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2018/19 Precept Consultation Summary

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire

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Precept Consultation 2018/19 Summary

Table of Contents

Precept Consultation 2018/19 Summary	2
1.0 Headline result	3
2.0 Summary of publicity	4
3.0 Online consultation survey results in detail	5
3.1 Warwickshire residents' response data	6
3.2 Comments received	7
3.3 Moderated final data	8
4.0 Additional responses	9
4.1 Email/social media comments	9
4.2 Face-to-face consultation	9
4.0 Commissioner's response to the consultation	10
Appendix A: Precept Proposal Summary Guide	11
Appendix B: Frequently asked questions about Council Tax	15
Appendix C: Statistical breakdown by district	17

Precept Consultation 2018/19 Summary

The Police and Crime Commissioner launched his precept consultation on Friday 22 December 2017 following receipt of the Government's police funding settlement on December 19. The consultation ended on Friday 19 January 2018 – a total time of four weeks. A precept proposal summary guide (**Appendix A**) and explanatory info about Council Tax (**Appendix B**), including frequently asked questions, were published on the OPCC website alongside a short online survey, enabling people to comment on the proposals being put forward.

Three options were presented for public feedback:

- Option 1 – a rise of 6.25% (equivalent to £12 per year on a Band D property)
- Option 2 – a rise of 5.21% (equivalent to £10 per year on a Band D property)
- Option 3 – a rise of 4.17% (equivalent to £8 per year on a Band D property)

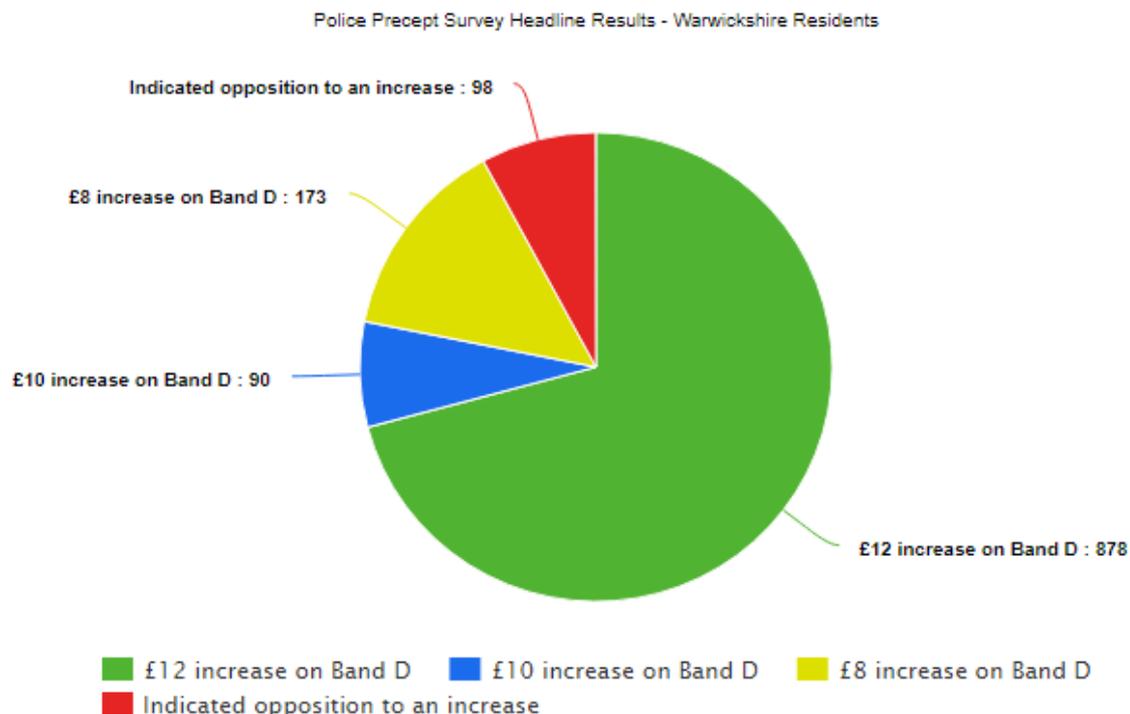
While there was no formal option to oppose an increase, account was taken of people's additional comments when compiling the final results. Consultation meetings were also held with key partners, local authorities and the business community, while comments were also received via email, post and through social media.

1.0 Headline result

At its close on Friday 19 January, the online survey had received 1,501 responses, with 1,349 of those responding identifying as being residents of Warwickshire.

This is the highest return for a precept consultation undertaken the OPCC (previous high marks were 447 responses in 2017 and 1,026 in 2016). It is considered to be a statistically significant sample for the population of Warwickshire.

Of those Warwickshire residents who responded and indicated a preference:



Answer choice	Result	
Favoured option 1 (£12 increase on Band D / 6.25% overall)	70.9 %	878
Favoured option 2 (£10 increase on Band D / 5.21% overall)	7.3%	90
Favoured option 3 (£8 increase on Band D / 4.17% overall)	14.0%	173
Indicated opposition to an increase in comments	7.9%	98
Total: 1,239*		

*110 respondents from Warwickshire failed to complete the survey, so did not indicate a preference for an option.

2.0 Summary of publicity

A range of communication tools were used to promote the online precept consultation to communities across Warwickshire. These included:

- Posting full details of the consultation on the OPCC website, including prominent links from the home page;
- Media releases at the start and end of the consultation. These achieved coverage in newspapers across the county, including articles in the:
 - Stratford Herald (including a front page lead on the Midweek Herald)
 - Leamington/Stratford/Rugby Observer (including a front page lead on the Rugby Advertiser)
 - Nuneaton News / Coventry Telegraph
 - Leamington/Warwick Courier, Kenilworth Weekly News, Rugby Advertiser
 - Redditch and Alcester Standard
 - Banbury Guardian

This included a mix of print and online articles;

- Social media – regular postings were made throughout the consultation to encourage residents to take part. Paid advertising was also placed on Facebook and Twitter to increase the reach of these social media messages to users in Warwickshire:
 - Facebook posts reached a total of 48,697 users and resulted in 586 clicks through to the survey, 70 comments and 76 post shares;
 - Twitter tweets and promoted tweets reached: 40,777 users, resulting in 1,078 clicks through to the survey, 4 comments and 13 re-tweets;
- The Commissioner’s email newsletter featured the consultation prominently in a December extra issue at the consultation launch and again in the January edition resulting in:
 - 1711 subscribers being reached, with 112 clicks through to the survey;
- Warwickshire Police’s Community Messaging System was used to promote the consultation to subscribers;
- Neighbourhood Watch groups;
- Internal force communications.

