



South Wales
Police and Crime Commissioner
Comisiynydd yr Heddlu a Throseddu
De Cymru

Expenditure Consultation 2015-2016

Consultation closes on 12th December 2014

Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales

Expenditure Consultation 2015/16

I was elected as South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner in November 2012 as one of two Labour and Co-operative Party Commissioners in England and Wales. The role of the Commissioner is to ensure the police service in South Wales is effective. This means vigorously pursuing the first priority for the police - to cut crime. This priority, set by Sir Robert Peel when he established the first police service in London in 1829, remains the top priority for the police today - "success is demonstrated by the lack of crime, not the presence of activity".

As Commissioner I work closely with the Chief Constable to support the police in providing the best possible service, ensuring the people of South Wales get value for money. I am currently consulting on my expenditure plans for the 2015/16 financial year and would be grateful for your views by **12th December 2014**.

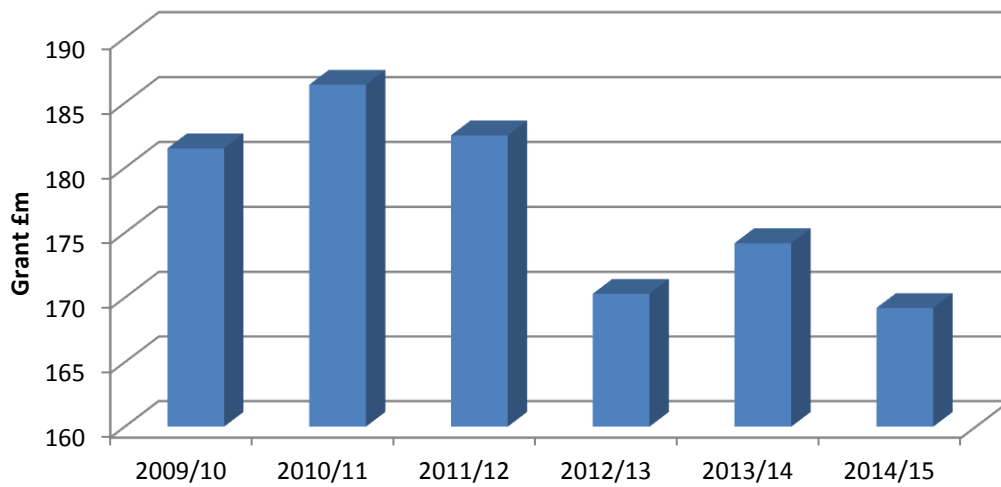
Since the Comprehensive Spending Review of 2010, this government has reversed two decades of investment in policing and crime prevention. These cuts are impacting on the Police and my other partners in community safety, such as local authorities and Local Health Boards. My challenge developing my spending plans for 2015/16 is to balance my priority of cutting crime and building safer communities with the harm that further cuts may cause to policing and the ability of the public to pay more in Council Tax.

Sir Robert Peel set out that the purpose of the police is to cut crime – to reduce offending and cut reoffending. Even though he said this nearly 200 years ago, the principles are still the same, and this is the focus of the Commissioner's Police and Crime Reduction Plan. The Plan sets out 15 priority issues which, by working closely with the police and partners, I aim to tackle between now and the next election in May 2016. This Plan guides our actions and priorities in the immediate future...but finalising this plan is just the start of the process. It is the first step on a shared journey, for the police, local authorities and other partners. I will be consulting on revisions to the Plan early in the New Year. The Police and Crime Reduction Plan can be found at:

<http://www.southwalescommissioner.org.uk/en/Policy/Police-and-Crime-Plan/Police-and-Crime-Plan.aspx>

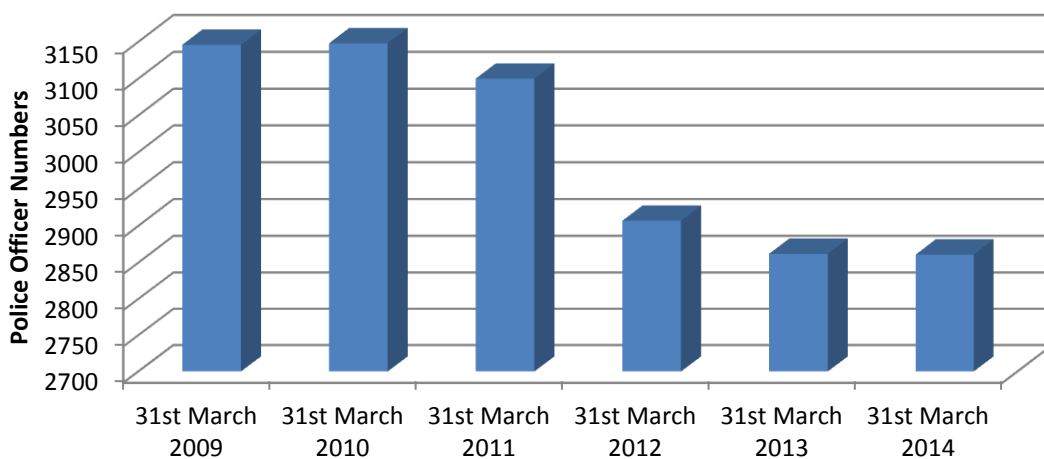
The South Wales Police have faced significant cuts since 2010. Grant funding has changed year on year due to various transfers of responsibilities but overall the trend is sharply downwards. The graph shows that, overall, the grant has reduced significantly since 2009/10.

