



Police and Crime Panel for Northumbria

6th Feb 2013

Report of Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria

Report on Proposed Precept for 2013/14

1. Purpose of Report

1. This report to the panel sets out my proposed precept for the policing area covered by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria for the 2013/14 financial year, with a recommendation to agree to the proposal.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Police and Crime Panels (Precepts and Chief Constable Appointments) Regulations 2012 specifies that the police and crime commissioner shall comply with the duty under paragraph 2 of Schedule 5 (commissioner to notify the panel of proposed precept) by 1st February of the relevant financial year.

- 2.2 These budget proposals have been developed on the basis of:

- Northumbria remains the lowest policing precept in England and Wales
- Significant use has been made of reserves to meet the funding gap going forward;
- A one-off availability to take up the precept which is doubtful going forward, without which frontline policing numbers would be under threat in future years; and
- A 20% real term cut in Central Government funding for the police from 2011/12 to 2014/15

- 2.3 In preparing the budgets, the Commissioner has considered the following issues:

- The key principles underlying the MTFs 2013/14 to 2015/16;
- The provisional Police Grant settlement for 2013/14, which for Northumbria is a reduction in grant funding of 1.6%, a cash reduction of £3.8m;
- The likely Revenue and Capital outturn for 2012/13;
- The budget pressures in 2013/14;
- Delivery of the Police and Crime Plan;
- Budget savings;
- Options for council tax; and

- Reserves and risk assessment.
- 2.4 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) covering the years 2013/14 to 2015/16 sets out a challenging financial context:
- a reduction in grant funding of 1.6% for the next year and projected reductions of a similar magnitude over the remaining years of the MTFS;
 - budget savings of over £35m over the next three years, on top of savings in excess of £40m already achieved over the previous two financial years;
 - a funding gap of £22m over the three years of the MTFS, after planned use of reserves.
- 2.5 The attached report attached sets out the proposed revenue budget and capital programme for 2013/14, together with a review of the current year's budget position, to enable the Panel to consider the proposed council tax precept for the financial year commencing 1 April 2013.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 I propose to issue a Band D council tax precept for the Northumbria area of £86.61, which represents an increase of £2.93 per year, (6p per week) or 3.5% for the following reasons:

- To invest in maintaining front line policing to ensure the residents of Northumbria continue to benefit from a high standard of policing in the face of an extremely challenging financial climate; and
- To ensure a sustainable financial position for policing in Northumbria beyond the next financial year in the context of uncertainty around future levels of funding

4. Recommendation

The Police and Crime Panel is asked to review the proposed precept and agree to the issue of it as the precept for the 2013/14 financial year.

Supporting documents:

- Proposed Council Tax and Revenue & Capital Budgets 2013/14
- Annex A – Draft Capital Programme 2013/14 – 2015/16
 - Annex B – Draft Revenue Budget 2013/14
 - Annex C – Schedule of proposed Police & Crime Commissioners' council tax increases for England and Wales for 2013/14
 - Annex D – Reserves
 - Annex E – History of Northumbria Police Authority council tax increases

Proposed Council Tax and Revenue & Capital Budgets 2013/14

1 Summary of Proposed Council Tax and Revenue & Capital Budgets 2013/14

- A revenue budget of £287.4m for policing and crime reduction;
- Provision for increases in pay and prices of £3.3m;
- Budget pressures of £1.3m to reflect the full year effect of changes in the current year, mainly relating to increases in national police services' charges, contract increases and the uplift of injury pensions in line with CPI;
- An increase in revenue costs of £1.0 m to support capital investment in buildings, vehicles and new technology;
- Budget savings of £16.4m in 2013/14;
- Capital investment in buildings, vehicles and new technology of £22.7m;
- The use of £9.274m from the Commissioner's reserves to support capital investment and phase budget savings to minimise the impact on frontline policing; and
- An increase in Band D Council Tax of 3.5% to £86.61 per annum, approximately £1.66 per week, to allow continued support in front line policing. Band A households which make up approximately 60% of the total in Northumbria will pay £57.74 a year, approximately £1.11 per week.

