

**THE OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
FOR DEVON, CORNWALL AND THE ISLES OF SCILLY**

Report and appendices – *OPEN*

**SAFE, RESILIENT AND CONNECTED
COMMUNITIES**

Police and Crime Panel Meeting
Friday 30th January 2026
Report of the Police and Crime Commissioner

**Proposed Precept, Budget and Medium Term Financial
Strategy (MTFS)
2026/27 – 2029/30**

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report considers the future four-year financial position for the Police and Crime Commissioner (the Commissioner) and the Chief Constable in delivering a sustainable budget for Devon and Cornwall Police. It presents the Commissioner's council tax precept recommendation for 2026/27 for consideration by the Police and Crime Panel.
- 1.2. My proposal is for a total precept increase of £15.00 for this year which equates to a council tax Band D of £303.20. This represents an increase of 5.20% in the Band D equivalent for the police element of the council tax for the 2026/27 financial year. Currently Band D households pay £28.82 a month over 10 months (if paid monthly) this will rise to £30.32, an increase of £1.50 per month.
- 1.3. Items for the Police and Crime Panel to note:
 - The Strategic Investment Plan attached as Appendix 3.
 - The Reserves Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy and the Capital Strategy are published online to ensure transparency.
 - The Chief Constable's resources summary letter detailing his operational policing requirements for the coming year as Appendix 2.

- 1.4. The ongoing challenging national economic picture is impacting on policing with significant increases in areas such as nationally agreed pay awards and inflation rates, although now falling, continue to be above the government target of 2%. This has been recognised by the government who have given all Police and Crime Commissioners the flexibility to increase the council tax precept by up to a maximum of £15 for the coming year. By way of example some local councils can increase their precepts up to 4.99% for 2026/27. The Home Office expectation is that the combination of the increase in grant funding and the increased flexibility provided for the precept will cover the inflationary increases to the overall budget requirement. The increase in funding that I intend to make available to the Chief Constable through the precept (as outlined in the MTFS) is specifically to protect policing services, the police officer uplift programme and enable it to be sustained for the long term and ensure that victims and those individuals in the care of policing are appropriately supported. This increase will also allow for some modest investment in services with a focus on improving public confidence. I know from the public feedback I receive that the visibility of policing and public confidence in policing is vitally important and this budget proposal will focus on this element. The letter from the Chief Constable (attached as Appendix 2) sets his proposals for the coming year.
- 1.5. I have not requested the full amount of the council tax increase every year. Since my first budget in 2017/18, and including my current proposals, I have maximised the increase six out of ten times. As a major preceptor, when approached by billing authorities, I was also happy to agree the changes proposed to the additional support being provided to families and individuals.
- 1.6. The Police and Crime Plan is a requirement of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (PRSR). The new Police and Crime Plan was brought to the panel for feedback in November 2024 and with the inclusion of the recommendations from this Panel has now been published. The Plan has four priority crime areas: anti-social behaviour, alcohol and drugs, theft, and serious violence. In addition, there is a focus on police performance and victim care. The strategy used to produce this MTFS is my Police and Crime Plan for 2025-2029 which provides continuity from my previous approach 'Safe, resilient, connected communities where everyone plays their part'.
- 1.7. This report has been produced in consultation with the Chief Constable, Mr James Vaughan QPM.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Police and Crime Panel accept the council tax precept proposal and do not exercise a veto.

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW BY THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

3. Introduction

- 3.1. This is the second budget of my current term of office having been elected by the people of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly for a third consecutive term. This budget has been developed in consultation with the Chief Constable and his operating requirements along with my declared priorities in my new Police and Crime Plan in the challenging circumstances details above.
- 3.2. As the voice of the public in policing I am acutely aware of the vital role that policing plays to keep our communities safe and the confidence the public expect to have to give the police their legitimacy. Policing is a universal service, but threats often come from outside the UK and are felt locally in our communities, often manifesting as community tensions in some areas due to divided views. There are system wide challenges in providing communities with the level of service that they deserve. Delays across criminal justice agencies are significant and our prisons are overcrowded so new and innovative solutions to prevent crime and reduce reoffending are more important than ever.
- 3.3. Police Officer numbers remain at their highest number ever at 3,610. However, this level of increase and grant requirements from the government on managing these numbers brings huge challenges as well as huge opportunities. Over a third of police officers in Devon and Cornwall Police now have less than three years' service and it will still take time to reestablish the skills and capabilities on the front line which have been eroded. However, this investment has enabled the Chief Constable to return 121 experienced officers to front line duties through Op Resolve which this Panel was briefed on in November 2025.
- 3.4. The new government's announcement on an ambitious programme of reform to policing was unveiled by the Home Secretary in November 2024. Little was made public until November 2025 when a further promise of a White Paper was announced by the new Home Secretary. The way in which the government announced the abolition of all Police and Crime Commissioners in favour of Mayoral models was unexpected and professionally discourteous. This announcement was entirely politically driven, and I wish to put on record my thanks to the OPCC team of staff who reacted so professionally to being told this news with less than an hours' notice of a public announcement in the House of Commons.

4. Strong and stable leadership and governance leading to success in 2025/26

- 4.1 Mr Vaughan's appointment as Chief Constable in December 2024 has brought strong, stable and consistent leadership to Devon and Cornwall Police.
- 4.2 As previously reported to this Panel, Devon and Cornwall Police's call handling has significantly improved over the past 18 months and sustained performance continues to be evident. In the 12 months to November 2025, Devon and Cornwall Police placed 32nd of all police forces in the 999 national league table, with 90.4% of all emergency calls answered in the 10-second target. The average wait time for a 101 call was 3 minutes and 52 seconds and 87.7% of calls were answered within 10 minutes. 101 call abandonment has decreased significantly, currently at 11.2% (12 months to November 2025) compared to 17.8% the previous year.

- 4.3 Over the last year the following successes have been achieved:
- Value for money green light from our external auditors.
 - The force has been removed from the enhanced monitoring process known as “engage”.
 - The planned savings of £2.2 Million have been achieved through a variety of workforce mix initiatives and a further £2.8M has been found from non-pay budgets as a result of changes to contracts, better procurement and spend control.
 - Phase 1 of intense budget scrutiny through Priority Based Budgeting process has been completed and overall benefit efficiencies to Devon and Cornwall of £6.6 Million have been identified.
 - Costs of the previously unfunded nationally agreed pay award have been absorbed – this exceeded the 2.8% predicted in the MTFS as a 4.2% increase was agreed.
 - Investment has been made in PIP2 investigators, Professional Standards Department and legal services.
 - The capital programme has identified the compliance works necessary for custody centres and completion of improvement schemes in Cambourne, Bodmin, Ilfracombe, Torquay, Exeter (Middlemoor) and Exmouth.
 - This year we opened a further three Police Enquiry Offices at Liskeard, Ivybridge and Tavistock. Unfortunately, we were unable to open Exeter City Centre in the council building. There are no new openings of PEOs planned for 2026/27.
- 4.4 Mid-year the former Chief Constable Will Kerr retired from Devon and Cornwall Police, but the misconduct investigations continue by the IOPC. I am unable to confirm how long these will continue as these matters are outside of my control. I have again written to the IOPC urging a resolution to this matter.
- 4.5 Chief Constable Vaughan’s letter at Appendix 2 is clear that a precept increase of £15 is the required threshold for his operational policing budget and included in this letter is a more detailed breakdown of where this money will be allocated. These proposals are essential to maintain policing services to our public and prevent a decline. As you will see that regardless of prudence and robust budget management in previous years there are unavoidable cost pressures, including the nationally agreed pay awards of the MTFS period, incremental costs for police officers in their first few years of service; unfunded costs arising from central funding not covering the full costs of the required activity (including the full year impact of the Neighbourhood Policing Grant and unfunded pay awards); contractual inflation, business rate increase and interest rate changes. The proposals do not include investment but matters which are essential to stabilise the current policing. I have worked with the Chief Constable to explore all alternative options to the maximum increase and at this stage I cannot find any.
- 4.6 Although we have welcomed additional government funding under the Neighbourhood Policing Grant which has enabled 49 police officers and 51 new PCSOs to be funded this is short term funding with a complex formula of penalties attached which could drive perverse behaviours. To mitigate this and ensure that as many warranted officers are returned to the front line as possible the Chief Constable has embarked on a challenging programme called Op Resolve which this Panel were briefed on at their November meeting.
- 4.7 At a Police and Crime Panel meeting in July 2025 I prepared a report detailing the costs of

the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the target set for the costs to be no more than 0.65% of the Policing Budget. At the time there were costs slightly in excess of this target due to unfunded additional burdens created by the new police misconduct processes set out by government guidance. I am pleased to be able to inform this panel that these have now been realigned and the costs of my office are back to the 0.64% target and that there has been an overall reduction in headcount to 31FTE. This includes not recruiting a Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner. In addition, the budget for providing services through policing to communities has been reviewed and adjusted bringing an overall reduction of a further £973k costs to the OPCC. In addition, where appropriate services have been transferred to the force from the OPCC, these include the Victim Care Unit, ASB lawyers and the Police Museum Grant.

- 4.8 Last year Devon and Cornwall Police benefited from an uplift in funding from second homes council tax charged levied on second homes. Prudent estimates were made then, which now mean that policing continues to benefit from this additional finance and this has been already factored into the calculations.
- 4.9 Other successes of previous years have been highlighted to you in detail in my annual reports (most recently in July 2025).

5 Victim Services

- 5.1 The government has confirmed the amount of victims funding that my office receives to support Devon and Cornwall victims. This has been confirmed for two years with a 2% uplift; however, this is against the backdrop of previous cuts in this budget. So much uncertainty has prompted a different approach for 2026/27 and beyond from my office with an ongoing review of all our financial commitments underway and a move away from a Commissioning Intentions Plan towards a Strategic Investment Plan. There were also consequential issues from the bringing back of a victim's contract in house during the summer due to overall underperformance compared to expectations. Whilst this has resulted in a saving it also had positive implications for how the multiplicity of grant funding is now managed.

6 Ring Fenced Grants Received

- 6.1 I have also delivered an additional 12 month hotspot patrol programme to target antisocial behaviour (ASB) and Serious Violence through a £1m investment from the Home Office. The funding criteria allowed for force areas to use the full range of uniformed visible presence available in their area to conduct patrols in hotspots, for example, police officers, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), local authority community safety wardens, Business Improvement District (BID) patrol staff, and street marshals.
- 6.2 The funding came with strict criteria to ensure the hotspot activity was maximised to have the greatest impact in local areas and achieve tangible reductions in ASB and Serious Violence, and positive outcomes for those communities that were experiencing the most harm.
- 6.3 This Home Office funding was supplemented by a further investment of £300,000 from my own budget to maximise the number of partner patrols through street marshals across Devon and Cornwall, in addition to the extra police patrol hours.
- 6.4 Devon and Cornwall communities have benefited from Hotspot Policing which is now being delivered in 15 towns and cities across Devon and Cornwall. Police and street marshals are working together to tackle antisocial behaviour (ASB) and serious violence. This Panel received a detailed report on the benefits of this approach in Autumn 2024. These targeted patrols have had a real impact particularly on police visibility.

- 6.5 The road safety partnership, Vision Zero South West, is a partnership across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The OPCC serves as the lead financial entity for the collaboration. The main funding generated relates to the income from Speed Awareness Courses. This net income, after the costs of administration of the speeding courses and penalties have been deducted, must be used on road safety. Any unspent net income is transferred to a ringfenced reserve and used for road safety purposes e.g. replacement cameras, prevention initiatives etc.

A board oversees the work of the partnership and receives regular financial updates and approves the business plan. For 2026/27 the estimated plan is shown in the table below.

Vision Zero South West	
	2026/27 £k
Income	9,600
Staffing	5,476
Running Costs	1,481
Core Costs	1,518
Surplus	1,125
Reserve	
Opening Balance	1,535
Surplus	1,125
Expenditure	- 1,859
Closing Balance	801

The main elements of the expenditure from the reserves covers vehicle investment, replacement and upgrades to the camera equipment, education and training activities, awareness campaigns and future initiatives.

7 Police and Crime Plan priorities

- 7.1 I keep members of this panel updated on progress against the Police and Crime Plan through regular updates and performance reports. However, the following are a few highlights of the past year which have been pivotal in moving on these agenda and in particular addressing incidents of reducing repeat victims, repeat offenders and repeat locations.

7.2 **Anti-social behaviour: Street Focus Camborne**

Street Focus is a partnership initiative led by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner in collaboration with Devon & Cornwall Police, local authorities and other partners to improve safety and address issues such as antisocial behaviour in town and city centres. It started in Torquay in July 2024, and the focus is now Camborne to support work already underway to improve safety in the town. The Torquay Street Focus programme has been nominated for a national ASB award.

In August 2025, I met with police and local leaders in Camborne to observe the ongoing collaborative work which can be built on during the next stage of the Street Focus project. The visit highlighted key initiatives tackling antisocial behaviour such as the PubWatch scheme, which enables hospitality services to work together to reduce problems in and around their premises.

My office and Camborne Town Council have jointly funded a local ASB officer, who holds Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) accreditation and intervenes early in emerging cases of antisocial behaviour including street drinking. Camborne is entering its second year as one of the areas receiving additional funding to support high-visibility hotspot policing patrols and is also an area where Street Marshals are part funded by the Commissioner's office.

The police station's £6m investment to upgrade has been completed and a newly refurbished PEO is now open.

7.3 **ASB/Theft**

Night Buses

Due to the success of the pilot schemes of Night Buses across the two counties during 2025/26, these will continue and be expanded for 2026/27. I will be funding the continuation of the Saturday night buses, to run throughout 2026 until 31st March 2027 including New Year's Eve, and a total of 9 services will be operational from midnight to 4am in the following areas:

- 2 Barnstaple services – Bideford and Ilfracombe
- 4 Exeter services – Cullompton/Tiverton, Crediton, Exmouth and a new service in Cranbrook replacing the Dawlish service
- 2 Plymouth services – Tavistock and Saltash
- 1 Torquay service – Paignton/Brixham

A new Cranbrook service has started in January 2026 and replace the Dawlish night bus which consistently had low passenger numbers throughout 2025. Passengers will be able to access the night bus for just £3 per journey.

A new Cornwall night bus scheme is currently being explored as the previous transport provider First Bus has recently decided to stop operating a bus service in Cornwall.

Business Crime Reporting Tool

The OPCC office continues to support the roll-out of UKPAC as an easy way for businesses to work in partnership with the police to reduce retail crime, ASB and theft. The Commissioner is funding the first year of membership to UKPAC (or to PARC in Plymouth) to encourage take up of the scheme. In November, the Commissioner and team attended a UKPAC meeting in Newton Abbot to inform local business of the benefits of the reporting system. The response was enthusiastic, and it is hoped the introduction of UKPAC will make a real difference in the town. Over 300 businesses across the force area, including in Torquay, Paignton, Brixham, North Devon, and Cornwall have already signed up with 8 prolific offenders being convicted. The online portal, also available as a smartphone app, enables traders to easily report crimes and share intelligence, empowering communities to work together against persistent and repeat offenders. Police can instantly access the information to build stronger evidence files, increasing the chances of successful prosecutions and reducing crime on the high street. I have funded the first year of the membership free for any business who want to sign up.

7.4 **Serious Violence including violence against women and girls**

In July 2025 I hosted a disruptive Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) event which invited practitioners and other interested parties to share their ideas with me about how they could do

more to disrupt and combat violence against women and girls. I also opened up this call for ideas to the public. Since that time, we have been capturing and refining those ideas and those of the public to determine which of the opportunities present us with the greatest opportunity for change across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

There are two “big ideas” which are progressing – male allyship and a business accreditation scheme. Within both of these we are making connections between similar and associated schemes to formulate our final approach.

7.5 As you know every year the Commissioner sponsors the Combating Violence Against Women and Girls Award as part of the Westcountry Women’s Awards, and we were overwhelmed with entries in this category this year. There were so many worthy nominees, and we had a challenging time narrowing this down to four finalists. This year’s winner however was Becca Hewitt Strategy and Policy Manager and chair of South Devon and Dartmoor Community Safety Partnership (CSP) for all her commitment to introducing innovative approaches to protect women and girls.

7.6 In 2026/27 I am allocating a further £300k to address these issues and progress the disruptive approach.

7.7 **Drugs and Alcohol**

Operation Scorpion remains a key programme of coordinated delivery in the fight against drugs in Devon and Cornwall, and across the South West, through the persistent combined efforts of Police and Crime Commissioners and police forces in unity with vital partners.

I have always been clear that drugs will not be tolerated in our region and issues can only be tackled by disrupting organised criminal groups, reducing supply and addicts, delivering effective treatment, and protecting young people from exploitation.

Over the last year three weeks of coordinated activities under the Op Scorpion approach will have been delivered with suspected drug dealers apprehended, drugs and weapons seized, along with cash, and vulnerable people, including children being safeguarded.

In the most recent activities, all five police forces and Police and Crime Commissioners worked together with British Transport Police and South West Regional Organised Crime Unit (SW ROCU) to eradicate drugs. This included a focus on child criminal exploitation with an awareness campaign on TikTok and Snapchat to specifically target young people and educate them about how to spot the signs and where to get help and support.

8 **Scrutiny**

8.1 A core part of my role is holding the Chief Constable to account and although there are many ways in which this occurs one of those ways is through a formal scrutiny process. This year I introduced a new formal approach to scrutiny in the form of the Commissioners Accountability Board (CAB). This formal monthly meeting allows detailed discussions about policing performance where I formally record and publicise whether or not I am assured by the information I am provided with. All these outcome reports are available on the OPCC website.

