

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LEICESTERSHIRE

PAPER MARKED

Report of	Chief Constable
Subject	Operational Requirement Budget setting 2022/23
Date	18th January 2022
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1. Purpose of Report

- To provide the Chief Officers and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) with the operational advice to inform the budget setting process for 22/23.
- It will summarise the approach taken to inform the budget setting process, recapping the principles and the desire to be both financially and operationally sustainable.
- It will set out the areas of operational and organisational threat and risk identified through the strategic risk assessment process.
- It will then highlight the Force's requirement for growth and changes intended for the operating model within the next business year to begin delivering the Police and Crime Plan and meet our strategic policing requirements.

2. Principles used throughout the planning process

The effectiveness of Leicestershire Police is our ability to continually evolve and adapt to rapidly changing policing challenges.

Section 3 below provides a short summary of the external influences that impact on policing. The importance of aligning budget with operational effectiveness is well rehearsed and understood by both the Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner.

Between November 2021 and January 2022, a series of discussions took place to develop and agree a set of principles that informed the budget setting process. For ease, these are set out below.

1. Budget planning will focus on the total budget.
2. The Medium-Term Financial Plan's (MTFP) business-as-usual must be affordable and sustainable for the entire period of the MTFP.
3. Maintain General Reserve at £5m (2.3% of NRE).
4. Include 2 months Job Evaluation pay protection costs etc from Feb 2022 and full costs for the duration of MTFP.
5. Maintain an officer establishment of 2,242 ensuring we achieve the Home Office uplift minima.
6. PCSOs 200 FTEs.
7. Staff c.1,201 FTEs.
8. POCA income will be recycled into base to sustain and enhance our approach to economic / financial investigation.
9. Prepare for the future with investment in digital transformation (Cloud), transitional funding, and remove duplicate infrastructure costs modelled.
10. Use of Budget Equalisation Reserve for one-off investments and transformational change.
11. Ensure borrowing is sustainable around the potential impact of future debt charges.
12. Efficiency strategy to be refined and used to support investments.
13. Need to meet growing national accreditation costs to ensure our effectiveness is not undermined.

3. Financial planning and modelling

Both the PCC and the Force share the view that for the Force to continue to be effective it needs to be sustainable, both financially and operationally.

Financial sustainability will be a combination of the Home Office core grant and precept allocations. They provide sufficient revenue to maintain a consistent level of resources and infrastructure for the entire period of the MTFP. It will also ensure borrowing is proportionate and repayment costs are manageable within the construct of the MTFP.

Operational sustainability will mean the force maintains a consistent level of officers and avoids sharp fluctuations across officer establishments. It requires a focus on the operational capabilities of the force beyond that of officer head count and will include specialist skills, infrastructure and an operating model that is needed to deliver the Police and Crime Plan and meet our strategic policing requirements.

The changing nature of crime and vulnerability is bringing a requirement for new and different skills. Some merit being officer roles; some are better placed as a specialist support members. The important thing is having the right skill-set to achieve the outcomes the public requires of the service.

The pace of technological advancement is also being exploited by criminals at a faster than ever rate. The force needs to ensure we have an infrastructure that can support this increased workload, along with allowing technology to aid in the prevention and detection of crime.

In May 2021, the Police and Crime Commissioner set out a clear statement of intent that the use of reserves was not to continue to be used to uplift officer numbers and encouraged the force to set resourcing levels that were sustainable excluding reserves for the entire MTFP period.

Between 2009 and 2022, the force responded well to budgetary pressures. It is recognised that demand and complexity had increased during those years and the force, like most other forces, had to rely on reserves as well as precept increases to increase officer numbers. The use of reserves has been common practice among public sector organisations and was previously encouraged by the Home Office.

The commitment to growing officer numbers in order to meet demand was necessary. However, that approach was predicated on having reserves available in sufficient quantity to see through the MTFP period.

During the budget setting period 21/22, it was acknowledged that the reserves would not be sufficient to maintain that approach and, strategically, there would be a requirement to shift from growth to becoming sustainable.

To become sustainable, it is necessary to make a strategic shift away from the reliance on reserves for bolstering officer numbers and to balance the establishment within what is affordable for the entire period of the MTFP.

In December 2021, the Force and PCC received the details of the budget settlement and it is clear that to continue to recruit up to 2342 officers is not a sustainable option because it generates a £14.9 million deficit in total over the MTFP period, rising from £0.2 million 22/23 to £7.8 million 25/26.

