



AVON &
SOMERSET
POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER



THE TIPPING POINT:

The case for a safe, sustainable
and fair funding settlement for
Avon and Somerset Constabulary

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THE CHALLENGE

About the report

This report is a summary of the threats, risks and consequences facing our organisation at a time of diminishing financial resources and increasingly complex criminality and operational demand. We have shared the facts of the circumstances we face with key local stakeholders and decision makers. We now ask that you read this report to understand the repercussions of the choices you make about our funding settlement and the implications for the service we will be able to deliver as a result.

An outstanding force in driving efficiency and managing demand

Our force has repeatedly been recognised by HMIC for its outstanding ability to drive efficiency and manage an ever growing, changing and more complex mix of demand. We have achieved this by successfully transforming and innovating to manage the substantial funding reductions faced by policing and other public sector services. Despite a strict curb on pay increases, police officers and staff have shown tremendous resilience, professionalism and commitment, carrying out some of the toughest jobs in increasingly difficult circumstances.

how exceptionally well we utilise what we have. The reality now though is that it's no longer enough.

We believe we have reached the point where the decisions made on funding have direct implications for the quality and range of services offered by the Constabulary as well as, and most importantly, for public safety.

New challenges, increasing complexity

We face increasingly complex challenges to keep communities, vulnerable victims and individuals safe, and tackle criminality, the impact of globalisation and extremism. All this, together with greater public, inspectorate and political scrutiny, is placing greater pressure on policing than ever before.

The tipping point

But now we face a tipping point. We cannot sustain further funding cuts without extremely serious consequences. Our ability to prevent harm, keep the public safe, protect the vulnerable and respond to escalating threat levels depends on having enough resources to do so. We have consistently demonstrated

In our own force 655 fewer police officers, and savings of £65 million since 2010 - and a further £17million to find by 2021/22 - means policing is being hit hard. These are perilous times for policing in Avon and Somerset.

Policing is fundamental to the fabric of our society

A reliable and reassuring presence to help our communities live harmoniously and free from fear, policing creates the conditions in which our society can exist and thrive. The police are enablers of peaceful democracy and protectors against civil unrest. The role policing plays in sustaining communities and supporting cohesion is unquantifiable. It is of equal value to the visible response when a crime has taken place and it's already too late.

We need a safe and sustainable funding settlement to reflect the assessment of strategic threats and operational challenges; and to support the Strategic Policing Requirement, and continued delivery of the Police and Crime Plan to 2020/21.

The loss of life through the evil acts of terrorism in our own cities and across the world has sadly become a recurring theme of our daily lives, throwing the very challenging context in which the police operate into sharp focus.

On the limit

The Constabulary is already operating to the limits of its capability to deliver the policing service local people have a right to expect and the threat of a terrorist attack locally would severely test the capacity and resilience of our officers and staff to respond as they would wish. These are the individuals who run towards danger when all others run away.

Neighbourhood policing teams are at the heart of our communities and we've fought determinedly to protect frontline policing. As the eyes and ears of our community, developing trust, building relationships and gathering intelligence, our neighbourhood policing teams embody the meaning of prevention. Their worth has never been more apparent

or necessary in gathering intelligence and promoting community cohesion. But, as HMIC has recognised, we have reached a point where we may no longer be able to sustain the visibility and reassuring presence of neighbourhood policing in the way communities have become accustomed.

Choices and consequences

HMIC has judged Avon and Somerset Constabulary to be 'outstanding' at understanding demand and delivering efficiencies. We are continuing to drive a challenging programme of transformation, collaboration and continuous improvement to realise further savings, raise productivity and improve performance. But achieving additional substantive gains has become progressively harder.

The current 'flat cash' funding settlement means that further savings will be required beyond what can be achieved from increased efficiency alone.

At the same time our demand is growing and becoming ever more complex, our population is growing at pace and new threats are intensifying and emerging every day.

This report asks policy makers to understand and contemplate the reality of the service that the Constabulary will be able to deliver in these circumstances. We believe policing is fundamental to the fabric of our society. In the absence of new funding, the breadth and volume of policing as we know it today is unsustainable

There are choices to make and, given the implications for the communities in which we all live, we feel that they cannot be made by policing alone. The risk should be understood by all stakeholders and choices should be made in full knowledge of the consequences.



2

NEW AND COMPLEX DEMANDS ON POLICING

Our demand is changing, increasing and becoming more complex

The threats we face are new, growing more complex and they are often less visible to the public – if we fail to tackle them effectively their impact upon individuals and communities is substantial.

The threat of extremism

The threat of a terrorist attack remains severe. We are witnessing a national and international surge in terrorist incidents and there is no intelligence to suggest we are coming to an end of this.

We see our capability, and the availability of specially trained officers to respond to such an incident, and neighbourhood officers to prevent such an incident, significantly reducing year on year if the current 'flat cash' funding position is sustained.

In the aftermath of Manchester, Westminster, London Bridge and most recently Barcelona, the public have a heightened expectation of policing response that would be very difficult for us to deliver in significant provincial cities such as Bristol and Bath. Individuals from the South west region, some of whom are socially isolated and vulnerable, have travelled or expressed a desire to support Islamic State in Iraq and Syria while others represent a threat as potential 'lone actors'.

We understand very well, from national intelligence and our own experience of the Andrew Ibrahim case ('The Boarding School Bomber') eight years ago, the crucial importance of building trusted relationships with leaders and individuals in close communities. A reduction in current funding is likely to mean reduction in prevention activity delivered by our neighbourhood policing teams.

At the same time, Domestic Extremism is still an ongoing and complex threat. Extremist Right Wing behaviour is currently characterised by lone actors attempting to incite anti-Islamic hatred whilst Extreme Left Wing activists retain the capability and intent to conduct further attacks within the Force area. Effective community engagement by neighbourhood officers is critical in gathering the intelligence that uncovers such plots.

Tackling exploitation and abuse

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) still represents the highest graded risk in Avon and Somerset. Our use of sophisticated, predictive analysis warns us to expect a continuing increase in the number of victims and offenders.