8.2 In addition formal scrutiny has also been undertaken. This year there have been numerous scrutiny reports.

- Welfare and legal services in custody centres
 - Assault on emergency workers (adults)
 - File quality and timeliness
 - Adult out of court scrutiny – domestic abuse
 - Adult out of court scrutiny – stalking and harassment
 - Adult out of court scrutiny – criminal damage
 - Child out of court scrutiny – sexual offences
 - Child out of court scrutiny – domestic abuse
 - Child out of court scrutiny – drugs
 - Victim Codes of Practice – stalking and harassment
 - Victim Codes of Practice – assault on emergency workers
 - Victim Codes of Practice – child victims of child offenders
- 8.3 I also continue to operate my Independent Custody Visitors Scheme. Their support is a very valuable insight into to detainees' welfare whilst they are detained in one of our six custody centres across Devon and Cornwall. A recent recruitment exercise has doubled the number of ICVs available to 30 across the two counties. Further information on this scheme is available in my annual report.
- 8.4 Police misconduct process are an integral part of maintaining public confidence and legitimacy in policing. For the year 2025 19 misconduct panels have been held, and my team have provided the coordination of Legally Qualified Chairs (LQCs) and (Independent Panel Members (IPM) to all these panels. The changes to the processes have seen a significant increase in the number of misconduct processes which are now required resulting in an increase in cost both to the Force and to the OPCC compared to two years ago. These additional costs have been built into the budget.

9 Reserves

- 9.1 Earmarked reserves have reduced over my time in office from £54.1m to an estimated balance at the end of 2025/26 of £16.3m (excluding the partnership reserve for Vision Zero South West). It was, and remains, my conscious decision to use those reserves to maximise funding to policing. For this MTFS we may be using reserves to smooth the phasing of the savings required to maintain a balanced budget. Full details of the reserves are contained in Appendix 1.
- 9.2 The MTFS has been produced covering a four-year period to provide assurance that my proposals are robust and sustainable. To limit the amount of technical detail within this report, the appendices contain more information on the budget requirement; the proposed savings to be made; the reserves; and detailed council tax changes within bands.

Alison Hernandez
Police and Crime Commissioner
Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly
January 2026

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTFS) AND PRECEPT PROPOSALS

1. Introduction

1.1. This report will cover the revenue and capital budgets for 2026/27 together with the projections for 2027/28 to 2029/30. The specific areas that will be covered are the:

- National context.
- Local and regional context and funding levels.
- Council tax levels and assumptions.
- Revenue expenditure.
- Capital programme.
- Reserves.
- Risks.

2. National Context

- 2.1. On 11th June 2025 the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced the outcome of the Spending Review 2025 (SR2025). The SR2025 sets out revenue funding allocations for each Government department over the next three years (2026/27 to 2028/29). According to SR2025, police spending power will increase by an average of 2.3% per year (2023/24 to 2028/29), in real terms over the SR period. This funding will be used to support frontline policing levels and help restore public confidence. This reflects the Government's "Plan for Change" commitment to put an additional 13,000 police officers, PCSOs and special constables in neighbourhood policing roles.
- 2.2. The Bank of England base rate is currently 3.75%, a decrease of 1.00% since this time last year when rates were 4.75%. It is anticipated that this will decrease further during 2026.
- 2.3. The provisional Police Settlement was published on 18th December 2025. Only minimal detail was given with only the total level of grant and the total anticipated income from council tax being provided. For Police and Crime Commissioners in England the council tax referendum threshold will be £15 for a band D property. The assumptions on the council tax income are based on a council tax base growth of 0.9% and the maximum council tax increase being utilised by all Commissioners. Additionally, the government states that they will consider requests for limited flexibility on the police precept referendum principles where the Police and Crime Commissioners view is that the additional increase is critical to maintaining their financial sustainability of the organisation. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The deadline for this submission was 6th January 2026. The Commissioner has not pursued a request for this additional flexibility.
- 2.4. On 16th January the Home Office confirmed that a further £50m would be made available to support the neighbourhood policing objectives. This funding is to enable 4,750 additional policing roles in neighbourhood by 31st March 2027. The detail of the grant criteria and conditions will not be available until late January.

- 2.5. The Government is set to publish a Police Reform White Paper in early 2026 which will set out a vision to bring policing into the modern age with technology, innovation and structure needed to ensure policing can focus on the crimes that matter to the public and to drive out waste and inefficiency. It is not known whether funding will be provided to support any additional requirements of the White Paper.
- 2.6. The overall funding package provides additional funding of £796.1m for 2026/27. This includes additional government grant of £432.1m and increased council tax income of £364m. This level of investment assumes that all Commissioners will maximise the stated council tax flexibility of £15. The provisional settlement data only includes territorial policing funding and the total level of grant and anticipated council tax income and provides no detail of the breakdown of the overall policing allocation. The further breakdown required, and still outstanding, is outlined below:-
- The breakdown between core grant and specific grant. This will ensure we can correctly calculate the Net Revenue Expenditure (NRE). This will also provide detail on what grants remain specific and therefore are only based on a one year funding allocation.
 - The impact of any grant moved from specific to core. The impact will be the difference in funding based on an allocation by (for example) police officer numbers or an allocation based on the funding formula percentages. This could have a significant impact.
 - The top-slice of the police funding to support wider national issues.
 - Notification of the support for initiatives which include Hotspot Policing etc.
 - Further breakdown was received on 16th January 2026 regarding the Neighbourhood Policing Grant. Responses were invited by 20th January 2026. An additional £50m has been provided for the second year to increase neighbourhood officers (both police officers and PCSO's) by a further 1,750. Taking the growth to 4,750 fte by the end of March 2027. There is no detail on the criteria or grant conditions.
- 2.7. The settlement represents an average cash increase in total funding for England and Wales of 4.5% between 2025/26 and 2026/27. This settlement is based on national data which includes a council tax base increase of 0.9% and the maximum increase of £15 for a Band D equivalent property. The summary shows that the majority percentage increase is assumed to be from the council tax precept and therefore funded by local taxation not by central government.

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	Variation	
			£m	%
Grant (includes core and specific)	11,507.8	11,939.9	432.1	3.8%
Precept	6,057.6	6,421.6	364.0	6.0%
Overall Provisional Settlement Increase	17,565.4	18,361.5	796.1	4.5%

- 2.8. As in previous years the overall funding available to the police will be top sliced for central initiatives. However, this information has not been provided in the provisional settlement. The amount top-sliced in 2025/26 was £914.3m, 4.7% of the total funding (including precept assumptions) available to policing.

2.9. Planning for 2026/27 and beyond is therefore challenging. There is significant activity which will impact on this planning:

- Policing Reform and the recent announcement to abolish Police and Crime Commissioners from May 2028.
- The impact of the Policing Reform White Paper due to be published early in 2026.
- The economic impact of the inflationary changes. Inflation is not reducing as quickly as expected with the Bank of England base rate also staying at a higher level than was expected this time last year.
- The uncertainty of whether the anticipated review of the funding formula will progress. The work in this area has paused since the election of the current government.
- The long-term funding plans for the uplift in police officers as they progress through incremental scale.
- Centrally driven ICT programmes such as the replacement of Airwave and the Police National Computer.

2.10. There are areas, outside the level of central government grant, that are sensitive to changes in the wider economy. These are:

- The impact of the higher than anticipated inflation rates currently being experienced especially regarding pay related costs.
- The impact of supply chain problems and delays.
- The interest earned on the reserves which is linked to the bank base rate. These budgeted income levels have been reduced for 2026/27 to reflect the decrease in the bank base rate and the investment interest to be earned on the balances and reserves.
- The change in the value of sterling against the Euro and the Dollar can lead to some additional inflationary costs. As nearly 85% of the MTFs budget costs are employment related these costs are relatively protected from this variable. The most significant impact is likely to be on fuel and computer products.

3. Local and Regional Context and Funding Levels

3.1. The local impact of the provisional settlement will provide increased funding for Devon and Cornwall and is shown in Table 2 below. This shows that overall, based on the provisional settlement data, the level of funding has increased by 4.2%, which is below the national average of 4.5%. The overall grant has increased by 2.8%, which is 1% lower than the national average of 3.8%. Due to the lack of data, it is unclear why the overall grant is nearly a third less than the national average.

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	Variation	
			£m	%
Grant (includes core and specific)	271.9	279.4	7.5	2.8%
Precept	192.2	204.1	11.9	6.2%
Overall Provisional Settlement Increase	464.1	483.5	19.4	4.2%

- 3.2. The level of funding to support the net revenue budget is shown in Table 3 below and is adjusted for the local data on council tax. There is limited data relating to the split between core grant and specific grant so to prepare a MTF5 it has been assumed that those specific grants not outlined have remained the same as in 2025/26. This shows a slightly worse overall increase in funding of 4.1% when adjusted for the local council tax impact.

	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	Variation	
			£m	%
Core Grant	238.2	255.0		
Specific Grant	33.7	24.4		
	271.9	279.4	7.5	2.8%
Council Tax	192.2	204.7		
Council Tax Surplus	2.6	1.8		
	194.8	206.5	11.7	6.0%
Overall Funding	466.7	485.9	19.2	4.1%

- 3.3. In 2025/26 a pay award of 4.2% was nationally agreed for police officers and police staff. However, the pay award for senior staff and officers, and Police and Crime Commissioners has still yet to agreed. Additional funding was provided by the Home Office to support 1.4% of this increase for the period 1st September 2025 to 31 March 2026. This additional grant was allocated based on the proportions of the funding formula. Allocation based on this method is detrimental to Devon and Cornwall as it sees the amount allocated being 2.35% rather than 2.6% if the net revenue budget data were used. However, this was one off funding and has not been provided for in the provisional settlement, therefore an additional increase in the pay budget of 1.4% is required from 1st April 2026 before any pay award is agreed for 1st September 2026.
- 3.4. There are various aspects of the council tax funding that impact on the revenue available to the Commissioner.
- The Council Tax Base

This covers the number of chargeable Band D equivalent properties. For 2026/27 this is the second year that all collecting authorities across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly have opted to charge 200% of the council tax charge for second homes. Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly are one of the most significantly impacted by this change. The impact of the number of second homes for 2026/27 across the whole area has not significantly reduced overall. This effectively increases the council

tax base and provides additional revenue for all precepting authorities across the area.

- The increase in the council tax base is 1.22%, raising an additional £2.5m which is £1.5m higher than anticipated.
 - The change in the council tax base is a combination of increased properties, the increase from the inclusion of second homes at 200% and any change in the number of council tax payers requiring support with their bills. Various collecting authorities consulted all major preceptors regarding a change to the council tax support being provided to individual bill payers. The changes mean that those cohorts in some authorities will be able to claim an increased level of support for the council tax liability. The level of support will depend on the individual circumstances. The Commissioner confirmed support for the changes.
 - The payments received in 2025/26 for council tax has been higher than anticipated. Due to the potential volatility with the first year of the additional second homes charge, it was estimated there would be no surplus to be returned to the Commissioner. However, it is anticipated that this will now be a surplus of £1.8m. However, this is £778k lower than the surplus for 2025/26. The surplus or deficit for each council area is calculated and set by the individual collecting authorities.
 - The proposed increase to the Band D precept by £15.00 for policing equates to an increase of 5.20% on the council tax. This increase generates funding of £10.0m and when combined with the changes to the council tax base and overall surplus/deficit it is anticipated to increase council tax funding for policing by £11.7m.
- 3.5. At the time of writing this report the allocations to individual Commissioners for the funding for counter-terrorism policing have not been announced. However, based on previous years we are not anticipating there will be any impact on the Net Revenue Budget of the funding for Devon and Cornwall.
- 3.6. The pay award is the most significant inflationary pressure on the budget with the overall pay budgets being 87% of gross expenditure for 2026/27. The pay award is nationally agreed and for 2025/26 saw an increase of 4.2%, this was significantly higher than the estimate of 2.8%. Additional funding of 1.4% was provided by the Home Office to partially cover the gap between local estimates and the nationally agreed pay award. However, this funding was a “one-off” and not provided in 2026/27. An assumption of 3% has been included for 2026/27 which is comparable across England and Wales.
- 3.7. Any changes to the revenue generated from the final declared council tax surpluses or council tax base changes will be dealt with by way of a transfer either to or from reserves.
- 3.8. The overall level of funding, including increases to specific grants, is set to increase by 4.1%. The table below shows the major changes to the budgets outlining the pressures and additional funding available.
- 3.9. The main aspects affecting the budget changes relates to pay increases. The underlying increase in the pay award for 2025/26 is 1.4%, the pay award assumption for 2025/26 is 3% from 1st September 2026 (annual equivalent for 2026/27 of 1.75%) and the cost of increments equate to an annual increase of 1.4%. When compared to an overall funding increase of 3.8% this immediately indicates a 0.75% gap for the year.

Summary	2026/27	
	£m	£m
Additional Funding		
Core Grant and Council Tax	19.2	
Specific Grant	-	19.2
Increases		
Additional Investments	3.1	
Regional Growth	0.7	3.8
Unavoidable Changes		
Pay Award Inflation	15.8	
Incremental increases	6.0	
Other Pay Changes	1.5	
Staff Pension Fund Triennial revaluation impact	- 3.2	
Neighbourhood Policing - additional	0.5	
Inflation	2.2	
Non Pay Costs	1.4	
Capital Funding	1.4	25.6
Investment		
Change in the use of Reserves		- 0.7
Investment Interest		0.6
Increased Income		- 0.2
Savings		- 9.9
		0.0

3.10. The key financial information relating to the four-year budget requirement and the precept increase is shown in Appendix 1. The level of council tax funding equates to 42.5% of the net revenue budget (inc specific grants) for 2026/27 which is a 0.8% increase compared with 2025/26 figure of 41.7%.

4. Setting the Council Tax

4.1. Government guidelines have set the maximum amount that the council tax can be increased, without triggering a referendum, at £15 (5.20%) for a band D equivalent property. This is an additional £1 above our original assumption. The proposed increase from the Commissioner will utilise the full flexibility assumed by the government. The budget forecasts contained in this report are based on this assumption. The impact on the Band D council tax is shown in the table below.

Valuation Band	2025/26 £	2026/27 £	Increase £	Increase %	Increase per day £	Increase per week £	Increase per month £	Increase per month (10 months) £
A	192.13	202.13	10.00	5.20%	0.03	0.19	0.83	1.00
B	224.16	235.82	11.67	5.20%	0.03	0.22	0.97	1.17
C	256.18	269.51	13.33	5.20%	0.04	0.26	1.11	1.33
D	288.20	303.20	15.00	5.20%	0.04	0.29	1.25	1.50
E	352.24	370.58	18.33	5.20%	0.05	0.35	1.53	1.83
F	416.29	437.96	21.67	5.20%	0.06	0.42	1.81	2.17
G	480.33	505.33	25.00	5.20%	0.07	0.48	2.08	2.50
H	576.40	606.40	30.00	5.20%	0.08	0.58	2.50	3.00

5. Detailed Total Budget Requirement

- 5.1. The overall revenue position for 2025/26 indicates an overspend position of approximately £2m. A review of 2025/26 expenditure has been undertaken in preparing the budget to ensure that any underlying pressures or savings have been appropriately reflected in future years' budget assumptions. The main overspend relates to the costs of major operations which are difficult to predict.

Financial Planning Assumptions

- 5.2. A list of budget assumptions is attached in Appendix 1. Key assumptions are covered below.
- 5.3. General Inflation – Actual CPI for November 2025 was 3.2%, compared to 2.6% in November 2024. Inflation has only been applied to budgets that are subject to inflationary pressures. Electricity and Gas contracts are based on market energy prices. Future years increases have been assumed in line with treasury predictions.
- 5.4. Pay Awards – The MTFs assumes that a 3% pay award will be applied on 1st September 2025, 2.5% 1st September 2026 and each year thereafter for police officers and police staff.
- 5.5. Council Tax Base - The council tax base which consists of the total value of properties by band D has increased by 1.22% for 2026/27. A cautious approach has been taken for 2027/28 onwards to ensure any reduction in the level of second home is affordable in the longer terms. From 2027/28 an increase of 1% increase in the taxbase has been assumed.
- 5.6. Staff Pension Contributions – The Police Officer pension contribution rates are set by central government and remain at 35.3% in 2026/27. The police staff pension contributions rates are set by the pension provider (Peninsula Pensions hosted by Devon County Council) and have been subject to a revaluation. The employer contribution rate has reduced from 18.9% to 16% due to the triennial revaluation. The reduction in the employer contribution rate is consistent across the country.

6. The Overall Budget Preparation

- 6.1. The budget process for 2026/27 has been undertaken on a similar basis to that of the previous year. This is shown in Appendix 1 and includes consideration of the following areas:

- Unavoidable changes in costs arising from the budget assumptions and other factors for example changes to second homes precept income, external income and specific grants.
- Priority spending areas that are essential to delivery of the Police and Crime Plan and to improving the long-term efficiency of policing.
- Savings and efficiencies required.
- Effective management of risk.

Savings Plans

- 6.2. A combination of a grant increase below the level of increases being experienced coupled with increases due to inflation means that ongoing efficiency savings, above existing planned ones, will be essential to balancing the budget over the next four years.
- 6.3. To continue to further drive productivity and value for money, the Chief Constable will continue to challenge costs of operational business areas across the force, to seek financial and time savings not only for this coming year but also the future. The first Priority Based Budgeting intervention was undertaken on Strategic Alliance functions during the autumn of 2025. This identified cashable savings of £4.7m and non-cashable savings of £1.9m. A second phase will be undertaken in February/March 2026. This will look at all areas of the spend and identify priorities areas within Devon and Cornwall only services. It will also identify how things are done and look to improve processes and procedures. Further detail is included in the letter from the Chief Constable attached to this report.
- 6.4. The overall level of savings required to balance this proposed budget is approximately £9.9m, some of which have already been identified. This will require focus and persistence to ensure achievement.
- 6.5. Due to the level of uncertainty, the approach that has been taken following the announcement of the provisional police funding settlement on 18th December is to increase the level of savings to be achieved by the reduced funding announced until more detail is provided. Once clarity is obtained the Commissioner and Chief Constable will be in a position finalise the savings plans and restate the MTFs.

Management of Risk

- 6.6. These proposals are not without risk. A risk register is attached as Appendix 4. Due to the changing economic climate, the significant lack of detail and a one-year settlement, there is increased risk compared to previous years due to:
- The increase in the underlying grant funding being less than anticipated.
 - The uncertainty around the announcement of the abolishment of the Police and Crime Commissioner role from May 2028. Along with the overall yet unknown policing reform announcements.
 - The lack of detail around the specific grants and any future funding. This includes areas such as Hotspot Policing and the detailed criteria and grant conditions for the second year of the Neighbourhood Policing Grant.
 - The pay award assumptions which are nationally agreed. The proportion of the total budget which is attributable to pay is 87%. This makes the budget particularly volatile

to changes in the assumed pay award. This coupled with the underlying gap in the pay budget due to one off funding in 2025/26 to support the pay award given in that year.

