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**Drusilla Sharpling, CBE**  
Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary

28 September 2012

Mr Christopher Hoare  
Chair – Wiltshire Police Authority

Mr Kieran Kilgallen  
Chief Executive – Wiltshire Police Authority

Dear Christopher and Kieran

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

Thank you for the time the police authority spent with the HMIC team on 12 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 the discussions and to highlight any areas that emerged for further consideration.

#### **Budget setting process**

You have a well established approach to your 2013/14 budget setting process and your medium-term financial plan was updated in September and, where appropriate, it has been adjusted in year when new information has become available. The medium term financial strategy will be updated during October and November. You have completed an analysis of the impact on your budget from a wide range of factors including new council tax benefit localisation arrangements, the council tax base, the police precept component of local council tax (precept) and grant income.

You are engaging with stakeholders and prospective PCC candidates to brief them on the budget outlook and you have more events of this type planned in the next couple of months. You have already met with the police and crime panel (PCP) to discuss the budget setting process and how this supports the development of the police and crime plan.

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

You are preparing a range of alternative scenarios for the incoming PCC to consider in order to assist with setting the budget. These include a worst case scenario which involves a precept freeze and different scenarios based on different levels of precept increase. The implications of each scenario on the force's savings requirement will be calculated as well as plans for how these savings might be made.

## **Workforce and service impact**

You described your current workforce plans which are progressing as part of your Vision Wiltshire strategy. The impact of any further budgetary changes on service delivery are unclear at this stage and while you are not expecting any changes to your workforce projections for the next two years you will be reassessing the position from 2015/16 onwards.

The authority is involved in a number of collaborative working arrangements and is continuing to pursue options for collaborating with others as a means of increasing efficiency and reducing costs.

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

You have set aside a small transition budget to take account of any one-off costs and the provisional budget for the OPCC is based on the current police authority budget.

You have identified the principles for how the OPCC will operate and arrangements are being put in place for when the PCC takes up office. You have considered staffing requirements and identified areas where further support may be needed such as commissioning services. You have an induction plan and diary for the PCC's first 100 days which identifies essential activities.

You have assessed a range of options for decision making and governance and you have put in place a corporate management board structure with the chair of the police authority operating as a shadow PCC. The PCC will, however, be given a menu of options for different governance models to hold the Chief Constable to account and you are drawing on guidance issued by the Association of Police Authority Chief Executives and the Association of Police Authorities to assist you with this.

An interim joint audit committee is in place with members appointed from the existing audit and risk committee. You have drafted your scheme of delegation which includes the scheme of consent, financial regulations and contract and procurement regulations. You have used national guidance to assist you with this.

In summary, you have a well established budget development process which is based on prudent assumptions and which will take account of a broad range of funding scenarios.

You have progressed plans for how the OPCC will operate to support the PCC in delivering their statutory functions. You are currently trialling a decision making and governance model and you have a clear idea of the options. You fully understand that it will be a matter for the PCC which, if any, options they choose to adopt.

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, appearing to read 'Dr Sharpling'.

**Drusilla Sharpling**

HM Inspector of Constabulary, Wales and Western Region

Copied:

Mr Patrick Geenty  
Chief Constable – Wiltshire Police

Mr Matt Jones  
HMIC Liaison Officer