

Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel

19 March 2018

Report of the Budget Working Group

Recommendations

That the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel:

- 1) Considers the minutes of the Budget Working Group meeting in respect of the Quarter 3 Finance Report

1.0 Recent Activity of the Working Group

- 1.1 The Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel has agreed to delegate quarterly monitoring in respect of the Police and Crime Commissioner's budget to the Budget Working Group. A quarterly meeting of the Budget Working Group was held on 22 February 2018.
- 1.2 The Working Group heard that there had been a number of savings decisions in June 2017 which sought to militate against the expectation of a reduction in funding for 2018/19. The main decision was to freeze recruitment to allow for a natural decline in officer numbers as they voluntarily retire, in anticipation of a reduced pay budget in 2018/19. The result of this was an underspend forecasted at £2.079m on Police Officer pay.
- 1.3 The Working Group discussed Police Officer overtime, and requested further information on the reasons for overtime claims. For example, was overtime being paid to cover absences. There was concern that too much overtime had the potential to negatively affect staff wellbeing.
- 1.4 The issue of retaining income from speeding fines and speeding awareness courses was also raised, as it was at the Planning and Performance Working Group. The Group heard that new arrangements had been deployed for the retention and spending of this money on road safety measures. The group have asked for an update on this at their next meeting.
- 1.5 The Working Group also noted capital slippage in the delivery of ICT projects, the Operational Command Centre, SAABSafe and telephony. However, the amount of slippage was considered better than in previous years.
- 1.6 The Working Group also noted a decline in the uptake of pensions, particularly among new recruits.

2.0 Police Officer Numbers

- 2.1 The Working Group discussed the issue of police officer numbers, and the recent precept consultation. Many of the issues raised at the Panel meeting on 1 February 2018 were reiterated again here. The Group heard that the cost of employing an experienced officer or transferee was in the region of £54,000 a year, whereas new recruits costed in the region of £35,000. Because of this difference in pay, it made it difficult to accurately predict the number of officers that could be recruited on the basis of a £12 precept rise per Band D property.
- 2.2 The Working Group made several requests for clarity around Police Officer numbers. The group agreed to wait for the PCC's response to the Panel's letter, which they understood would answer many of their questions. The full details of the discussion on Police Officer numbers can be found in the attached minutes (Appendix A).

3.0 Future Meetings

- 3.1 The future meetings of the Budget Working Group are in the process of being scheduled.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Budget Working Group minutes, 22 February 2018.

Background Papers:

None.

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