Reduction in Central Government Funding For South Wales 2009 to 2014



Difficult decisions have been made to deliver savings of **£32m**. Police officers account for the largest single part of our expenditure and the graph shows that we have already lost nearly 300 police officers since 2009.

Police Officer Numbers in South Wales 2009 to 2014



This year, I had to take the difficult decision to reduce Community Support Officer numbers by 100. Now, we only have 406 Community Support Officers across South Wales. 206 of those are funded by Welsh Government, for whose support I am extremely grateful.

Efficiencies have been made by reducing the number of custody suites into new “Bridewells” in Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend. Telephone contact has been consolidated into a single contact and control centre that is now being expanded to accommodate our colleagues in the Fire Service.

I am acutely conscious that the grant forecasts are for further cash cuts, possibly until the end of this decade. South Wales Police will need to be a smaller, more agile organisation in 2020 than it was in 2010 if we are to continue to balance the budget and ensure safe communities. The same challenges apply to our partners and we must learn to “shrink together, not shrink apart” if we are to preserve and improve the services that you value.

Next year, I am expecting the Police Grant, our main source of funding to fall by more than 5%. The loss in cash is more than £8m. I also have to consider inflationary pressures – pay awards and general price increases. Overall, I estimate that the funding gap for next year will be £14m. This can be addressed in part by savings and in part by an increase in Council Tax. In terms of savings, I have already identified a potential £6.7m saving for next year, from the following areas:

	<u>£m</u>
Reduction in police staff posts	2.1
Full year impact of removal of 100 Community Support Officers	2.0
Collaborative procurement with Welsh Government	0.5
Consolidation of the police estate in fewer properties	0.8
Reduction in capital contribution to estates maintenance	1.0
Increased income	0.3
TOTAL	6.7

Table 1

That still leaves £7.3m which needs to be found to close the budget gap. I have asked the Chief Constable to identify further areas for saving and he has responded with vigour.

I also need to consider the contribution I can reasonably expect from Council Tax. Council Tax for South Wales Police is the lowest in Wales, as shown below. Council Tax in South Wales would need to increase by 7% to catch the next lowest force

	<u>2014/15 Band D Council Tax</u>
	<u>£</u>
North Wales	227.61
Dyfed Powys	210.60
Gwent	203.50
South Wales	190.34

Table 2

A 1% increase in Council Tax for a band D taxpayer is equivalent to £1.90 per annum or less than 4p a week. However, in aggregate across South Wales, a 1% increase is equivalent to nearly £1m or 20 police officers. The Welsh Government has powers to cap Council Tax. It is likely that any increase above 5% would be capped. Our expenditure plans currently provide for a Council Tax increase at that level. I have to balance the impact of Council Tax increases with our desire to live and work in safe communities when making my final budget decisions..

I also need to consider my capital expenditure plans for 2015/16. These are summarised below:

<u>Planned Expenditure:</u>	<u>£m</u>
Estates – recurrent schemes	1.3
Estates – projects	13.6
Vehicle replacements	2.0
Information system – projects	3.0
Information system infrastructure	1.0
Total	20.9
Funding:	
Commissioner’s Resources	9.0
External Grant	11.9
Total	20.9

Table 3

In particular, the estates’ projects include a scheme to extend our contact centre in Bridgend to incorporate our partners from the South Wales and Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Services. This project has financial support from the Welsh Government and will deliver savings to all 3 organisations.

Consultation Questions

What are your views on the need to maintain an effective police service in South Wales?

What are your views on the savings proposals in table 1?

What are your views on my capital expenditure plans in table 3 for next year?

Do you think there are areas of the Police service that should be protected from further cuts?

Do you think there are things that the Police could stop doing in your community?

Do you think there are better ways that the Police could work with partners to prevent and detect crime in your community?

Please return this consultation by 12th December 2014

You can return this consultation to us:

By email to: commissioner@south-wales.pnn.police.uk

By post to:

Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales
Consultation response
Tŷ Morgannwg
Police Headquarters
Bridgend
CF31 3SU

This form and the consultation are available on our website at <http://www.southwalescommissioner.org.uk/en/home.aspx> and in accessible versions on request by calling 01656 869 366 or e-mailing commissioner@south-wales.pnn.police.uk