Child abuse is still largely hidden due to familial and online offending and therefore true levels of demand are not known but we are seeing an increasing number of children who are at risk of abuse and neglect being identified and subject to child protection plans.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), one of the most complex forms of child abuse, remains a threat due to the considerable physical and mental health consequences. Recorded FGM based crimes and incidents have seen large increase since 2013 rising from just 20 in 2013/14 to 83 in 2016/17. Thanks to an increase in third party reporting and active partnership in this area we have also seen an increase in initial FGM Protection Orders being issued.

The risk of Modern Slavery for labour and sexual exploitation continues to increase with links to international organised crime.



Hidden crimes such as these where victims are very vulnerable present a significant threat requiring substantial pro-active intelligence and investigations to uncover the crime and bring the victims to safety and the offenders to justice.

Organised crime and drugs

Organised crime groups (OCGs) involved in drug markets still have strong connections with violence, use of firearms, acquisitive crime and exploitation of vulnerable drug users. Drug markets across the Constabulary are very active; Bristol, a core city, is a central hub. We are concerned that high levels of cocaine and higher purity drugs could result in reduced prices and the attraction of a new younger demographic of users. Gang related violence continues and we see evidence of this in Bristol and Weston-Super-Mare. Gang rivalries and the consequent tension present us with an ever-present threat of escalation.

Violence relating to county line drug activity requires dynamic and proactive management to reflect the changing intelligence picture. Intelligence has identified 43 active 'Dangerous Drug Networks' across Bridgwater, Taunton, Yeovil, Yate, Bath and Weston-Super-

Mare. We have identified links with London, Wolverhampton, Manchester and Birmingham requiring close interconnectivity and interdependencies with other police forces who are themselves also attempting to manage the consequences of their respective financial settlements. The level of threat posed by OCGs sourcing and using firearms is high; we have investigated several incidents in the last year.

Growing challenge of technological advances

Advances in technology and digital globalisation are used by criminals and OCGs as a means of facilitating fraud, child sexual exploitation and abuse. Increased use of technology by criminals as an enabler presents challenges to a finite investigative resource.

Our complex demand is increasing exponentially

Our strategic threat assessment has identified high risk demand for the organisation in the areas outlined here. These are areas that carry the greatest risk and it is crucial that we protect our preventative and investigative capability to ensure an effective as well as agile approach.

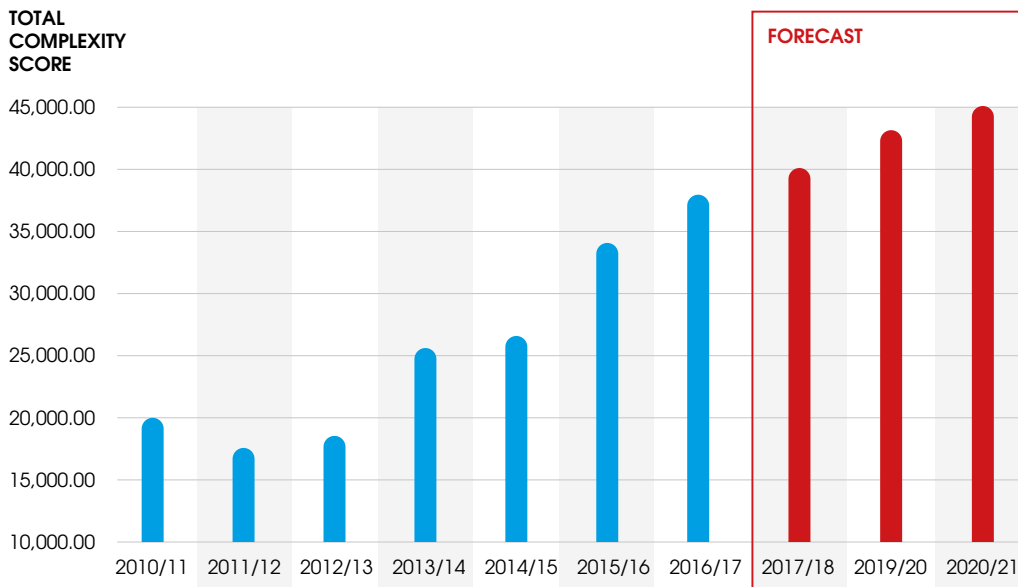
To make best use of our finite investigative resources we have made changes to maximise our allocation of crimes based on threat, harm and risk. But even though our processes are increasingly lean and efficient, our investigations teams are

being placed under growing pressure and strain as a result of the volume and complexity of demand.

It is important not to over-simplify. Funding assumptions predicated solely on crime counts fail to consider the fundamental issue of rising complex demand.

Complex crimes are increasing. To better understand this and deploy our resources to best effect, we have developed crime complexity analysis as part of our predictive analytics capability.

Change in crime complexity for Violence Against Person (VAP), sexual offences, hate crime and domestic abuse



Each Home Office crime has a complexity score that is used internally to monitor team workloads and the complexity of crimes being carried. This value has been used in this chart to show the increase in crime complexity since 2010/11.

This rising complexity has an associated cost. Based on conservative estimates on time taken to resolve individual incidents, we estimate **an operational delivery gap of a further £15million by 2020/21** in addition to that described by our financial risk assessment. **This equates to 300 additional police officers.**

Not just crime

Not all policing demand is easily measured through statutory data returns and the Crime Survey of England and Wales.

Management of risk is a fundamental role for police forces. We have invested in order to better identify and manage community risk in real time. The challenges of managing such risk are hidden from public view but we believe they must be considered alongside summary reporting of national crime levels to give a true picture of demand on policing, and in the subsequent provisioning of police budgets.

The demand placed upon policing by increasing numbers of Registered Sex Offenders living within our communities is often unacknowledged.

MANAGING REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS (RSOS)

By May 2017, we had **1,926 registered sexual offenders** (RSOs) in our area. The numbers have been **increasing 10% per annum since 2007**.

A change in law in 2012 increased the number of notifications required for each RSO. The aggregated uplift in demand as a result is considerable, as are the risks of non-compliance.