- Inflation still being above the national recommended rate of 2% and remaining at higher levels than was anticipated at this time last year.
- The implementation of the amended funding formula remains a significant future risk. Work has paused on any changes to the formula at the moment.

6.7. Financial resilience is extremely important during periods of economic volatility. The last year has continued to see local government bodies, and now one policing area, in financial difficulty with some of those bodies issuing section 114 notices. A section 114 notice is issued by the Chief Financial Officer when it is considered that expenditure of the authority incurred in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources available.

6.8. A Value for Money Assessment is undertaken by our external auditors as part of the final accounts audit. This assessment covers financial sustainability, governance and improving efficiency and effectiveness. Our assessment undertaken during 2025 to support the final accounts for 2024/25 identified the following:-

- Financial Sustainability – all areas were graded green (no significant weaknesses or improvement recommendations).
- Governance – all areas were graded green (no significant weaknesses or improvement recommendations).
- Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness – three of the four areas were graded green (no significant weaknesses or improvement recommendations. With one area graded amber (no significant weakness, improvement recommendations made). The recommendation was that the Chief Constable maintains focus on fully addressing the remaining causes of concern and other areas for improvement identified by HMICFRS.

The Main Budget Components

6.9. The total budget requirement is built up of three main areas:

- The Chief Constable's Budget.
- The OPCC Office Budget and Strategic Investment Budget.
- The Capital Budget.

The Chief Constable's Budget

6.10. The Commissioner owns the overall police budget and is responsible for all income and sets the overall expenditure envelope. During the financial year the Commissioner delegates financial control of the Chief Constable's Budget to the Chief Constable who monitors and manages its day-to-day spending. The overall level of the 2026/27 Chief Constable's budget is £454.7m. The detailed allocations are shown in Appendix 1. A letter from the Chief Constable is attached as Appendix 2 to this report which covers, in more detail, the operational impact, risks and opportunities within this MTFs.

6.11. The Chief Constable is operationally independent under law and is responsible for the deployment of police officers and staff to keep the public safe and deliver policing in Devon and Cornwall.

- 6.12. Delivering the Police and Crime Plan and the force mission relies on longer term planning than a single year. As in previous years the Chief Constable's Budget is presented in the context of the future four-year MTFS to ensure that any potential funding risks can be mitigated by operational savings within the timescale required. This ensures that proposals are sustainable longer term. The respective Chief Finance Officers have worked together and agree on the inflation and other assumptions built into the budget proposals.
- 6.13. The government's commitment to increased police officers by 20,000 headcount for England and Wales has now been relaxed. Devon and Cornwall exceeded their uplift target, due to a combination of planned additional recruitment of 90 extra officers, and the successful recruitment, training and retention strategies put in place by the Force. Not all policing areas were successful in achieving their targets so as part of the 2024/25 settlement the Government reallocated base funding between force areas to take this into account. This has meant additional funding for Devon and Cornwall to fund an additional agreed 95 officers (Batch 1 – 71 officers and Batch 2 – 24 officers). These additional officers have been included within the overall budgeted number of 3,610 FTE.
- 6.14. The Batch 2 additional recruitment of 24 officers had previously been funded via an unconditional specific grant.
- 6.15. There is risk to the uplift grant for the additional officers (Batch 1 and 2). If it is put into the core grant this would see all those areas that have recruited the additional requirement penalised due to the allocation method i.e. allocated across all areas under the formula funding or allocated based on the numbers being recruited. The second risk is more relevant for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly due to the high number of additional officers recruited. In 2025/26 our proportion of the additional recruitment grant was 4.7% which appears to have been moved into the core grant changing our proportion to 2.35%, a 50% loss equating to £2.5m.
- 6.16. The estimate of officer numbers considers the anticipated leavers and the recruitment needed to maintain numbers. Although, the recruitment of officers can be flexed, any increase in leavers above planning assumptions could prove challenging.
- 6.17. It has now been clarified that the provisional settlement includes the first year (2025/26) of the Neighbourhood Policing grant of £4.7m and a second year of £1.2m to deliver the Governments neighbourhood policing commitment. This will seek to put a total of 4,750 neighbourhood officers (police officers and PCSOs) by 31st March 2027. Further detail should be provided at the end of January relating to the criteria and grant conditions.
- 6.18. The budget includes investment as part of the Police and Crime Plan priorities. The focus of the increase in expenditure relates to the pressures arising from the following items:
- Nationally agreed pay awards.
 - Inflationary pressures.
 - Forensic capacity.

OPCC Office Budget and Commissioning Budget

- 6.19. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) budget is split into two parts. The cost of delivering the statutory duties of the OPCC and funds that are used for commissioning essential services for the public.

- 6.20. The OPCC office costs budget is proposed to be set at £2.95m for 2026/27 along with a commissioning budget of £3.87m. Producing a total net budget of £6.82m. This is a reduction of £1.71m compared to 2025/26. The reduction in the overall commissioning budget comprises two elements. An amount of £858k has been transferred to the force. This includes £585k for the provision of the Victim Care Unit which is provided directly by the force. Along with the transfer of funds to support the ASB lawyers which were piloted by the OPCC and have been very successful, and the grant provided to the Police Museum.
- 6.21. The funds previously received from the government for the Serious Violence Duty cease at the end of March 2026.
- 6.22. The remaining decrease in the commissioning budget is a saving and relates to one off funds used in 2025/26 for CCTV, contract savings and community grants.
- 6.23. In addition, the Commissioner is using £300k from reserves to fund a disruptive approach to violence against women and girls approach.
- 6.24. Income in the form of grant funding of £3.74m had been confirmed by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to support services for victims and witnesses. This is an increase of £73k with this grant being confirmed for the next two years. The table below outlines the movement between years.

Table 6: Investment in services for Communities

	2025/26	2026/27	Variation	
	£000's	£000's	£000's	%
Police and Crime Commissioner Allocation	4,578	3,181	- 1,397	-31%
MoJ - Victims and Witness Grant	3,666	3,739	73	2%
Strategic Interventions	1,000	694	- 306	-31%
Vision Zero South West Funding	100	-	- 100	-100%
	9,344	7,614	- 1,730	-19%
Police and Crime Commissioner Reserve		300	300	
	9,344	7,914	- 1,430	-15%

6.25. The OPCC office budget is £2.95m which is anticipated will represent 0.64% of the net revenue budget. The FTE has decreased from 34 to 31. This is a cash decrease of £7k and includes assumptions for 3% nationally agreed pay award. The OPCC costs are shown in table 7 below and cover the following items:-

- The Independent Audit Committee
- Legally Qualified Members and Independent Panel Members for Police misconduct panels
- Local Criminal Justice Board
- Prevention of Serious Violence Duty
- The Police Complaint Review process
- External and Internal Audit Fees
- Independent Custody Visiting scheme.

Table 7: OPCC Office Costs

	2025/26 £k	2026/27 £k	Increase/ (Decrease) £k	% Variation
Staffing	2,219	2,148	- 71	-3%
Office running costs	134	218	84	63%
Consultation and engagement	136	154	18	13%
Audit Costs	160	162	2	1%
Legal and Support	80	75	- 5	-6%
Council Tax Support Scheme	4	3	- 1	-25%
Independent custody visitor scheme	13	18	5	38%
Misconduct Panels	211	172	- 39	-18%
Total	2,957	2,950	- 7	0%
Proportion of Net Revenue Budget (TBC)	0.68%	0.64%		

6.26. The Strategic Investment Plan, which supersedes the Commissioning Intentions Plan, is attached as Appendix 3 to this report. The plan includes support for the following priority areas and reflects the current Police and Crime Plan:

- Anti-social behaviour
- Alcohol and drugs
- Serious Violence
- Theft
- Victims

6.27. As part of the Commissioning Spend the Commissioner identifies a theme for the Property Act funds recovered from seized goods or property which cannot be returned. The theme for this will be reducing ASB in line with the feedback from the community survey.

6.28. Although the announcement to abolish Police and Crime Commissioners would see a significant change part way through this four year MTFs, the costs of the OPCC have remained in the plan to ensure that any future structure to support policing governance would be affordable.

The Capital Budget

6.29. The Commissioner is also required to publish a capital strategy.

6.30. The Capital Programme indicates a total spend of £115.1m over the four years. The detail of the capital programme is attached in Appendix 1. The most significant projects within the capital programme are:

- A vehicle replacement programme.
- An allocation for new provision – North Devon and Exmouth.
- An allocation to provide efficiency changes and capital minor works in the buildings.
- An allocation for investment into our custody provision.
- A comprehensive programme of ICT work across the organisation.

- Essential operational equipment to the frontline.
- 6.31. The annual revenue costs associated with this programme are contained within the budget. The level of capital financing cost equates to £6.9m and as a percentage of net revenue expenditure is 1.5%. The funding policy of the Commissioner is to ensure that short life assets are funded by capital grant/receipts or revenue contributions. The revenue contribution to capital outlay (RCCO) is £7.9m to support the programme. The RCCO will increase across the life of the MTFs to ensure the capital programme is robust and sustainable in the longer term. The financing plan aims to make the maximum use of temporary internal borrowing from revenue reserves until they are used in the budget plan.
- 6.32. The main sources of funding for the capital programme are:
- Reserves – which are planned to reduce over this MTFs.
 - Capital Receipts – which have a finite level and are only used once realised.
 - Capital Grant – there is no longer a capital allocation from the Home Office so this is now only available via bidding processes for specific projects that may come up from time to time.
 - Revenue Contributions to Capital – which are being increased.
 - Borrowing – which needs to be affordable in the longer term.
- 6.33. In addition, funding via s106 planning obligations and Community Infrastructure Level (CIL) is now actively being pursued with local planning authorities. However, this funding can only cover items such as infrastructure, uniforms and equipment.

7. Reserves

- 7.1. The Reserves Strategy is published annually and can be found on the OPCC website. The Strategy is reviewed annually and includes a risk assessment of the general balance. The Strategy is taken to the Independent Audit Committee for review and comment prior to approval by the Commissioner.
- 7.2. The Commissioner's Reserve Strategy has the following key principles:
- The reserves policy will be seeking to maintain general balances at no more than 5% and no less than 3% of overall funding levels each year.
 - The requirement for the reserves will be reviewed at least annually. Those reserves no longer required for their intended purpose will be identified and made available for other defined priorities.
 - Reserves will be assessed annually to ensure adequacy.
 - Risk assumptions used when assessing reserves will be reviewed annually.
 - A long-term view will be used when assessing the use of reserves to ensure all assets that support policing are maintained.
 - General balances cover the general financial risks. This will include unexpected or unavoidable additional costs, such as a major operation, riot compensation, uninsured liabilities, or treasury management risks.

- 7.3. The current level of general balances predicted at the end of 2025/26 indicate that they will stand at 3.4% of the net revenue budget for 2026/27. This is compliant with the Reserves Strategy which is in line with best practice.
- 7.4. As of 31st March 2026, the forecast of the total amount of reserves held is £33.3m (earmarked reserves of £17.8m and general reserves of £15.5m). This is forecast to reduce to £23.1m by the end of 2029/30. The Commissioner considers the level of reserves and their planned reduction when considering the proposals for the level of council tax increases each year. The reserves include £1.6m relating to Vision Zero South West which is a partnership fund with Cornwall Council, Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council. The Vision Zero South West reserve will fund road safety initiatives. This is not funded by council tax precept.
- 7.5. The planned use of the reserves is in line with the Home Office drive to reduce the level of reserves being held by Commissioners.

8. Conclusion for the Police and Crime Panel

- 8.1. In considering the increase of £15 (per Band D equivalent) in council tax funding, the Commissioner has considered this year's funding settlement and seeks to ensure that funding for the force keeps pace with inflation. The budget is looking to deliver improved public confidence through better policing. With the limited detail provided by the government at this time there is no option but to increase the precept by £15 to be able to deliver policing services across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Even at this level savings of £9.9m are still required.
- 8.2. There are always new and different demands being placed upon policing and resources need to reflect these. With 2026/27 being a one-year settlement with very little detail this increases the risk to the future funding assumptions across the MTFs. Many new areas of policing require investment in new technology before any operational savings can be generated or operational benefits fully realised and therefore take time. The autumn budget announcement and the provisional settlement highlighted the importance of neighbourhood policing and this aligns to the Chief Constable's delivery of Op Resolve to return as many police officers as possible back to the frontline.
- 8.3. The Commissioner has consulted the Chief Constable about the proposal to increase the council tax, and the Chief Constable has confirmed that these proposals will ensure a robust and sustainable budget to deliver operational policing and have due regard to the Police and Crime Plan.

Alison Hernandez
Police and Crime Commissioner

Nicola Allen
Treasurer

Attached:-

Appendix 1 – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 to 2029/30

Appendix 2 – Letter from the Chief Constable

Appendix 3 – Strategic Investment Plan 2026/27

Appendix 4 – Risk Assessment

Appendix 5 – “Your Safety, Your Say” survey results summary

Appendix 6 – Glossary of Terms

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 to 2029/30

Annual Budget 2026/27

“Community Policing delivered with competence, compassion and a common sense approach”

(To be restated following the confirmed final funding settlement)



The Medium Term Financial Strategy: 2026/27 to 2029/30

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1. POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

The Police and Crime Commissioner (Commissioner) has a statutory duty to produce a Police and Crime Plan (The Plan). The Plan must set out the priorities for policing and community safety in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly along with the resources that will be provided to the Chief Constable and others in order to meet those objectives. The Plan must be kept under regular review to ensure it remains appropriate to the needs of local people, the police and partners. The strategy used to produce this MTFS is my Police and Crime Plan for 2025-2029 which provides continuity from my previous approach 'Safe, resilient, connected communities'.

The Police and Crime Plan can be found at:

[Police-and-Crime-Plan-2025-FINAL.pdf](#)

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is created to support delivery of the Police and Crime Plan. It sets out both the funding available, and the forecast spending required to deliver the Plan priorities. The MTFS for 2026/27 and beyond has been prepared within a backdrop of a difficult economic climate and a new government. The provisional settlement announced on 18th December 2025 had minimal detail and therefore this MTFS may need restating once further detail is available. It is unclear whether the mandated maintenance of the police uplift programme will still be required.

The Police and Crime Plan

The Police and Crime Plan was created in November 2024 and will be used to inform the Peninsula Strategic Assessment. The new Plan will run until 2029 and sets out the Commissioner's priorities for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, including:

- ❖ Antisocial behaviour
- ❖ Alcohol and Drugs
- ❖ Theft
- ❖ Serious Violence
- ❖ Victims

The Commissioner will work closely with the Chief Constable and colleagues across the Peninsula to drive forward progress against these priorities.

During 2025/26 an announcement was made to abolish the role of Police and Crime Commissioners from May 2028. There is very little detail on the impact of this decision. The Bank of England base rate continued to decrease, with inflation ranging from 3.2% to 3.8% which is still higher than the government target of 2%. However, there was a decrease in the rate of employers pension rates which has mitigated some increased costs.

This MTFS includes the impact for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly on the national uplift in officer numbers. An element of the government grant (£8.2m) has been ringfenced and is subject to the maintenance of these numbers.

The Police and Crime Plan places a strong emphasis on protecting the vulnerable in our society. There has been progress, but the work continues to encourage the reporting of crime and encouraging victims to come forward and seek justice and to ensuring that they receive a high-quality service when they do come forward.

The focus of the 2026/27 budget process is specifically on maintaining "business as usual, enabling it to be sustained for the long term. This will enable Devon and Cornwall Police to

strengthen, stabilise and sustain their current position. Visibility of policing and public confidence in policing is vitally important, and this budget will endeavour to keep police officer numbers at the highest ever seen. However, this will be dependent on the additional detail around the funding settlement. Neighbourhood policing is also a focus for the year both locally and nationally.

Delivery & accountability

The Police and Crime Plan will be delivered by the Commissioner with close co-operation from the Chief Constable and partners.

The Plan details how strategic measures and indicators (including qualitative surveys) will be used to monitor its implementation and successful achievement. Regular progress reports will be published on the OPCC website.

The Commissioner is required to report regularly to the Police and Crime Panel.

Slavery and Human Trafficking compliance statement

The Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable are committed to eliminating discrimination and exploitation in all its forms from the workplace and will not knowingly or otherwise be complicit in human rights infringements.

Slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, including child labour and human trafficking and other human rights offences must be identified, tackled and prevented for the future.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary embrace the obligations placed on organisations under section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and understands they are vital in tackling and preventing modern slavery and human trafficking.

2. REVENUE STRATEGY

a. FUNDING FORECAST

The funding forecast provides a prediction of the level of funding across the timeframe of the MTFS.