Considerations

2 In preparing the Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2013/14 the Commissioner has considered the following issues:

- The key principles underlying the MTFS 2013/14 to 2015/16;
- The provisional Police Grant settlement for 2013/14;
- The likely Revenue and Capital outturn for 2012/13;
- The budget pressures in 2013/14;
- Delivery of the Police and Crime Plan;
- Budget savings;
- Options for council tax;
- Reserves and risk assessment; and
- The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

Police Finance Settlement

3 The final Formula Grant figures for 2013/14 are due to be published in early February 2013. They are not anticipated to be different from the provisional settlement of 19 December 2012.

- 4 Northumbria's reduction in grant funding of 1.6% in 2013/14 is consistent with the national reduction for all Commissioners and continues to be at what is referred to as the floor. This cut represents a cash reduction of £3.8m, after adjusting for the Neighbourhood Policing Fund which has been moved into the baseline. Northumbria will receive £240.181m in Formula Grant in 2013/14 as set out below:

	2012/13	2013/14	
	£m	£m	
DCLG Grant	120.079	119.017	
Police Grant	114.992	121.164	
Formula Grant	235.071	240.181	
Relative Needs Amount	53.011	52.497	
Relative Resource Amount	-1.610	-2.121	
Central Allocation	47.183	46.082	
Main Police Grant	114.992	121.164	
Floor Damping	20.583	21.647	
Council Tax Freeze Compensation (2011/12)	0.912	0.912	
Formula Grant	235.071	240.181	
Neighbourhood Policing Fund*	8.923	0	
Adjusted formula grant	243.994	240.181	-1.6%

* paid as a specific grant in 2012/13 but absorbed into Main Police Grant in 2013/14

- 5 In addition, the Commissioner will receive £6.845m in Localised Council Tax Support Grant to offset the shortfall in council tax income, subject to a reduction of 10%, from the introduction of localised council tax support schemes by billing authorities; and £2.789m from the Community Safety Fund which was previously paid to a number of other bodies but is being paid to police and crime commissioners in 2013/14.
- 6 The Government has made available funding to Commissioners to freeze their council tax in 2013/14. The grant funding is equivalent to a 1% increase in council tax, which for Northumbria equates to £0.367m and is payable for two years. The implications of this are considered later in the report.
- 7 Over the Spending Review 2010 period, a number of specific grants have been absorbed within the Main Police Grant. Those that remain as specific grants for 2013/14 include the Counter Terrorism specific grant for which allocations are awaited from the Home Office and the Private Finance Initiative grant, which for Northumbria finishes during 2013/14.

Capital Programme 2012/13

- 8 The Commissioner considers regular monitoring reports in relation to the capital programme. The latest report in January 2013 indicated that expenditure in 2012/13 was currently estimated at £25.466m, compared to the budget of £29.177m. The reduction reflects the slippage of expenditure due to the phasing of work in relation to the Newcastle City Centre Police Station, and slippage on

those schemes awaiting the outcomes of reviews within the Programme of Change.

Capital Programme 2013/14

- 9 The proposed capital programme for 2013/14 totals £22.750m and is shown in detail at Annex A. The programme has been set at a level to reflect the challenging financial position and the need to focus on essential schemes to deliver the Programme of Change. The Estates Strategy continues to focus on the delivery of the Newcastle City Centre Police Station and an acceleration of the rationalisation of the estate. It is estimated that £16.390m will be spent on committed major building schemes during 2013/14.
- 10 The programme for minor building works, vehicles, equipment and computers and communications totals £6.360m. This is made up of:
- A programme for minor building works including provision for cell refurbishment, energy management initiatives and public area CCTV;
 - Investment of £2.239m in computers and communications in 2013/14 providing for the ongoing essential maintenance and development of the ICT infrastructure, the 'refresh' of the existing technology in line with the ICT strategy, the implementation of a new information management platform to provide new functionality to support the Force's operating model; and the development of a mobile data solution designed to transform the way operational staff access and share everyday information used to deliver policing services to the communities.
 - Planned expenditure on vehicles and equipment is £3.250m in 2013/14, comprising £2.7m on the vehicle fleet, which allows for the replacement of vehicles within the current replacement strategy, and £0.320m to complete the replacement of body armour secured in 2012/13 through a national procurement exercise.
- 11 The table below sets out the proposed financing of the capital programme. Capital resources such as capital receipts and capital grants are limited so prudential borrowing will continue to be the main source of funding. This is dependent on satisfying the prudential framework which requires an income stream to be identified to meet the ongoing revenue costs.

