

Suffolk Police and Crime Panel

Outcomes of Consideration of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Proposed Policing Precept for 2026/27

1. On 30 January 2026 the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel considered the recommendations of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Suffolk regarding the proposed precept level and Council Tax requirement for 2026/27 for policing in Suffolk. The agenda and papers for the meeting are available on the [Suffolk County Council website](#).
2. On 18 December 2025 the Minister of State for Policing and Crime published a [statement](#) setting out the provisional total funding for police forces during 2026/27, and how much each individual PCC was likely to receive. This statement did not provide the same level of detail as previous years, and the final financial settlement for Suffolk was received on 28 January 2026.
3. The statement in December 2025 gave PCCs in England the flexibility to increase local funding by setting a maximum £15 precept increase for a typical 'Band D' property in 2026/27.
4. 12 members of the Panel were present at the meeting. The PCC was accompanied by his Chief Executive Officer, Chief Finance Officer and Head of Communications and Assistant CEO. Suffolk Constabulary's Chief Constable was also present.
5. The Panel reviewed the PCC's detailed precept report and the associated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2026/27 to 2029/30, which included his proposal to increase the precept by **£14.94 (5.16%)** per annum for a 'Band D' property.
6. The MTFP had been prepared following notification of the provisional 2026/27 settlements from the Home Office and in conjunction with a range of assumptions summarised within the report. The PCC also provided a verbal update to the Panel on the final financial settlement which had been received after the Panel papers had been submitted. The PCC's decision papers in this regard are available on the [PCC's website](#), decision references [1-2026](#) and [3-2026](#).
7. The Panel noted that two options had been considered by the PCC in determining the precept. The detail and rationale for each option are set out in the PCC's decision papers referred to above.
8. In summary, Option 1 (an increase of 3.45% [£9.99 for a Band D property] per annum) would result in the Constabulary incurring a budget deficit of £1.4m in 2026/27, with further savings of £8.4m needing to be identified in the period 2027/28 to 2029/30 to achieve a balanced budget over the MTFP period.

9. Option 2 (an increase of 5.16% [£14.94 for a Band D property] per annum) would result in the Constabulary delivering a balanced budget in 2026/27. However, further savings of £7.0m would need to be identified in the period 2027/28 to 2029/30 to achieve a balanced budget over the MTFP period.
10. In introducing his report, the PCC outlined the rationale behind his decision to recommend an increase of 5.16% (£14.94pa for a Band D property) in the policing element of the Council Tax. The PCC was pleased to report that Suffolk had the third lowest level of recorded crime in England and Wales according to the latest Office for National Statistics figures, and it was important to maintain this position for the general wellbeing of the population and to underpin the economic development of the county. Nevertheless, Suffolk remained one of the lowest funded forces.
11. Whilst the Government had announced an additional £796m police funding for 2026/27, this was dependent on PCCs maximising the precept increase. The PCC outlined a number of increased and unknown costs which the Constabulary would have to bear in the coming year including the ongoing impact of the employer's National Insurance increase, the annual pay award, increased costs from the continued backlogs in the court system and a 4.2% cut in victims funding in 2025/26 which was still having an impact.
12. The PCC asked members to support his proposed precept, as by ensuring there was no deficit going forward further investment in technology would be possible which was expected, in time, to increase productivity, visibility of police in market towns, and to support a focus on rural crime.
13. The Panel received an update from the PCC's Head of Communications and Assistant CEO on his [survey](#) to capture the views of Suffolk residents on the proposal for the precept increase. Because of delays in receiving financial settlement information from central government, the survey had been open for responses between 9 and 29 January 2026. The survey had asked: "*As a council tax payer in Suffolk, do you agree with my proposal to increase the policing element of the council tax for 2026/27 by 5.2%? [For example this is equivalent to 22p a week for a Band B property and 29p a week for a Band D property]?"*. There had been 1,206 responses to the survey, 57% of which supported the proposal.
14. Members questioned the PCC on his proposals, with question areas including the results of the precept survey, what the additional precept funds would be spent on, the effect of another above-inflation rise on people who were already struggling with the cost of living, whether equality considerations had been taken into account when proposing the precept and the potential use of reserves to fund invest-to-save projects. Full details of the debate can be found in the [minutes](#) of the Panel's meeting.
15. The Chief Constable was also present at the meeting, and gave the operational context to the PCC's proposals.

16. In conclusion, the Panel understood that the Government's funding settlement assumed full use of the maximum allowable £15 (for a Band D property) increase in the precept. Members thanked the PCC and the Chief Constable for their attendance, and Suffolk Constabulary for the continued high level of service delivered to the residents of Suffolk. Members were also grateful for the PCC's continued positive engagement with the Panel and his taking on board of the Panel's comments and recommendations.

Decisions of the Panel

Following consideration of the information provided, the Panel:

- a) supported the PCC's proposal to increase the policing precept by 5.16% (£14.95 for a Band D property) per annum in 2026/27 (8 votes in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention);
- b) agreed that the Panel Chair would make a formal report on behalf of the Panel on the PCC's precept, by the statutory deadline of 8 February 2026; and
- c) recommended that the PCC:
 - i) for future precept reports, include a written explanation of how equality considerations were taken into account as set out in the Equality Act 2010;
 - ii) provide the Panel with a written explanation of how equality considerations were taken into account prior to the PCC's 2026/27 precept proposal;
 - iii) for future years' precept consultations, consider ways to engage under-represented and disadvantaged groups in order to elicit a greater number of responses from those groups;
 - iv) update the Panel regarding the county-wide survey currently being procured by the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders Group aimed at assessing community views on public safety;
 - v) bring an update to the October 2026 meeting of the Panel regarding the planned investment in technology to be funded under the approved 2026/27 precept, and the expected impact of that on freeing up officer time;
 - vi) consider how reserves might be used to fund invest to save projects, and report back to the Panel at its October 2026 meeting;
 - vii) arrange a workshop for the Panel providing details of the reserves set out in the Medium-Term Financial Plan, to include when they are due to be spent, and for what purpose; and
 - viii) when writing his next letter to the Minister of State for Policing and Crime regarding the unfairness of the police funding formula, liaise with other public sector leaders as to whether they would be willing to write a letter of their own supporting the PCC's concerns.

A copy of this report will be uploaded onto the County Council's [website](#).

Sarah Mansel

Councillor Sarah Mansel

Chair of the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel

30 January 2026