POLICE AND CRIME PANEL FOR LEICESTERSHIRE



Report of POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

Subject REVENUE BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2013-14 AND

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

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COMMISSIONER AND FINANCE DIRECTOR, CHIEF CONSTABLE'S

OFFICE

Purpose of Report

- 1. To present revenue budget and consequent council tax precept proposals for the financial year 2013/14 for consideration and, in the latter respect, reporting upon by the Police and Crime Panel.
- 2. To present the current Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and to outline the intended plan for finding solutions to address the estimated funding gap.

Recommendations

- 3. The Police and Crime Panel (PCP) is asked to:
 - a. Note the information in this report, including the 2013/14 budget requirement at £173.446m and council tax requirement for 2013/14 at £49.153m.
 - b. Report on the proposal to freeze the Band D council tax for police purposes at £173.8750, the same level as for 2012/13.
 - c. Note that any changes required by either Government grant alterations notified through the final settlement or through council tax base notifications received from the collecting authorities, will be balanced through a transfer to or from the Budget Equalisation Reserve.
 - d. Note the current MTFS, the change programme and plans to identify solutions alongside development of the Police and Crime Plan.

Background

4. On 19 December 2012 the Government announced the provisional funding allocations for local authorities for the financial year 2013/14 (the final figures are expected on 4 February 2013). Subsequent to the general announcement, led by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), the Home Office announced the provisional funding allocations for the policing bodies in England and Wales. The Home Office Police Grant Report contained the DCLG funding allocations also.

- 5. The grant report contains positive news in that the police have been protected from the further reductions (beyond the Comprehensive Spending Review 2010 (CSR 2010) figures) announced in the Chancellor's 2012 Autumn Statement.
- 6. It is regrettable, however, that details of the revenue allocations have only been made available for 2013/14, and do not include those for 2014/15 as was hoped. The figures for 2014/15 have not been made available due to the indications in the Autumn Statement that there will be further reductions in the Home Office budget for that year.
- 7. The availability of only one year's figures will make medium term financial planning more uncertain, and probably more difficult, especially in the context of the requirement to have a Police and Crime Plan for the period to 31 March 2017.
- 8. The DCLG also announced that there will be additional council tax freeze grant for those authorities and policing bodies who do not increase their rate of council tax between 2012/13 and 2013/14. That grant will be available for two years, i.e. to the end of the CSR period, at an amount that would be equivalent to a 1% increase in Band D council tax.
- 9. While it is helpful that there is additional grant made available to help to reduce the burden of costs on local council tax payers, the lack of forward planning of these grants is unhelpful. In addition, the increasingly tight constraints for any authorities seeking to increase council tax (a costly referendum is required for any increase above 2%) potentially conflict with the localism agenda and any mandate for preserving or improving policing services that newly elected commissioners have secured.

The Provisional Grant Settlement

- 10. As in previous years, policing bodies will be receiving their formula funding through two sources the Home Office and the DCLG. The latter continues to be calculated through the four-block model, which has been subject to limited technical and data updates. While there is a review of the police funding model anticipated in 2013, it is expected that the current model will be used for the 2014/15 funding allocation.
- 11. The most significant change in regard of Home Office Police Grant is that the Neighbourhood Policing Fund (grant for Police Community Support Officers – PCSOs) has been consolidated with it. This means that the grant of £4.7m for Leicestershire is no longer separately identifiable. Relevant comparisons are shown in the table below.

	2012/13	2013/14 Planned
Funding Source	Final (£'m)	(£'m)
Formula Grant (excluding 2011/12 Council Tax		
Freeze Funding)	45.023	43.300
Precept	55.706	49.153
Localised Council Tax Support (2013/14 onwards)		6.998
2011/12 Council Tax Freeze Funding	1.349	1.349
2013/14 Council Tax Freeze Funding		0.562
Police Grant	67.317	71.901
Neighbourhood Policing Fund (2012/13 only)	4.695	
Planned Council Tax Surplus	0.205	0.183
Total	174.295	173.446