3.0 Online consultation survey results in detail

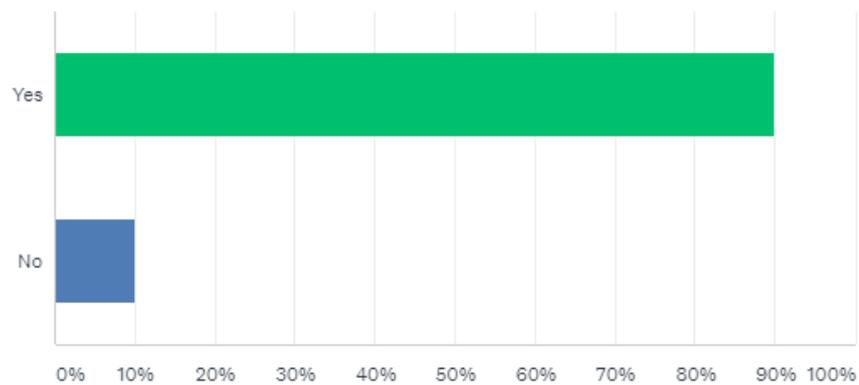
An online survey was used to ascertain views on the Commissioner’s precept proposals. Three options for raises of £12, £10 and £8 (on a Band D average property) were offered, along with a free text area for further public comment.

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they were residents of Warwickshire and, if so, which district they lived in. The results were as follows:

Q1

Are you a resident of Warwickshire?

Answered: 1,501 Skipped: 0



Answer choice	Result	
Yes	89.87%	1,349
No	10.13%	152
		Total : 1,501

For the purposes of the Commissioner’s decision making on the precept, the results are shown in the section below for those that indicated they were Warwickshire residents only.

A full breakdown of statistics for those outside of Warwickshire and for each district area is included within **Appendix C** for completeness and full transparency.

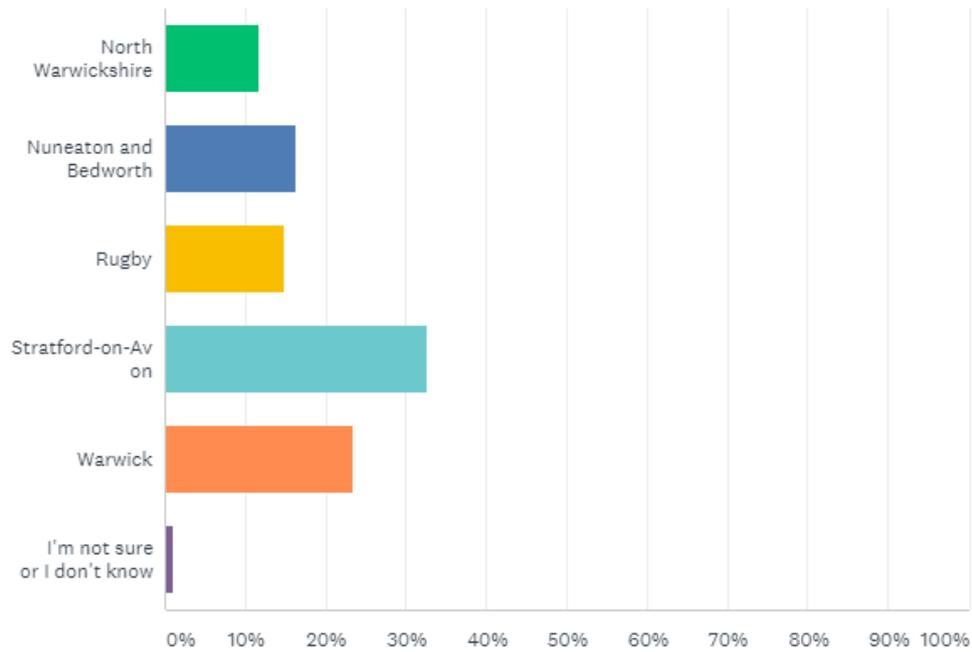
3.1 Warwickshire residents' response data

Residents were asked to state in which district area they lived. A 'not sure/do not know' option was also provided for completeness.

Q2

Which district do you live in?

Answered: 1,341 Skipped: 8



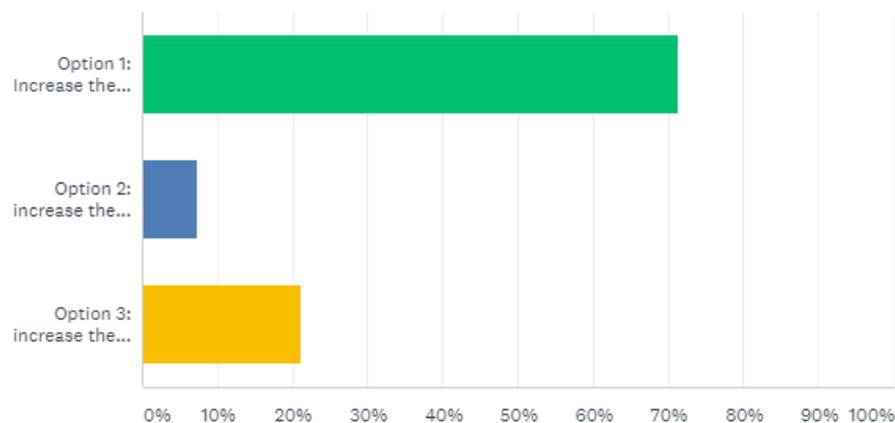
Answer	Result	
North Warwickshire	11.86%	156
Nuneaton and Bedworth	16.26%	218
Rugby	14.84%	199
Stratford-on-Avon	32.66%	438
Warwick	23.49%	315
I'm not sure or I don't know	1.12%	15
		Total: 1,341*

* 8 respondents skipped this question

Q3

Please select your preferred option below (please choose only one):

Answered: 1,239 Skipped: 110



Answer choice	Result	
Favoured option 1 (£12 increase on Band D)	71.35%	884
Favoured option 2 (£10 increase on Band D)	7.43%	92
Favoured option 3 (£8 increase on Band D)	21.23%	263
		Total : 1,239*

* 110 respondents skipped this question

3.2 Comments received

The final section of the survey included a free text area which allowed people to give additional feedback on the proposed options. A total of 468 comments were left by Warwickshire residents. While many comments were positive or general in nature, a number of clear themes emerged:

- Funds should ensure police visibility is boosted (15.60%)
- Central government should provide additional funding, not local taxpayers (9.40%)
- The increase should be spent on frontline policing only (5.34%)
- Funds should ensure a boost to policing in North Warwickshire (5.13%)
- Funds should be used to boost policing in rural areas (5.13%)
- The PCC post should be scrapped and funds redistributed (4.06%)

A further 864 respondents ended the survey with no further comment.

