

Report of the Chief Executive

Consultation findings of both the Force and Authority for consideration as part of precept setting

1. Purpose of Report

For scrutiny

Recommendations

To note the report.

2. Background

In order to provide Members with evidence to gauge whether public opinion is supportive of an increase of Council Tax precept to protect policing services locally, specific questions were included in some forms of consultation undertaken throughout 2011. The results are provided below to enable Members to reach a decision that may take cognisance of our communities' views.

The majority of responses were received from the Citizen's Panel surveys. A smaller sample (380) was received from the Authority's web-based and paper surveys.

The following sets out the results received to the question "*How willing or unwilling would you be to pay an additional amount per week to your Council Tax to protect services provided by your Police Force?*"

Dyfed-Powys	Up to 15p per week	16-30p per week	31-45p per week	46-60p per week	More than 60p but less than £1.00
Very / fairly willing	1390	1009	611	401	425
Not very / not at all willing	366	566	922	1103	1197
Don't know	56	39	42	51	71
Total	1812	1614	1575	1555	1693

In answer to whether respondents would pay up to 15 pence per week extra towards their Council Tax precept, 56% (1006 respondents) stated that they were "very willing" and 21% (384 respondents) stated that they were "fairly willing".

Responses by County are provided overleaf.

Carmarthenshire	Up to 15p per week	16-30p per week	31-45p per week	46-60p per week	More than 60p but less than £1.00
Very / fairly willing	408	294	177	112	133
Not very / not at all willing	111	172	273	332	362
Don't know	26	18	19	25	29
Total	545	484	469	469	524

Ceredigion	Up to 15p per week	16-30p per week	31-45p per week	46-60p per week	More than 60p but less than £1.00
Very / fairly willing	306	229	140	103	106
Not very / not at all willing	87	128	213	241	267
Don't know	9	11	10	10	15
Total	402	368	363	354	388

Pembrokeshire	Up to 15p per week	16-30p per week	31-45p per week	46-60p per week	More than 60p but less than £1.00
Very / fairly willing	482	344	193	121	120
Not very / not at all willing	99	180	301	373	400
Don't know	16	5	8	8	18
Total	597	529	502	502	538

Powys	Up to 15p per week	16-30p per week	31-45p per week	46-60p per week	More than 60p but less than £1.00
Very / fairly willing	194	142	101	65	66
Not very / not at all willing	69	86	135	157	168
Don't know	5	5	5	8	9
Total	268	233	241	230	243

CONCLUSION

Based on results from 1812 responses (largest sample), the majority of those consulted with stated that they would be either “very” or “fairly” willing to pay up to an additional 15 pence per week towards their Council Tax precept to protect policing services locally. Results also demonstrated that a large proportion of those consulted with would either be “fairly” or “very” willing to pay an additional 16-30 pence per week.

3. Legal issues

The Police Authority has a statutory duty to consult with its community and for the results to be considered as part of the precept setting process.

4. Financial implications/assessment of value for money

The Authority should be mindful of its duty to ensure that residents of the Dyfed-Powys area receive a policing service that delivers value for money. As part of those considerations, costs to the public must be balanced with the requirement to ensure the Force has sufficient funds to deliver an effective service to our communities.

5. Equality and Diversity implications

Consideration must be given to more vulnerable groups within our communities including those on low incomes that are required to pay Council Tax contributions.

6. Crime and Disorder Act implications

Reference to the precept will be made within the Local Policing Plan, which impacts positively on the Crime and Disorder Act as it set out its intention to provide policing services in line with public views and other statutory considerations whilst ensuring value for money.

7. Children and young people implications

Council Tax precept increases will impact on all those who pay contributions regardless of age. Many families that have young children are on low incomes and may be adversely affected by an increase in Council Tax contributions.

8. Human rights implications

The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, together with the right to freedom of expression are engaged in the application of the consultation process.

9. Environmental, biodiversity and sustainability issues

None

10. Risk analysis

Part of the Authority's role is to secure an efficient and effective Force that delivers value for money to communities.

Lack of due consideration to the findings of this consultation exercise could lead to the setting of Council Tax precept that is not reflective of community needs resulting loss in public confidence in the Force and Authority.

11. National park implications

None

12. Appendices

None

13. Background papers

All relevant analysis of the data contained within this report is held by the Secretariat.

14. Contact details

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