



## Police Budget Consultation - 2024/25

### A message from your Police & Crime Commissioner Giles Orpen-Smellie

**As your Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) I must provide Norfolk Constabulary with the resources needed to investigate crime, support victims and keep Norfolk safe.**

To do this, I must each year consider the requirements and demands on the police's spending plans, and how much I ask you, the residents of Norfolk, to contribute through the policing element of your council tax.

The total policing budget for the current financial year (2023/24) is £199.8 million of which over half (55%) is provided by the Government and the remainder (45%) is raised through council tax.

The budget is divided into two parts: revenue and capital. The revenue part is used for day-to-day running costs, such as police officer salaries and maintaining vehicles; and the capital part is spent on key assets such as police buildings and information technology.

This financial year (2023/24), £171.6 million (85.9%) is being spent on people - £113.5 million of which is spent on officers and £58.1 million on staff. The remaining £28.2 million (14.1%) is spent on everything else, including police buildings, vehicles, fuel costs, equipment, and training.



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More information about the consultation and Giles' Police, Crime and Community Safety Plan can be found on our website:

[www.norfolk-pcc.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk-pcc.gov.uk)

Looking forward to the next financial year (2024/25), the forecast budget is expected to increase to £205.2 million for several reasons, these include:

- An increase in police officer pay of 7 per cent set nationally, with police staff pay increases yet to be agreed.
- The impact of inflation on the costs of supplies and services purchased.
- The volume of high harm crimes such as domestic abuse and sexual offences, which require a highly skilled, high-tech response to successfully investigate crimes and provide support to victims.

Every pound the constabulary spends is precious, and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) agree that Norfolk Constabulary is 'Outstanding' at delivering value for money.

Sometimes, however, achieving value for money alone, does not mean the constabulary can meet all the growing demands placed on it or make the necessary investments required to ensure services meet expectations, such as call times for 101 calls.

To meet increased demands and costs, the law currently allows me to raise the policing element of council tax by just short of £10 a year (£9.99) for a Band D property. However, an increase of £10 would still leave the constabulary with a shortfall of £3.9 million for 2024/25 against current spending plans.

As in previous years, **I am aware and concerned about the pressures on household budgets** and the impact an increase in council tax could have for many. However, I am also conscious of the need to maintain the service Norfolk Constabulary currently provides to you, your loved ones, and local communities.

**The decision I must make is not straightforward** or easy and involves balancing several complex factors, including your views.

To do this, I have decided that during this year's consultation, we must have an open and frank conversation about the funding challenges that policing faces.

I would specifically like to hear **which areas of policing and services you think should be priorities** in my spending plans, and if you are prepared to pay more to ensure these are protected in the future.

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I will be touring the county for twelve weeks - **starting Monday 4 September, and finishing Friday 24 November** – to speak to as many of you as possible about what matters most to you about policing and crime in Norfolk.

When I became your Police and Crime Commissioner, I produced my Police, Crime and Community Safety Plan, setting out the strategic direction for policing in our county. This was based upon feedback I received from stakeholders and residents of Norfolk – **you spoke, and I listened.**

Based upon the six pillars highlighted as priorities in my plan, I would now like to ask you to answer the two questions in my online survey found at the end of this document.

Before doing so, please also take the time to read the information provided by Norfolk's Chief Constable Paul Sanford.



PCC Giles Orpen-Smellie



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## A message from Norfolk's Chief Constable Paul Sanford

**Policing plays a fundamental role in society; we have unique powers to keep you safe in your homes, on the streets and online. In times of difficulty, we are often the first and only point of contact, and in many cases, the service of last resort.**

Our communities expect and deserve exceptional service. We strive to deliver this by protecting you from harm and building and sustaining trust.

We know successful policing depends on getting the basics right and in Norfolk we call this 'core policing'. Core policing means prioritising the core services the public value the most: answering calls swiftly, getting to incidents quickly, investigating crime well, relentlessly targeting criminals and providing exceptional services to victims of crime.