3.3 Moderated final data

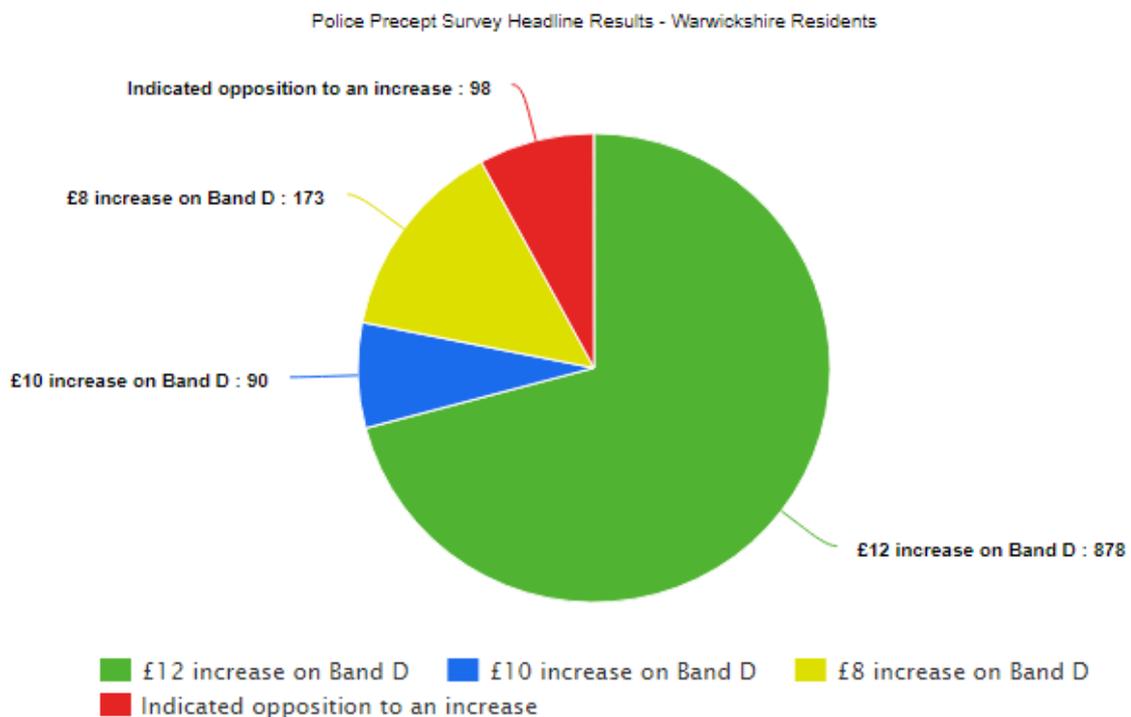
Detailed analysis of the comments revealed a number of respondents from Warwickshire who did not support a raise but had voted in order to be able to make a comment to this effect. In order to ensure that the poll gave a fair reflection of the true view of respondents, the totals for each option have been moderated to take account of this.

Comments which stated objection to an increase outright or where it could be clearly inferred that this was the case were subject to further analysis. How each person had voted was noted and the relevant totals were as follows:

- Would have voted 'no' if possible but chose Option 1 – 6 respondents
- Would have voted 'no' if possible but chose Option 2 – 2 respondents
- Would have voted 'no' if possible but chose Option 3 – 90 respondents

These totals were then subtracted from the overall totals of responses for Warwickshire residents and the percentages adjusted to include the 'no raise' opinions. This is the data set presented in the headline summary.

For ease of reference, the final totals were:



Answer choice	Result	
Favoured option 1 (£12 increase on Band D / 6.25% overall)	70.9 %	878
Favoured option 2 (£10 increase on Band D / 5.21% overall)	7.3%	90
Favoured option 3 (£8 increase on Band D / 4.17% overall)	14.0%	173
Indicated opposition to an increase in comments	7.9%	98
		Total: 1,239

A further 110 people failed to complete the survey before choosing an option but no inference has been drawn from this. There could be many reasons for not completing the survey and it is not possible to accurately deduce what these may have been.

4.0 Additional responses

4.1 *Email/social media comments*

A number of additional comments were received by email and social media.

Not all comments received via social media were directly relevant to the consultation. Some related to other matters, were more general opinions about policing or were in response to other people's comments. These have been excluded from this report, although all social media platforms are monitored and, where appropriate, comments are responded to.

A full listing of comments relevant to the consultation are provided in **Appendix D**.

4.2 *Face-to-face consultation*

In addition to the online survey, the Commissioner and Treasurer offered to consult formally with county MPs, local authorities and key partners across the county to discuss the precept and the overall budget for Warwickshire Police.

Those following indicated they wished to be consulted and were visited in December 2017 and January 2018:

- Stratford-on-Avon District Council
- Jeremy Wright MP
- Rugby Borough Council
- North Warwickshire Borough Council
- Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
- Warwickshire County Council
- Police Superintendents' Association
- Police Federation
- Unison
- Federation of Small Businesses
- NFU
- Country Landowners Association

In addition, the Commissioner spoke at a number of public events and Community Forums and explained the precept proposals and canvassed responses. Detailed discussions were also undertaken with the Chief Constable to determine the final budget proposal.

4.0 Commissioner's response to the consultation

It is always a difficult decision to increase taxation and it is not one that I take lightly, so I am grateful for the number of people who took the time to express an opinion and complete the survey. From the results and the comments received, it's clear that the public wants to see more police on their streets and for officers to continue to focus on tackling the issues that matter most to local communities.

While increases in council tax are never welcome, the majority of the responses received from the public support my assessment that in order to safeguard the continued delivery of an effective service to the public, Warwickshire Police needs more funding. The consultation has also shown strong support for a proposed maximum increase of 6.25%, which is the equivalent of a pound extra a month for Band D taxpayers. I will therefore be looking to take this option forward.

Without a cash boost of this scale, Warwickshire Police would face having to lose around 60 police officer posts over the medium term – a position that would leave the force having to make very difficult choices over a reduced level of service to the public. I do not think this is acceptable and the consultation clearly backs up that this is not what the public or local businesses would want to see either.

I have listened to the additional feedback and comments I have received over the past four weeks and share the desire expressed by many that any extra resources must be used to boost frontline policing here in Warwickshire. Through the detailed consultations I have had with the Chief Constable, I am now more confident that the proposed precept increase would allow an even greater proportion of police officers to be retained than initially envisaged, safeguarding some 50 officer posts, which can only be good news.

I will therefore ensure that all of the additional money raised will be spent on police officer posts here in Warwickshire. In addition to the programme of investments in technology, mobile working and a continued focus on delivering efficiency savings, I believe my proposed budget will help Warwickshire Police provide the public with enhanced confidence in policing, boost visibility and will mitigate against some of the pressures that frontline officers currently face.

Philip Secombe TD

Police Budget 2018/19 Consultation



Philip Secombe
Police and Crime
Commissioner
for Warwickshire



Dear Warwickshire resident

As your Police and Crime Commissioner, it is my job to set the budget for Warwickshire Police for the next financial year and, with it, the amount you contribute through your council tax for policing services in the county.

Funding for police forces is made up of grants from central government and an amount raised locally from the council tax, known as the police precept. In Warwickshire, around 58% of the police budget is funded by central government, with your council tax making up the rest.

I know that these are difficult financial times for many of you and that's why I want to give all Warwickshire residents the chance to have your say, before I set the budget. I want to know how much you feel we should pay more per household to ensure that our police continue to have the right technology, training and officers to protect communities and deal with the changing nature of crime.