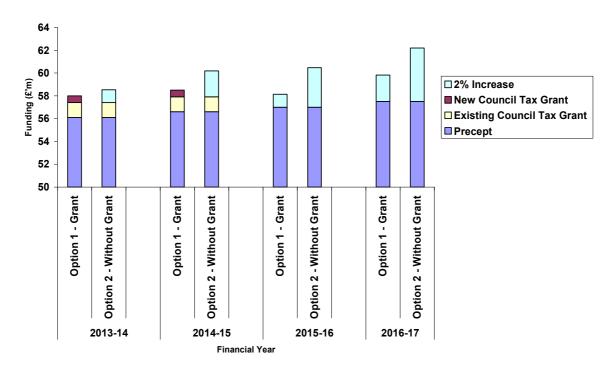
- 12. Damping has again been applied to the allocations to ensure that all policing bodies receive a 1.6% cash reduction in overall formula funding in 2013/14, compared to 2012/13. This approach was adopted after consultation responses revealed that a full review of the Police Allocation Formula was needed before changes to damping were considered. As has been highlighted in the budget reports of previous years, Leicestershire Police is currently disadvantaged by this arrangement as it would receive about £4m more each year if the formula were allowed to work in full, i.e. the floor was funded from sources other than those policing bodies whose formula increases are capped.
- 13. As mentioned above, council tax freeze grant is payable to policing bodies if they do not increase the basic amount of council tax in 2013/14 compared to that for 2012/13. The grant is equivalent to a 1% increase in the PCC's 2012/13 Band D amount multiplied by the council tax base for 2013/14. The grant will be paid in each of the years 2013/14 and 2014/15.
- 14. Counter terrorism specific grant will remain as set out in the CSR 2010, but allocations will not be made known until early 2013. It is therefore estimated that the allocation will remain the same as for 2012/13.
- 15. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) will also receive a new specific grant for the Localisation of Council Tax Support (LCTS). This scheme replaces the current council tax benefit scheme (CTB), and will be administered locally by council tax collecting authorities. As a local scheme, the grant previously given to collecting authorities to reflect actual expenditure on CTB will be distributed to collecting and precepting authorities. The sum allocated to the OPCC for Leicestershire is £6.998m. The local schemes were described in a report to the Executive Board on 6 December 2012.
- 16. A new specific grant is to be put in place for 2013/14, namely the Community Safety Fund (CSF). From April 2013 a total of £90m will be made available to PCCs to replace numerous funding streams for drugs, crime and community safety. These are currently paid to various organisations and will end in March 2013. The Government has not published a list of these funding streams, instead indicating that one set of funding has ended and a new one started; they are seeking to break the linkage between the two.
- 17. The CSF is not a ringfenced grant, but is separately identified in 2013/14. It will be consolidated with the main police grant in 2014/15. The Commissioner is currently working with partner organisations to identify appropriate means of allocating the funds in support of Police and Crime Plan priorities.
- 18. Other top slices from the police settlement include some from the capital funding to support the National Police Air Service (NPAS) and £1m for the National Police Coordination Centre.

Precept Options

- 19. In order to calculate the precept increase required for 2013/14 to fund the budget requirement, after taking account of the Government formula grant and the use of reserves, it is necessary to have regard to two figures. Firstly, the value of the council tax base for the area and secondly, the Police and Crime Commissioner's share of the estimated surpluses on the billing authorities' collection funds for the preceding financial year (2012/13).
- 20. The collection fund surplus reflects the performance of the billing authorities in collecting council tax in 2012/13 and the tax base reflects the number of households