In Avon and Somerset we have gone a step further in understanding the risk posed by offenders to our communities, by extending our focus beyond those offenders in formal offender management schemes. Our innovative approach to understanding and scoring the risk posed by each individual offender, based on reoffending likelihood, gives us a total 'harm' score and total picture of risk.

MANAGING OFFENDERS

We currently manage in excess of **11,000 offenders**

There are nearly **2,000 further high risk individuals** in our communities that are not subject to any formal management programme. These individuals include domestic abusers, violent offenders, sexual offenders, robbers and burglars.

Over the last 12 months, they alone have been linked to over **4,300 victims of crime**. These numbers exclude offenders in prison who will be released at some stage.

Our neighbourhood teams currently play the leading role in 'managing' those 2,000 high risk individuals who are not currently subject to any formal management programme.

Mental health and missing people

Mental health related issues often generate repeat demand. On average, an incident involving someone in mental health crisis will take 4 hours of one officer's time.

 **50,000hrs**

Last year, we spent over 50,000 hours on such incidents.

Missing Person demand has a more substantial call on officer time, requiring

on average between 8 and 13 hours for each missing person.

National Crime Agency costings show that an average medium missing person enquiry cost is **£2,500**. We receive on average 28 missing people reports each day.

If we extrapolate the figures based on medium risk cases (although many will be high risk) we can see that **the cost of managing just a single day of missing people demand is equal to the annual cost of one Police Constable.**

Crime and non-crime: Increasing and more complex

Our experience and our evidence, which mirrors that of other forces, demonstrate growing demand, increasing complexity and rising crime.

A TYPICAL DAY NOW SEES THE CONSTABULARY...

Answering **1,966 calls to 101** and **772 calls to 999**

Which will generate, **1,333 calls for service**, where

- **290** will require an immediate response, and
- **460** will require a priority response

2 or 3 firearms operations

28 reports of missing persons will require immediate attention (which can often take up to 8 hours to resolve)

55 mental health related calls for service will be resolved by local officers

425 crimes will be recorded of which the majority will be investigated to some degree

102 domestic crimes and incidents will bring safeguarding and investigative challenges

12 serious sexual offences will be reported and require complex investigation and victim care

Demand change by the day

Demand type	July 2013	July 2017	Actual change
Recorded crimes	293	425	+ 132
Domestic crimes and incidents	78	102	+24
Serious sexual offences	6	12	+6
Missing person reports	7	28	+21
Mental health related calls	40	55	+ 15

We are called upon to attend, manage and resolve a wide array of incidents. Just a quarter represent a crime. By far the greatest draw for police attendance and ultimately police time relates to public safety and welfare.

Population growth will keep the pressure on police resources

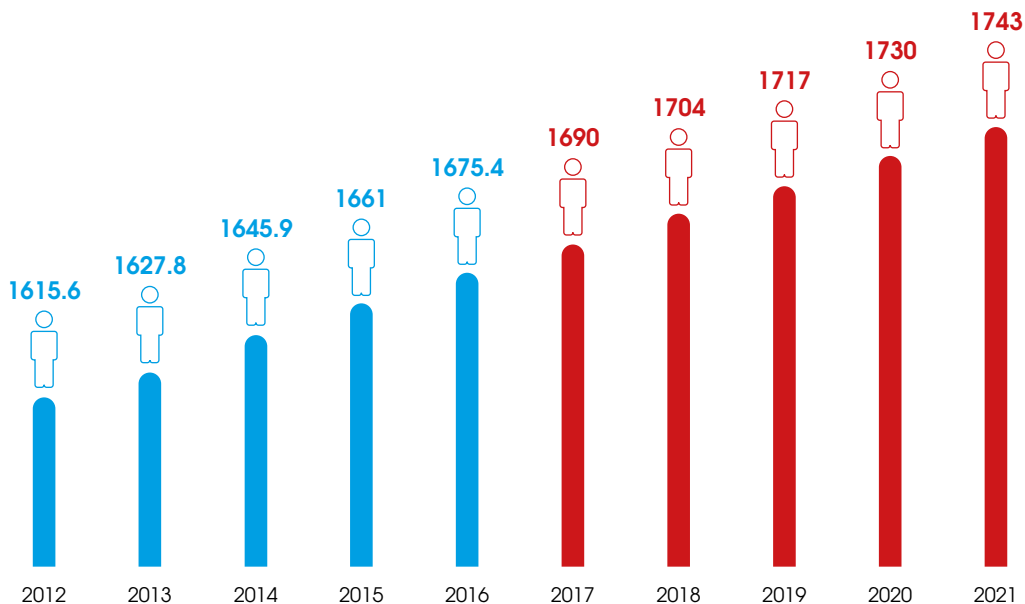
We believe it is also important to take account of predicted population change over the next few years.

We predict that the rise in population will sustain this trend in increased demand, both non crime and crime.

i 68,000 

Based on ONS 2014 population projections for Local Authorities, we can see a further **projected increase of 68,000 residents** across the Avon & Somerset area by 2020/21.

Avon and Somerset Population Change (1000s)



The role of policing

In his annual HMIC State of Policing report, Sir Tom Winsor draws attention to material pressures on police forces in England and Wales, which put the service under strain. He said:

"The police are considered to be the service of last resort. In some areas, particularly where people with mental health problems need urgent help, the police are increasingly being used as the service of first resort. This is wrong."

"The provision of mental healthcare has reached such a state of severity that police are often being used to fill the gaps

that other agencies cannot. This is an unacceptable drain on police resources, and it is a profoundly improper way to treat vulnerable people who need care and help."

"The obligation of the police is to prevent crime. This is not only because this makes society safer – both in reality and in perception – but also because it is far cheaper to prevent a crime than it is to investigate and arrest the offender after the event."

We believe policing is fundamental to the fabric of our society. In the absence of new funding, the breadth and volume of policing as we know it today is unsustainable.

3

GROWING CRISIS IN FUNDING



A GROWING FINANCIAL CRISIS

Our financial management is astute, but our risk assessment reveals a growing funding crisis and the significant scale and urgency of the response required to meet these challenges.