<u>2025/26</u>		<u>2026/27</u>	<u>2027/28</u>	<u>2028/29</u>	<u>2029/30</u>
	<u>Grant Funding</u>				
142,206	Core settlement	255,044	257,838	260,660	263,511
80,443	DCLG Formula				
15,461	Legacy CT Grants				
<u>238,109</u>		<u>255,044</u>	<u>257,838</u>	<u>260,660</u>	<u>263,511</u>
	<u>Council Tax</u>				
192,241	Precept income	204,707	216,983	229,483	242,212
2,562	Surplus	1,784	1,000	1,000	1,000
<u>194,804</u>		<u>206,491</u>	<u>217,983</u>	<u>230,483</u>	<u>243,212</u>
432,913	Total Funding	461,535	475,820	491,143	506,723
667,041	Tax base	675,155	681,906	688,725	695,612
4.65%	Tax base Increase	1.22%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
288.20	Band D	303.20	318.20	333.20	348.20
4.99%	Council Tax Increase %	5.20%	4.95%	4.71%	4.50%
£13.70	Council Tax Increase £	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00	£15.00

b. MAIN COMPONENTS OF THE REVENUE BUDGET

25/26 MTFS Plan £000's	Category	Description	26/27 MTFS Plan £000's	27/28 MTFS Plan £000's	28/29 MTFS Plan £000's	29/30 MTFS Plan £000's
263,684	Pay & Employment Costs	Police Officer Costs	282,359	292,990	300,242	311,494
123,680		Police Staff Costs	134,792	138,768	142,663	145,968
2,341		Restructure, Training & Conference Costs	2,168	2,050	1,963	1,965
1,193		Other Employee Expenses	1,268	1,289	1,315	1,342
390,898	Pay & Employment Costs Total		420,588	435,097	446,184	460,769
16,815	Overheads	Premises Related Expenditure	17,237	16,725	16,697	16,709
19,933		Supplies and Services	22,256	21,393	21,567	21,868
19,488		Communications and Computing	20,253	20,912	21,737	22,275
6,175		Transport Related Expenditure	6,811	6,919	7,035	7,140
17,873		Third Party Payments	17,697	18,152	18,568	19,080
80,284	Overheads Total		84,254	84,101	85,605	87,072
(35,671)	Grant, Trading & Reimbursement Income	Government & Overseas Funding	(29,792)	(29,869)	(29,945)	(29,452)
(1,405)		Interest/ Investment Income	(961)	(1,046)	(1,049)	(1,040)
0		Local Government Specific/Partnership Funding	0	0	0	0
(672)		Reimbursed Services - Other	(677)	(688)	(697)	(704)
(1,532)		Reimbursed Services - Other Police Forces	(1,130)	(1,132)	(1,134)	(1,132)
(9,457)		Reimbursed Services - Other Public Bodies	(11,075)	(11,219)	(11,205)	(11,371)
(10,808)		Sales, Fees, Charges and Rents	(11,387)	(11,750)	(12,505)	(12,406)
(429)		Special Police Services	(459)	(459)	(459)	(459)
(59,973)	Grant, Trading & Reimbursement Income Total		(55,481)	(56,162)	(56,994)	(56,564)
1,640	Capital Financing and Contributions	Loan Charges	1,539	2,366	2,771	2,915
5,000		Minimum Revenue Provision	5,342	5,577	6,579	7,974
6,547		Revenue Contribution to Capital	7,856	8,964	9,012	10,089
13,188	Capital Financing and Contributions Total		14,737	16,908	18,362	20,978
(18)	Transfers to / (from) Specific Reserves		(927)	1,770	1,813	1,887
(18)	Transfers to / (from) Reserves Total		(927)	1,770	1,813	1,887
424,378	Sub-Total Force		463,171	481,714	494,970	514,141
0	Savings Programme (PBB)		(5,350)	(8,675)	(9,375)	(10,375)
	Savings to be identified		(3,111)	(4,142)	(1,472)	(4,170)
424,379	Total Force		454,710	468,898	484,123	499,596
2,957	Office of the PCC		2,950	3,047	3,146	3,252
5,578	PCC Commissioning		3,875	3,875	3,875	3,875
8,535	Total OPCC		6,825	6,922	7,021	7,127
432,913	Net Revenue Expenditure		461,535	475,820	491,143	506,723
432,913	Funding		461,535	475,820	491,143	506,723

c. SCHEDULE OF KEY BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS

This schedule identifies the key assumptions used in the ongoing calculation of the 2026/27 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

- This budget reflects the first year of the recent comprehensive spending review. The provisional settlement covered one only 2026/27 and provided very little detail.
- Core Government Police Grant funding will increase by 2.3% in 2026/27. Future years assume a 1% grant increase for each year thereafter.
- There is minimal detail on the specific grants and therefore it has been assumed that these will remain the same for 2025/26. There is no detail on any grant criteria or conditions.
- This MTFs assumes Council Tax for a Band D property will increase by £15 in 2026/27 and each year thereafter.
- The 2026/27 figures for tax base and Council Tax surplus along with future years assumptions are shown below. The previous year figures are included for context.

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Annual increase in tax base	4.65%	1.20%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Annual surplus/deficit on Council Tax collection funds	£2.7m	£1.6m	£1m	£1m	£1m

- Turnover on police officers assumes officers leaving at their usual pension date, plus an estimate for ill health retirements, transfers out and resignations.
- A 4.2% pay award was agreed for police officers and police staff from 1st September 2025. The MTFs assumes that a 3% pay award will be applied on 1st September 2026, and 2.5% 1st September each year thereafter for police officers and police staff.
- Inflation has been applied only to budgets that are subject to inflationary pressures. Actual CPI for November 2025 was 3.2% compared to 2.6% in November 2024.
- The Devon Pension Fund employer's contribution to the police staff pension scheme, plus agreed contributions to the deficit, is as set out below. The scheme was revalued from 1st April 2026.

	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
LGPS Base Contribution	18.90%	16.00%	16.00%	16.00%	16.00%
Plus Repayment of LGPS Deficit (cash lump sum)	£0.677m	£0.000m	£0.000m	£0.000m	£0.000m
Estimated Total Cash Contribution	£17.7m	£17.0m	£17.7m	£17.8m	£18.2m
% of Staff Pay Budgets	19.27%	16.83%	17.43%	17.15%	17.25%

d. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN THE REVENUE BUDGET BETWEEN 2029/30 AND 2025/26

	26/27 MTFS Plan £000's	27/28 MTFS Plan £000's	28/29 MTFS Plan £000's	29/30 MTFS Plan £000's
2025/26 Budget	432,913	432,913	432,913	432,913
<u>Savings</u>				
Savings Delivered - OPCC	(973)	(973)	(973)	(973)
Savings Programme (Priority Based Budgeting)	(5,000)	(8,325)	(9,025)	(10,025)
Savings Required - Balancing Figure	(3,111)	(4,142)	(1,472)	(4,170)
<u>Planned Budget Reductions: -</u>				
Rent Reductions	0	(510)	(630)	(750)
ICT related reductions	(604)	(699)	(699)	(699)
Other budget efficiencies	(228)	(548)	(626)	(626)
<u>Pay related increases</u>				
Pay Award	15,852	26,143	36,156	46,409
Increments (Officer & Staff)	6,019	12,178	18,686	25,601
Police Officer Pay Changes	(372)	(1,810)	(7,461)	(9,398)
Overtime	1,078	578	600	0
Other Pay Changes	815	690	667	612
LGPS Changes	(3,206)	(3,535)	(3,666)	(3,767)
Increase to Neighbourhood policing	5,248	5,265	5,278	5,292
<u>Non Pay related Increases</u>				
Inflationary changes	2,170	3,597	4,894	6,261
Other Contractual Changes	956	525	584	762
Other unavoidable increases	519	540	543	546
Regional Budgets	679	1,012	1,427	1,831
<u>Changes in Income</u>				
Investment Interest	444	359	356	365
Changes to Income	146	166	(158)	173
<u>Grant Changes</u>				
Neighbourhood Policing Grant	(8,591)	(8,591)	(8,591)	(8,591)
Uplift Grant	13,222	13,222	13,222	13,222
Other Grant Changes	(249)	(249)	(249)	(249)
<u>Capital Financing</u>				
RCCO	1,309	2,417	2,465	3,542
MRP	209	1,074	2,040	3,400
Interest Paid	(102)	370	810	989
Transfer to/from reserves	(723)	1,948	1,948	1,948
Growth	3,114	2,204	2,104	2,104
Total 26/27 MTFS	461,535	475,820	491,143	506,723

e. INCOME FROM SALES, FEES, CHARGES AND RENTS

This analysis details the level of external income generated from sales, fees, charges and rents. The level of income generated is continually reviewed to ensure that all opportunities are optimised.

25/26 Budget £000's		26/27 Budget £000's	27/28 Budget £000's	28/29 Budget £000's	29/30 Budget £000's
(7,694)	National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme	(7,610)	(7,838)	(8,074)	(8,316)
(482)	Firearms Certificates	(645)	(608)	(900)	(687)
(525)	Rents & Lettings	(548)	(548)	(548)	(548)
(310)	Accident Reports	(436)	(445)	(454)	(464)
(140)	Driver Improvement Income	(565)	(582)	(600)	(618)
(110)	Sale of Vehicles	(110)	(110)	(110)	(110)
(1)	Vehicle Recovery	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
(59)	Radio Masts and Equipment Hire	(59)	(59)	(59)	(59)
(4)	Stores External Income	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)
(69)	Provision of Vehicle Services	(69)	(69)	(69)	(69)
(1,414)	Other Sales, Fees, Charges and Rents	(1,341)	(1,486)	(1,687)	(1,531)
(10,808)	Grand Total	(11,387)	(11,750)	(12,505)	(12,406)

f. STAFFING ANALYSIS

	2025/26 (FTE)	2026/27 (FTE)	2027/28 (FTE)	2028/29 (FTE)	2029/30 (FTE)
<u>Police Officers</u>					
Opening Balance at 1st April	3,610	3,610	3,610	3,610	3,610
Closing Balance at 31st March	3,610	3,610	3,610	3,610	3,610
<u>Police Community Support</u>					
PCSO	150	199	199	199	199
PCSO Uplift	49				
Blue Light	26	26	26	26	26
Total	225	225	225	225	225
<u>Police Staff (Force)</u>					
Opening Balance at 1st April	2,200	2,281	2,183	2,129	2,129
Change	81	-98	-54	0	-30
Closing Balance at 31st March	2,281	2,183	2,129	2,129	2,099
<u>Police Staff (OPCC)</u>					
Opening Balance at 1st April	34	34	31	31	31
Change	0	-3	0	0	0
Closing Balance at 31st March	34	31	31	31	31
<u>Police Staff (Road Safety - Vision Zero South West)</u>					
Opening Balance at 1st April	113	132	132	132	132
Change	19	0	0	0	0
Closing Balance at 31st March	132	132	132	132	132
<i>All staffing figures will be updated once the final settlement has been received.</i>					

3. RESERVES AND BALANCES SUMMARY

	Forecast Balance 31/3/2026 £000's	Forecast Balance 31/3/2027 £000's	Forecast Balance 31/3/2028 £000's	Forecast Balance 31/3/2029 £000's	Forecast Balance 31/3/2030 £000's
Revenue Reserves					
Capital Financing Reserve	6,528	5,680	4,830	3,080	809
ESN Capital Reserve	4,101	4,101	3,265	0	0
VZSW (Ringfenced)	1,558	695	703	1,110	1,388
Improvement Reserve	200	200	200	200	200
Budget Management Fund	3,210	568	568	568	568
Police and Crime Plan Reserve	931	931	931	931	931
Total Revenue Reserves	16,527	12,173	10,495	5,888	3,895
Capital Reserves					
Capital Grant	360	360	360	360	360
Capital Receipts	977	977	977	977	977
Total Capital Reserves	1,337	1,337	1,337	1,337	1,337
General Balances	15,469	14,869	15,869	16,869	17,869
Total Reserves and Balances	33,333	28,379	27,701	24,094	23,101

4. COUNCIL TAX INFORMATION AND PRECEPT

Council Tax Information and Precept

	2026/27	2025/26
	£	£
Police Budget to be met from Council Tax	206,491,250	194,803,217
Less net surplus on council tax collection from previous years	(1,784,375)	(2,561,983)
Total precept payable by Billing Authorities	204,706,875	192,241,234

Tax base, collection variations and precepts					
2026/27					
	Tax Base declared by Councils	Total Precept collected by Councils	2025/26 Surplus (Deficit) on collection fund	Amount due from Councils	% share collected by Councils
	£	£	£	£	
East Devon	65,733.46	19,930,385.07	232,884.27	20,163,269.34	9.76%
Exeter	40,186.00	12,184,395.20	128,435.52	12,312,830.72	5.96%
Mid Devon	31,180.16	9,453,824.51	109,124.49	9,562,949.00	4.63%
North Devon	37,751.61	11,446,288.15	222,545.03	11,668,833.18	5.65%
Plymouth	76,887.00	23,312,138.40	80,212.00	23,392,350.40	11.33%
South Hams	46,083.87	13,972,629.38	521,000.00	14,493,629.38	7.02%
Teignbridge	52,653.00	15,964,389.60	458,765.00	16,423,154.60	7.95%
Torbay	49,488.48	15,004,907.14	147,030.00	15,151,937.14	7.34%
Torridge	26,477.64	8,028,020.45	38,789.00	8,066,809.45	3.91%
West Devon	22,623.50	6,859,445.20	157,000.00	7,016,445.20	3.40%
Cornwall	224,697.68	68,128,336.58	-291,701.00	67,836,635.58	32.85%
Isles of Scilly	1,392.20	422,115.04	-19,709.00	402,406.04	0.19%
	675,154.60	204,706,874.72	1,784,375.31	206,491,250.03	100.0%

Police element of Council Tax due for each Property Valuation Band						
Valuation band	Government multiplier		Council Tax by band		Increase per week	%
	Ratio		2026/27	2025/26		
A	6 / 9	0.667	£202.13	£192.13	+ 19.2 p	} 5.20%
B	7 / 9	0.778	£235.82	£224.16	+ 22.4 p	
C	8 / 9	0.889	£269.51	£256.18	+ 25.6 p	
D	1	1.000	£303.20	£288.20	+ 28.8 p	
E	11 / 9	1.222	£370.58	£352.24	+ 35.3 p	
F	13 / 9	1.444	£437.96	£416.29	+ 41.7 p	
G	15 / 9	1.667	£505.33	£480.33	+ 48.1 p	
H	18 / 9	2.000	£606.40	£576.40	+ 57.7 p	

5. CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Capital Programme	Revised 25-26 £'000	MTFS 26-27 £'000	MTFS 27-28 £'000	MTFS 28-29 £'000	MTFS 29-30 £'000
Fleet	2,571	4,510	4,586	3,629	3,661
Estates Minor Building Works	3,204	1,500	4,100	3,250	3,250
Barnstaple North Walk Mitigation	0	0	656	0	0
Bodmin Roof	400	0	0	0	0
Camborne Phase III	1,527	0	0	0	0
Comms Roof/Windows HQ	1,150	1,269	0	0	0
EV Infrastructure Upgrade	500	500	1,000	1,500	1,500
Exmouth	0	500	1,500	3,214	0
HQ Firing Range	0	500	1,500	1,000	1,000
North Devon Provision	0	2,000	2,000	2,000	3,000
Relocation of Staff to HQ	515	1,110	0	0	0
Sustainability	850	500	1,120	1,120	1,000
South Devon Provision	1,120	540	0	0	0
SARC	0	0	600	0	0
Estates Contingency	0	0	2,000	4,000	4,000
Estates Major Building Works	6,062	6,919	10,376	12,834	10,500
Strategic Change	485	1,256	597	500	1,000
National Projects	55	173	134	202	0
ESN	0	0	836	3,265	5,362
ICT Infrastructure	3,447	5,482	6,666	7,257	5,557
Operational Equipment	2,632	1,809	1,133	513	560
Regional Collaboration	657	771	449	899	451
Other Capital	376	550	223	150	150
Total Programme	19,489	22,970	29,100	32,499	30,491
Capital Financing					
Borrowing	9,251	12,894	17,477	17,327	17,381
Capital Financing Reserve	3,223	1,598	1,600	2,500	3,021
Revenue Funding (RCCO)	6,562	7,856	8,964	9,012	10,089
Funding from Other Forces (Forensics)	120	72	0	395	0
Vision Zero Reserve	333	550	223	0	0
ESN Reserve	0	0	836	3,265	0
Total	19,489	22,970	29,100	32,499	30,491



Devon & Cornwall
POLICE

Chief Constable James Vaughan QPM MSt (*Cantab*)

Police Headquarters, Middlemoor, Exeter, Devon, EX2 7HQ

- 📞 **101 Non Emergency** SignLive **Non Emergency** (BSL video relay)
- 📞 **999 Emergency** **Non Emergency Text 67101** (Deaf only)
- 🌐 **dc.police.uk** **999 BSL Emergency** (BSL video relay)
- 💬 **dc.police.uk/webchat** **Text 999** (Deaf only - must pre-register at www.emergencysms.org.uk)

PCC Alison Hernandez
The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for
Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly
Alderson Drive
Exeter
EX2 7RP

15 January 2026

CC/DW/SDB

Dear Commissioner

Budget Proposal 2026/2027

1. Introduction

I write to outline my operational budget requirement for the following four years. This incorporates the limited and incomplete government funding settlement announcement in December 2025 and has regard to the new Police and Crime Plan 2025-2029, the Force's Strategic Roadmap, the Force Management Risk Register and Force Management Statement. The budget calculation has been undertaken in discussion with your Chief Financial Officer.

This letter outlines unavoidable savings and necessary investments, and estimates for future years' budgets, and considers the robustness of the 2026/2027 budget. It is deeply disappointing that the government has only provided a partial and limited funding settlement, consisting of a high-level total government grant figure. In previous years I would have expected to receive a detailed breakdown of this figure into direct and indirect grants, as well as clarity around any restrictions or ring-fencing of grants.

In the absence of this information, which is expected in late January 2026, I am unable to finalise my budget proposals to you as I do not have the full information. I am, however, clear that the settlement has left a funding gap even after the implementation of our extensive savings and efficiency proposals. This letter therefore has been written based on what little information is available and there are unavoidably some areas that will need to be clarified when the full funding settlement detail is published. As such, the medium-term financial strategy (MTFS) will need to be restated after the council tax setting.

It is also necessary to have due regard to the medium-term policy landscape. The Police Reform White Paper expected in January 2026 is likely to propose changes to

police structures and the governance model for policing beyond 2028 is unclear. This single year, incomplete and late funding settlement has made effective financial planning materially more difficult against an uncertain policy outlook. As such, in balancing the need for investment to keep the Force moving on a positive and upwards trajectory, my budget proposal also recognises the need to stabilize and maintain effective services through a period of significant uncertainty and change.

In the twelve months I have been Chief Constable this Force has made considerable improvements. Most notably, we have been removed from HMICFRS's enhanced level of monitoring, known as Engage. HMICFRS was able to see improvements in how the Force performance is understood and overseen, as well as the progress made on the two remaining causes of concern relating to crime recording standards and quality of investigations. Whilst the two remaining causes of concern remain, the Force is going through a full PEEL inspection in January 2026, and I hope that the evidence we can present at that opportunity will go some way to closing these. I am grateful to my officers and staff who have worked tirelessly to improve services and get the Force out of Engage whilst also responding to high levels of operational demand and managing financial constraints.