	Original Estimate 2012/13 £m	Revised Estimate 2012/13 £m	Estimate 2013/14 £m
Capital Grant	3.362	3.744	3.496
Capital Receipts	1.400	1.202	1.844
Prudential Borrowing	24.415	20.520	17.410
Total	29.177	25.466	22.750

- 12 The proposed programme of £22.750m along with planned spending of £21.137m in future years represents a significant investment in the

Commissioner's asset base, new technology and operational vehicles and equipment.

Revised Revenue Budget 2012/13

- 13 The Commissioner also considers regular monitoring reports in relation to the revenue budget. The Commissioner's budget for the financial year 2012/13 was £291.318m, reduced by transfers from reserves of £19.410m. This was revised in June 2012 to take account of agreed rephasing of savings over the life of the MTFs. The budget was revised to £288.924m and the planned use of reserves was reduced to £17.016m
- 14 The latest report in January 2013 projected an overall net underspend of £4.471m (1.5%) against the approved budget, resulting in a requirement from reserves of £12.545m. A number of factors account for this position, primarily one off business rate refunds, on-going underspends on the Forensic Science Service and capital financing costs, and the limited utilisation of the one off transition contingency. The 2012/13 budget will be revised to reflect the forecast outturn position.
- 15 The underspend has been achieved against a backdrop of continuous improvement of performance by the Force. The Commissioner has identified in year savings in relation to Support Services of £0.073m, and has also overseen reductions in spend against her non staff budgets of £0.170m. Work to review non-essential spending during the remainder of the financial year will continue in the Force and the Commissioner's office in order to maximise the reserves available to support the budget in future years.

Revenue Budget 2013/14

- 16 For the financial year 2013/14, the proposed total net police expenditure before the use of reserves is £287.381m, details of which are attached at Annex B. The proposed budget includes £3.3m in pay and prices increases to cover the cost of pay awards and inflationary increases in relation to energy, business rates and rent increases. Most other inflation is being absorbed within existing budgets.
- 17 Budget pressures of £0.9m have been included in the budget, which relates primarily to increases in national police services' charges, and the uplift of injury pensions in line with CPI. Contract increases of £0.4m has also been included.
- 18 A further provision of £1.0m has been included to reflect the revenue impact of the capital programme including the cost of additional borrowing.

Budget Savings

- 19 The proposed budget for 2013/14 includes savings which have been carefully considered to ensure the Commissioner and Force can meet the financial challenges they face whilst continuing to focus on their core principles, as set out below:
 - Police and Crime Plan Delivery;
 - Prioritise Neighbourhood Policing;

- Improve performance; and
- Address local priorities.

20 Whilst maintaining the above principles, £16.4m of budget savings have been identified for 2013/14. Further budget savings of over £19m have been built into the updated MTFS for 2014/15 and 2015/16 to meet the challenging financial position and to ensure the impact on frontline policing is minimised.

