

MEDIA RELEASE MEDIA RELEASE

LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY Council Tax Precept Consultation

Date Issued 24 January 2008, **Embargoed until Friday 25 January 2008 at 5 am**

Leicestershire Police Authority and the Chief Constable are to consult with local opinion formers and leaders of community organisations about setting the Police budget for 2008/09 and beyond.

Central Government has failed to fully provide the funding entitlement for the Police service in Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland. The time is fast approaching for the Police Authority to decide on the taxpayer's contribution towards their Police service. An average household currently pays £2.67 a week towards the Police service, regardless of how many people live within that property. The Police Authority consulted with the public on the Police budget in November 2007. Now it will consult the political and community representatives so that the Authority can make a final decision which is based on vital feedback from the service users. Options will then be presented to the Police Authority budget meeting on 7 February 2008.

Byron Rhodes, Chairman of the Police Authority, said – "We are stuck between a rock and a hard place in terms of funding. Whilst not wishing to incur any more costs to the taxpayer we cannot deny that the Police are in a tough position in terms of resources. The Police Authority wishes to keep the public cost to a minimum, but growing national threats, a lack of resilience in protecting some of our most vulnerable, and an understandable public wish for more visible neighbourhood policing, suggest to the Authority that more police officers need to be employed to deliver the service over the next 3 years."

Matt Baggott, Chief Constable of Leicestershire Constabulary, said – "This Force is at the top of the national table in terms of performance and overall professionalism. It has managed to achieve this whilst maintaining high standards of service and protection for an expanding population. Clearly, we want to continue to provide this, but there is no doubt that without assistance over the next 3 years our capacity to do so will diminish. Indeed, cracks are starting to appear in terms of arrests and response times. The implications of population growth, changes in alcohol use, organised crime and terrorism, are all challenges that must be met. As Chief Constable I want to provide a police service which is 'Second To None' but I need the resources to do this."

.....ENDS.....

NOTE TO EDITORS:

1. The consultation event is being held at FHQ on Friday 25 January 2008 at 10am and repeated at 2pm. Members of the press are welcome to attend to observe.
2. Mr Rhodes and Mr Baggott are available for interview from 4.30pm to 5.15pm on Friday 25 January. If you are interested, please contact 0116 222 2222 xtn 2798 to book a time.
3. Mr Rhodes' photo can be downloaded from the Leicestershire Police Authority website: http://www.leics-pa.police.uk/about_members.php

4. Leicestershire Police Authority monitors the Leicestershire Constabulary, which polices the area of Leicester City, Leicestershire and Rutland.
5. Police Authorities are independent bodies made up of local people. Police Authorities hold the Police Force to account on behalf of local communities.
6. Local Police Authorities along with the Home Secretary and Chief Officers of Police make up the tripartite relationship which is responsible for the governance of policing in England and Wales.