Please spare a few moments to read the information which follows and then go online to give me your views.

The survey can be completed at www.warwickshire-pcc.gov.uk/preceptsurvey or alternatively you can send me your views by email to opcc@warwickshire.gov.uk. You can also fill in the form at the back of this pack and post your views to: Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, 3 Northgate Street, Warwick CV34 4SP.

The consultation will close on Friday January 19, 2018.



A message from your PCC

Since becoming Police and Crime Commissioner in May 2016, I have become increasingly aware of the challenging situation policing is in. Recorded crime is increasing, while the resources available to investigate and bring offenders to justice and protect communities from harm have become ever scarcer.

While I have been able to maintain overall police officer numbers since taking office, it nevertheless remains the case that we now have 21% fewer officers than we did 10 years ago. As a result, Warwickshire has among the lowest ratios of police officers per head of population in the country and those officers we do have are now dealing with much bigger workloads.

In common with the national picture, recorded crime has increased in Warwickshire—up by 24% in the last year alone. Our increasingly global and technological world means these are also often more complex and time-consuming to investigate, creating additional pressures on the force.

Last year I was able to freeze the police precept—the portion of your council tax that pays for policing—while using funding from reserves to ensure that the Chief Constable had the resources he needed to keep communities safe, ensure that frontline policing remained a priority and that Safer Neighbourhood Teams formed the bedrock of policing in the county. Of course, financial reserves can only be spent once and this option cannot be sustained in the longer term, though I am proposing to invest a further £3.8 million from reserves to support the force budget in 2018/19.

Costs continue to rise through inflation and there remains increased pressure on operational



policing through the rising demand for services. Despite the major transformations happening within our force, which have raised efficiency and been recognised by our external inspectors as 'ambitious and innovative', the simple reality is that the police require more funding just to maintain current service levels. This means I am not in a position to be able to freeze the police precept once again. To do so would leave the force with a significant shortfall in funding and some very unpalatable decisions to make over a reduced level of service to the public.

Over the past 12 months I have been making this position clear to central government, arguing the case that policing needs more funding if it is to continue keeping the public safe and maintaining law and order satisfactorily. I am



pleased to report that the ministers have listened to these representations. Alongside additional funding for counter terrorism, national policing priorities and projects to support the transformation of policing, the Government has given Police and Crime Commissioners the flexibility needed to raise extra money through council tax.

We have been given a static settlement for the financial year ahead, with the amount we receive from central government remaining the same as in 2017/18 in real terms. As I have stated previously, however, this will not be sufficient on its own to maintain the levels of service you expect while continuing to modernise the force. I am therefore proposing to increase the police precept for 2018/19, in order to protect frontline policing and ensure that I can deliver a safer and more secure Warwickshire.

Where previously I could raise the police precept by up to a maximum of 2%, the Government has now given me the greater flexibility to set an increase of up to £12 per year on an average Band D property. That added pound a month would equate in Warwickshire to a 6.25% increase over 2017/18 funding levels and could help to raise around £1.7 million. Taking into account the amount we also receive from central government, this would mean a total of £2.9 million is then available to invest in frontline policing services.

Even with this boost to funding, Warwickshire Police will still need to continue making efficiency savings in order to provide a balanced budget, with the amounts raised through the police precept helping to offset losses in staffing that might otherwise occur. I will continue to ensure that public money is used efficiently and responsibly. Equally, I will ensure that the additional money that is raised is used directly to fund police officers, while also leaving a secure and viable financial future for the force.

I remain conscious however, that these remain challenging financial times for many of you and so I want to hear your views before I make a final decision on the level of the precept early in the New Year. I have put forward options for different levels of increase of the police precept, outlining the consequences for each and I am keen to get feedback from a wide spectrum across the county.

Please take the time to carefully read the proposals and the supporting information before taking the survey. I look forward to hearing from you between now and Friday 19 December.

Philip Seccombe TD

Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire



Consultation options

Each of the options being consulted on include an investment of £3.8 million from reserves and will continue to require the force to make efficiency savings in order to provide a balanced budget.

OPTION 1: INCREASE THE POLICE PRECEPT BY £12 PER YEAR (BAND D)

This equates to a rise of 6.25% and would mean a Band D taxpayer would pay an extra £1 per month. This funding option would mean the force could retain around 33 police officer posts that might otherwise have been lost.

OPTION 2: INCREASE THE POLICE PRECEPT BY £10 PER YEAR (BAND D)

This equates to a rise of 5.21% and would mean a Band D taxpayer would pay around an extra 83 pence per month. This funding option would mean the force could retain around 25 police officer posts that might otherwise have been lost.

OPTION 3: INCREASE THE POLICE PRECEPT BY £8 PER YEAR (BAND D)

This equates to a rise of 4.17% and would mean a Band D taxpayer would pay around an extra 67 pence per month. This funding option would mean the force could retain around 18 police officer posts that might otherwise have been lost.

Why is there no option to freeze council tax?

As I have stated, costs continue to rise through inflation and there remains increased pressure on operational policing through the rising demand for services. Freezing the precept would leave the force with the need to save £5.7 million and this would lead to very difficult decisions around officer numbers and reduced levels of service to the public. It is not therefore an option that I consider is viable or would wish to consider.



The table below shows what each Council Tax band would pay for each of the options:-

	2017/18	Proposed 2018/19		Proposed 2018/19		Proposed 2018/19	
	Actual charge (£)	£8 increase (£)	Actual charge (£)	£10 increase (£)	Actual charge (£)	£12 Increase (£)	Actual charge (£)
Band A	127.99	5.33	133.32	6.67	134.65	8.00	135.99
Band B	149.32	6.22	155.54	7.78	157.10	9.33	158.65
Band C	170.65	7.11	177.76	8.89	179.54	10.67	181.32
Band D	191.98	8.00	199.98	10.00	201.98	12.00	203.98
Band E	234.64	9.78	244.42	12.22	246.86	14.67	249.31
Band F	277.30	11.56	288.86	14.44	291.75	17.33	294.64
Band G	319.97	13.33	333.30	16.67	336.63	20.00	339.97
Band H	383.96	16.00	399.96	20.00	403.96	24.00	407.96

You can check your council tax band at: www.gov.uk/council-tax-bands

Having considered the information from the PCC, which of the options would you support?



The consultation can be completed online at www.warwickshire-pcc.gov.uk/preceptsurvey

Alternatively, state your preference below (tick one):

- Option 1—a £12 increase (Band D)
- Option 2—a £10 increase (Band D)
- Option 3—a £8 increase (Band D)

Which district of Warwickshire do you live in?

- North Warwickshire
- Nuneaton & Bedworth
- Rugby
- Stratford-on-Avon
- Warwick

Any other comments

Please cut out and send your completed survey to: Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, 3 Northgate Street, Warwick, CV34 4SP to arrive no later than Friday 19 January 2018.