This year has been exceptionally challenging due to several large and complex criminal investigations which diverted resources; higher demand for service over the summer period; a larger than normal number of protests; and challenges to our plans for recruitment of police officers and PCSOs. Furthermore, the Home Office has announced its plans to change police governance model with the ceasing of Police and Crime Commissioners after May 2028 with further radical reform expected in the new White Paper. Despite this, the Force has maintained excellent performance in responding to the public. Current data shows that 96% of 999 calls were answered in ten seconds or less, compared to 94% this time last year, stabilising the performance for another year. In addition, the average 101 waiting time reduced to 1 minute and 20 seconds, with a 4.6% abandonment rate.

Devon and Cornwall Police's purpose is to deliver community policing with competence, compassion and a common-sense approach. As the Force moves forward following our exit from Engage, I have structured my priorities for investment around four areas of focus: **Public Service, Performance, Planning, and People.**

My 2026/2027 budget requirement is balanced at this stage only if a 2026/2027 council tax increase of £15 (5.2%) is agreed and with the inclusion of a manageable element of risk relating to £3.3m of savings that are as yet unspecified and may need to be achieved when the full settlement detail is known. I am comfortable that this is a proportionate approach in the circumstances given the Force's strong track record of good financial management and achieving savings, combined with the unspecified savings being less than 1% of the overall budget. The full details of my budget proposals are included in the MTFS, which is attached.

2. Efficiency and Savings Plans

Last year's MTFS set a challenging savings requirement of £13.3m over the four-year period, with £10.8m to be delivered for the 2026/2027 budget. Whilst the previous approach of targeted reviews to improve efficiency, effectiveness and

productivity has served the Force well in the past, I have introduced a more rigorous, transparent and structured approach to efficiency and productivity through the implementation of Priority Based Budgeting (PBB). A first phase covering the services we share in our alliance with Dorset Police was completed in September 2025, and a second phase covering the remaining Force areas will commence in February 2026. PBB is transforming the Force's approach to financial and business planning and will be the main vehicle for identifying and delivering the savings required within the MTFS.

During the year, good progress has been made achieving the savings required in the MTFS through a review of the police officer rank structure to ensure we maximise the staff in our frontline roles rather than leadership positions. I have now agreed on a new senior rank structure which has an ambition to remove sixty senior ranks to put sixty constables back on the frontline. This has reduced the number of leadership roles by 22 (one assistant chief constable, two chief superintendents, seven superintendents, two chief inspectors and ten inspectors) with further work ongoing to ensure our sergeant numbers are at the right level and in the right places. This review will save around £2m in police officer pay costs without reducing officer numbers.

I have aligned the rank review with Operation Resolve, which has the objective of moving officers from non-front-line roles to patrol and neighbourhood teams. By the end of December 2025, 71 officers have joined our patrol teams, with a further 50 joining by the end of March 2026. This will return patrol to a full complement, made up of a balanced mix of internal officers, officers transferring from other Forces, and new student officers beginning their service.

Based on the funding assumptions and economic outlook, the MTFS will require savings of £16m to be found over the four-year period to 2029/2030. £9.9m of budget savings are included in the proposed budget for 2026/2027, £3.1m of which relate to the uncertainty caused by the delayed funding settlement. The remaining amount will come from the savings programme in 2026/2027 and later years of the strategy. This level of reduction will have an impact on the Force, but it is necessary to offset the unavoidable cost increases and likely funding levels to ensure the Force has a sustainable medium term financial position.

3. Robustness of the Calculation

As is usual I want to take this opportunity to assure you of the robustness of the budget calculation and to highlight any inherent risks.

3.1 Pay Award, Pensions and Inflation

Last year's MTFS built in an assumption for the pay award in 2025/2026 of 3%. Given that staffing costs make up around 85% of my budget, pay awards remain the biggest unknown variable to the budget and therefore the biggest financial risk we face in predicting expenditure. In 2025/2026, the pay award was 4.2%, and whilst the government provided additional funding to cover the gap between 3.0% and 4.2%, this did not fully cover the cost of the higher pay award due to the allocation being based on the police funding formula rather than cost. The unfunded cost to

the Force is £0.5m. The budget proposals in this year's MTFS are based on a pay award in 2026 of 3%, followed by 2.5% in the following years. The total cost increase in pay costs between 2025/2026 and 2026/2027 is £18.5m. The total increase in the government's assessment of grant and council tax funding is £18.4m. This means that there is no allowance for wider inflation, other unavoidable costs or growth, all of which need to be found from making savings and reductions elsewhere in the Devon and Cornwall budget.

The triennial Local Government Pension Scheme valuation has been undertaken in 2025 and as a result the employer's costs of police staff pension contributions will reduce from 18.9% to 16% for three years from 2026/2027. In total, the changes will save around £3.7m without impacting police staff members in any way. These changes do not apply to the Police Pension Scheme which has contribution rates set nationally and is managed through a separate accounting arrangement.

Inflationary price increases have generally been more stable over the last year, however, there has been cost pressure on IT contracts with above inflation increases impacting on licencing and software costs, as well as significant unfunded increases in the costs of national arrangements, such as Police National Computer (PNC) and National Police Aviation Service (NPAS). The risk of volatile general inflation is lower than last year; however, the general economic outlook is such that this needs to be carefully monitored over the MTFS.

3.2 Police Officer Uplift Grants and Police Officer Numbers

The December 2025 funding settlement did not include any detail in relation to the 2026/2027 funding or conditions of Police Uplift Grants. My budget proposal assumes a continuation of 3,610 full time equivalent officers, our highest ever number. However, this will need to be reviewed when the funding settlement is published to ensure it is affordable and compliant with any grant conditions.

3.3 Neighbourhood Policing Grant

The December 2025 funding settlement did not include any detail in relation to the 2026/2027 funding or conditions of Neighbourhood Policing Grant. My budget proposal assumes a continuation of the posts that have been added during 2025/2026, this will need to be reviewed when the funding settlement is published to ensure it is affordable and compliant with any grant conditions.

3.4 Funding Requirements in Future Years

The December 2025 funding settlement announced dealt with high level allocations for 2026/2027 only, and as such we have no detail of funding levels beyond this year. We have made prudent assumptions around council tax increases and grant increases for the last three years of the plan, as detailed in the attached MTFS. Budget requirement figures, especially for police pay, have been calculated forwards in detail. Naturally, the further into the future a projection is made, especially in the absence of funding information beyond 2026/2027, the less it can be relied on.

4. Investments to Maintain Services

As highlighted in my introduction, the 2026/2027 budget builds on last year's MTFS, and introduces a shift in focus for the Force around my four key priority areas: **Public Service, Performance, Planning, and People**. I set out below areas where I need to allocate additional resources to maintain services and address additional demand.

4.1 Public Service

During 2026/2027 I expect the community to see the benefits of Operation Resolve. This ambitious programme has worked to ensure front line functions of patrol and neighbourhood policing are fully staffed so we can deliver the best service to communities and avoid placing unreasonable demands on my officers to cover gaps in resources.

Ensuring my officers demonstrate the highest possible standards of behaviour and conduct is crucially important to retaining public trust, and there are robust procedures in place where accusations that this has not been the case come forward. My budget proposal includes £310k to fund the third and final year of a planned investment strategy into the Professional Standards Department and also external chairs of misconduct panels to ensure we can fairly deal with misconduct cases in an appropriate way.

Stabilising our approach to out of court resolutions will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of decision making and delivery, which will support the development of a streamlined process that will improve quality and consistency across the Force. A modest investment of £224k will create a stable infrastructure to meet the legislative requirements of cautions with conditions, whilst enabling the Force to expand deferred prosecution and out of court resolution. This enables us to meet new demands that the government's sentencing review recommendations potentially place on policing. Specifically, the need to provide meaningful and evidenced-based alternatives to short custodial sentences, which will not be met with commensurate increases in resources for probation services.

Following a successful pilot of introducing ASB lawyers funded by the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner, I have agreed to mainstream this capability and built the cost into the Force budget for 2026/2027. The ASB lawyers have been working across Exeter and Torquay and have had many significant results since being embedded in the neighbourhood teams in 2024. These include obtaining 54 closure orders to temporarily shut down premises which are linked to serious, persistent anti-social behaviour, including one notable period in September 2025 when nine closure orders were obtained in the period of a week. In the period prior to their arrival from 2020-2024 only twelve orders were obtained, which demonstrates the value they bring.

4.2 Performance

Significant progress has been made over the last year to continue the improvement journey around criminal investigations, supported in part by the agreed additional

funding for two years from general balances. However, there remains an organisational challenge in the recruitment and retention of PIP2 investigators (detectives), who are essential to maintain and sustain the improvements I am seeking in this area.

We have discussed this position and agreed that this MTFS should include proposals to build into the base budget funding for 35 police staff investigators (civilian detectives) to ensure I can retain and develop the skills and capacity needed. In 2026/2027, this cost is £1.8m and this has been built into the base budget from 2027/2028.

4.3 Planning

As mentioned earlier, I am extending the use of priority-based budgeting to critically review all areas of the Force. Whilst this exercise requires external consultancy support of £550k, the return on investment from phase 1 and the expected return on phase 2 more than cover this cost. The results have been extensive; financially to support the savings requirement and also in terms of enhancing the Force's approach to productivity and business planning.

Aligned to the capital programme, I have agreed with you to relocate the Victim Care Unit from Hawkins House to the HQ at Middlemoor. This will create fit for purpose and modern accommodation for key victim services at the centre of the police estate and provide a saving to the revenue budget from not renewing the current leaseholds. Work has commenced and will be complete before the end of 2026/2027.

4.4 People

Over the last few years, the Force has benefitted from additional police officers because of our ability to recruit above the initial targets set by the Home Office, and we have been able to retain our police officer numbers at 3,610. However, during 2025/2026 the Force has found the recruitment market for police officers more challenging to achieve the level of new recruits necessary to maintain officer numbers.

To ensure I can keep officer numbers at our highest ever level, it is necessary to amend our recruitment strategy and invest in a larger number of officers transferring from other Forces as opposed to new recruits. Changing our recruitment approach to aim for 135 transferees in 2026/2027 costs £2m in total. We have traditionally been an attractive option for transferees and have a strong pipeline of experienced officers wanting to join the Force. Whilst the cost of an experienced transferee officer is higher than a recruit, there are significant operational advantages in that transferees come with acquired skills and experience.

4.5 Capital Investment

The capital budget for 2026/2027 includes investment in creating infrastructure for the transition of the fleet to electric vehicles over the MTFS period. Furthermore, estates investments in Exmouth, North Devon, South Devon and Middlemoor HQ.

There are also investments in new contact centre software, body worn video, drones and network resilience.

5. A Balanced Budget

Whilst we are not in a position to accurately forecast future years' grant funding ahead of a spending review, it is important that we can demonstrate sound finance and value for money to HMICFRS and other external stakeholders. It is important for police officers and staff because it provides reassurance on their employer's financial position. Most importantly, the public can be assured their police service is sustainable in the medium term. This has recently been confirmed through the external auditor's positive value for money assessment.

The 2026/2027 budget requirement (including the investments and savings plans as outlined above) is balanced by a combination of government funding as announced in December 2025, a council tax of £15 and a manageable element of £3.1m of savings to be specified when the detail of the funding settlement is known. The following years – which include prudent grant estimates and council tax increases – still show areas where detailed savings strategies need to be worked through, and these will be developed through the PBB programme.

My Chief Finance Officer informs me that they consider the four-year MTFS is robust because:

- It is materially balanced in 2026/2027, albeit with a manageable element of as yet unidentified savings to be identified.
- The assumptions in spend, grant and council tax for future years are prudent.
- There are a range of feasible plans in place that will balance the budgets in 2027/2028 onward.
- The unspecified gaps that remain across the MTFS are proportionately small – around 1% of budget each year.

6. Conclusion

The 2026/2027 budget will only balance at a council tax precept increase of £15 (5.2%) with unspecified savings of £3.1m. This is the maximum council tax increase announced by the Home Office as part of the settlement and was the figure assumed by the government in its calculations. Obviously, the final decision on council tax levels remains entirely one for you and I know you are acutely aware of the impact of tax increases on the public.

Nevertheless, I recommend that you support my budget request as outlined in this report. The proposal ensures:

- Subject to clarification of grants, officer numbers will be maintained where possible.
- Police officers will not be placed into inappropriate vacant police staff posts.
- Improved performance in priority areas is sustained.

- The risk and uncertainty created by the late funding settlement is manageable. Not taking the full council tax increase would increase the unspecified savings to be identified, adding additional risk and uncertainty.
- There is a sound financial basis for the next four years.

I look forward to developing these opportunities with you. It is my belief that Devon and Cornwall Police is in a strong position with regards to both our financial planning and our improving performance. We are, at some pace now, becoming a Force with a much greater sense of purpose and pride in the service we deliver. We are also becoming much less tolerant of some of the poor performance in our recent past. I believe with this budget proposal we will have the resources we need to continue that improvement. In closing, and with your continued support, I am confident that this Force is in a very good place to deliver competent, compassionate and common-sense policing to the communities of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly over the coming years.

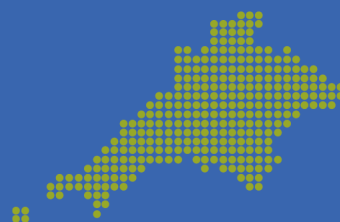
Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Vaughan'.

James Vaughan QPM MSt (Cantab)
Chief Constable

Strategic Investment Plan 2026/27

How we spend money to
prevent crime, help victims
recover and support the
policing of our communities



PCC

Office of the Police and
Crime Commissioner
Devon and Cornwall

Police and Crime Commissioners

Strategic Investments for 2026/27

Introduction

This document outlines how the Police and Crime Commissioner will invest the funding available to her to support victims of crime and reduce offending behaviours to make communities safer. It supports the priorities in the Police and Crime Plan and covers a range of interventions across policing, crime, criminal justice and community safety. In previous years this type of investment has been detailed in a Commissioning Intentions Plan, and this document supersedes that approach, and focuses on the types of investment rather than the process by which it is achieved.

The Police and Crime Commissioner is responsible for the totality of policing across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and therefore the £461m annual police budget requirement, 42.5% of which is paid for by the communities of our two counties and islands through the council tax precept. Of this budget, the Commissioner is retaining 0.64% to fund the statutory duties of her office along with 0.84% for the Strategic Investments outlined in this plan. The remaining 98.52% is given to the Chief Constable for operational policing and the budget requirements of running the largest geographical police force in England.

In addition, the Commissioner is responsible for all the income generated by policing. This includes one off grants from the government, such as the funding which support Hot Spot Policing interventions, the Ministry of Justice Grant for Victims Services, income from some road traffic offences and fees and charges.

The Commissioner does not have a legal general power of competence and therefore we can only invest in interventions which directly contribute to our core purpose of policing and crime.

This document describes the intended approach to investment for the coming year. If there are deviations from this to identified needs, and whenever this occurs, a separate decision notice will be published on our website for transparency.

Where does our funding come from?

There are six main sources of funding:

1. Annual policing settlement from the government;
2. Council Tax precept;
3. Ministry of Justice Victim Support Grant;
4. A partial element of road traffic fines;
5. Fees and charges;
6. Police Property Act Funds.

1. Annual policing settlement from the government

This is the annual settlement received from the government. Further details on how this mechanism works are detailed annually in the reports to Police and Crime Panel when the council tax precept is set. This includes both core grant and one off grants received to cover a specific purpose. These are commonly known as “specific grants”.

2. Council Tax precept

The government sets the upper limit of the precept which the Commissioner can charge annually before a referendum is required. This year it is £15. The government assumes that Police and Crime Commissioner will set this at the maximum level when it agrees the funding settlement.

3. Ministry of Justice Victim Support Grant

For the first time the MoJ have confirmed their grant to Commissioners for 2026/27 and 2027/28 in advance. This is allocated based on a national formula and is effectively the distribution of the victims’ surcharge to local policing bodies.

In recent years the MoJ have also topped up this grant with specific funding, which has influenced the way in which the money is spent at a local level with very strict grant criteria. This has focused mainly on domestic abuse and sexual violence funding and therapeutic services in this space.

4. Partial element of the road safety fines

The Commissioner convenes and chairs a road safety partnership known as Vision Zero South West to work collaboratively with local councils, Highways England and a range of other partners to take steps to reduce road deaths and casualties on our roads. Devon and Cornwall have the largest road network in England, with the majority being rural roads. This Partnership oversees how the income granted from speeding fines is allocated as it can only be used for

road safety. Vision Zero collectively decide the way in which road safety is delivered and how the funding mechanisms work. However, the level of fine and speeding thresholds that trigger a fine is a matter for the Chief Constable. The education course fee is determined locally.

5. Fees and charges

The fees and charges income is outlined in the MTFs. The main sources of income are the road safety fines outlined above, along with firearms certificates. Devon and Cornwall are an outlier for the number of firearms licences administered with over 30,000. The income generated covers approximately 43% of the cost of administration of the licencing process.

6. Police Property Act Funds

This funding is as a result of the disposal of seized or found items that cannot be returned to the owner due to either the owner not coming forward or unable to be found. A small element is donated to the Chief Constables Charity with the remainder being distributed by both the Devon Community Foundation and the Cornwall Community Foundation. Each year the Commissioner announces a theme for this grant and for 2026/27. The theme is in line with the top issue outlined in the budget survey, which is the reduction in antisocial behaviour.

Balancing competing priorities

The Commissioners own budget and short term grant funding from a variety of government funding streams is grouped into two main areas – the funding that is required to run the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the funding which provides services to victims and to deliver services required under the Police and Crime Plan.

It is important to note that any investment from the Commissioners own budget is funding which is being diverted away from policing and there needs to be a strong justification for doing so. The Commissioner consults with the Chief Constable before making final decisions.

The Commissioner therefore invests funds into services from her own budget, to minimise the risk of volatility and to provide further local flexibility to deliver the Police and Crime Plan objectives.

To specifically support victims the approach is therefore based on an ecosystem of services which support victims at all stages across the CJ system.

In reaching any funding decisions the Commissioner is mindful of any convening powers that she has and allocates funding to support and maintain additional strategic partnership support. The Commissioner will prioritise her funding to further these objectives with allocations reflective of the level of integration and collaboration being achieved between the Commissioner and other partners wherever possible.

