

PCC decision on Police Council Tax Precept 2014-15

After listening to the public, Chief Constable and Police and Crime Panel, Stephen made a decision to raise the police Council Tax precept by 1.97%.

Stephen said: "This is not a decision I have taken lightly but I strongly believe that it is the right one for the residents of Norfolk.

"In the course of preparing the budget the Chief Constable presented a strong and compelling case for an increase in the council tax, not only so that I can secure ongoing funding but also to reduce slightly the level of cuts required of the service. The Chief Constable described the growing pressures on the service and I think it was apparent that even after efficiencies from our nationally-recognised collaboration with Suffolk Constabulary are taken into account Norfolk Constabulary still has a financial mountain to climb.

"For Norfolk, the collaboration has already delivered around £11m in efficiencies, a further £11m is planned to come out by 2017/18, but even with a 1.97% rise in the police element of the Council Tax the force will still have a further £9m to find by March 2018. No-one can be in any doubt that we face extremely difficult decisions over the next few years. That is the reality of the situation.

"Norfolk Constabulary is a highly performing force, and is making good progress in many areas. The force clearly recognises the need to pull the purse strings tighter but is equally clear that demand in some areas is rising. The force is seeing the emergence of new patterns of offending including increased reporting of serious sexual offences and domestic violence and more cases of adult abuse and child exploitation. These crimes often involve vulnerable members of our communities and are more often than not complex and difficult investigations and require appropriate resourcing. None of this can, or will, be ignored.

"It was of vital importance to me to ensure all the residents of Norfolk had every opportunity to have their say through an extensive consultation process. We received over 1000 responses; overall 53% were in favour of a 2% rise with 47% in favour of a freeze. The full consultation breakdown and all comments made are [here](#).

"The government had set the referendum limit at 2% (increases of 2% or more would automatically trigger a referendum). I kept a close eye on other Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and noted with interest that the vast majority proposed a 2% rise. It seems obvious to me that PCCs up and down the country recognised the increasing pressure on constabulary budgets and the need for a modest precept rise.

"Taking all of the above into consideration, including the Panel's comments, I can confirm that I will increase the police element of the Council Tax by £3.96 per annum (1.97%) to £204.75 (Band D) for 2014-15."

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM

	2013-14	2014-15
	£m	£m
Government Funding	96.8	93.0
Council Tax	53.0	55.0
Approved Budget	149.8	148.0

WHY SPENDING WILL INCREASE IN 2014-15

	£m
Approved Budget 2013-14	149.8
Increased pay & price levels	1.8
Ongoing commitments	6.0
External funding changes	-0.7
Budget reductions & savings	-3.5
Changes in appropriations to reserves and balances	-5.4
Approved Budget 2014-15	148.0