Council Tax and the Police Precept

Your Questions Answered

We know that Council Tax can be confusing—so here are some answers to frequently asked questions.

Q: What is Council Tax?

A: Council Tax is a local charge which pays towards the cost of services, including the police. The Council Tax year runs from 1 April to 31 March and how much you pay depends on which band your house is in. Each band is calculated as a proportion of band D.

You can check your band at: www.gov.uk/council-tax-bands

Q: What is the Police Precept?

A: This is the portion of a Council Tax bill that is put towards paying for policing services locally. On Council Tax notices it may be marked as being for the Police and Crime Commissioner, who sets the budget for the police. The majority of the precept is used directly for the Warwickshire Police budget, with a small portion used to pay for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

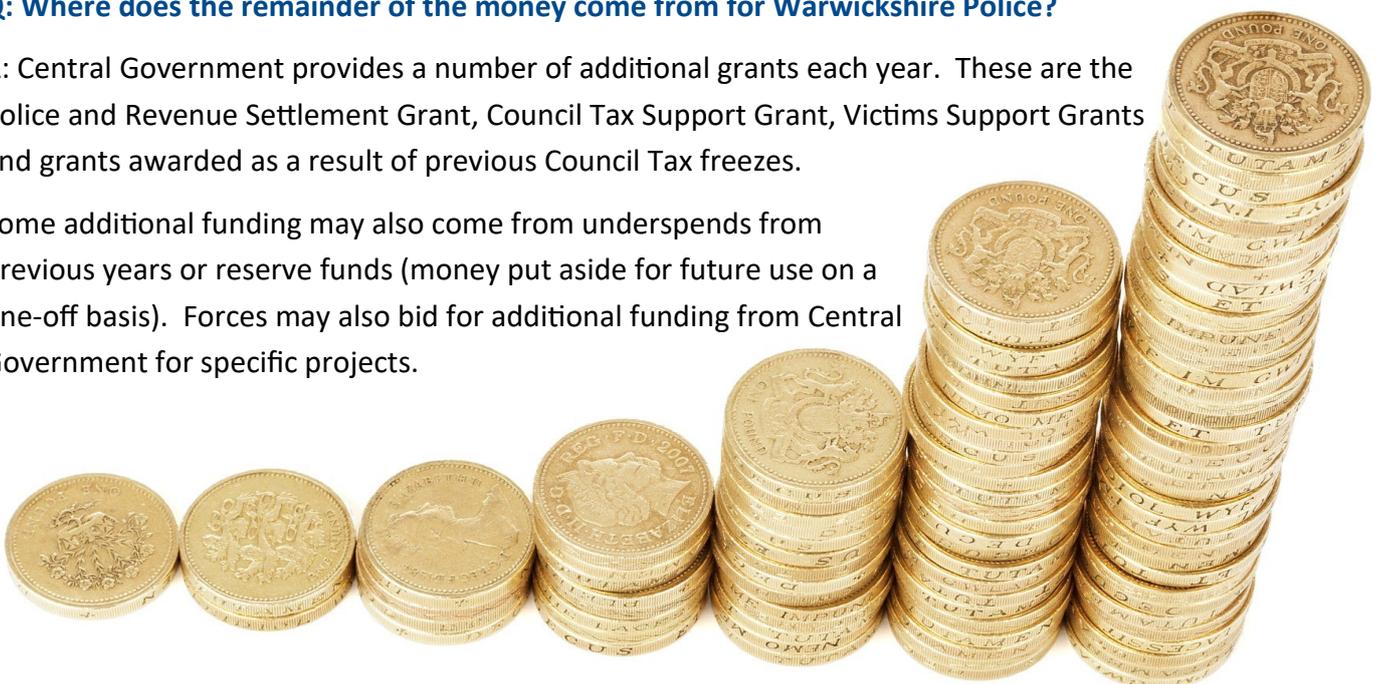
Q: How much money does the Police Precept contribute to Warwickshire Police each year?

A: The precept for 2018/19 will raise approximately £ 41.8 million – around 42% of the net funding for Warwickshire Police. This assumes the PCC increases the precept by the maximum of £12 for a Band D property. He is also consulting on smaller increases of £10 and £8.

Q: Where does the remainder of the money come from for Warwickshire Police?

A: Central Government provides a number of additional grants each year. These are the Police and Revenue Settlement Grant, Council Tax Support Grant, Victims Support Grants and grants awarded as a result of previous Council Tax freezes.

Some additional funding may also come from underspends from previous years or reserve funds (money put aside for future use on a one-off basis). Forces may also bid for additional funding from Central Government for specific projects.



Q: How much can the Commissioner alter the level of the Police Precept?

A: The Commissioner can vary the level of the Police Precept by up to £12 on a Band D property. In Warwickshire this equates to an increase of 6.25%. Any proposed change above this figure would require a local referendum to take place with voters backing the proposal before it could be enacted. The Commissioner is not proposing to go to referendum.

Q. If the Police Precept is increased by the maximum amount in Warwickshire for 2018/19, what will I pay?

A. If the maximum allowable increase is applied, the Police Precept for each property band will be as follows:

Band A: £135.99

Band B: £158.65

Band C: £181.32

Band D: £203.98

Band E: £249.31

Band F: £294.64

Band G: £339.97

Band H: £407.96

Q: How much of the money raised goes towards the Office of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner?

A: Around 2.7% of the total police budget is allocated to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The majority of this allocation (approximately £1.6 million) relates to the funding for victims' support services and the Commissioner's Grants Scheme, which supports projects in the community which deliver against the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan. The costs of running the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (c. £980,000) remain lower than those of the Police Authority which it replaced (when inflation is taken into account).

Q: Is police funding changing?

A: The Government is continuing to review changes to the Police Settlement Grant ahead of the next spending review, though this will not apply to the 2018/19 or 2019/20 budgets. The Commissioner will make representations at national, regional and local levels to ensure Warwickshire will receive a fair funding settlement in future years.

Q: How can I have my say?

A: The Commissioner is consulting the public on his proposals for the Police Precept for 2018/19. Visit www.warwickshire-pcc.gov.uk/preceptsurvey for more information and to have your say.