On that basis, the Police and Crime Commissioner, in consultation with the Chief Constable, chose to model the budget based on maintaining a minimum of 2242 police officers. This was to allow the force to continue to meet the national uplift requirement whilst also ensuring that the 21/22 recruitment profile continued and was delivered. By maintaining 2242 it ensures there is not a reduction to operational capability, as of the 31 March 2022. Growth to 2342 was forecast to occur during 22/23 so the force is required to amend its recruitment programme for 22/23 and recruit to replace those who are due to retire.

In order to maintain a minima of 2242 officers and meet the budget principles as set out above, the force and OPCC finance team have modelled various options which include possible increases to the precept. These options are set out in detail in other papers submitted to the Police and Crime Panel.

4. Operational and organisational threat and risk

Policing continues to become more complex with the rapidly changing nature of crime, sharp rises in high harm crimes, cross border criminality and the interconnected nature of physical and digital evidence that needs to be captured and interpreted.

This is not unique to Leicestershire but policing across the country is experiencing a series of changing pressures.

The most recent Force Management Statement, an internal self-assessment of demand and risk, which was shared with HMICFRS, identified five strategic themes: workforce development, financial sustainability, the post-Covid environment, digital capability, and our commitments to collaboration at a local, regional and national level. Those themes, and the evidence underpinning them, have informed the budget setting exercise.

In order to plan effectively, the PCC has undertaken extensive public consultation on the development of his Police and Crime Plan, based on his 2021 election manifesto. This has positively re-shaped and refreshed the force's focus.

The force and OPCC have therefore begun a detailed and extensive planning exercise which has reviewed and considered all national and regional plans along with the Police and Crime Plan and a review of the next iteration of the Force Management Statement. This work is progressing at pace.

In Autumn 2021, the Chief Officer team and OPCC came together to consider the contents and agree a set of shared priorities. It is accepted that all elements of the Police and Crime Plan will be progressed, and the plan looks to deliver beyond the span of one election cycle. A longer time-span assists strategic planning overall.

In combination, these considerations have informed this report, highlighting the priority areas which will be the focus for investment within this budget along with the proposed changes to the force operating model as part of our ongoing transformation and delivery of the agreed "rich picture" (the expanded plan of force delivery against national, local and Police and Crime Plan objectives) during 22/23.

To turn to particular priority issues, we can consider them in the context of two challenges:

- Capacity: Challenges which are driven by year-on-year increases in demand and complexity, and;

- Capability: The pace of technological change and an emphasis on skills and workforce development to manage officer/staff churn.

The National Policing Strategy, in particular the National Policing Digital Strategy, places significant emphasis on the changing nature of police infrastructure. There is an expectation that individual forces will be converging towards the national approach. This will bring unknown expenditure and regular scrutiny through HMICFRS.

Locally, the force has experienced increased recording of crime. This is partly due to changes in crime recording but also improved confidence to report crimes such as safeguarding, rape, domestic violence, stalking and harassment. A recent HMICFRS inspection highlighted the significant increase in crime data integrity with the force. We look forward to their assessment in the coming months.

The Force Management Statement also identifies increased demand for the Serious Collision Investigation Unit, missing from home, and fraud and financial crime teams. The changing nature of crime requires additional skills and infrastructure to respond to these changes and manage it thereafter.

The force has identified significant churn in operational officers. This brings both opportunity and threat. The risks identified are that for a period of up to nearly ten years recruitment was significantly reduced. With the sharp increase in recruitment since 2019, and a significant number of officers approaching retirement, our workforce will shift to be disproportionately younger in service as a whole.

It should be noted that significant effort has gone into increasing officer numbers over recent years in order to meet growing demand. Equally, we should note that, by 2024, 40% of the force will have less than 4 years' service. When we consider uniform resources only, that figure increases to 60%. This is an opportunity and a challenge.

Additionally, the force has made significant progress in ensuring that frontline officers and staff have technology that enables them to work remotely. We are considered to be a progressive force with all officers having mobile devices and Body Worn Video. We have also invested in Pronto, a system which allows remote access to intelligence, crime and custody information along with developing an electronic case file. We have developed and introduced Digital Forensic capabilities allowing frontline staff to triage electronic devices in a timely manner which assists with providing a more timely and responsive service to the victims. We are considered to be an exemplar in this area.

That said, we recognise that much of our IT infrastructure has grown organically and there are areas of technology that are out of step with the pace of technological advancement. This is putting pressure on the system.

It is acting as brake on further innovation and improvement to service, which is why it has been identified for investment.