The Strategic Investment Plan aims to:

- Compliment investments in police improvement.
- set out the range of areas where the Commissioner will invest in services over the coming financial year aligned to the Police and Crime Plan priorities of tackling anti-social behaviour; drugs and alcohol; reducing serious violence and theft
- identify the range of mechanisms through which the Commissioner invests in improvements that focus on reducing repeat victims, repeat offenders and repeat locations of crime.
- achieve value for money from all support services ensuing that they are closely aligned to policing and criminal justice services.

The objectives to be achieved are:

- To achieve long term advantages in supporting victims and reducing repeat victims, offenders and locations to support delivery of the Police and Crime Plan and enhance productivity and efficiency of policing.

- To provide a framework for decision making for all financial intentions against the five priorities of: anti-social behaviour; drugs and alcohol; serious violence, theft and services for victims.
- Make best use of limited OPCC funding and capacity and ensure that it adds value to the delivery of policing services.

The mechanism by which funding is allocated

The way in which the Commissioner achieves the stated objectives needs to be flexible to meet the variety of circumstances across both counties and islands. The Commissioners funding is not for the exclusive use for commissioning services externally and may be used to spot purchase services or provide additional capacity into policing depending on circumstances. The mechanism used to allocate funding are broadly categorised as:

- Commissioning - only where market certainty is required and services are required across both counties and a contractual arrangement is required. Most of this activity is through pooled funding with partners and the OPCC will only act as lead commissioner where there is no viable alternative.
- Community Safety Grants – for specialist services, which will be for a maximum of two years, and based on identified needs. This limit is due to the uncertainty of the future of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner after 2028. Grant giving is not a strategy in and of itself. The OPCC will give grants where it furthers the ambitions of the police and crime plan and our statutory duties. However, we are not an organisation of sufficient size and scale to grant fund organisations indefinitely. We will generally give grants where:
 - There is a gap in the market, and we can stimulate a response with short term funding.
 - Where short term seed funding may facilitate a funding response from other interested parties.
 - Where there is a specialist provider within the Criminal Justice system which would have a consequential impact on policing if the service was not provided.
 - Where we are trying to build an evidence base and test a new approach.
 - Where the benefits of grant funding result in a reduction to requiring police to act.
- Spot purchases – to provide additional capacity into policing or the community and voluntary sector in response to specific needs.
- Pooled budgets – where the OPCC is not a big enough organisation to lead; only with organisations that have longevity i.e. other public sector bodies. We wish to seek stability in the provision of services in Devon and Cornwall and will wherever possible seek to pool budgets for contracted services wherever possible. However, we do not aim to be the lead commissioner of services as we are not best placed to do this. We will contribute expertise, data, funding and knowledge of the systems locally to support others to lead at scale.

Visibility of Services

One of the challenges of operating in pooled budget arrangements over such a complex geographical area with multiple partners is that the end recipient of a service funded in part of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner is not always obvious. For example, in 2025/26 the Commissioner invested £1.9m in services administered in localities by upper tier local authorities. The recognition of individual funding streams is not provided to the end service user or provided back to the Commissioner with a granular level of outcome for the investment. This makes funding decisions complex particularly when the Commissioner is only a small investor in such services. This is not a sustainable position for the OPCC given the challenging to policing budgets. This is partly what has led to a lack of understanding of the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner and its impact.

The OPCC will not financially invest in bodies outside of policing where those other bodies have the statutory duties and responsibilities to provide those services as it is not the Commissioners responsibility to do this.

The way funding is allocated is a mixture of:

- **Commissioned Services and Pooled Budgets**

In order to secure stability of funding for victims service these will tend to be services which have long term contracts associated with them. These will generally be services which are sourced in partnership with other public sector bodies including the NHS and local authorities as a mechanism to pool resources and are based on a needs assessment.

- **Community Safety Grants**

Community Safety grants can be issued by the commissioner to any organisation to further the priorities in the police and crime plan and will vary from year to year.

- **Investments into policing (over an above the budget set)**

The Commissioner may provide additional funding to policing throughout the year from her own budget to assist in the delivery of specific programmes of work which further the delivery of the efficient and effective policing.

- **Support for national policing infrastructure**

There are a number of national agreements which the all the Commissioners are signatory which receive regular funding against a formula.

- **Levering in new funding into policing from national sources**

There are a variety of opportunities which present themselves nationally either from central government or other funders within a budget year which the Police and Crime Commissioner may secure for specific areas of work.

- **Decommissioning Services**

From time to time, services will be decommissioned where there is no longer an unidentified need, or alternative funding streams available to continue with the service, or best practice required a change in service direction.

Evaluation of the Services Provided

Service User Voices and the Publics Voice

One of the roles of the Police and Crime Commissioner is to seek the views of the public and amplify these voices into improving services for those who come into contact with policing and criminal justice services. The voices of the public including lived experience and expertise of communities are heard through a wide variety of OPCC engagement activity and are core to this investment plan. There is no single approach to hearing to and responding to this voice but there are a wide variety of mechanisms through which these voices are heard both directly to the OPCC but also within policing.

Examples of this type of activity are detailed in the Police and Crime Commissioners Annual Report and on the OPCC website.

Monitoring of effectiveness

The OPCC will require all those who are recipients of funding to be accountable for the way in which they spend the allocated funds, regardless of whether this is a contractual arrangement or under a grant agreement. The level of accountability will be proportionate to the funding allocated on a risk based approach. Generally, the OPCC will act with the principles of a “thin client” with the expectation of service accountability on the recipient of the funding through pre-determined performance indicators.

Risk appetite

As a small organisation the OPCC can rarely be the lead commissioner for complex services and multi-year contracts but will use its convening powers to bring partners together to join up services and reduce inconsistencies in service provision across its geographic area wherever possible. Where services are purchased which directly interface with the operation of policing services, the OPCC will ensure that all services meet the operational needs of the Chief Constable and there are clear pathways for referral to services.

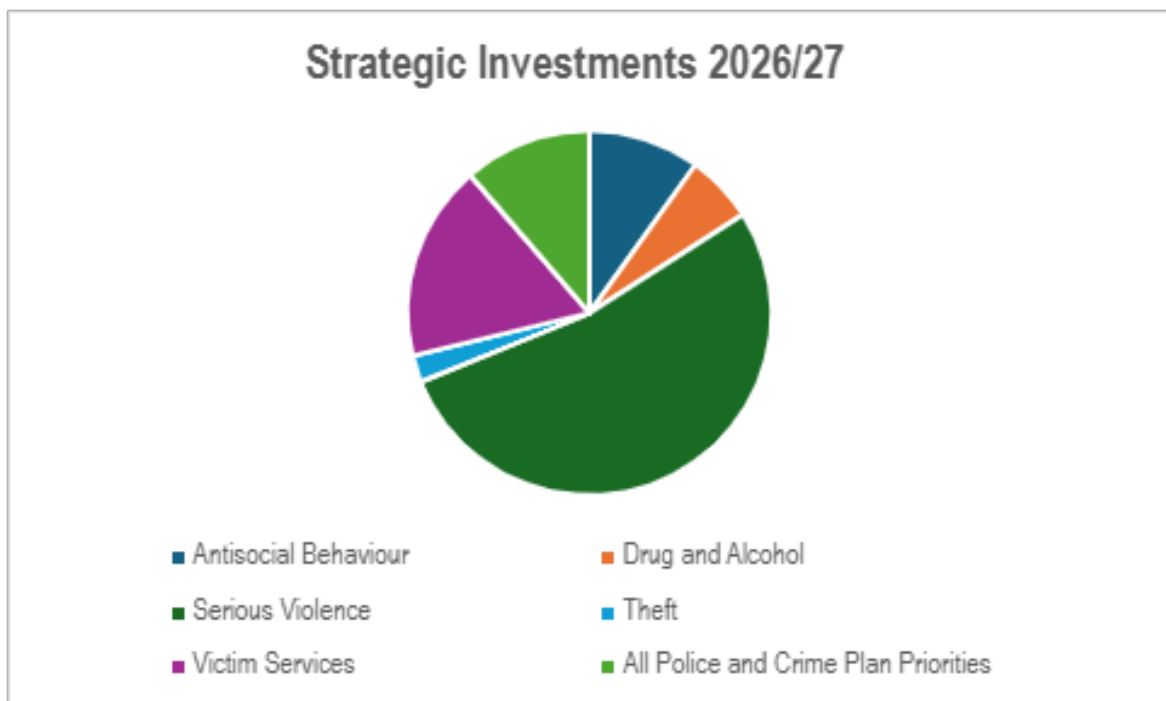
Summary of Current Provision

Currently the OPCC spend £7.9m on services for victims and offenders. The majority of this investment is for victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence, in line with the volume crime profile across our two counties and islands.

Where appropriate spend has been transferred to the force. In 2026/27 there are three areas where the spend in 2025/26 was embedded within the force. Further areas identified will be considered and transferred to the force if appropriate

- The Victim Care Unit 585k – this service is provided in the force. We will provide scrutiny on this areas part of holding the Chief Constable to account.
- ASB Lawyers £113.3k – this pilot was started by the Commissioner in 2024/25. This has been extremely successful so has transferred to the force as business as usual.
- The Police Museum Grant £160k – this was transferred to the Commissioner in 2024/25 but with the abolition of the Commissioner role in 2028 it is appropriate for this to now be managed by the force.

The pie chart below shows the spending by category:



The detailed list of spend is shown below:

	2026/27
	£
Antisocial Behaviour	
ASB Youth Outreach	187,500
Safe Buses	20,000
Night Buses	100,000
Street Focus/Marshalls	360,000
ASB Mediation	15,000
Premier League Police Partnership Pilot	100,000
	782,500
Drug and Alcohol	
Funding for drug treatment services for CJ Cohort	340,000
Complex Needs Service for Young Adults	48,000
Drug and Alcohol intelligence	90,000
	478,000
Serious Violence	
Specialist Domestic Abuse Services for victims	909,265
Specialist Sexual Violence Services for victims	1,020,000
Independent Sexual Violence Advisor Service	348,886
SARC Services	354,479
Additional MoJ funding for Domestic Abuse/Sexual Violence	1,094,410
Reduce reoffending - Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse	160,584
Disruptive approach Violence Against Women and Girls	300,000
	4,187,624
Theft	
Crimestoppers Capacity	22,000
Neighbourhood Watch Capacity	40,000
Theft and business crime	124,000
National Rural Crime Network	2,500
	188,500
Victim Services	
Victim Services (multi crime)	442,499
Restorative Justice Service	306,745
Children and Young Person/Family Victims Services	326,692
Child Exploitation Service	204,000
Support for Third Party victims of crime	20,000
Protected Characteristics Grants for victims of crime	80,000
	1,379,936

All Police and Crime Plan Priorities	
National Police Services	3,724
Youth Justice Services	525,735
Support for Offenders whilst attending court	60,000
Crimestoppers anti-corruption line	8,692
Emerging Priorities	300,000
	898,151
	<u>7,914,711</u>

Value for Money

We undertake an annual value for money review of all of the services we invest in. This review includes (but is not limited to): service need, number of referrals, cost per referrals, number of police referrals to services, transparency of services to the public and how public money is being spent, partners transparency on how our funding will be used.

All spend covered by the MoJ grant is rigorously audited each year including the performance data.

Regular review and in year changes

Value for Money reviews often change our approach. For example, in 2025/26 we brought one of our victims' contracts back in house and saved £230k per annum.

Our scrutiny of how the police refer into our services has also identified that these referrals are inconsistent, and work is underway with the Chief Constable to improve this approach. Funding may change to reflect this, as we cannot underwrite service indefinitely and new glide paths to service improvement need to be put in place.

Budget Risk Assessment 2026/27

	Annual Budget	Detail	Mitigation
Provisional Settlement	£485.9m	The provisional settlement was announced on 18 th December 2025. There was minimal detail around what was core grant and what was specific grant. Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly have seen an overall increase of 4.2% (based on HO Assumptions). The grant element has increased by an average of 3.8%, however, the D&C increase is 2.8%. With so little detail is it hard to assess why this is the case. Further detail is expected before the end of January.	Ongoing dialogue with the Home Office. Prudent assumptions.
Funding Formula	£279.4m (Home Office grant funding)	The review of the funding formula has been paused. The review of the funding formula will look at the way in which the grant is distributed. In a previous attempt to review the formula D&C were significantly adversely affected.	Active engagement in the consultation process. Comprehensive submissions to HO covering sparsity and seasonality. Influencing of central government.
PCC Reform	£?	Following the announcement of the abolition of the role of the Police and Crime very little detail is available around the local structures for all the functions under the current legislation. The cost of this decision is unknown. This could overlap with police reform and local government reorganisation.	Publication of the White Paper to provide additional detail. Early engagement with the Home Office and working with the national teams to understand the full detail. Provision of a dedicated resource to support the change process.
Police Reform	£?	Following announcements of police reform from the Home Office, changes are likely to be made to the national, regional and local structures. This will overlap with PCC reform and local government reorganisation. The detail of any changes have not yet been provided.	Publication of the White Paper to provide additional detail. Early engagement with the Home Office.
Local Government Reorganisation	Not expecting additional cost for policing	Following the publication of the English Devolution White Paper in December 2024 it is uncertain of the detailed impact on Devon and Cornwall Police. This could have significant implications. It is not expected that this would incur additional cost but coupled with the PCC reform and Police Reform this will put more uncertainty and change into the system.	Involvement with LA's on their plans. A watching brief at this stage on the local government landscape in Devon and Cornwall.
Council Tax Funding	£206.5m	The cost of living crisis may have an impact on the level of council tax paid and/or increase in the number of council tax payers requiring Council Tax Support.	Active engagement with the collecting authorities to ensure early sight of issues and problems.
Council Tax Assumptions	£206.5m	The assumptions of the level of council tax, tax base increases and surpluses are considered carefully. The tax base is based on proposed house building levels and surpluses are based on historical trends. The inclusion is subject to a separate risk below.	The level of council tax, tax base increases and surpluses are reviewed annually. The tax base and surpluses are also tested at intervals during the financial year.
Council Tax assumptions for second homes	Between £6m and £10m (approx.)	2025/26 was the first year for the inclusion of a 200% charge for second homes. All collecting authorities in the area agreed the change. There are approximately 30,000 properties classified as second homes in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Areas in Wales saw a drop off in future years of the number of second homes.	2026/27 have remained reasonable robust and have exceeded the prudent assumptions made. For future years a cautious approach will still be taken on any increase to the council tax base and any surplus/deficit used in the assumptions.

Increase in pay award above assumptions	1% increase in pay award equates to £4m p.a.	The level of pay award cannot be guaranteed as it is agreed nationally. This is an area of concern as 87% of the overall budget relates to staffing. The pay award for 2025/26 was agreed at 4.2% with one off funding from the Home Office in 2025/26 to support 1.4% of the pay award. This funding will not be repeated for 2026/27.	The agreed pay award comes into effect part way through a financial year. Therefore, the immediate effect is reduced and provides time to build in the permanent increase into the MTFS. The inherent deficit of 1.4% for 2025/26 will require additional savings. In prior years the Home Office have provided additional support a proportion of the pay award, however, this cannot be guaranteed.
Inflation (non pay)	£2.2m	Inflation levels have reduced significantly since the peak in October 2022 of 11.7%. However, they continue to be above the government target of 2%. The increase in the employer rates for supplies will also impact in this area.	Continual review of inflation and national projections.
Pension Revaluations	Police Officers and Police staff	The Police Officer and Police Staff pension schemes are subject to triennial valuations. The employer rate can change depending on this valuation. These revaluations are especially susceptible to increases due to the increased pension remedy costs as a result of the McCloud judgement. There are no revaluations due in 2026/27. The triennial valuation of the police staff pension fund saw a drop in the employer rate.	The police officer pension and the Police Staff pension are due to be revalued during the life of this MTFS. Progress on this will be carefully monitored.
Future Capital funding		The Home Office grant allocation for capital schemes has ceased. Once the ability to generate capital receipts reduces this will mean insufficient funds are available and the capital programme will be mainly reliant on contributions from Revenue and borrowing.	A proactive development approach to the disposal of assets to maximise capital receipts. Increasing the level of revenue contribution to capital by £1m per year over the life of the MTFS.
Grant Income	Unknown	Grant income is available to the OPCC and the Force on a regular basis. This can come from a variety of funding streams. The grant will be subject to a grant agreement.	The approval of a grant must be authorised by either the OPCC Chief Executive or the OPCC Treasurer. This assures that any grant conditions are not onerous on the organisation. Particular attention if paid to the exit strategy.
Major operations	Unknown	An annual allocation is included in revenue for the cost of major operations. This is expected to be sufficient in most years. However, in the event of a particularly significant, high profile operation costs could easily exceed the revenue allocation, which has occurred in 2025/26.	Revenue funding. Potential access to Government grant for expenditure in excess of 1% of force budgets, although this cannot be guaranteed. General balances are available for additional costs. The Reserves Strategy does assess the adequacy of general balances with this issue forming part of that assessment.
Uninsured Liabilities and claims	Unknown	The key uninsured liabilities would be those resulting from employment tribunals or other legal challenges. While often low level, these can have the potential to be significant.	Proactive assessment of risk, legal/HR involvement at an early stage. Risk assessed as part of the level of general balances.
Treasury Management	Unknown	Devon and Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner routinely invest funds to optimise return. Such investments will always carry a degree of risk, which is expected to be manageable within the parameters of the Treasury Management Strategy.	Adherence to, and annual review of the Treasury Management Strategy.
Other unexpected expenditure/ Working Capital	Unknown	Throughout the year it is usual for expenditure plans to be revised and change, which is all manageable through the usual budget monitoring process. It is equally possible for unplanned requirement to surface outside those already covered e.g., a higher than anticipated number of officers could retire on ill health grounds with associated costs.	Close, accurate budget monitoring throughout the year. Highlighting potential variances as soon as possible.

Your Safety, Your Say

SURVEY RESULTS 2026

**Safe, resilient,
connected communities**
where everyone plays their part

Your voice in policing



PCC
Office of the Police and
Crime Commissioner
Devon and Cornwall

FOIA Open

About the survey

The 'Your Safety, Your Say' survey was launched in December 2025 on the Commonplace Community Engagement Platform.

The launch was featured on BBC Spotlight, BBC News Online, BBC Local Radio and various other news websites.

