



CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

25TH February 2010

1. MEETING

The Bedfordshire Police Authority met on 12 February 2010.

The main purpose of the meeting was to consider the 2010/11 Revenue Budget but included are other areas which will be of interest.

2. REVENUE BUDGET 2010/11

The revenue budget for 2010-11 has been set at £102.821M, an increase of £3.314M over last year. The increase in the policing precept, has been kept as low as possible at 3% (£4.21 p.a.) for a Band D household, which is approximately 8 pence per week.

To maintain Council tax levels at a minimum the Authority has overseen some significant process reviews over the past few months, that will provide the public with a more visible police force through a more focused response function and better crime investigation.

This level of budget will mean that resources can be redirected into areas of organised criminality to enable a greater ability to tackle organised crime associated with burglary, vehicle crime and drug and knife crime. Further investment has been agreed for the protection of vulnerable people, such as victims of child and domestic abuse and sexual offences and Neighbourhood Policing activity which will continue to be developed to provide a more consistent approach across all neighbourhoods.

The budget allows for 1264 Police Officers and 992 Police Staff, a small reduction on the 2009-10 year, who will be focussed on the provision of visible and effective frontline services.

The Authority's consultation with local people indicates that the protection of vulnerable people and Neighbourhood Policing are areas of police work in which they would like to see further investment.

Our consultation has also indicated that a Council Tax increase of 3% is considered to be a reasonable amount.

3. PERFORMANCE

Crime across Bedfordshire has dropped by 2744 incidents (8%) in the nine months ending 31st December 2009 compared to the previous year.

Members have recently considered performance data for this period which indicated that overall recorded crime levels continued to be better than the target. There had been large reductions in serious acquisitive crime (domestic burglary, robbery and theft of and from motor vehicles).

In comparison to the same period in 2009 the data indicated reductions in acquisitive crime as follows

- robbery offences 33% or 269 offences
- domestic burglary offences 15% or 452 offences
- theft from a vehicle 20% or 789 offences
- theft of a vehicle 21% or 217 offences.

All crime and criminal damage areas were better than target and again in comparison to the same period in the previous year there had been a 7% reduction in criminal damage (477 fewer incidents); a drop in sexual offences of 14% (59 fewer crimes) and a 26% (285) fall in fraud and forgery offences.

Violent crime areas were however above target and the Members have expressed their concern about this increase despite a number of strategies put in place to tackle violent crime and will be monitoring the effectiveness of the initiatives that have been put in place.

In terms of the detection rate this continued to be slightly below target but was an improvement on the previous year. Detections relating to robbery, vehicle crime, violent crime and racially aggravated crime were below the target set.

The Authority wishes to see further progress with detections, particularly in priority areas, in light of the significant investment made by the Authority over recent years, the Force having its highest ever number of officers and there being less recorded crime to investigate.

Members are also disappointed that, despite the reduction in recorded crime, there is no evidence of a corresponding rise in public confidence, which is now the Government's key target measure for all police forces and a report on the activities being undertaken by other forces who have seen increases in their public confidence has been asked for.

In respect of the delivery of the Policing Pledge further improvements have been made since the Force was inspected by Her Majesty's

Inspectorate of Constabulary last year and Members will receive a detailed assessment detailing the extent to which the force is meeting the standards set out by the Pledge in terms of their accessibility to local people.

4 **Membership**

Further to the resignation effective of 28 February 2010 from the Police Authority of Councillor Alison Graham, Central Bedfordshire Council, there is a need for a nomination to be made to the vacancy.

The Council is asked facilitate the filling of the vacancy at the earliest opportunity.

**PETER HOLLICK
REPRESENTATIVE ON THE BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE
AUTHORITY**