- upon whom council tax can be levied, usually quoted in Band D equivalent numbers.
- 21. As mentioned above, the Government announced its commitment to freeze council tax at the 2012/13 level, at the same time offering a council tax freeze grant, equivalent to a 1% council tax increase, as compensation.
- 22. The Department for Communities and Local Government also confirmed in the Ministerial Statement on 19 December 2012 the referendum principles that will apply in 2013/14. These are that the increase in an authority's council tax requirement in 2013/14 will be considered 'excessive' if its Band D council tax in 2013/14 is increased by more than 2% compared with 2012/13. There are exceptions for authorities whose 2012/13 Band D council tax is in the lower quartile for their class of authority; their increase can be over 2%, up to £5. This latter exception does not apply to PCC for Leicestershire. If it were decided to increase the Band D council tax by more than 2% then a public referendum would be required to seek to identify what support there might be for that level of increase. These are not only costly exercises, but also delay council tax collection, which has negative cash flow impacts for all authorities.
- 23. In the light of this information two main council tax options have been considered (refer to Appendix 1 for detail):
 - a. Option 1 no increase in Band D council tax combined with accepting the council tax freeze grant. This grant is estimated to be £0.56m for both 2013/14 and 2014/15.
 - b. Option 2 a council tax Band D increase of 2% (£3.48 per annum or 6.7p per week) in 2013/14, which would produce about £1.1m in additional council tax receipts.
- 24. The graph below shows the impact of these 2 options on the overall resources of the Police and Crime Commissioner over the medium term. It is necessary to make the following assumptions for this comparison:
 - a. For option 1 it is assumed that the council tax freeze grants from both 2011/12 and 2013/14 will cease in 2015/16 and that a 2% council tax increase will be applied from this year onwards. It is also assumed that there is no increase in council tax and no additional freeze grant in 2014/15;
 - b. In option 2 it is assumed that there is a 2% increase in council tax year on year for 2013/14 to 2016/17, that the freeze grant from 2011/12 ceases in 2015/16, and that there is no additional freeze grant offering in 2014/15.
- 25. The graph illustrates the additional financial resource that would be available over the next four years if option 2 was taken; that is, an additional revenue of £0.5m in 2013/14 and a cumulative £6.9m over the four year period (made up of £8.1m cumulative additional precept income, offset by not claiming £1.2m of council tax freeze grant over 2013/14 and 2014/15). Under this option, the council tax receipts would be £2.4m higher in 2016/17 than they are under option 1.

<u>Precept Options - Council Tax Grant or Funding Projection with 2% year on year precept increase</u>



- 26. When considering the level of council tax Band D increase to set a number of factors must be taken into consideration. These include:
 - a. the capacity to address the priorities as set out in the Police and Crime Plan;
 - b. the potential efficiencies to be derived from the current change programme;
 - c. the hitherto good track record in driving costs down and efficiency up;
 - d. the incentive, in the form of council tax freeze grant, from central government.

As a consequence of this, option 1 is put forward as the recommendation.

Managing Risk - Budget Allocations

- 27. In 2008/09 the Force introduced a risk based approach to budget setting which sought to align the budget process with identified strategic operational priorities and risks.
- 28. The Force continues to consider key corporate risks when setting the budget. Essentially these risks are operational and organisational around managing people, infrastructure assets, information etc. The Force has maintained and kept up to date its Corporate Risk Register that sets out how it intends to control and mitigate these risks.
- 29. The Force continues to identify its Strategic Operational Risks as part of the National Intelligence Model (NIM). This has been used to inform resourcing strategies at BCU, Directorate and Departmental level.
- 30. Each year, the Force undertakes a major exercise to review its operational risks which are set out within the "Force Strategic Assessment". This work was also

- informed by the work of the Regional Collaboration Project Team looking at the extent of collaborative opportunities across the East Midlands.
- 31. The purpose of the Force Strategic Assessment is to identify those areas of greatest risk. Essentially a high risk area is where only limited resources had been allocated to address a substantial risk i.e. this creates a significant risk gap.
- 32. A key part of this work was to bring together the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Senior Officers across the Force, to consider the key risks that the Force faces and how best to address them.
- 33. The revised 4 year financial forecast and, in particular, the 2013/14 budget contained within this report aligns the Force's financial resources to risk and therefore is key to the Force's performance management regime.

Budget Preparation Process

- 34. The former Strategic Planning and Coordination Board (which included nine Police Authority members and the Chief Executive/Treasurer) met throughout 2012 to identify and quantify the strategic financial risks facing the Force, alongside options for mitigating these risks, for presentation to the incoming Police and Crime Commissioner. At each meeting, progress achieved by the "Change Programme" savings work was scrutinised.
- 35. Phase 1 of the Change Programme delivered £15 million in savings during 2010/11 and 2011/12 to help balance the budget over the medium term. A further £8m savings will have been delivered through Phase 2 work by March 2013. However, further savings in excess of £20m are still required to deliver a sustainable medium term budget through to 2016/17.
- 36. The significant challenges now faced as a result of CSR 2010 have been reflected in the approach to budget preparation for 2013/14 by limiting the increases in both corporate and delegated budgets. The 'budget rules' applied to 2013/14 are as follows:
 - (i) full implementation of Phase 1 and Phase 2 savings realised to date;
 - (ii) pay awards and pay increments fully funded;
 - (iii) non pay increases limited to justifiable inflationary uplift;
 - (iv) any excess inflationary pressures funded through compensatory savings where possible.