"A safer, more secure Warwickshire"

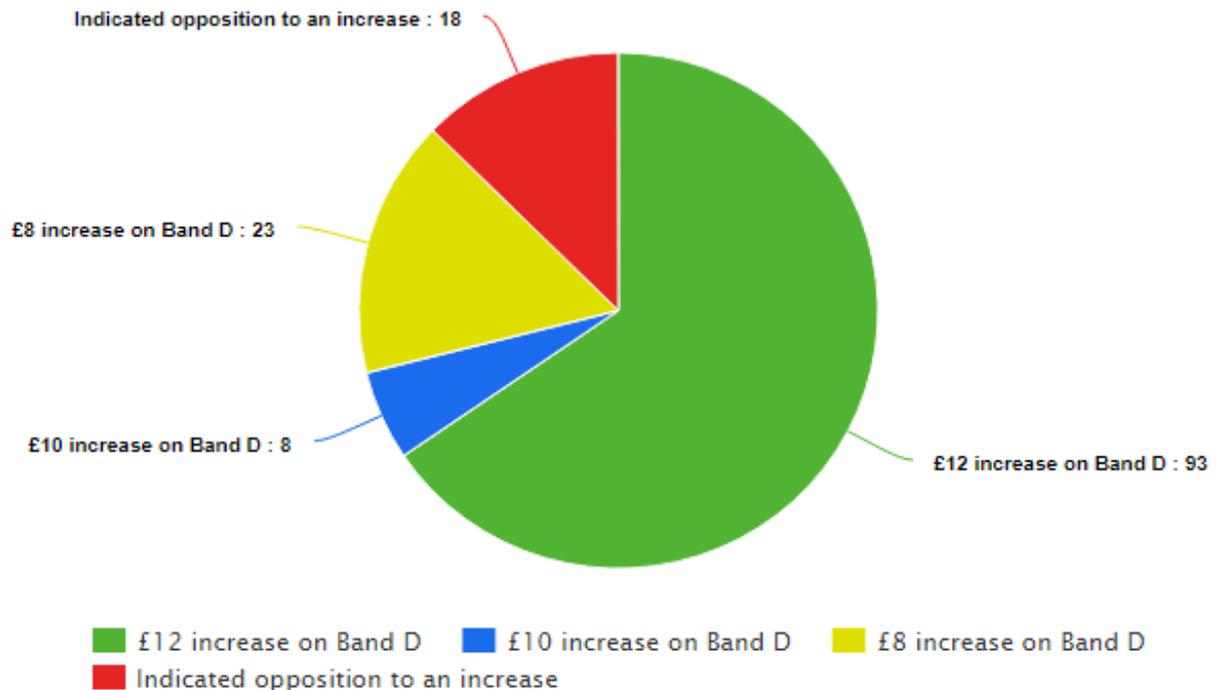


Philip Seccombe
**Police and Crime
Commissioner**
for Warwickshire

Appendix C: Statistical breakdown by district

Moderated responses to the three options (as per section 3.3) are provided below for each district within Warwickshire from those indicating they were residents of the county.

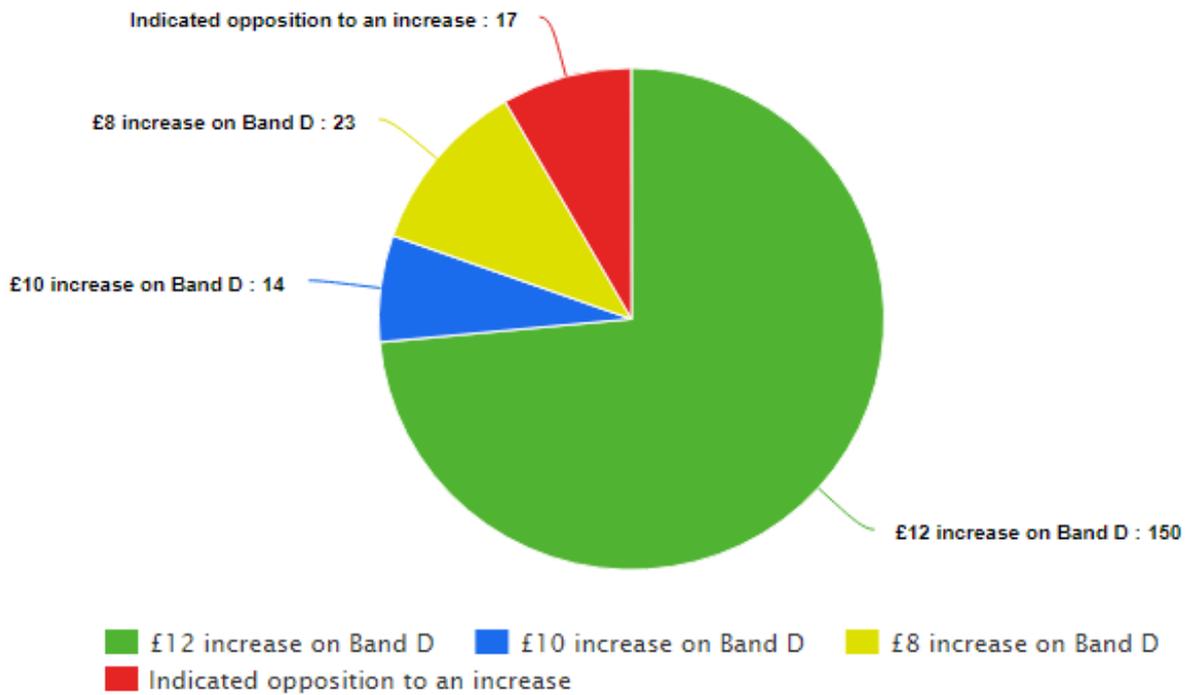
North Warwickshire



Answer choice	Result	
Favoured option 1 (£12 increase on Band D / 6.25% overall)	65.5%	93
Favoured option 2 (£10 increase on Band D / 5.21% overall)	5.6%	8
Favoured option 3 (£8 increase on Band D / 4.17% overall)	16.2%	23
Indicated opposition to an increase in comments	12.7%	18
		Total: 142*

