

## MESSAGE FROM DAME VERA BAIRD QC, NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

COUNCIL TAX INFORMATION 2018/19

**Just before Christmas, the Government announced the amount of funding that Northumbria Police would receive. When setting the figure, the government assumed that I would increase the police precept element of council tax by £12.00 (for a band D property) – if I didn't do this, it would mean a cut of more than £5 million to our budget. That said, I firmly believe that it is local residents who should decide not government, which is why I went out to consultation on this matter.**

Central government budget cuts continue to hit Northumbria police force hard, since 2010 our income has been cut by more than £135 million. Together with the Chief Constable, I have looked for further savings in every area of business. Since the cuts came into effect, we have been reliant upon reserves. That position cannot continue as reserves are nearing the lowest level allowed to ensure we can deal with any emergency. My plan is to maintain reserves at a level necessary to ensure Northumbria Police are able to keep you and your family safe.

The recruitment of police officers is what you have told me you want to see happen and that is what I have delivered. New police officers on our streets further delivers our commitment to neighbourhood policing.

As mentioned above, when calculating the overall policing budget for Northumbria, the Government had anticipated that the police precept element of council tax bills would rise by £12 for a Band D property, most residents in Northumbria live in a Band A property so the increase is £8 or 15p per week. There was no negotiation with government, if we want to maintain our vital neighbourhood policing services, we have to accept this decision. However, I wanted to know what local residents thought, so we conducted surveys on line, via email, telephone and chatted with local residents and it was heartening to see your overwhelming support for our police force. 80% of those we spoke to agreed that paying extra for policing was worth it. I can assure you that I will continue to deliver financial prudent management, to protect the services that matter to you.

Despite all the challenges, Northumbria Police is proud to serve our local communities, we excel at delivering for local people and HMIC inspections reinforce this. We are a learning organisation and always want to improve, we relish feedback from residents, partners and government as it allows us to improve further.

The extra money generated through the police precept will continue to fund the priorities that you have helped set out in the Police & Crime Plan, find out more on my website: [www.northumbria-pcc.gov.uk](http://www.northumbria-pcc.gov.uk). Thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes



Dame Vera Baird QC  
Police & Crime Commissioner – Northumbria