THE CHALLENGES ARE FOUR FOLD:

1 'FLAT CASH' 2 CAPITAL FUNDING 3 RAPID DEPLETION OF RESERVES 4 FAIR PAY SETTLEMENT

Acting together these forces are placing unsustainable pressure on policing in Avon and Somerset.

For three consecutive years Avon and Somerset Constabulary has been rated by HMIC as 'outstanding' at understanding our demand and using our resources productively to meet it. We have a proven track record in providing an efficient policing service and we already have robust plans in train to continue to do so in the coming five years.

However, the additional savings we will need to make to accommodate these four challenges cannot be made without adverse consequences for the policing service in Avon and Somerset. 80% of our budget relates to employment costs and we predict that future savings must necessitate further reductions in police officers and police staff.

It is hard to see how such reductions can be made without an impact on public safety and on policing effectiveness.

FLAT CASH: The revenue funding challenge

It is our assessment that the current 'flat cash'² funding settlement is no longer safe or sustainable. It leaves us with an ongoing challenge to meet further annual budget gaps after eight years of efficiency savings, just to keep pace with pay and inflation rises and afford new capital investments.

If the current 'flat cash' settlement continues, we forecast a significant deficit due to annual rises in pay costs and inflation. Savings will have to be found each year just to retain current resource levels.

In our forecast, the cost pressures arise from:

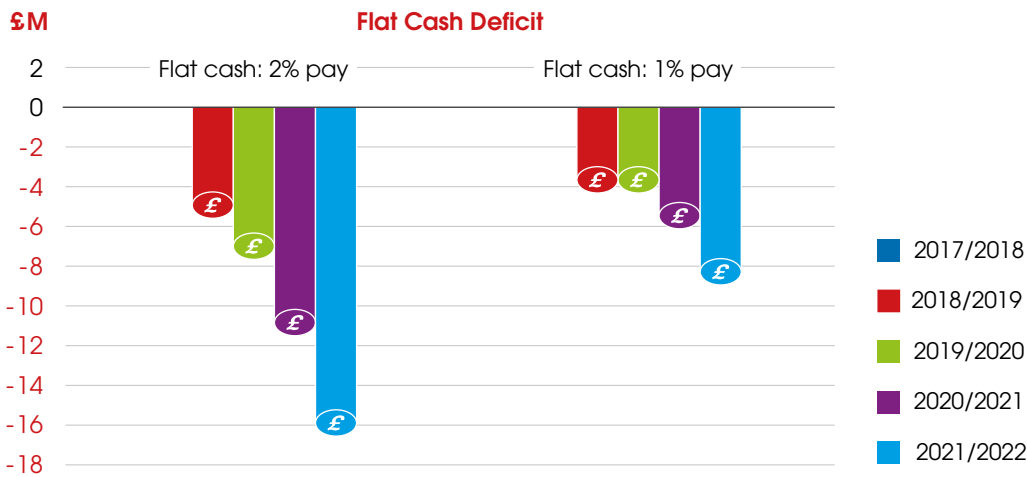
- A 1% pay rise, together with pay increments, creates an annual cost pressure of £2.7million. This increases to £5million if pay rises by 2%.
- Inflation pressure on non-pay budgets of £1million to £1.3million each year.
- Rising revenue costs to fund capital expenditure of £3million over the next four years.
- Costs from changes to legislation, civil claims, insurance and pension costs.

Using these considerations we have modelled two scenarios (on the following page) for the current 'flat cash' arrangement - with 1% and 2% pay settlements respectively.

² No cut in police grant but no increase in funding to match inflation or pay rises.

Deficit (£Ms)

Scenario	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Flat cash: 2%	balanced	5.5	7.6	11.5	16.4
Flat cash: 1%	balanced	4.2	4.2	6.0	8.9



In 2017/18 the budget is balanced in both these scenarios but, without additional funding, the implications for future years are very serious indeed. **In both scenarios, substantial further savings would be required.**

Under flat cash with 1% pay rises, new savings of £8.9M would be required by March 2022 to balance the revenue budget which is equivalent to **losing nearly 180 more police officers.**



With a 2% pay increase, the savings requirement rises to £16.4M by March 2022, the equivalent of **losing more than 320 police officers.**

Realistic opportunities for revenue savings from other sources have been exhausted

Savings of £8.2m are being delivered in 2017/18 and a further £6.6m savings plans have been agreed by the PCC and Chief over the next four years. These are fully built into these projections and are based on a redesign of enabling services such as HR, Finance and ICT provision and further collaboration in these areas. These savings are in addition to the £65.2m which have already been delivered since 2010 from collaboration, procurement, a reduction of 655 police officers including significant delayering of management and supervisory ranks, new ways of operating,

rationalisation of our police buildings, and the removal of budget contingencies. Cumulatively therefore the total savings delivered, or planned to be delivered since 2010, amounts to £80m/27%.

But once these savings have been made, we have exhausted all realistic opportunities to deliver enough continued savings to meet the projected budget gap.

Nevertheless, further savings will have to be found to balance the budget over the next four years. This can only mean cuts in police officers, including but not exclusively those working in neighbourhood policing. The risk and adverse consequences for public safety and the effectiveness of the policing service provided to the public cannot be overlooked.

CAPITAL FUNDING: A growing gap

Our capital grant funding (which must be ring-fenced for investment in buildings and other 'capital' assets) has reduced by 60% since 2010 to a current level of around £1million per year.

This does not cover even half the annual replacement costs of our fleet of vehicles, let alone make a contribution to funding our investments in ICT.

The latter is crucial to manage the transition to the Emergency Services Network (a national programme to replace Airwave), mobilise the workforce with digital technology to improve efficiency and visibility, manage and store digital evidence, and replace end of life ICT infrastructure.

Up to now we have funded capital programmes from capital reserves and capital receipts (from the sale of buildings for example) but in two years' time these will be exhausted.

At the same time, our ability to generate a new capital reserve from revenue budget underspends has been hugely challenged with the impact of cuts and tighter budgets. We still have some excess buildings which

will provide limited capital income to add to reserves but the number of these and the potential capital funds from their sale reduces to zero over the medium term.