* 14 respondents skipped this question

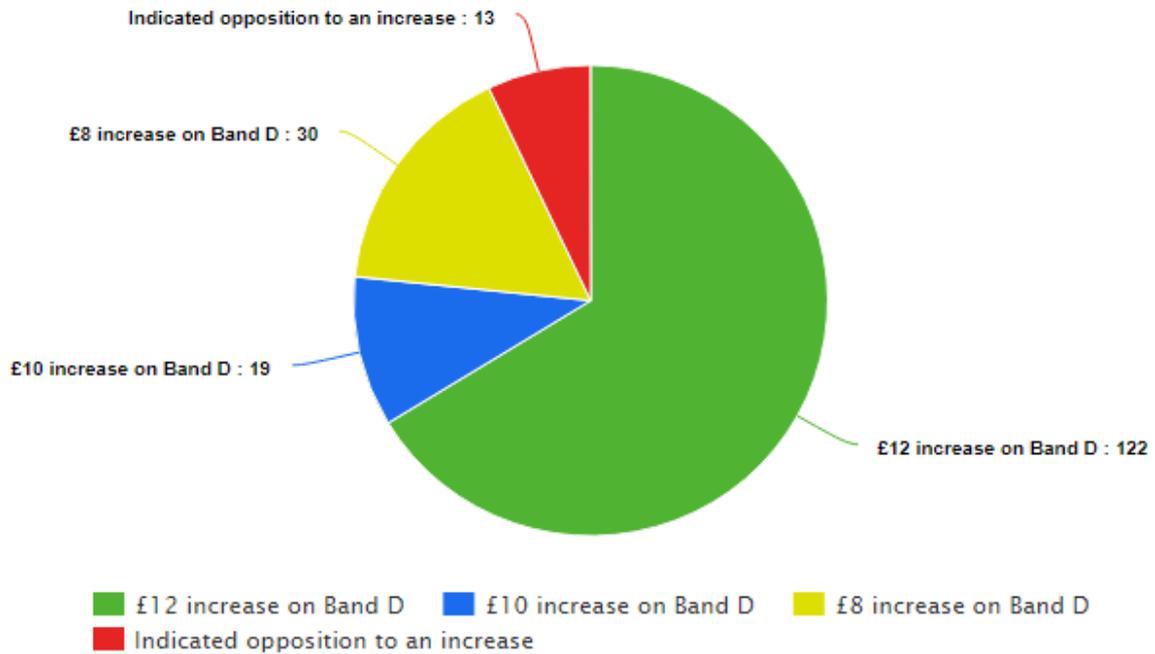
Nuneaton and Bedworth



Answer choice	Result	
Favoured option 1 (£12 increase on Band D / 6.25% overall)	73.5%	150
Favoured option 2 (£10 increase on Band D / 5.21% overall)	6.9%	14
Favoured option 3 (£8 increase on Band D / 4.17% overall)	11.3%	23
Indicated opposition to an increase in comments	8.3%	17
		Total: 204*

* 15 respondents skipped this question

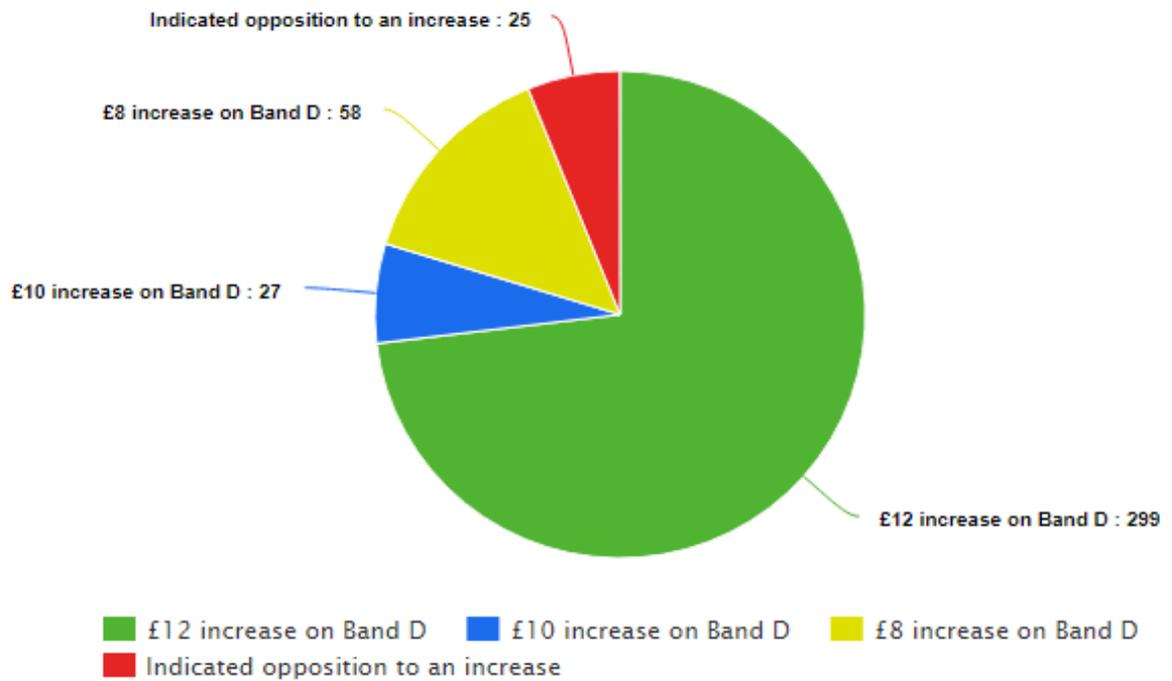
Rugby



Answer choice	Result	
Favoured option 1 (£12 increase on Band D / 6.25% overall)	66.3%	122
Favoured option 2 (£10 increase on Band D / 5.21% overall)	10.3%	19
Favoured option 3 (£8 increase on Band D / 4.17% overall)	16.38%	30
Indicated opposition to an increase in comments	7.1%	13
		Total: 200*

* 16 respondents skipped this question

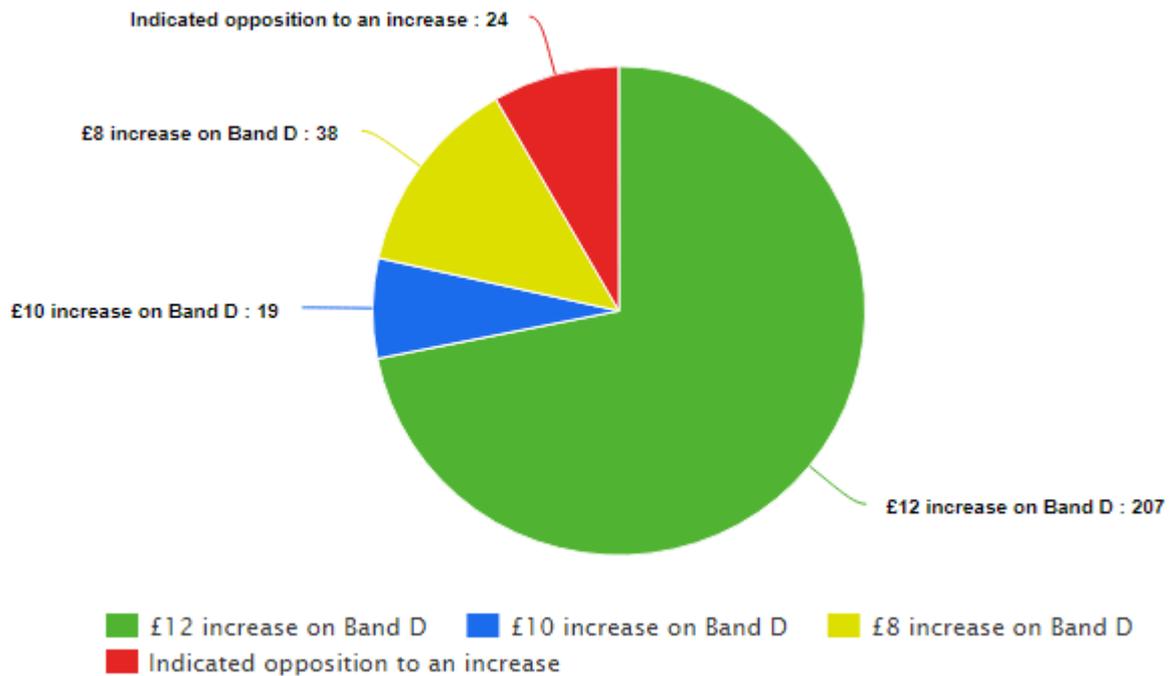
Stratford-on-Avon



Answer choice	Result	
Favoured option 1 (£12 increase on Band D / 6.25% overall)	73.1%	299
Favoured option 2 (£10 increase on Band D / 5.21% overall)	6.6%	27
Favoured option 3 (£8 increase on Band D / 4.17% overall)	14.2%	58
Indicated opposition to an increase in comments	6.1%	25
Total: 409*		