5. Focus for growth and transformation

Within this budget only 0.8% of the total budget is focused on meeting unavoidable costs and growth requirements which equals a total £1.85 million. This centres on Investment in technology and specialist skills as set out below and small growth to staff roles to meet changes to demand. These changes in demand are directly linked with increases to officer numbers and workloads.

They include: enhancement to Criminal Justice department to improve file quality and timeliness; Fleet, to increase the availability of vehicles and; Finance, to meet increased workloads linked with payroll. All growth areas have been extensively scrutinised by the Force Executive and are considered essential.

The areas that are being focused on as priority for transformation within the force operating model are as follows.

5.1 Strengthening public confidence.

A separate public confidence strategy will be drawn together to further strengthen public engagement, consultation, victim experience, communication, enhanced access and call handling capabilities.

We are in the process of reconfiguring corporate services and introducing a Business Insight section that will oversee and track confidence indicators, public engagement and consultation activity across the force and all communities.

We will further renew our commitment to Neighbourhood policing (NHP) through the delivery of accredited NHP training and increased visibility of NHP teams through a range of measures including the reintroduction of regular neighbourhood newsletters / blogs and joint-agency patch walks with local councillors.

We have established bespoke task and finish groups that are working on communities with recognised lower confidence levels and ensuring robust mapping, engagement and consultation is underway already.

We will continue to strive to become representative and maintain a priority focus on pre- and post- recruitment support for those from under-represented communities.

We will launch our repeat victims strategy and set out publicly what our service standards are, along with incorporating soft skills / service standards within all core training.

We will continue to be in the top quartile of police forces in ensuring complaints are dealt with in a timely and effective manner.

By June 2022, we will have introduced a new social media management platform which will further strengthen interaction with the public across these growing channels.

We will review all existing NHP beat offices and seek to maximise visibility across those locations, supported - where possible - with an ability for the public to book managed appointments with their local team in order to provide another opportunity to discuss local issues.

5.2 Enhanced force and partnership response to rural crime, business crime, violence, serious and organised crime and safeguarding.

We will enhance our response to rural criminality and wildlife crime by:

- Enhancing the centralised Rural Crime team by introducing rural crime teams in every Neighbourhood Police Area outside of the city
- All county Dedicated Neighbourhood Officers and PCSOs will receive training in rural crime and wildlife issues and become part of the broader response to rural criminality.
- We will utilise our newly formed 24/7 drone capability to provide additional rural patrol capability to hotspot areas. Along with supporting rural crime teams.
- We will move to having a minimum of two 4x4 rural crime vehicles as part our rural response. In addition, we will ensuring they have the appropriate equipment to undertake the role including the availability of night vision goggles and high intensification lamps.
- Special team to be further enhanced to operate alongside the centralised team as well as local rural crime teams.
- We will Introduce a dedicated trainer within the Academy to focus on rural crime issues.
- All Contact Management Department operators will be trained in rural crime issues.
- We will Introduce bespoke policing in rural neighbourhoods' performance pack to include response times and outcomes for varied offence types.
- We will Implement our revised policing in rural neighbourhood strategy and develop strategic- and tactical-level partnership governance arrangements including key stakeholders.
- In line with wider force programme, we will develop and implement a new digital platform to enable more effective access to policing services from rural communities.

- We will ensure Neighbourhood Link is set up to report on rural themes and to identify issues from rural communities and provide regular updates and practical tips.
- Ensure Single Online Home services provide appropriate information to refer to appropriate agencies.
- Continue to support rural specific operations around hare coursing, hunting and the badger cull.
- We will review mapping of all rural neighbourhoods and ensure regular and routine engagement is taking place.
- Additional Volunteering opportunities will be introduced (Farm watch etc).
- Build upon our Neighbourhood Active principles and embed them in rural neighbourhoods where possible.

5.3 Business Crime.

- Within the establishment we will introduce a strategic business crime lead and associated delivery plan.
- We will introduce business crime detectives within each of our local investigation units/ NPA.
- We will explore broadening our Neighbourhood Link capability to deliver a specific service for local businesses.
- We will invest in providing crime prevention, prioritising cyber and fraud crimes that are experienced by our business communities.
- We will establish robust engagement strategies to understand the issues most effecting our business communities and work with local partners to address the business crime priorities.
- We will embed a rolling programme of initiatives to encourage tradesman and skilled workers to mark property and utilise tracking equipment in order to reduce the impact of tool and equipment thefts.
- We will work with our partners and the Police and Crime Commissioner to ensure our Community Safety Partnerships have a business crime focus.