In our Medium Term Financial Plan we recognise this position and have made provision for new borrowing of £25million in total, of which £5million has already been taken. This will increase our total debt balances to £60million by 2020, and increase our revenue funding costs (interest and repayment on the capital) of capital by a recurring revenue cost of £3million by 2021/22.

Even after the new borrowing, we forecast an unfunded deficit on our capital programme of **£13.7million** by 2021/22

As a result we will need to reduce our capital investment plans, or identify further additional sources of funding. And, of course, new capital funding will have further adverse impacts on the revenue budget.

Capital funding gap (as capital receipts and reserves are consumed)

		2017/18 £Ms	2018/19 £Ms	2019/20 £Ms	2020/21 £Ms	2021/22 £Ms	TOTAL £Ms
CAPITAL REQUIREMENTS	ICT	14.2	9.9	6.3	3.3	2.2	35.9
	Estates	8.5	9.3	3.7	0.5	0.5	22.5
	Fleet / PME	6.0	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.3	18.7
	Sub Total	28.7	22.3	13.1	7.0	6.0	77.1
CAPITAL FUNDING	HO Grant	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	5.0
	Revenue	0	1.5	1.8	2.0	2.5	7.8
	Borrowing	10	11.7	0	0	0	21.4
	Reserves	18	4	7	0	0	29.2
	Sub Total	28.7	17.7	9.9	3.3	3.8	63.4
CAPITAL FUNDING GAP	Total	0	-4.6	-3.2	-3.7	-2.2	-13.7

RESERVES: Depleted reserves are reducing our safety net

Our total reserves, (or 'money in the bank'), is reported in our annual accounts in the following way:

- Usable reserves (diminishing from £36million to £10million) and
- Restricted ring-fenced reserves; we can only use these for specific purposes such as funding our PFI (Private Finance Initiative) building repayments over the 25 years, managing regional grants held by Avon and Somerset, and managing our self-insurance funds.

£17m 

Between April 2015 and March 2017 the useable reserves available to us reduced by £17million. This figure is forecast to continue reducing rapidly over the medium term.

Total reserves forecast

	ACTUALS		FORECAST			
	2016 £Ms	2017 £Ms	2018 £Ms	2019 £Ms	2020 £Ms	2021 £Ms
Useable reserves that are NOT ring-fenced						
Discretionary reserves	12.4	8.8	4.4	2.1	2.0	1.9
General Fund	10.4	10.4	10.4	10.4	10.4	10.4
Capital receipts & reserves	13.6	9.1	0.3	0	0	0
TOTAL Useable reserves (not ring-fenced)	36.4	28.3	15.1	12.5	12.4	12.3
% of PCC net spend	13%	10%	5%	4%	4%	4%
Ring-fenced reserves	2016 £Ms	2017 £Ms	2018 £Ms	2019 £Ms	2020 £Ms	2021 £Ms
PFI fund	6.3	6.5	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0
Ring-fenced for restricted use	8.6	9.5	6.1	5.3	4.9	4.9
TOTAL Ring-fenced reserves	14.9	16	12.7	12	12	12

The General Fund is a fund we hold to manage the risks inherent in policing Avon and Somerset, such as unplanned major operations, claims against the organisation, funding to meet any local government pension scheme fund deficit, and savings that are not delivered as planned. By 2021 only this fund will remain.

This forecast shows that, by 2021, we will have exhausted all useable, non-ring fenced reserves to support capital programmes and revenue transformations costs.

Our future financial security is sound – but only just

By 2020, our remaining usable reserves are equivalent to just **4%** of our net annual spend.

This is a very low level of useable reserves and could be considered to be high risk for a police force; it leaves absolutely no provision for future change programmes and/or future capital funding.

FAIR PAY: Fair pay for police officers and staff

We support fair pay for police officers, PCSOs and police staff. Increased risk of staff attrition is a real and imminent threat as workloads increase and pay growth remains subdued and is outstripped by the cost of living.

The dangers posed by our inability to attract and retain staff are mitigated to a degree if pay rises are increased from 1% to 2%. But the detrimental impact on our revenue funding gap (an increase of around £7.5 million by 2021/22) will most likely result in cuts to headcount unless commensurate funding is provided to us in the police settlement.

If we are going to recompense police officers and staff with the level of pay they deserve for an increasingly challenging and difficult job, we must do so in a way that does not compel us to reduce the workforce further. To do so would simply increase the pressures upon our people whilst reducing the quality of the service they are able to deliver.

The police service needs investment as well as a fair pay settlement to continue to provide the service we all expect.



4

NEIGHBOURHOOD
POLICING IS IN DANGER
OF BEING ERODED

Erosion of neighbourhood policing

The community risk we have articulated here is not unique to Avon and Somerset but is widespread across the country. For us and for others, the financial challenges set out in this report indicate a watershed in terms of our future service and the future shape of policing.

The NPCC pre-budget assessment recognises that refocussing priorities often exposes weaknesses in other areas of policing. Neighbourhood Policing lies at the heart of the British Model of Policing and is central to the objectives of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan.

But Neighbourhood Policing can no longer be protected. It is now left increasingly exposed and continued financial challenge will mean further erosion.

Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) are required increasingly to manage considerable risk and responsibility. Without further resources it will be impossible for them to provide the standard of service, visibility and community intelligence expected by the public and the service at large.

NPTs are working increasingly to threat, risk and harm principles to reflect the changing nature of demand but this means that crimes and incidents with

a high occurrence but low impact, such as theft of or from motor vehicles and non-domestic burglary, are not being investigated as we or the public would like.

The capacity of NPTs to engage with communities is already reduced with little time left for regular engagement or visible patrol activity. Demand pressures require a focus on the "here and now" with reduced time afforded to proactive and long term problem solving and prevention work.

Our delivery of consistent neighbourhood policing is already being unduly shaped by financial influences and demand pressures. Whilst we have a clear line of sight of the model the public expects and we want to provide, we can see the beginning of a drift away from that.

This has not gone unnoticed by the public as the word cloud summary below from a recent PCC public confidence survey demonstrates.