21 In 2013/14, the savings will be realised by a combination of:

- A reduction in police officers through natural wastage, with a programme of recruitment to protect the frontline. For 2013/14, this reduction is expected to total 184 fte during the course of the year, resulting in a saving of £9.2m, offset by recruitment of 50 fte at a cost of £0.5m in 2013/14. Over the course of the financial year the Force will aim to manage an overall net reduction of 134 fte officers;
- A reduction in police staff through natural wastage. The full-year effect of staff savings in 2012/13 and a further reduction in staff of 35 fte in 2013/14 from natural wastage, estimated at saving £2.4m;
- Implementation of the Winsor Review, which has recommended changes to police officer terms and conditions, generating estimated savings of £2.1m; and
- Scrutiny of non-pay related expenditure throughout the Force, including overtime, with expected savings of £2.4m in 2013/14, as summarised below:

	£000s
Estate savings	792
Review of individual non pay budgets	483
Air Support (NPAS)	271
Forensic Science Service	270
Vehicle Recovery	180
Police Officer Overtime	155
ICT Communications	152
Interpretation Services	68
Catering	55
	2,426

22 Within the non pay savings, rationalisation of the estate is anticipated to generate £0.8m in 2013/14.

23 In addition, expenditure by the Commissioner on support services has been reduced by £0.35m (15%) and closer scrutiny will deliver more savings in the short and medium term, to ensure the net OPPC budget will be lower than that of the former Police Authority.

24 The Force has undertaken a 'Programme of Change' since 2010/11 in order to establish more efficient ways of working whilst continuing to deliver high levels of service alongside the financial challenges of the Spending Review. The Programme has three phases:

- **Phase 1** of the programme revised operating models and delivered significant savings during 2011/12, whilst maintaining visible policing and improving performance;

- **Phase 2** has continued to challenge ways of working through reviewing processes, productivity, key functions and departments; this has resulted in a further reduction of police officers and police staff. The Workforce Strategy throughout has been to achieve these reductions through voluntary redundancy and natural turnover wherever possible; and
- **Phase 3** is pursuing collaborative opportunities, at a local and regional level, resulting in policing services being delivered in collaboration with other forces or organisations.

25 The programme is underpinned by the following principles of:

- Focus on customers
- Delivering local policing tailored to local communities
- Commitment to people and communities.

26 The proposed budget ensures that resources are directed towards achieving the Police and Crime Plan and the Commissioner's objectives. The Police and Crime Plan is shaped by the Force Strategic Assessment and public consultation by the Commissioner. Engagement with local communities had identified that objectives within the current Local Policing Plan are broadly correct. The 2013/14 Police and Crime Plan will be considered by the Police and Crime Panel in February.

Budget Summary

27 Summary of the proposed 2013/14 Revenue Budget is as follows:

	Original Estimate 2012/13 £000	Revised Estimate 2012/13 £000	Forecast Outturn 2012/13 £000	Original Estimate 2013/14 £000
Employees	214,244	212,880	213,915	205,389
Pensions	45,482	45,257	47,158	44,045
Premises	12,089	11,825	11,773	11,546
Supplies & Services	8,866	8,388	8,096	7,900
Transport	5,966	6,070	5,812	5,494
Establishment Expenses	5,853	5,744	5,780	5,062
Agency Services	4,422	4,418	4,015	4,458
Miscellaneous Expenses	7,617	7,559	8,112	9,334
Capital Charges	<u>7,084</u>	<u>7,084</u>	<u>6,370</u>	<u>7,363</u>
Total Expenditure	311,623	309,225	311,031	300,591
Income	<u>(21,305)</u>	<u>(21,301)</u>	<u>(26,645)</u>	<u>(13,210)</u>
Net Expenditure	290,318	287,924	284,386	287,381
Contingency	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Expenditure	<u>291,318</u>	<u>288,924</u>	<u>284,453</u>	<u>287,381</u>
Appropriations from reserves	<u>(19,410)</u>	<u>(17,016)</u>	<u>(12,545)</u>	<u>(9,274)</u>
Budget Requirement	271,908	271,908	271,908	278,107

Funding

28 As outlined above, the proposed budget before use of reserves is £287.381m. Formula grant funding available is £240.181m (paragraph 4). This would leave £47.20m to be met from council tax before considering use of reserves. After

taking into account Localised Council Tax Support Grant of £6.845m, the Transitional Council Tax Support Grant of £0.160m and the proportion of the collection fund surplus of the constituent billing authorities of £0.074m, this would require a council tax increase of 34%. Further consideration is required, therefore, of the council tax options and the potential for using reserves to fund the proposed budget package.