* 29 respondents skipped this question

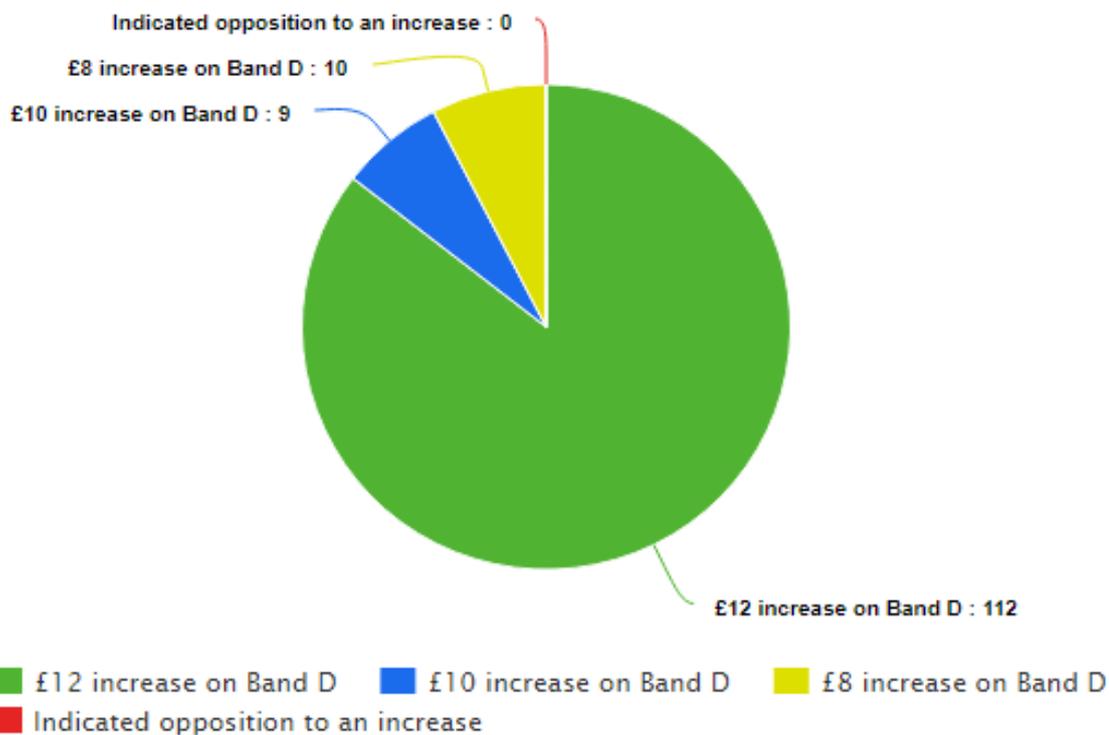
Warwick



Answer choice	Result	
Favoured option 1 (£12 increase on Band D / 6.25% overall)	71.9%	207
Favoured option 2 (£10 increase on Band D / 5.21% overall)	6.6%	19
Favoured option 3 (£8 increase on Band D / 4.17% overall)	13.2%	38
Indicated opposition to an increase in comments	8.3%	24
Total: 288*		

* 27 respondents skipped this question

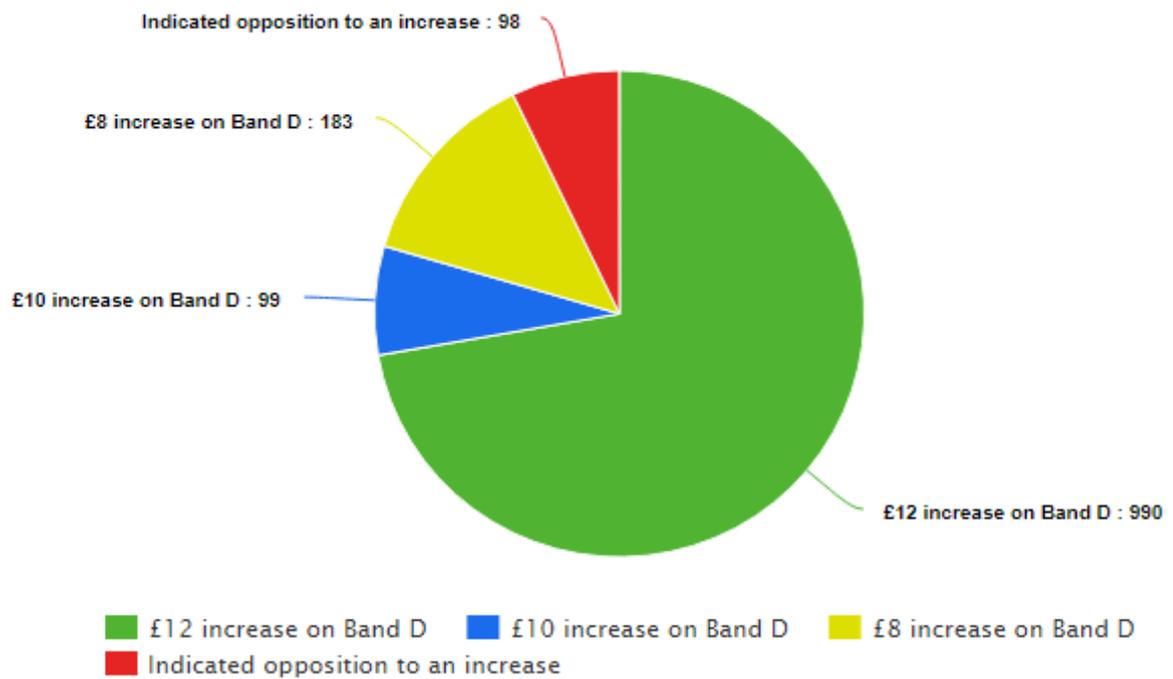
Non-Warwickshire residents



Answer choice	Result	
Favoured option 1 (£12 increase on Band D / 6.25% overall)		112
Favoured option 2 (£10 increase on Band D / 5.21% overall)		9
Favoured option 3 (£8 increase on Band D / 4.17% overall)		10
Indicated opposition to an increase in comments		0
		Total: 131*

* 21 respondents skipped this question

All results (residents and non-residents)



Answer choice	Result	
Favoured option 1 (£12 increase on Band D / 6.25% overall)	72.3%	990
Favoured option 2 (£10 increase on Band D / 5.21% overall)	7.2%	99
Favoured option 3 (£8 increase on Band D / 4.17% overall)	13.4%	183
Indicated opposition to an increase in comments	7.2%	98
Total: 1,370*		

* 131 respondents skipped this question