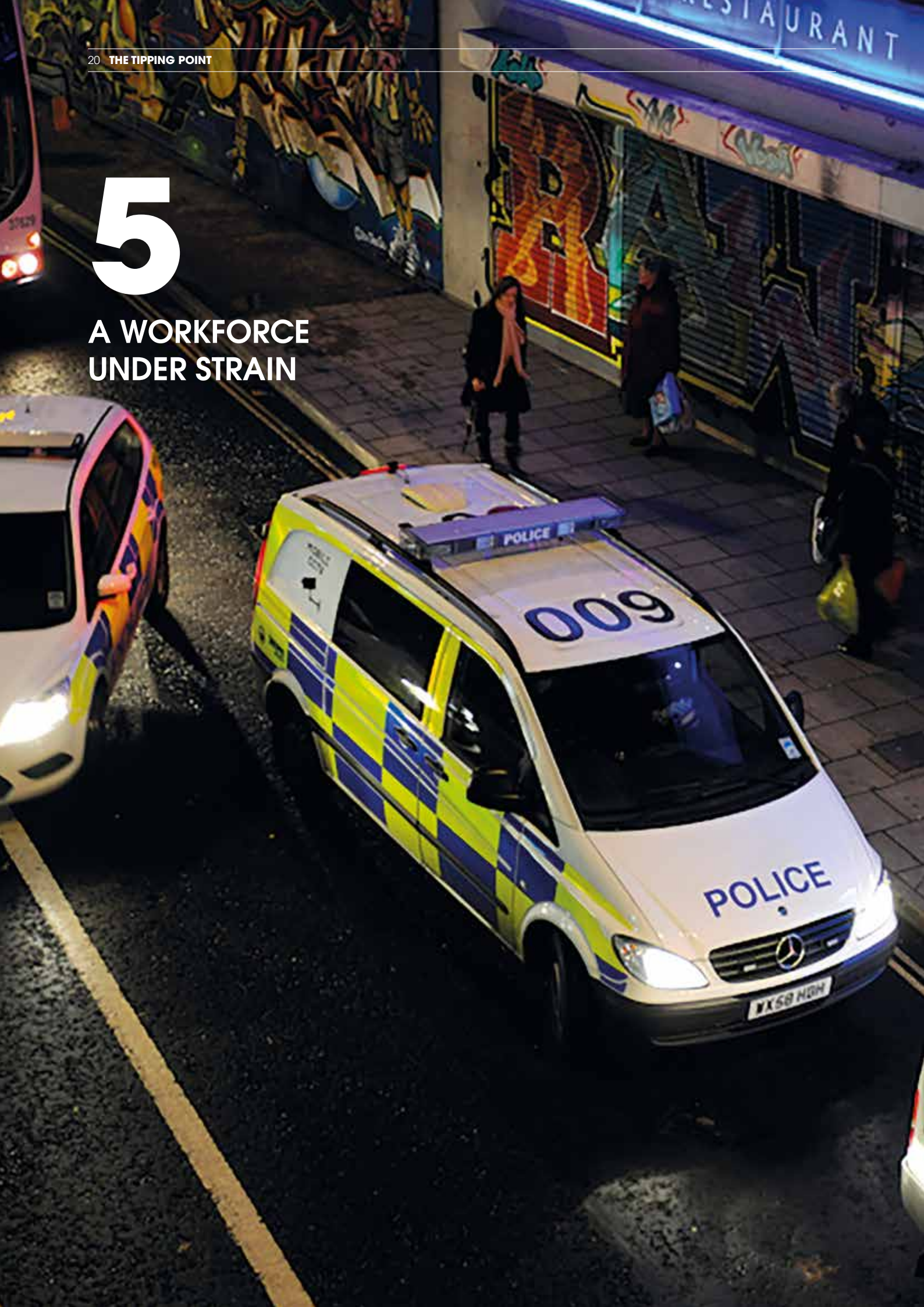
“ Comments on public confidence

I never see the police in the area. Cars are always bombing around and kids hanging about. **Generally, you hear many burglaries are ignored and that does put a negative view in my mind.** The police never pick up the phone and the police station is shut. **Every time I call about a local issue, nothing gets done.** I had a brick thrown through my truck window which I reported to the police. They told me to keep the brick and wait for them to respond but they never did. **They are undermanned and it's inappropriate.** I reported a violent crime happening there and then and I was put on hold, even though I dialled 999.

”

5

A WORKFORCE UNDER STRAIN



Vocation is no longer enough

We cannot forget the needs of the workforce in the case for police budgets; **around 80% of our budget is staff costs**, and they are our most important consideration.

The needs of those who provide policing are not separate from the needs of the community. An effective, skilled and motivated workforce with the right behaviours will make a positive difference to the public.

We recognise our workforce as a “critical asset” and the importance of wellbeing in sustaining a happy and healthy workforce. However, despite our best efforts, the workforce is showing signs of strain.

Nationally and locally absence rates are increasingly difficult to manage and the prevalence of absence linked to mental health (including stress) is increasing. Staff retention is increasingly difficult as police resignations increase, and pay and benefits fail to keep pace with other

sectors. For the first time, we have seen a reduction in take up by officers and staff of relevant pension schemes.

All of these indicators are symptomatic of the current operating environment. Annual pay awards have been capped for many years. The cumulative impact of restrained pay has reduced our competitiveness as an employer of choice and forces are starting to see the number of police officer applicants reducing. Police Staff remain more mobile between employment sectors making market pay comparisons more relevant and recruitment of good people more difficult.

In short, in times of rising costs and minimal pay increases, vocation is no longer always enough.

The human impact

More than 30,000 police officers took part in the **2016 Police Federation Pay and Morale Survey** – equivalent to a quarter of all ranks from constable to chief inspector.

39% of officers said they had sought help with mental health issues. In the same survey, more than a quarter of officers who had taken sick leave attributed it to stress, depression or anxiety, and 65% said they still went to work even though they felt they shouldn't have because of their mental wellbeing.

The survey also revealed that 69.4% of officers who were actively looking to leave the force wanted to do so because of the “impact of the job on health and wellbeing”.

