

North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Report to the Mayor of York and North Yorkshire

Precept Proposals for Policing and Fire and Rescue 2025/26

On 28 January 2025 the Mayor of York and North Yorkshire formally notified the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel (“the Panel”) of their proposed precept for policing for 2025/26, along with the draft 2025/26 budget and Medium Term Financial Plan proposal for the fire and rescue service. The Panel is required to review the proposed precepts and report on its decision, including any recommendations, to the Mayor by 8 February of the relevant financial year.

The Panel met at County Hall, Northallerton, on Thursday, 6 February 2025. Membership of the Panel at the meeting was:

North Yorkshire Council	Cllr Chris Aldred
North Yorkshire Council	Cllr Tim Grogan
North Yorkshire Council	Cllr Heather Moorhouse
North Yorkshire Council	Cllr Malcolm Taylor
North Yorkshire Council	Cllr Steve Shaw-Wright
North Yorkshire Council	Cllr Peter Wilkinson
City of York Council	Cllr Emilie Knight
City of York Council	Cllr Danny Myers
City of York Council	Cllr Michael Pavlovic
Independent co-opted	Fraser Forsyth
Independent co-opted	Mags Godderidge
Independent co-opted	Martin Walker

The Panel would like to thank the Commissioner, Chief Constable, Chief Fire Officer and the Assistant Director of Resources (Deputy s73 Officer for Police, Fire and Crime functions) for assisting in providing responses to the questions and issues raised by the Panel.

Policing precept proposal

The Commissioner presented a proposal to the Panel to set the police element of the Council Tax precept for 2025/26 at £320.86, which represents an increase of £14 (or 4.56%) over the 2024/25 level for a Band D property.

It is noted by the Panel that while the police funding settlement has provided the Mayor with an increase in core government funding of 6.2%, much of this is linked to decisions already taken nationally or expenditure, including:

- funding to cover last year's pay award and to maintain police officer numbers;
- funding to help cover higher National Insurance contributions; and
- funding to support the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.

The Panel therefore recognises that the Mayor is seeking to increase the precept for 2025/26 to ensure that the service can accommodate all inflationary pressures and the 2025/26 pay award. The Panel asked a number of questions in the meeting by way of further clarification and reassurance around issues including the following:

- the assumptions made in the report around inflationary increases
- the weighting given to public consultation responses, in view of the proportionately lower level of respondents in areas such as York compared with districts such as Hambleton
- the shared services collaboration programme between police and fire and rescue services
- PCSO pay figures and the police overtime budget.

The Panel noted the responses provided and the confidence levels conveyed around the planning assumptions. The Panel heard that the policing budget is in a relatively strong position, with a proportionately low level of borrowing. It was also noted that North Yorkshire will receive £973,000 of funding for neighbourhood policing, following finalisation of the government settlement. The Panel welcome the Chief Constable's commitment to improving neighbourhood policing and requested that a further report be brought on this separately to the Panel in due course.

The Panel would also like the Mayor to give further consideration for next year's public precept consultation around how to ensure a greater number of responses is obtained.

Decision – Policing precept proposal

The Police, Fire and Crime Panel supported the Mayor’s proposal to increase the policing precept for 2025/26 to £320.86, which represents an increase of £14 (or 4.56%) over the 2024/25 level for a Band D property.

As far as the Panel is concerned, provision of this report ends its scrutiny process of the Mayor’s proposed precept for policing for 2025/26.

Fire precept proposal

The Mayor presented the proposed budget for North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (“the FRS”) for 2025/26 and the updated Medium Term Financial Plan. The Mayor proposed to set the Band D Fire Element of the Mayoral General Precept within North Yorkshire for 2025/26 at £107.02. This represents an increase of £24 over the 2024/25 level.

The Panel are fully cognisant of the significant financial challenges that the FRS has been facing over recent years – and which have been discussed regularly at the Panel - following historic under-funding and the freezing of the precept in the last few years. The Panel has been supportive of previous Commissioners’ efforts to obtain a fairer funding deal for the FRS to ensure that the service can be placed on a more stable financial footing and be able to invest in critical equipment and appliances. In this context, the Panel has, separately, written to the government recently to urge that consideration is given to putting funding for flooding response on a statutory basis and to re-consider its removal of the Rural Services Delivery Grant and Services Grant/Funding Guarantee.

The Panel therefore recognises that the Mayor is keen to take advantage of having greater flexibility under his general budget requirement to ensure that opportunity is taken in 2025/26 to address some of these critical and urgent issues by seeking a higher precept from the public. It is recognised that this proposal is being made in the interests of securing both public safety and the safety of firefighters.

While therefore very supportive of the Mayor’s proposal, the Panel is conscious that the proposed increase in percentage terms will appear high to the wider public and, while there was a degree of support from the public for an increase, the Panel has been well placed to receive detailed reports over recent years to help justify this proposal; facts which may be less apparent to the taxpayer. The Panel recommends therefore that the Mayor ensures that accessible communications

are provided for the public – now and over time – to highlight the importance of raising the precept to this level and what this money will be spent on.

Decision – Fire precept proposal

The Police, Fire and Crime Panel supported the Mayor’s proposal to increase the fire element of the Mayoral General Precept for 2025/26 to £107.02, which represents an increase of £24 over the 2024/25 level for a Band D property.

As far as the Panel is concerned, this ends its scrutiny process of the Mayor’s proposed fire budget for 2025/26 and medium term financial plan.



Councillor Peter R Wilkinson
Chair, North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel
6 February 2025