Base Revenue Budget Changes

37. The first stage in the process is to build a budget for 2013/14 based upon the 'budget rules' identified. The table below summarises the movement in budget from 2012/13 to 2013/14 (see Appendix 2 for further details):

	£	£
2012/13 Approved Base Budget		177,336,662
Variations:		
Police Officer Pay, Allowances & Income	(4,570,886)	
Police Officer Pensions	163,776	
Central & Financing Items	291,312	
Delegated Budgets	171,056	
Police Community Support Officers	(24,021)	
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	186,200	
Regional Collaboration	422,521	
Community Safety Fund	1,449,000	(1,911,042)
2013/14 Base Budget Requirement (Gross)		175,425,620

Note: There are other budget streams which when added to the above makes up the 2013/14 net budget requirement set out in para 3a. These are listed below:

2013/14 Base Budget Requirement (Gross)	175,425,620
Community Safety Fund (new source of funding from Home Office to commission services)	(1,649,000)
Efficiency Savings (national and local initiatives which are to be presented to the change board)	(460,627)
Transfers to/(from) reserves (transfer to insurance liability reserve of £354k, and transfer £215k from the Proceeds of Crime Act reserve)	129,958
2013/14 Base Budget Requirement (Net)	173,445,951

Police Officer Pay, Allowances and Income

38. This includes part and full year effect savings of £3.0m that have arisen from planned restructuring, modernisation and regional collaborative savings during 2012/13.

- 39. Savings in police allowances (Unsocial Hours, Rent and Housing Allowances) total £451k. This is due to the impact of officer retirements and sufficient management information to more accurately estimate the new Unsocial Hours payment introduced by the Winsor Review from April 2012.
- 40. In a change from 2012/13, the Seconded Officer income budget of £1.06m has been transferred to police pay. There has been an increase in the anticipated income from external partners in 2013/14 for funded police posts of £149k. This is partly offset by a reduction in secondment income of £50k resulting in a net increase of £99k.
- 41. The budget for 2013/14 sees the second year of an increment freeze introduced by the Winsor Review Part 1. Increments remain payable to police constables on the first three spinal points only.

Police Pensions

42. The OPCC's expenditure on injury awards has increased both in terms of the number of awards in payment and a 2.2% CPI increase from April 2013. Costs of supporting the 30+ scheme in 2013/14 have decreased by over 50% as only one officer remains. There has been an increase of £25k in the pensions budget in respect of the liability to scheme sanction charges triggered by lump sum commutations taken by retiring officers that are in excess of the tax-free amount. There are other increases of £19k expected for 2013/14.

Central and Financing items

43. The increase in the Central and Financing budget of £0.3m is attributable to the provision of the 2013 pay awards, the increase in the contribution for national police systems and the virement of Police Officer seconded officer income to Police Pay. This is partially offset by savings on the utility budgets due to the closure of premises, investments in low energy lighting and changes to contractual prices, a reduction in debt charges due to slippage in the capital programme, savings on telephony expenditure and a reduction in the amount set a side for legal claims.

Delegated Budgets

- 44. The movement in this budget takes into account:
 - Pressures/Cost Increases:
 - £0.29m relating to pay increments and movement in Police Staff, Police overtime pay budgets arising from modernised posts and savings agreed at the Change Board.
 - £0.55m relating to reinstatement of external training budget, IT communication contract price increases and other inflationary increases.
 - £0.5m loss of Drug Intervention Programme Grant.
 - Savings/Increased income:
 - £1.2m net increase in income and non-pay savings.
- 45. Also contained within this budget is an annual allocation of £500k for BCU Fund related activity. This annual allocation is deemed necessary for 2013/14 and beyond, to support a variety of crime and anti social behaviour reduction initiatives

with partners. Proposals around its utilisation for 2013/14 will be considered in due course by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

46. This includes savings of £0.2m due to an increase in the budgeted staff turnover provision. Pay increments are included for those PCSOs eligible to receive them. The reduction in County Council grant of £90k and other miscellaneous savings of £45k have also been included.

Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner

47. In order to enable the PCC to fulfil the additional responsibilities expected of him, compared with the functions of the former Police Authority, it has been necessary to review the staffing of the OPCC. As well as needing to reflect the full year cost of the PCC salary (£53k) and personal assistant support (£27k), it is necessary at this time for interim arrangements to remain in place while the PCC assesses his requirements and the level of resource and/or support that can be made available from the Chief Constable's Office, for example in respect of media relations or performance management. The need for commissioning support within the OPCC is also being assessed. Consequently a holding budget of £1.077m is in place in this budget, but it is intended that the eventual structure will cost less than this sum.

Regional Collaboration

48. £0.9m has been transferred from devolved budgets in respect of Legal and HR Transactional services. This has been offset by a £0.45m saving from existing regional teams.

Community Safety Fund

49. This is a new source of funding from the Home Office for the PCC to commission services to support crime, drugs and community safety priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan. It is intended to bring together all sources of funding (e.g. BCU funding mentioned above) for commissioning activities so that these sums can be monitored effectively, both in financial terms and for impact and outcomes.

<u>Capital Programme 2013/14 to 2015/16 and Treasury Management - Investment Strategy</u>

- 50. For completeness, the capital programme is set out in Appendix 3 to this report. The consequences of the proposed programme have been taken into account in the development of the revenue budget, and the required prudential indictors are set out in Appendix 3.
- 51. Appendix 4 contains the Treasury Management Investment Strategy; this is required by the Code of Treasury Management published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

Use of Reserves and Balances

52. Over recent years, due to the impact of effective efficiency programmes and through financial prudence, a Budget Equalisation Reserve (BER) has been created. This reserve is estimated to total approximately £10m at the financial year end, depending on the delivery of further efficiency savings during the remainder of the financial year 2012/13.

- 53. When the current Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) was formulated in February 2012 it was estimated that some £3m of the BER would be used in 2012/13 and a further £5m in 2013/14. Given the rigorous efficiency programme pursued by the Police Authority and Office of the Chief Constable, it is likely that there will be no draw on the reserve for 2012/13, and there is no planned use to balance the budget for 2013/14, although there may be for subsequent years (Appendix 1 assumes no withdrawal from the BER in order to show the gross funding gap each year). However, as the change programme is formed, there is the potential that some invest to save initiatives will be funded from the BER.
- 54. There is also a General Reserve, estimated to be about £5.25m at the end of the financial year 2012/13. This represents 3% of the net budget requirement for 2013/14; it is prudent to have such a reserve at this level to enable the organisation to withstand unexpected events that have financial implications. There are no planned uses of this reserve.
- 55. A contribution of £345k will be made to the insurance liability reserve to fund any potential uninsured losses arising from new public or employer liability claims.
- 56. There are a further 20 earmarked reserves, with an estimated value of £9m at the financial year end. The most significant of these are:
 - a. Capital reserve £1.8m, although most will be spent by 31 March 2013;
 - b. Proceeds of Crime Act £1m reserve to smooth the peaks and troughs of flow of proceeds. £215k is planned to be utilised in 2013/14;
 - c. PCSO reserve £2.6m to support the engagement of PCSO's in future years as grant and local authority support reduces;
 - d. Pensions reserve £0.75m to provide for unbudgeted pension costs such as ill health retirements
- 57. It is intended to review these earmarked reserves at the financial year end with the intention of consolidating, reducing and applying funding wherever possible in order to invest wisely while still maintaining a prudent level of reserves.

Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

- 58. It is a requirement that the Police and Crime Plan must cover the period until the end of the year of the next election for PCCs, in this case to 31 March 2017. It is therefore appropriate that the MTFS covers the same period. However, this is not without its challenges, given that there is only a firm Government announcement of funding for 2013/14, that the impact of the new LCTS is unpredictable, that there is at least another CSR between now and then, and that there is a formula review to be undertaken. Any one of these makes funding predictions challenging, but combined they make forecasting more akin to educated guesswork.
- 59. Key assumptions in seeking to outline the financial challenge for the medium term are:
 - a. Option 1 above is chosen; that is, no council tax increases until 2014/15 and increases of 2% from 2015/16, and that the council tax base grows at 0.8% per annum;
 - b. There is no new council tax freeze grant after 2013/14;