The 2016 **Police Superintendents Personal Resilience Survey** found similar concerns amongst more senior ranks. 90% of respondents reported working 50-70 hours a week; only 25% of respondents said working less than 48 hours per week is the

norm, and 100% reported that their role involves excessive breadth and depth of responsibility leading to excessive working hours. Only 21% said they ensured they are rarely contacted on a rest day.

In our own **2016/17 Avon and Somerset Wellbeing Survey**, we found that:

- 65% of the workforce are happy in work; only 57% for police officers.
- 54.5% are able to switch off from work away from the workplace; only 41% for police officers
- 55% feel in control of their workload; only 45% for police officers.

Police officers and staff have been hit on all fronts. Despite a strict curb on pay increases they have continued to work tirelessly with tremendous resilience and commitment. At the same time they have compensated increasingly for a lack of resources by taking on tougher and increasingly more complex work in the most difficult of circumstances. This is taking a toll on their morale and wellbeing.

Mitigating the risk and embracing diversity

We believe our workforce is under strain, to the detriment of individual officers and staff, and the public. We have made substantial efforts to expand our understanding of the patterns of absence and provide counselling, psychiatric and medical welfare services. These solutions are beginning to have an effect but are without a sustainable financial footing.

The connection between financial settlements and the workforce is also crucial in achieving a better reflection of the communities we serve. The Chief Constable and the PCC have a genuine enthusiasm and commitment to address the need for a representative workforce. But this becomes impossible to achieve without an investment of resources and funding.

In line with the objective of increasing the professionalism of the service and changing skills requirements, the College of Policing has undertaken an extensive programme of activity including Leadership Reviews and the Professionalism Programme. The tangible outputs from this work include the Police Educational Qualification Framework (PEQF), Continued Professional Development, improved leadership development and career paths. But again, the delivery of this requires funding and the one-off but nevertheless substantial cost to a Force the size of Avon and Somerset would be around £2.5million. Should the College of Policing be unsuccessful in its bid to the Police Transformation Fund, the full cost will need to be met by individual forces.





6

THE PUBLIC VOICE

National figures from the Crime Survey for England and Wales show that in Avon and Somerset, 76% of people have confidence in the police, and 56.8% of people feel that the police deal with local priorities.

Top ten priorities for policing:

Louise Casey in her Review, 'Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime', identified the public's 'Top Ten' priorities for policing which underpin the design and importance of neighbourhood policing:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 A service that takes action and is responsive and approachable | 6 Continuity in the local policing team |
| 2 A visible uniformed police presence | 7 A better service for victims of crime, especially repeat victims |
| 3 PCSOs that are clearly distinguishable as part of the police service | 8 Sensitivity over reporting crime and giving evidence |
| 4 Named contacts and clear information on roles and responsibilities | 9 Good engagement with the community to identify local priorities |
| 5 Face-to-face access at a police station, surgery or street meeting | 10 Clear leadership from the police on crime |

Given the severe financial challenges we face, we believe **eight out of these ten public priorities are under threat.**

The service is already over-stretched which challenges our ability to respond effectively. With further cuts to enabling functions, those patrolling the streets must give up valuable visibility time in the community to perform administrative tasks.

What the people say

The threats we face are all symptomatic of shrinking budgets, less funding and reduced resources. The correspondence received by the Office of the Police and Commissioner from local people is reflective of this. These views predominantly focus on, but are not limited to, police visibility in the community and tackling local policing priorities.

VISIBILITY



Police should return to the beat and be a visible presence to reassure people and be available in time of need. People need to know who their local police are.



The increasing reduction in visibility of uniformed officers over recent years, along with the reduction in police stations or offices tends to give the impression that the police are hiding from the community.



How can we have confidence in something we never see?

ACCESSIBILITY



I feel the closure of Police Stations is a grave mistake.

RESPONSIVENESS



Rural stations are closing and there are fewer officers on the streets or roads. In an emergency it will take too long to get there.



Strongly oppose further cuts to front-line services so that the workforce is not so stretched that only 'crisis' management happens.

PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

An appropriate and visible neighbourhood policing presence with engaged contact with local communities is vital in maintaining public confidence in policing and society. So, in addition to these main themes, local people are also calling for the police to be more proactive and engaging:



I would like our local beat officers to be more pro-active within the Community. It is an old tune, but more police on the beat is what reassures people and what deters those who may be up to no good. The police should not be just reactive. Easily said, I know. Policing is increasingly becoming reactive instead of proactive, probably because of the reduction in resources. This is a short sighted policy which will have little impact on crime levels and more importantly people's fear of crime. Priority must be given to crime prevention, which seems to have been entirely abandoned.



More confidence is needed before we feel safe especially now with all the terrorist activities going on across the EU, because before long they will strike somewhere in the UK.

A service overstretched

The PCC has listened to local people and is committed to making their voices heard. Our communities have a right to live harmoniously and free from fear. It is the PCC's job to ensure this can happen.

But together, the PCC and the Constabulary believe we have reached the point where public safety is at risk, a view clearly shared by many people across Avon and Somerset. In the absence of new funding, our ability to mitigate risk and sustain public confidence is no longer within our gift.



7

CHOICES AND CONSEQUENCES

HMIC has judged Avon and Somerset Constabulary to be 'outstanding' at understanding demand and delivering efficiencies. We are continuing to drive a challenging programme of transformation, collaboration and continuous improvement to realise further savings, raise productivity and improve performance. But achieving additional substantive gains through these channels has become progressively harder.

Our demand is growing and becoming ever more complex, our population is growing at pace and new threats are intensifying and emerging every day. As a result the workforce is under immense strain whilst neighbourhood policing is seeing its capacity and capability reduced.

The current 'flat cash' funding settlement means that further savings will be required beyond what can be achieved from increased efficiency alone, making further and significant reductions in police numbers highly likely.

This report asks policy makers to understand and contemplate the reality of the service that the Constabulary will be able to deliver in these circumstances.

Policing is fundamental to the fabric of our society. In the absence of investment, **the breadth and volume of policing as we know it today is unsustainable.**

There are choices to make and, given the implications for the communities in which we live, they should not be made by policing alone. The risk should be understood by all stakeholders at all levels, local and national, and choices should be made in full knowledge of the consequences.