In the recent recruitment drive to uplift officer numbers, we exceeded our target by 15% and we've prioritised deploying our new officers into departments which deliver these core services. Our results show that this approach is working:

- In May 2023 we delivered the best 999 performance in the country (based on average time to answer).
- Norfolk Constabulary currently has the best crime detection rate in the country.
- Norfolk has one of the lowest burglary rates in the country.
- In the last 12 months we have significantly reduced our number of outstanding suspects.
- Our County Lines enforcement has resulted in over 300 years of imprisonment for those who attempt to deal drugs on our streets.
- Arrests are up, drug seizures are up, knife seizures are up and admissions to hospital for violence offences are down.



**We are proud of these achievements and will continue to prioritise core policing so that our success continues.**

In our most recent inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) we had maintained or improved our performance in nearly all areas. Indeed, Norfolk Constabulary was graded as 'Outstanding' for how we use our resources, with inspectors particularly noting the efficiency of the organisation. As the National Policing Lead for Finance, it is vital that I lead by example in the efficient running of my force.

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**We are a lean organisation and aim to make the best use of every pound given to us.** However, we face significant financial challenges in the year driven mainly by inflationary pressures, increasing demand and the growing costs associated with achieving regulatory compliance.

With a significant percentage of policing budgets locked into police officer and police staff pay and long-term contracts, finding further savings with no service impact will be difficult.

We are committed to delivering our core services and wherever we can, we will seek to reduce the time spent responding to non-police related demand. We will be implementing the Right Care, Right Person initiative in Norfolk towards the end of the year.

**Protecting the vulnerable and keeping people safe is at the heart of everything we do.** However, all too often, my officers find themselves dealing with situations that could be better handled by other, more appropriate agencies. This includes people in mental health crisis, who need the help and support of professionals and not the skills of a police officer. This type of demand is ever increasing – one in five calls we receive is mental health related. The Right Care, Right Person initiative is about giving people the right support when they need it, from the right agency, and we are working closely with our partners to introduce this in Norfolk in the right way.

In addition, the constabulary is maximising its use of technology for greater efficiency with the use of video to attend calls for service virtually. This saves time, money, fuel and is greener, as well as providing victim satisfaction scores of 4.5+ out of 5. Furthermore, the force has swiftly adopted the changes in crime recording practices, which frees up officer time to investigate crime, be visible and engage with our communities.

**In everything we do, the trust and support of our communities is essential in achieving our aims** and is fundamental to the principle of 'policing by consent'. Like all forces, we are not immune to the issues brought to light in the Baroness Casey report, and we recognise the significant impact this has on public confidence. We've increased the resources in our vetting and Professional Standards Department, and we are identifying those officers who have no place in policing.

Despite our continual effort to drive efficiency, the gains we have made are being overtaken by the continual increase in demand. Our 999 calls are up by 14% which ultimately results in additional attendance and more follow-up work. Therefore, additional funding is needed to maintain what we know is the public's number one demand – visibility. Increasing demand is not our only challenge.

The inflationary costs that have bitten all communities and organisations have had a similar effect on the constabulary. **Our approach of making every pound count never stops.** Right now, we are having to assess how we provide additional resource to answer the calls for service, both in the Contact and Control Room and in the officers responding to emergency calls. The reality is this resource will have to come from reducing capability elsewhere in the force. Additional funding is required to maintain the quality of service being delivered.



Chief Constable Paul Sanford

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## Have your say

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Having considered this information from Norfolk's Chief Constable, Paul Sanford, please spare a few minutes to complete PCC Giles Orpen-Smellie's survey below:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/OPCCNBudget24-25/>

If you need the information in this document in an alternative format, please contact the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk (OPCCN) by telephone on 01953 424455 or by email: [opccn@norfolk.police.uk](mailto:opccn@norfolk.police.uk).

**Printed copies of the survey can also be requested. The consultation will close at 5pm on Friday 24 November 2023.**

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This consultation does not ask for identifiable information. If any identifiable information is provided, the OPCCN will ensure that any published information relating to the consultation remains anonymous. The OPCCN complies with data protection legislation, including GDPR, by applying its Data Protection Policy - which can be found at [www.norfolk-pcc.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk-pcc.gov.uk).