

# Safer in Kent

News from Matthew Scott: Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner

## Kent PCC budget plan launched

Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Scott has today launched his budget, to make the force fit for the future and protect the service residents of Kent say they want.

Thanks to a combination of council tax payer support and extra funding from the Government's Uplift Programme, police officer numbers have risen by 788 since 2016. Kent will soon have 3970 officers, with a further 185 to be recruited by March 2023.

The county now has specialist teams working in both urban and rural communities, a dedicated squad to reduce burglary and another to tackle drug dealing gangs. These teams are producing results and the Commissioner wants to build on their success.

As part of the budget Kent will receive £230.5 million from central government, but in real terms this is still a decrease of 16.6% since 2010/11. To cover some of that shortfall the Commissioner is proposing to increase the local council tax police precept by just 84 pence per month, or £10 a year for an average Band D property. Savings of over £8 million will still need to be made across the Force. The Budget will be voted on by Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel early next month.

Matthew Scott says,

*"If the first phase of my plan was to rebuild, the next phase is to make the Force fit for the future. I'm proud to have delivered an additional 788 police officers to Kent and I'm asking for your support to help us grow and invest further.*

*The Budget I announce today will include dealing with unprecedented inflationary challenges, funding for*

*185 more Police Officers and the support required to deliver this. Investment will begin in police stations in Maidstone, Sittingbourne, Folkestone, Tonbridge and further investment in Ashford. A new digital evidence system that will allow dash cam uploads. And there will be a further expansion of our cadet programmes.*

*To deliver this, I have had to make hard decisions. And I appreciate that times are tough. But in return for this plan, I am asking you to pay just short of 84 pence per month more in your council tax. £10.00 for the whole year. We will also need to make further efficiencies to deliver a balanced budget, which will be tough, but will be done in a managed way.*

*We are turning a corner. Numbers are rising. Outcomes are improving. Crime is falling.*

*I hope you can support me in this task again."*

If you have any comments, please get in touch before Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan at: [haveyoursay@kent.police.uk](mailto:haveyoursay@kent.police.uk)



The Budget plan will be voted on by Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

In the recent Police and Crime Plan Survey, 82% of respondents agreed with the Commissioner's priorities for Kent Police.

Last year Kent had the 8<sup>th</sup> lowest police precept rate in the country.

If this budget is approved a Band D house would pay £228.15 a year for the police.