Council Tax Options

- 29 Schedule 5 of the Localism Act introduces a new Chapter into the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (the 1992 Act) governing the calculation of council tax. It makes provision for council tax referendums to be held if an authority increases its council tax by an amount exceeding principles determined by the Secretary of State and agreed by the House of Commons.
- 30 On 19 December 2012, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government stated that the trigger for a referendum for Commissioners is likely to be any council tax increase greater than 2%.
- 31 However, commissioners in whose areas the 2012/13 council tax was in the lower quartile need only hold a referendum if the increase in the basic amount of council tax for 2013/14 is by more than 2% **and** there is a cash increase of more than £5. Northumbria falls into this category; a £5 cash increase at Band D would represent a 5.98% increase and would provide additional funding of approximately £1.78m per annum.
- 32 A 1% council tax freeze grant will be available in 2013/14, payable for two years, and estimated to be £0.367m per annum for Northumbria. This is only available if the Commissioner freezes the 2013/14 relevant basic council tax level.
- 33 For Northumbria, each 1% increase in the precept generates approximately £0.298m. An increase of 5.98% (Band D increase from £83.68 a year to £88.68 a year) would generate £1.78m in extra revenue in 2013/14. An increase in one year would also reduce the gap in future periods.
- 34 The annual additional income generated for a range of council tax increases in 2013/14 can be illustrated as follows:

Increase	Band D	Additional Income
%	£	£m
0.5	84.10	0.150
1	84.52	0.299
1.5	84.94	0.449
2	85.35	0.595
2.5	85.77	0.744
3	86.19	0.894
3.5	86.61	1.044
4	87.03	1.193
4.5	87.45	1.343
5	87.87	1.492

5.5	88.28	1.639
5.98	88.68	1.780

- 35 Given the size of Northumbria's council tax, which remains the lowest in the country, percentage increases are limited and have only a small impact on council tax in each of the six local authorities in Northumbria. For example, a 3.5% increase at Band D, which covers a minority of households, would be only £2.93 a year or less than 6p a week and is only a fraction of the investment in neighbourhood policing in recent years. Band A households would pay less than an extra 4p per week. A schedule of indicated Band D council tax for each Police and Crime Commissioner for 2012/13 and 2013/14 is attached as Annex C.

Reserves

- 36 The Commissioner's reserves policy is set out in the MTFs and is subject to regular review.
- 37 A full analysis of the Commissioner's revenue reserves and their planned use taking into account the proposals outlined below is attached at Annex D. This shows a projected General Reserve of £18.922m and earmarked reserves of £12.268m at 31 March 2013.
- 38 The General Reserve at £18.922m is 6.6% of revenue expenditure. This meets one of the key MTFs principles to seek to maintain the general reserve at a minimum of 3% of the revenue budget. It is currently at a higher than minimum level as a result of the Commissioner reviewing earmarked reserves and releasing some to provide more flexibility for the budget. Guidance does not dictate a reasonable level of the General Reserve because it needs to be linked to other factors such as the risks inherent in the budget, the level of robustness of budget monitoring, past experience of outturn spending within budget and the extent of earmarked reserves. The General Reserve, which is designed to act as a contingency and smooth out variations in spending, could be reduced to a minimum level of £8.7m if we were to continue to satisfy the minimum 3% guidance.
- 39 The former Police Authority has previously agreed, subject to annual review, that the General Reserve above the minimum requirements should be used as short term funding to offset grant cuts whilst budget savings are achieved to minimise the impact on frontline policing. This strategy can be applied to allow the Commissioner to use £10.222m of the General Reserve over the next two years as short term funding to contribute to meeting the £22m funding gap identified over the three years of the MTFs whilst budget savings are identified. To support the phasing of budget savings and protect frontline services it is proposed to use £3.550m of the General Reserve in 2013/14 and £6.672m in 2014/15.
- 40 Earmarked reserves have been established for specific purposes as set out in Annex D and are regularly reviewed. The main earmarked reserve is the Capital Development Reserve which is set aside to assist in developing and improving the capital assets of the Commissioner, particularly the Estates Strategy, in advance of generating capital receipts from former sites. The current strategy is to use this reserve to fund the revenue implications of prudential borrowing to