APPENDIX A

Financial planning – modelling scenarios for revenue funding

Despite the Force being rated outstanding for efficiency, the additional savings required to manage these challenges in the future will require further efficiencies which are likely to have an adverse impact on public safety and on policing effectiveness.

Planning assumptions

The current context for making forecasts about our financial future is informed by a number of factors including:

- Government decisions about the future police grant funding and transformation funding.
- The PCCs decision about future precept levels (subject to capping rules).
- Future pay awards.
- Future pension and insurance funding requirements.
- Future inflationary pressures.

The potential variance across these factors can be significant – for example a 1% increase in pay award costs about £2.1M per annum which when applied over multiple years can alter our forecasts significantly.

A significant forecast deficit arises under the current ‘flat cash’ settlement as we face annual rises in costs from pay and inflation. Under a flat cash settlement, savings would have to be found each year, just to retain current resource levels.

The cost pressures arise from:

- Pay rises at 1% together with pay increments create £2.6M million cost pressure each year. This increases to £5M at 2% pay rises.
- Inflation pressure on non-pay budgets of £0.5M to £1.0M each year.
- Rising revenue costs of funding capital expenditure of £3.8M over the next four years.
- Costs from changes to legislation, civil claims, insurance and pension costs.

The following table and graph show the forecast surplus or deficit between now and 2021/22 arising from different scenarios for police funding, all modelled with 1% and then 2% pay rises. In all cases it is assumed that the PCC raises the council tax precept by 1.99% each year (subject to Police & Crime Panel approval).

The scenarios are:

- Flat cash (i.e. precept rises offset main grant reductions) – this is the current funding position.
- Main Police Grant rises annually by GDP.
- Main Police Grant rises annually by GDP plus 2%.

The budget is balanced in all scenarios in 2017/18. However, under all scenarios other than GDP plus 2% we face deficits, even after current and planned saving programmes are delivered.

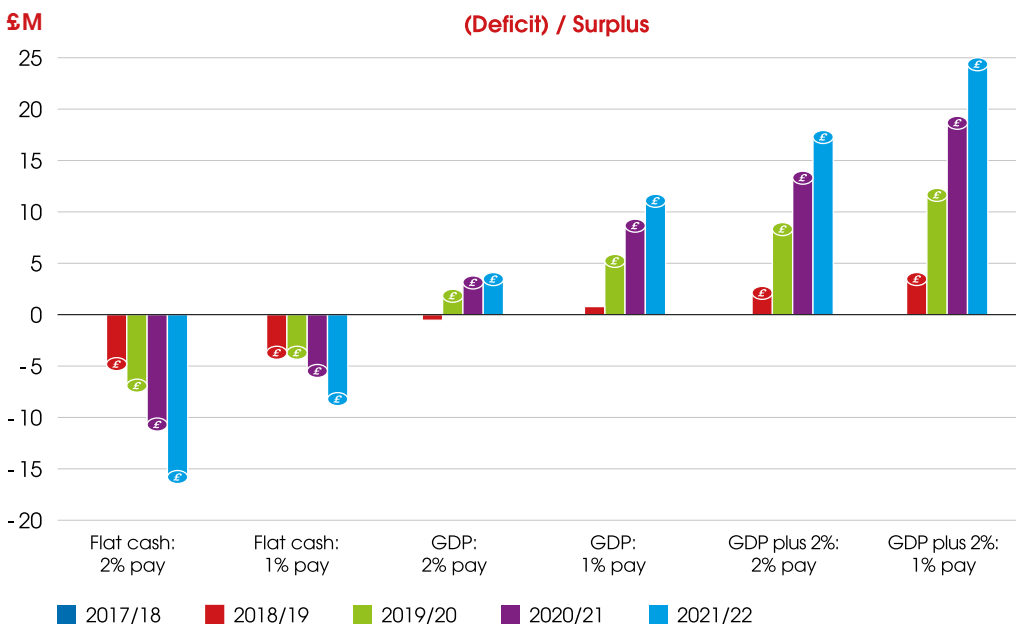
In these scenarios, substantial further savings would be required. Under flat cash with 1% pay rises, new savings of £8.9M would be required by March 2022 to balance the revenue budget which is equivalent to losing nearly **180 more police officer posts**.

With a 2% pay increase, the savings requirement rises to £16.4M by March 2022, the equivalent of losing more than **320 additional police officers**.

Funding scenarios (showing deficits or surplus with different main grant settlements)

Main police grant	Annual pay rise	2017/18 £ Ms	2018/19 £ Ms	2019/20 £ Ms	2020/21 £ Ms	2021/22 £ Ms
GDP plus 2%	1%	Balanced	3.9	12.2	19.2	25.4
GDP plus 2%	2%	Balanced	2.7	8.8	13.8	17.8
GDP	1%	Balanced	0.7	5.6	9.1	11.6
GDP	2%	Balanced	-0.5	2.3	3.7	4.0
Flat Cash	1%	Balanced	-4.2	-4.2	-6.0	-8.9
Flat Cash	2%	Balanced	-5.5	-7.6	-11.5	-16.4

Illustration of funding scenarios – showing surplus (above line) or deficit (below the line)



More savings required

Savings of £8.2m are being delivered in 2017/18 and a further £6.6m savings plans have been agreed by the PCC and Chief over the next four years. These are fully built into these projections and are based on a redesign of enabling services such as HR, Finance and ICT provision and further collaboration in these areas.

These savings are in addition to the £65.2m which have already been delivered since 2010 from collaboration, procurement, reduction by over 650 in police officer numbers, moving to a new police operating model, reducing the

size of the police estate, and removing budget contingencies. Cumulatively therefore the total savings delivered, or planned to be delivered since 2010 amounts to £80m/27%.

Further savings will be required beyond this to balance the budget over the next four years, which **under 'Flat Cash' funding will mean cumulative savings between £89m - £97m by March 2021.**

This cumulative impact will create severe risk of adverse consequences for public safety and the effectiveness of the policing service provided to the public.

