

**Zoë Billingham BA Hons (Oxon)**  
HM Inspector of Constabulary, Eastern Region

28 September 2012

Robin Chapman  
Chair – Norfolk Police Authority

Chris Harding MBE  
Chief Executive – Norfolk Police Authority

Dear Robin and Chris,

### **HMIC Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Budget Preparedness Visits**

Thank you for the time the police authority spent with the HMIC team on 04 September 2012. The meeting presented an opportunity for you to provide an overview of your budget development process for 2013/14, the funds identified for transition and the development of potential models of governance, decision making and accountability.

I am writing to provide you with a summary of our discussions and to highlight areas that emerged for further consideration.

#### **Budget setting process**

You have an effective budget setting process in place. While there is still a considerable level of uncertainty, your budget plans are based on up-to-date and prudent assumptions and all potential pressures have been identified and costed. The approach you have taken is 'business as usual' while allowing the potential for flexibility for the new PCC.

You have made an assumption that there will be no increase in council tax precept in your planning. You are planning on deploying a modest level of reserves over the spending review, but recognise that these can only be one off. You have identified a list of what is 'unknown' at the time of your planning such as the localisation of council tax benefit in 2013/14 and potential changes in the police funding formula. You are looking ahead to the next spending review (and its potential to affect this current spending round), and planning for a variety of further reductions being required. You have reached a view about the level of reductions which would question the viability of the force.

## **Preparation of scenarios to support the PCC in setting the budget**

You have considered drawing up options based upon the prospective candidates' manifestos; however none of the candidates in Norfolk have made any clear statements on their intentions with regard to spending and priorities, therefore options have not yet been developed.

You have calculated the additional resource each percentage point change in precept would yield and are planning to put a range of precept scenarios forward for consideration.

You are engaging with the prospective PCC candidates, in order that you may cost any manifesto commitments once they become known. However none of the current self-declared candidates have yet made clear what those commitments are likely to be. You are briefing prospective PCC candidates to assist them in understanding any current or potential developments.

## **Workforce and service impact**

The force has workforce plans which are supported by the current medium term financial plan. The force is in a position to cost and identify the implications for the workforce of any manifesto commitments around workforce numbers.

Your current budget proposals should not result in any major change in service delivery. You are involved in mature collaborative working with Suffolk; both authorities are working with prospective PCC candidates to ensure they understand the benefits around cost effectiveness and resilience this approach delivers.

## **Forward planning: governance and the Office of the PCC (OPCC)**


You have set aside a small transition budget and preparations are underway for the first 100 days following election of the PCC. You have considered the requirements of the OPCC, including provision for a deputy PCC, and have identified skills gaps and are making plans for filling these. You have addressed the key legacy issues such as standing orders and a scheme of delegation. The budget for the proposed OPCC is based on the current police authority budget.

Your proposal for governance draws on the work of the Association of Police Authority Chief Executives, but is also being developed closely with Suffolk Police Authority given the extent of your collaboration with Suffolk. You fully understand that it will be a matter for the PCC which, if any, options they choose to adopt.

I hope that the above comments are beneficial as you continue to plan and prepare for transition to a PCC.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the police authority for its continuing commitment to plan and prepare for the transition to a PCC.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Zoë Billingham". The signature is written in a cursive style and is centered within a light gray, textured rectangular box.

**Zoë Billingham**

HM Inspector of Constabulary, Eastern Region

Copied:

Mr Phil Gormley  
Chief Constable – Norfolk Constabulary

Mr Malcolm Cooke  
HMIC Liaison Officer