The survey has been promoted in multiple posts on social media.

In-person public engagement events promoting the survey have been held at venues across Devon and Cornwall, including at youth groups in Bodmin and Plymouth, in shopping areas in Exeter and East Devon, and at colleges and cultural centres in West Cornwall and North Devon.



Sample Size

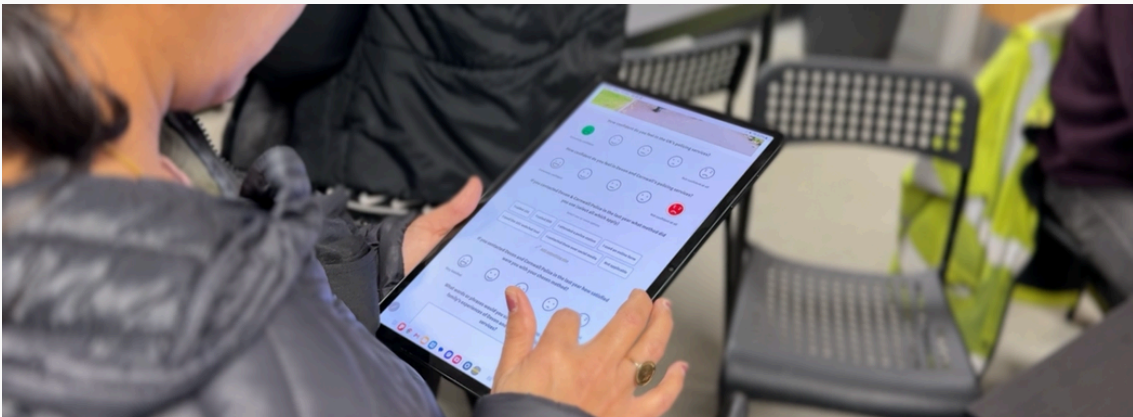
The survey results included in this report cover the period 11 December 2025 to 12 January 2026.

A total of 1,533 people responded to the survey in this period.

This is an 18% increase on the figure of 1,297 responses received in the same period last year.

Based on population figures from the 2021 census a sample size of 385 participants was required to give statistically significant results with a margin of error of +/- 5%.

It is important to note that the people who responded were self-selecting and their views may not always be representative of the general population.

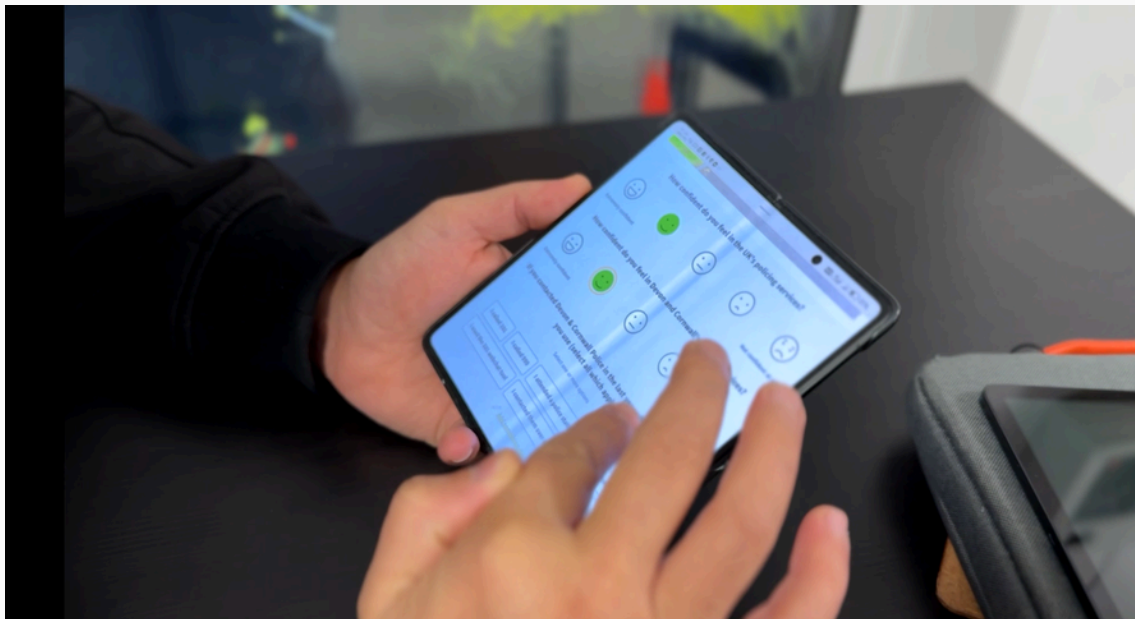


Questions

As in previous years, the survey asked about confidence in policing and policing priorities.

New for this survey were questions about:

- Investment in tackling violence against women and girls
- Community cohesion
- The replacement of police and crime commissioners and police force mergers



Confidence in Policing

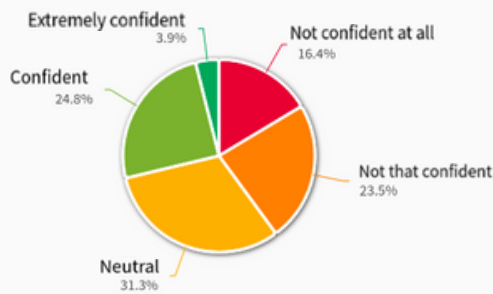
How confident do you feel in Devon and Cornwall's policing services?



- People continue to feel more confident about Devon and Cornwall Police than they do about police across the whole of the UK
- The proportion of people saying they feel 'confident' or 'extremely confident' in the police has increased by 3 points year-on-year both in Devon and Cornwall Police and in police across the UK
- There has been a slight increase in the proportion of people saying they are 'not confident at all' in Devon and Cornwall Police – up by 2.2 points year-on-year (from 16.4% to 18.6%)

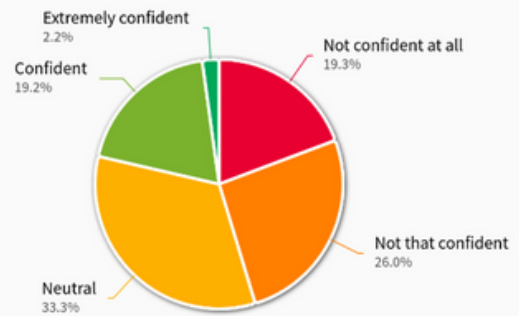
2025 Results

How confident do you feel in Devon and Cornwall's policing services?



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

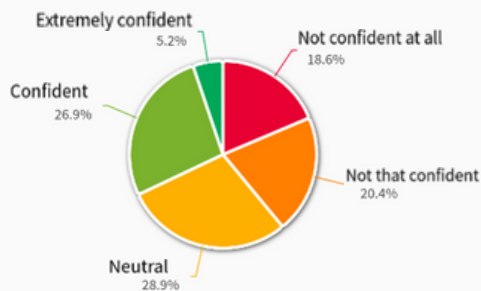
How confident do you feel in the UK's policing services?



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

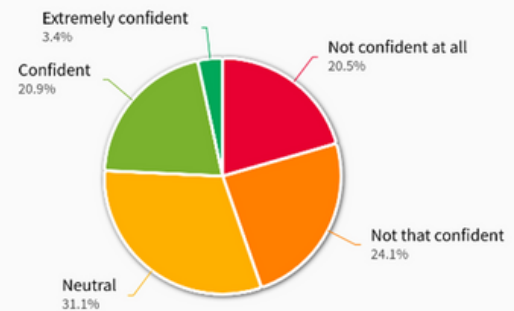
2026 Results

How confident do you feel in Devon and Cornwall's policing services?



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

How confident do you feel in the UK's policing services?



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

People selecting 'confident' or 'extremely confident'

Devon and Cornwall 32% (29% last year)
UK 24% (21% last year)

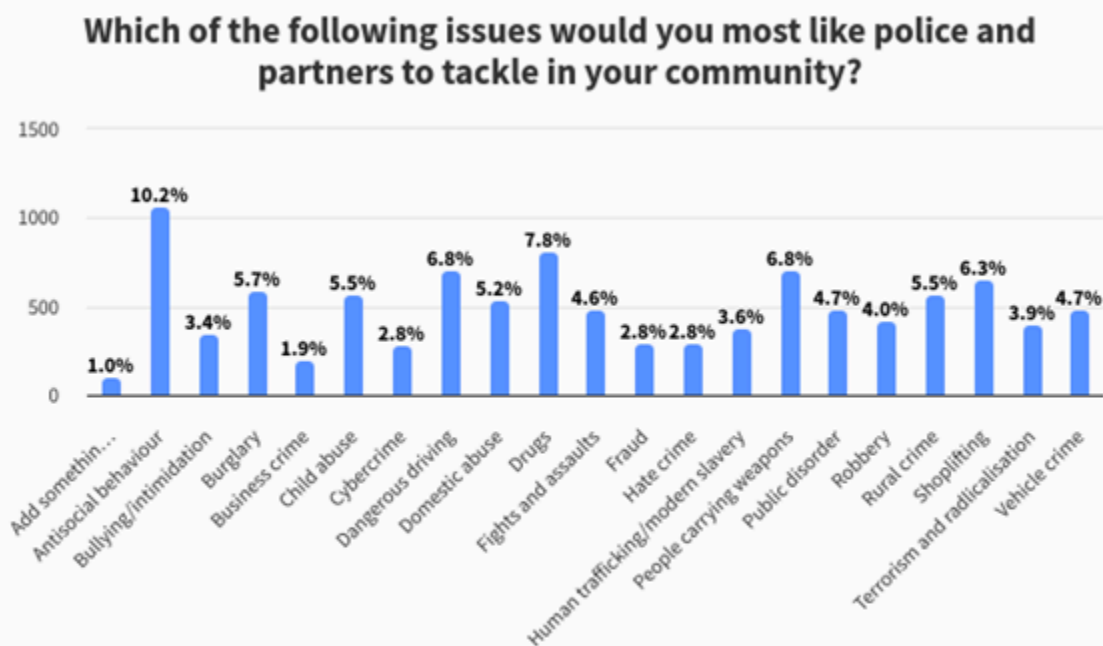
People selecting 'not that confident' or 'not confident at all'

Devon and Cornwall 39% (40% last year)
UK 45% (45% last year)

Policing Priorities

- When people were asked which issue they would most like the police to tackle they selected 'anti-social behaviour' more than any other crime-type
- After antisocial behaviour, the next four most frequently selected issues were 'drugs', 'people carrying weapons', 'dangerous driving' and 'shoplifting'
- The top five most frequently selected concerns were the same this year as last year

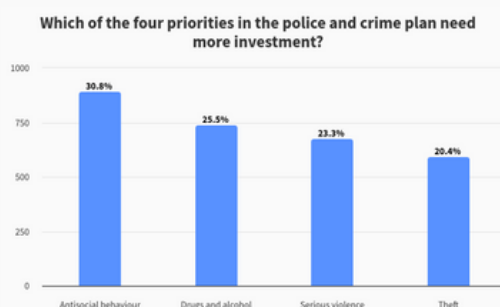
2026 Results



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Top five most frequently selected concerns

- 1: ASB 10.2% (9.6% last year)
- 2: Drugs 7.8% (7.4% last year)
- 3: People Carrying weapons 6.8% (7.0% last year)
- 4: Dangerous driving 6.8% (6.9% last year)
- 5: Shoplifting 6.3% (6.2% last year)



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

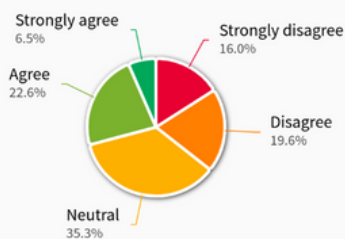
- When people were asked which of the priorities in the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan needed more investment 'anti-social behaviour' was the most frequently selected answer

Investment in Policing

- The proportion of people who agree they get 'value for money' from the police part of their council tax has stayed the same year-on-year
- 29.1% of people selected 'agree' or 'strongly agree' when asked if the police part of the council tax represented value for money last year, compared with 29.2% this year

2025 Results

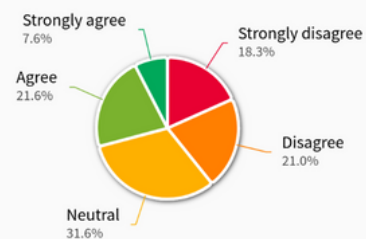
The table below shows the amount paid by Devon and Cornwall households this year, via their council tax bills, for policing (the precept). Do you agree it represents value for money?



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

2026 Results

The table below shows the amount paid by Devon and Cornwall households this year, via their council tax bills, for policing (the precept). Do you agree it represents value for money?

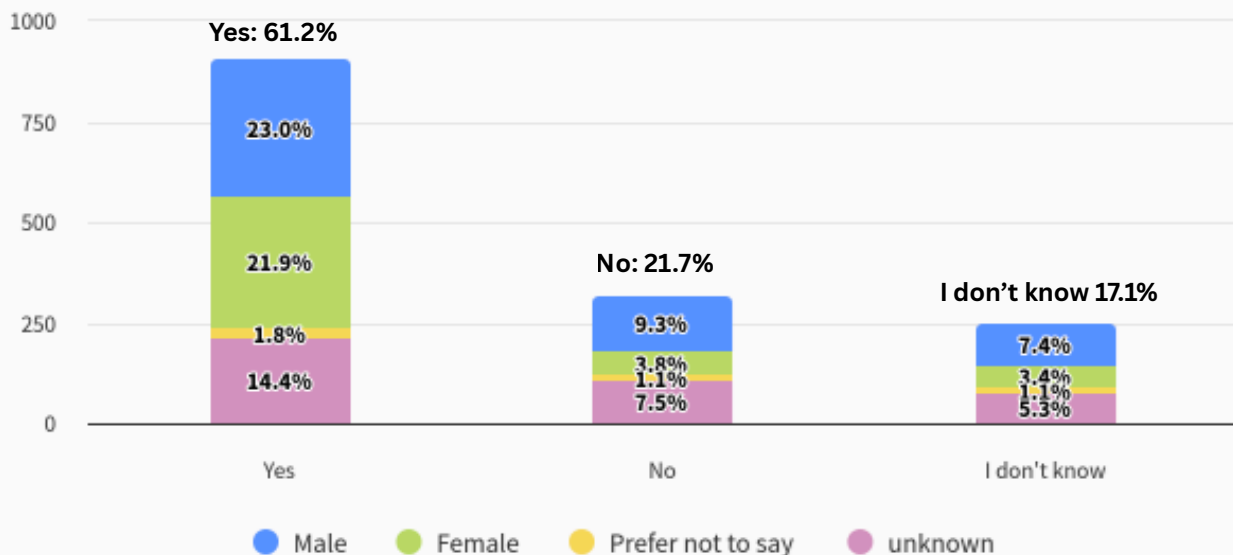


All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Funding to tackle violence against women and girls

- 61% of people said they would like the Commissioner to spend more money on tackling Violence Against Women and Girls
- Most of the people who said 'yes' were male (23%)

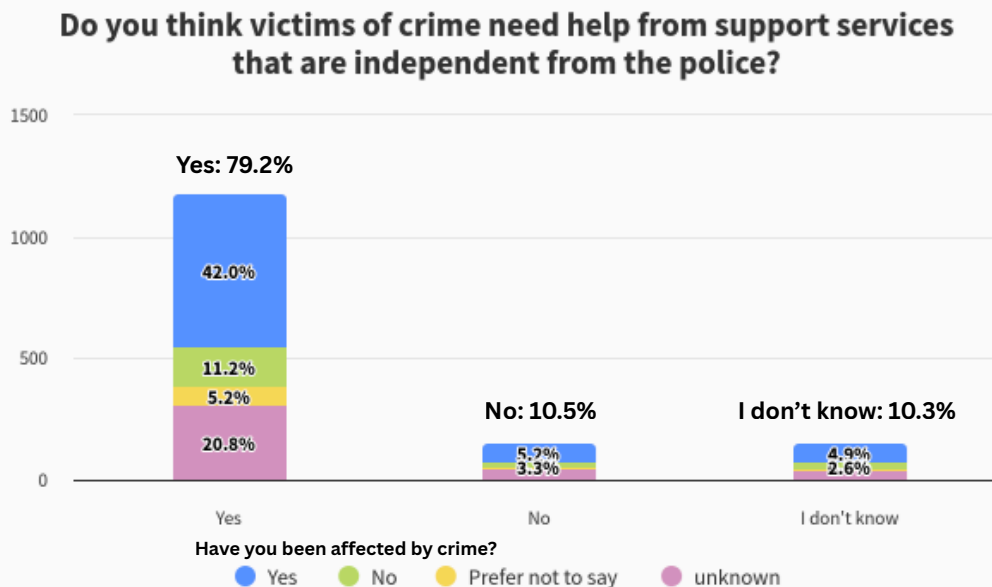
The Government wants to halve violence against women and girls. Would you like the Commissioner to invest more money to help achieve this?