5.4 Focus on Violence

- We will utilise and mobilise our specialist resources including the tactical support group, firearms unit, dogs as well as specialist covert departments, to support local officers to tackle knife crime and serious violence within their communities which will include urban crime patrols in hot spot areas.
- The force will prioritise the Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy and strengthen how we keep women and girls safe.
- We deliver a rolling programme of operations that target those identified as habitual knife carriers.

- We will introduce dedicated school liaison officers aligned with priority schools and within the People Zone areas to prevent young people carrying knives and take early action to address and prevent issues escalating.
- We will enhance our ability to share fast-time information with schools in order to enhance the opportunities to address potential harmful exposure or situations.
- We will work with leading academics, local universities and interested groups to ensure we are deploying an evidence-based approach to tackling serious violence in order to maximise our effectiveness and lead to sustainable reductions in harm.
- We will ensure offenders arrested have the opportunity and support to address the reasons behind their arrest in order to prevent reoffending and exploitation.
- We will work with partners and communities to reduce knife crime with a specific focus addressing the behaviours of young people being exploited or exposed to harm and on the wrong path and we will target those that cause the most harm within our communities.
- We will embed a trauma-informed approach across the force. It will be mandatory training and aimed at preventing and reducing repeat victimisation and offending.

5.5 Improve quality of service to tackle domestic abuse

- The force will implement a new response to domestic abuse which will see an enhanced ability to capture evidence from the point of the call, allow better face to face triage through video call and an increase in officers to provide an enhanced investigation capability.
- The force will invest in providing data and analytical support to local officers to support the prioritisation of domestic abuse and ensure perpetrators are arrested at the earliest opportunity.
- The force will reduce the time to complete investigations and where a prosecution or sanction cannot be achieved increase the utilisation of Domestic Violence Protection Notices to safeguard victims and help break the cycle of domestic abuse will be used.

5.6 Safer Communities Strategy – Young People

- Deliver the Young Person's Strategy through the investment of school liaison roles one for each of our NPA areas.

- We will introduce the mini police initiative within the People Zones areas
- We will further develop a cadet scheme ensuring reach into all communities.
- Delivery of Level 3 qualification for cadets, in partnership with Leicester College ensuring those that want to pursue a career in policing have all the support and encouragement to do so.
- Continue to support a police cadet Duke of Edinburgh scheme offer for Bronze through to Gold.
- We will develop a young people's advisory group and deliver trauma-informed early intervention approaches with young people
- We will maintain and develop our offer around universities with bespoke VAWG action plans to support and reassure young people.

5.7 Night Time Economy

- We will build upon Operation Nightsafe to ensure there is a visible and engaging policing presence which is complimented through effective intelligence-led patrol and response plans.
- We will routinely deliver intelligence-led test purchase operations with the deployment of plain-clothed operations in support of VAWG plan.
- Ensure the centralised licensing team is supported at each NPA by nominated licensing sergeants who receive regular intelligence and licensing updates as part of their duties. They will be proactive and take appropriate action in relation to any premises where licensing objectives are not being upheld.
- We will strengthen partnerships by ensuring there is regular exchange of information and a focus to act under the new serious violence duty linked with Violence Against Women and Girls and the Night-Time Economy.

5.8 Enhanced force and partnership focus on prevention, early intervention, young people and increased use of volunteers and neighbourhood watch schemes

- We will enhance our focus on Specials.

- We will double (to 180) our number of Specials within 2 years with strong recruitment in 2022.
- We will Implement our Special to PC programme as a pilot with the College of Policing's approval.
- Further develop fully accredited Specials and ensure the proportion of those fully accredited increases.
- Implement Specials senior management team as part of Local Policing Directorate's structure.
- Develop rural special team, aligned with rural crime team with recruitment campaigns from within rural communities.
- We will introduce a dedicated special trainer within the Academy ensuring a rolling programme of training and development is taking place
- We will ensure Specials are available at every location in the force and every NPA
- Continue to support and develop specialisms within Specials (e.g. drones and road safety).
- Develop wider employer support programme with local business in support of volunteering

Volunteering

- We will deliver the Volunteers In Policing strategy through the delivery plan that covers Specials, cadets, volunteers and chaplains.
- Maintain high levels of Police Service Volunteers and high levels of satisfaction in volunteering.
- Develop rural crime volunteer scheme which is in addition to the rural Specials.
- Deliver Community Speed Watch in every NPA, in partnership with Road Safety partnership.
- Evaluate Neighbourhood Active project and deliver in all NPAs in support of prevention, problems solving and to build public confidence.