support the delivery of the capital programme. The reserve, which is forecast to be £7.4m at 31 March 2013, is anticipated to be fully utilised during 2014/15 as a result of existing commitments.

- 41 The Workforce Management Reserve was set up to fund the one-off cost of police staff redundancies to release the on-going revenue savings of the reduction in staff costs at an estimated cost of between £2m and £3m over the life of the MTFs. It is anticipated that £1.2m of the reserve will be used during 2012/13. The balance of £1.8m is set aside to fund any future workforce changes, for example, the potential cost of a voluntary exit scheme for officers. It is anticipated that this reserve will be fully utilised during 2013/14.
- 42 The Insurance Reserve has been reviewed in the light of claims history and it is recommended that this remains at £3m. This will provide £2m for the insured liability claims falling within policy excesses and uninsured liability claims and £1m for uninsured property damage.
- 43 As reported in the MTFs the Commissioner has reviewed the Devolved Budget Reserves and will limit individual reserves balances for operational departments' and area commands' devolved revenue budget to the reduced level of £0.1m as at 31 March 2013.
- 44 The above proposals can be summarised as follows:
 - In line with the MTFs, the General Reserve will reduce from £18.922m to £8.7m by the end of 2014/15. The proposed net contribution to the revenue budget in 2013/14 is £3.550m.
 - A planned contribution from the Capital Development Reserve of £5.724m in 2013/14, with a further contribution of £1.644m in 2014/15.
 - A planned contribution of £1.8m from the Workforce Development Reserve to fund future workforce changes, including the potential cost of a voluntary exit scheme for officers.
- 45 Using reserves in this way will allow the Commissioner to continue supporting investment in front line policing and the capital programme and would result in a precept increase of 3.5%, compared to the 34% that would have been necessary without the application of reserves.
- 46 There is uncertainty about the future distribution of grant from 2014/15 onwards. The Home Secretary will be commissioning a full review of the funding formula once Commissioners are established in their roles and are able to engage fully in the review process. Northumbria will continue to make representations in relation to the current formula failing to take account of relative need, resulting in the current position of Northumbria being £21.647m below the floor. The magnitude of the current reliance on damping protection presents a significant risk to the financial sustainability of Northumbria Police and this has been considered by the Commissioner in the review of reserves.

Adequacy of Reserves and Robustness of Budget Estimates

- 47 The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Treasurer to undertake an assessment of the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of reserves.
- 48 The MTFS allows the Commissioner to consider the prudent use of reserves in the context of the future spending pressures and risks arising from potential changes to the funding formula without having a detrimental effect on policing.
- 49 In assessing the robustness of the budget, the Treasurer has considered the following issues:
- The general financial standing of the Police and Crime Commissioner;
 - The underlying budget assumptions, including an assessment of the estimates for pay and price increases;
 - A risk assessment of expenditure and income estimates;
 - The future budget pressures identified in the MTFS;
 - The adequacy of the budget monitoring and financial reporting arrangements;
 - The adequacy of the Commissioner's governance arrangements and internal control system;
 - The adequacy of unearmarked reserves to cover any potential financial risks faced by the Commissioner;
 - The risks inherent in reliance on the application of floors beyond 2013/14; and
 - The impact of funding cuts and the uncertainty of grant support beyond 2013/14.
- 50 At 31 March 2013, the Commissioner's General Reserve is estimated at £18.922m (6.6% of revenue expenditure), in addition to other reserves which are earmarked for specific purposes. The Commissioner's reserves policy will result in the General Reserve reducing to 3% of revenue expenditure by 2014/15. In estimating the level of reserves the Treasurer has taken account of known commitments for 2013/14 and the financial risks faced by the Commissioner which could impact on the level of reserves.
- 51 The Treasurer confirms that, after taking account of these issues, the revenue and capital estimates contained in this report are considered robust and that the level of reserves proposed in the review set out earlier is considered adequate to cover the financial risks faced by the Commissioner in 2013/14.