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Funding for victim services

- 79% of people said victims need support from services “that are independent from the police”
- Most of the people who said ‘yes’ had been affected by crime (42%)

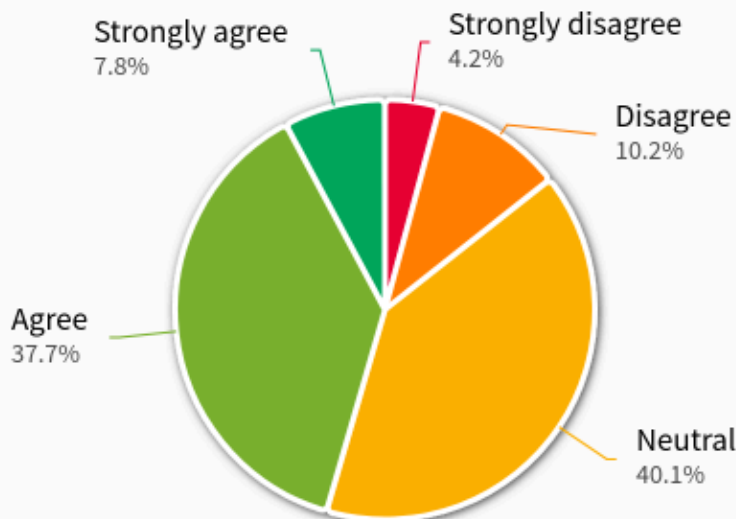


All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Community Cohesion

- When asked if their area is a place “where people from different backgrounds get on together” 45.5% of people selected ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’

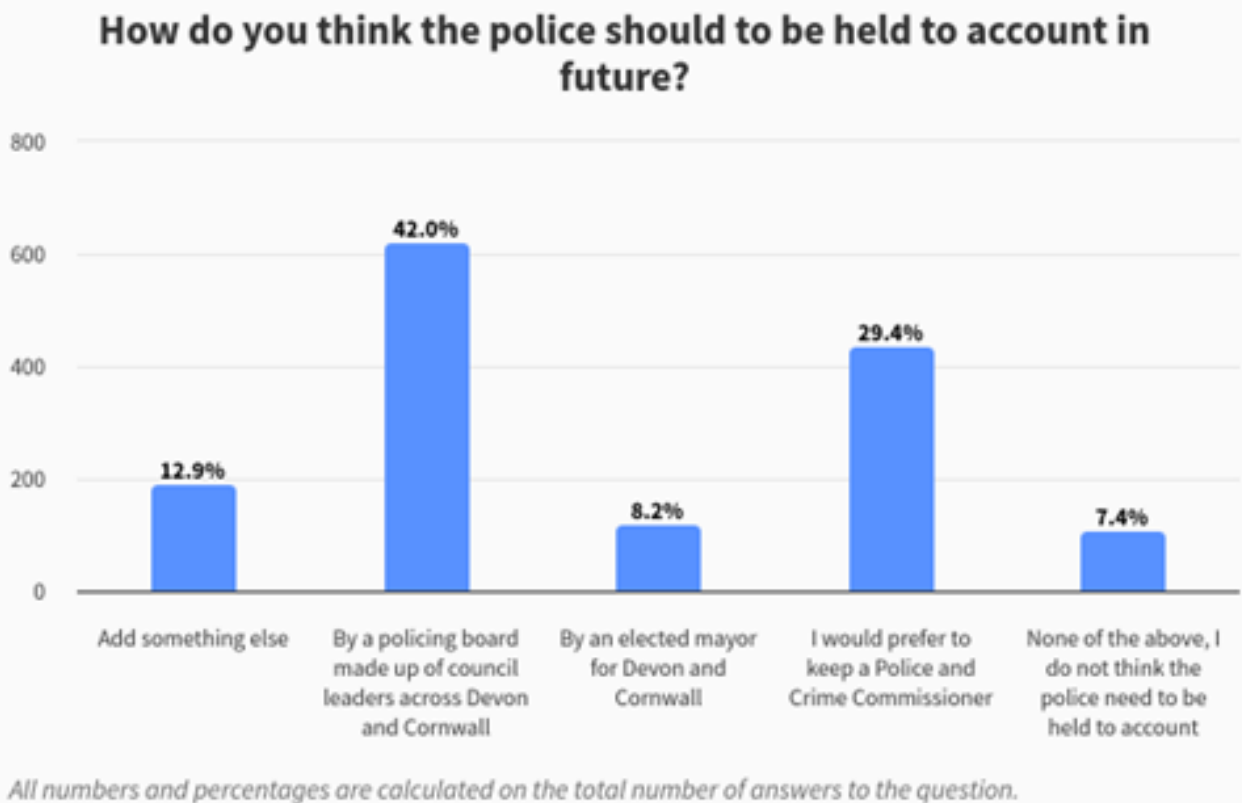
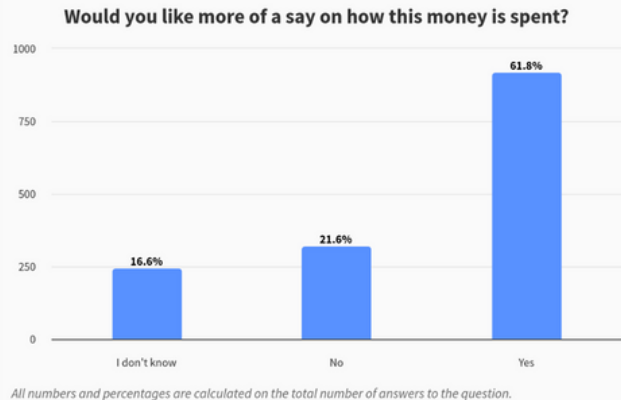
My local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Police Commissioner Replacement

- 62% of people said they would like “more of a say” on how the police part of the council tax is spent
- Most people said they would like police and crime commissioners to be replaced by a policing board made up of council leaders across Devon and Cornwall (42%)

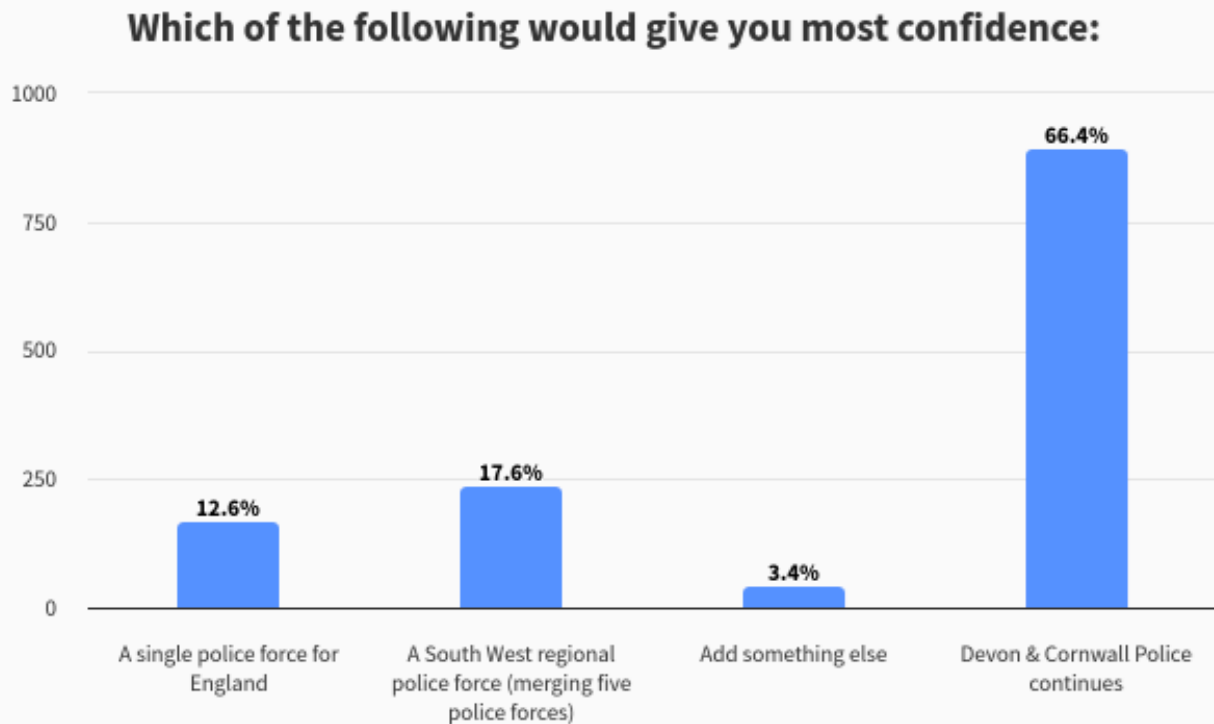


Summary of comments made by the 12.9% of people who chose to ‘add something else’ in response to this question:

- “Elected mayor for Cornwall”
- “By a policing board made up of lay people”
- “By a board of ex police officers who actually know the job”
- “Independent ombudsman type board”
- “A wide range of responsible people sit on a board”
- “An independent body”
- “Young people have a unanimous consensus”
- “I advocate Fifth Nation Status and devolved powers over police and crime prevention for Kernow. Meur ras hag oll an gwella. [Cornish for “Best wishes to everyone”]”

Police Force Mergers

- When asked about the possibility of police force mergers, 66% of people said they would like Devon and Cornwall police to continue
- 1.5% of people expressed a preference for a separate police force for Cornwall



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Summary of comments made by the 3.4% of people who chose to 'add something else' in response to this question:

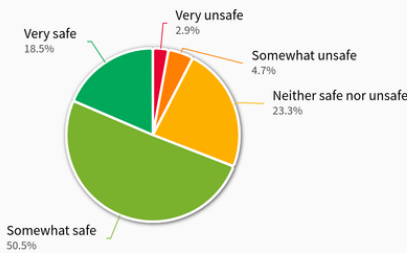
- “Cornwall police force answering to Cornwall”
- “Cornwall and Devon should have separate police forces”
- “A separate force for Cornwall, recognising our minority status and unique challenges”
- “Back to Cornwall and Devon separately. Cornwall isn't England. Never has been never will be”
- “Devon, Cornwall and Somerset”
- “Devon, Cornwall and Dorset”
- “A UK Police Force will be more cost effective, have no border issues, will have better national IT systems and have common agreed standards.”
- “None of the above would help sort out the problems with the police”
- “None of them give me confidence”
- “I think the administrative/organisation structure is immaterial, what matters is the quality of service delivery”

Young voices

- 173 young people completed our 'Young Voices in Policing' survey between April 2025 and January 2026 (compared with 325 the previous year)
- 60% of young people said they felt safe or very safe in Devon & Cornwall (compared with 67% the previous year)
- 42% said they were either confident or very confident in Devon and Cornwall Police (compared with 54% the previous year)
- Young people said 'threats or intimidation' was the crime they had experienced most, and this was the same last year

April 2024 - Jan 2025

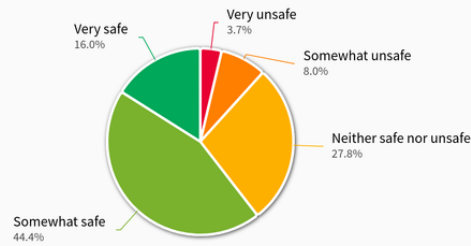
How safe do you feel in Devon and Cornwall?



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

April 2025 - Jan 2026

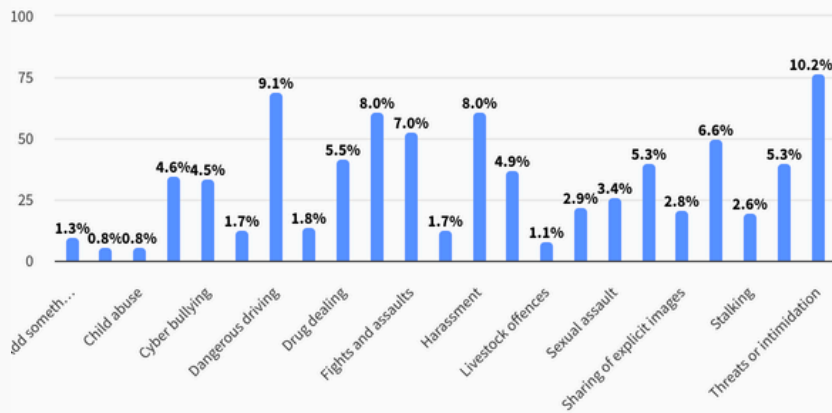
How safe do you feel in Devon and Cornwall?



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

April 2024 - Jan 2025

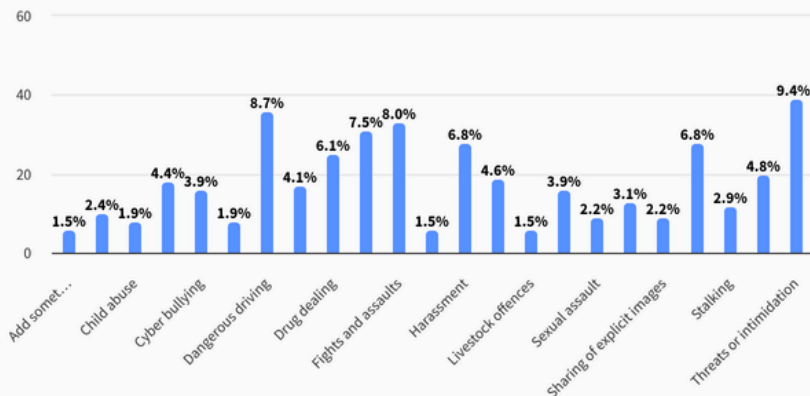
Which of the following crimes have you personally experienced or witnessed in the past 18 months?



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

April 2025 - Jan 2026

Which of the following crimes have you personally experienced or witnessed in the past 18 months?



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

Demographics

Sex

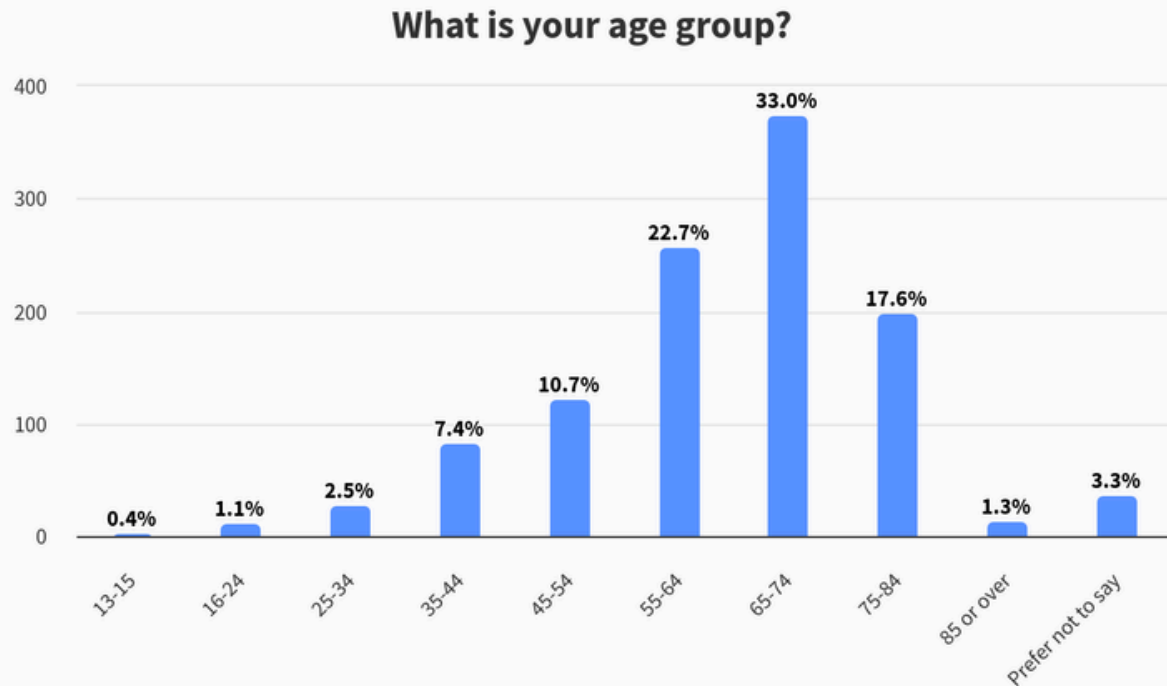
- 54% of the people who completed our surveys this year said they were male
- 41% said they were female

Ethnicity

- 86% of the people who completed our surveys this year described themselves as 'White English/Welsh/Scottish'
- 5% wrote 'Cornish' when given the option to add an ethnicity not listed

Age

- A third of the people who completed our surveys this year were aged 65-74



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

If your ethnicity is not in the list, please specify:



All numbers and percentages are calculated on the total number of answers to the question.

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

The following definitions of technical terms used in these reports may help the general reader:

ARV	Armed Response Vehicle
ASB	Antisocial Behaviour
BAU	Business As Usual
BIB	Business Improvement District
BWV	Body Worn Video
CDI	Crime Data Integrity
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CIPFA	The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, the professional body that sets accounting standards for the public sector.
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CMA	Competition and Markets Authority
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CSA	Childhood Sexual Abuse
CSE	Childhood Sexual Exploitation
CSP	Community Safety Partnership
CSR	Comprehensive Spending Review
CT	Counter Terrorism
CT	Council Tax
DCP	Devon and Cornwall Police
DBS Income	Disclosure and Barring Service Income – Employee checks
DCLG Formula	Department of Communities of Local Government Funding
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
FMS	Force Management Statement
ERT	Enhanced Records Team
ESN	Emergency Services Network
GDP	Gross Domestic Product

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

The following definitions of technical terms used in these reports may help the general reader:

HMICFRS	His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services
IOPC	Independent Office for Police Conduct
HO	Home Office
HQ	Head Quarters
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ICV	Independent Custody Visitor
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Advisors
IFRS	International Financial Reporting Standards
IPM	Independent Panel Member
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
ISD	Integrated Service Delivery
ISVA	Independent Sexual Violence Advisors
LAAP	Local Authority Accounting Panel – which sets accounting rules for the public sector.
LCJB	Local Criminal Justice Board
LGPS	Local Government Pension Scheme
LQA	Legally Qualified Advisor
LQM	Legally Qualified Person
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOSOVO	Management of Sexual Offenders and Violent Offenders
MTFS	Medium Term Financial Strategy, this is the financial plan and management of funding, spending and savings over a four year period
MRP	Minimum Revenue Provision
National non-domestic rates (NNDR)	Rates set nationally and paid by local businesses to the Government, then shared by local and police authorities in proportion to their resident population
NAO	National Audit Office
NCA	National Crime Agency
NPAS	National Police Air Service
NPCC	National Police Chiefs' Council
NPG	Neighbourhood Policing Grant
OBR	Office for Budget Responsibility

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

The following definitions of technical terms used in these reports may help the general reader:

OCG	Organised Crime Group
ONS	Office for National Statistics
OPCC	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
Pension scheme (unfunded)	Members pay a standard contribution each year. The employer then pays the cash difference between members' annual contributions and the annual cost of benefits to contributors and their dependants.
PEQF	Policing Education Qualifications Framework
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
PNC	Police National Computer
Precept	A levy collected by District and Unitary Councils from council taxpayers on behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
PRSR	Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011
REFCUS	Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute
RCCO	Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay
ROCU	Regional Organised Crime Units
SARC	Sexual Assault Referral Centre
SOC	Serious and Organised Crime
SODAIT	Sexual Offences and Domestic Abuse Investigation Team
UNIT	UNIFI Improvement Team
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
VFM	Value for Money
VZSW	Vision Zero South West