- c. All existing council tax freeze grants cease at 31 March 2015;
- d. Government funding reductions are 3.7% in 2014/15, 3% in 2015/16 and 5% in 2016/17;
- e. The collecting authorities' LCTS schemes deliver a cash neutral position when combined with the council tax support grant from the Government;
- f. Pay and price increases are assumed at realistic levels;
- g. No additional, unfunded responsibilities are given to the PCC;
- h. The BER can fund any necessary invest to save projects and further borrowing beyond the capital programme is not required;
- 60. With the above assumptions, the MTFS reveals a funding gap as set out in the table below:

2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
£6.085m	£12,820m	£20.260m

- 61. The Chief Constable launched a change programme in 2012 with the stated objective of "with our staff and partners, transform the way we protect our communities and deliver over £20m in (revenue) savings by 2016". This programme is making good progress in the options investigation stage, with the aim to have a series of outline business cases (OBCs) in place by the end of June 2013. The intention is that these OBCs will, together, produce a comprehensive suite of change options to create a Force that is fit for 2016/17, and beyond, within the funding available.
- 62. At the same time that this work is taking place, consultation will be ongoing on the priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan with the clear intention that the two work strands are aligned; i.e. that the Force will be able to deliver the priorities set out in the Plan within the resources available. Therefore, the next iteration of the Plan, to be delivered in the summer of 2013, will show how it is intended to balance the budget over the medium term, and with an organisation that is sustainable financially and in operational delivery.

Robustness of the Budget - Statement of the PCC Chief Finance Officer

- 63. The Local Government Act 2003, Part 2, Section 25, as amended by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, requires the PCC's Chief Finance Officer to report on the robustness of the estimates used for the budget and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. The PCC is required to have regard to the report of the Chief Finance Officer and the report must be given to the Police and Crime Panel.
- 64. In the sections above, titled "Managing Risk", "Budget Preparation Process" and "Base Revenue Budget Changes" a detailed description of the development of this budget is given. During the preparation of the budget I have been given full access to the budget model and have been consulted on the assumptions being made in order to develop the model. In the majority of cases I have agreed with the assumptions being made, and where I have sought changes then they have been incorporated.

- 65. I have reviewed the track record of Leicestershire Police in achieving efficiency savings; this is impressive with some £23m being removed from the base in the two years to 31 March 2013. I am therefore confident that the efficiencies required in order to ensure a balanced budget for 2013/14 can be achieved. Furthermore, I have confidence that the budget monitoring process will identify any variations of expenditure or income from that budgeted so that early action can be taken.
- 66. I have also reviewed the detailed calculations in arriving at the budget requirement and council tax precept, and find these to also be robust.
- 67. The Chief Constable has been involved in the development of the Police and Crime Plan and has been able to develop a budget that supports the delivery of the priorities set out in that Plan.
- 68. There is an operational contingency available to the Chief Constable, and sufficient general reserves available should demands require access to these also. Earmarked reserves are also in place for specific requirements such as pensions and insurance.
- 69. In coming to my conclusion on the robustness of the budget I have also reviewed the separate papers on Treasury Management and on Capital expenditure.
- 70. The section above on the MTFS does, however, set out a significant challenge to the organisation. Over the next few months it is essential that the change programme delivers suitable OBC's that will enable the OPCC and the Chief Constable to work together to close the funding gap over the medium term. While identifying the funding gap may be regarded as a "Strategy" at this time, in order to ensure that Leicestershire Police is sustainable in the longer term, a "Medium Term Financial Plan" must be developed that will show how the Police and Crime Plan priorities can be delivered within the resources that are predicted to be available. It is reassuring that there is a reserve in place to assist in delivering the change programme.
- 71. I conclude, therefore, that the budget for 2013/14 has been prepared on a robust basis, and that the reserves are adequate. I am also pleased that the medium term funding issues, beyond 2013/14, are recognised and that steps are being taken to seek to address them.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 Budget and Precept 2013/14 to 2016/17

Appendix 2 Subjective Analysis and budget build

Appendix 3 Capital Programme 2013/14 to 2015/16

Appendix 4 Treasury Management – Investment Strategy

Background Papers

Autumn Statement – December 2012
Provisional Police Grant Report – 19 December 2012
Council Tax Freeze, Council Tax Referendum Principles and
Alternative Notional Amounts (ANAs) 2013-14 – DCLG – 20 December 2012

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