Council Tax Requirement

- 52 The Localism Act requires the Commissioner to set a Council Tax Requirement. The calculation of the Council Tax Requirement, based on the proposed revenue budget and contribution from reserves is set out below:

Total Revenue Expenditure	£m
	287.381
<u>Less</u> Appropriations from Reserves	<u>9.274</u>
Budget Requirement	278.107

<u>Less:</u>	£m	
DCLG Grant	119.017	
Police Grant	121.164	
Localised Council Tax Support Grant	6.845	
Transitional Council Tax Support Grant	<u>0.160</u>	<u>247.186</u>
Balance to be Raised Locally		30.921
Less estimated net surplus on collection funds		<u>0.074</u>
Council Tax Requirement		<u>30.847</u>

- 53 The proportion of collection funds' net surplus due to Northumbria Police from its constituent billing authorities is £0.074m for 2013/14 (£0.257m in 2012/13).
- 54 The notified Council Tax base figure is 356,193.1, a decrease of 80,973 (18.5%) over the previous year, largely due to the changes following the replacement of the council tax benefit system with localised schemes of discounts.
- 55 Using the notified Council tax base figure of 356.193.1, the council tax for 2013/14 can then be calculated as £86.61 at Band D, which represents a 3.5% increase from 2012/13. The council tax for Band A households, which represent approximately 60% of the total, would be £57.74, or approximately £1.11 per week. The table below sets out the proposed council tax for each band:

Band	£ per annum	£ per week
A	57.74	1.11
B	67.36	1.29
C	76.99	1.48
D	86.61	1.66
E	105.86	2.03
F	125.10	2.40
G	144.35	2.77
H	173.22	3.32

- 56 The precept increase will raise an additional £1.044m funding per annum to support the provision of policing services in Northumbria.

Consultation Local Communities

- 57 Consultation has taken place with stakeholders and local communities, including:
- Engagement in public places such as local supermarkets in Killingworth and Berwick, Gateshead and the Monument Metro Stations and shopping centres such as the Bridges in Sunderland. Public engagement has also take place at Harton Technical College in South Tyneside and a national farmer's event in Hexham.

- A third sector conference in collaboration with Voluntary organisations Network North East (VONNE) reaching out to organisations with many thousands of participants.
- Engagement events with young people followed by a youth survey in North Tyneside completed by over 500 young people.
- An interactive web based survey completed by over 3,000 people from across Northumbria, within which 76% of respondents indicated that they would be happy to pay around 10 pence per week extra for policing in their area..
- Priority workshops with partner organisations, including Probation and health, Northumbria Police Strategic Independent Advisory Group and police professionals.
- A review of Community Safety Partnership strategic assessments, plans and emerging priorities for 2013/14.

58 This engagement has specifically included a Victim Advisory Group whose members are themselves victims of crime, and a meeting with representatives from a number of organisations that support victims, for example Victim Support and Tyneside Rape Crisis Centre.

59 To ensure the diverse needs of communities in Northumbria are reflected in the Police and Crime plan and supported by the budget, the Commissioner has established seven Advisory Groups covering victims and the six diversity strands of age, faith, disability, gender, Black Minority Ethnic (BME) and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) communities. These groups will also be included in the engagement process to inform development of the plan.