5.9 Workforce skills, representation, capability, Command, leadership and well being

- We will enhance our recently formed Resourcing Cell by developing systems and processes that ensure there is an equitable spread of experience and skills across each department and local teams with an ability to predict further into the future as part of an enhanced workforce modelling capability.
- We have increased the size of the Probationer Development Unit to support the professional development of our new-in-service officers to ensure the best possible service is given to the public.
- With immediate effect, we are implementing a new structure within the Team Leicestershire Academy. We have restructured to introduce a new head of academy and careers which seeks to enhance the relationship between recruitment, progression, retention with talent management and continuous professional development. This is aimed at ensuring we identify those with leadership potential to be identified and nurtured in readiness for taking up leadership positions.
- We are also strengthening the academy with a reformed senior management team in order to tackle the specialisms and complexity required e.g. enhanced crime training, digital, criminal justice procedures.
- Also, within the Academy we have also strengthened local policing and operations in a faculty structure. From April 2022 we will begin an operations faculty. This will focus on delivering all specialist training including dogs, firearms, public order and command training.
- We are seeking to optimise the efficiencies within the specialist faculty to uplift Taser availability by an additional 25% during 2022. This will enable the force to move from its current position of 430 Taser trained officers to 550 by the end of 2022. This will allow for one Taser trained officer to be available within every double crewed vehicle.
- The force is considered a progressive force with regards to our wellbeing offer. That said, there is a drive to better integrate our Occupational Health Unit (OHU) services and our wellbeing offer. One of the investments is to secure the expertise of a local occupational nurse to focus solely on Leicestershire cases. There is an ongoing review. We anticipate it will lead to the establishment of an enhanced local OHU and wellbeing offer.

5.10 Technology and digital ambition – Ensuring the force has the technology infrastructure to manage the rapid growth in data and digital material along with using technology to automate and become more efficient.

This is an area of investment / growth for the force.

To summarise the challenges, I would highlight there are several overlapping and interconnected issues. The force will need to manage the existing IT service demand, which is increasing at pace. During the past two years we have observed demand increase from 4000 – 6000 calls for assistance to the IT helpdesk each month. This is largely driven by the increased systems and issues that are associated with it.

We are capturing more data than ever before because of the world becoming more technologically enabled and this is rapidly using our on-premises storage facilities.

There is a growing need to maintain existing systems with increasing frequency for upgrades to keep pace with technology. This existing hardware needs to be maintained until it is replaced.

We need to use technology to make sense of the vast volumes of data both strategically but also operationally. To use Artificial Intelligence requires us to have a Cloud capability.

We need to create a Cloud capability which requires new skills alongside the need to ensure the data is of a sufficient quality to place into the Cloud. Once established, Cloud storage will remove many of the infrastructure risks we currently carry.

We will need to decommission and rationalise existing systems. Currently we have an IT infrastructure that will require replacement. This is expensive and the life span of technology is reducing from 5-7 years to 2-3 years. This makes capital borrowing expensive along with the high running costs linked with maintaining them and providing licences.

The force has successfully introduced Microsoft 365 and we need exploit that technology to rationalise other systems. Microsoft 365 on its own has immense capacity but we have only just begun to explore this. We need the capability to design and exploit its many functions. The new suite of Microsoft products allows us to radically change some ways of working e.g. in Forensics – automating slow manual processes, new tasking and briefing system, new intranet, and smarter more interactive staff engagement.

Finally, we need to develop new skills and capabilities within our IT department. This will require a full comprehensive review of what skills and capabilities we have along with what is needed to deliver against our digital transformation agenda.

In April, the force will introduce both a new intranet and Professional Development Review process that has been built in Microsoft 365. The force is also keen to exploit this technology further to enhance our partnership working.

The investments / growth contained within this budget are required to stabilise and manage the growth in existing IT demand. They allow for an increase in specialist capability to allow us to optimise on the investment we have made in 365. They allow for us to progress and develop the Cloud capabilities along with allowing us to carry out the review of the IT department.

There will be further requirement for investment in technology and potentially a substantial shift in how we fund the infrastructure into the future but at this stage we the investments merely seek to provide ongoing capability as we design the IT infrastructure for the future.

6. Conclusion

This paper sets out the operational advice to inform the precept budget planning discussions for 2022/23. It provides operational context and detail regarding the type and nature of the growth and changes to the operating model that will be implemented as part of the delivery of national plans, the strategic policing requirement and the Police and Crime Plan during 22/23.

Person to Contact

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