



'A budget to support the future of policing'

A strong focus on providing value for money, investment in priorities important to Cheshire residents and protecting front-line policing – those are the key messages as Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire, David Keane, sets out the 2017/18 budget for policing.

The Commissioner has agreed a 1.99% increase in the policing precept, meaning the 2017/18 budget for the Constabulary will be £193m.

David said: "I think it is important

for the public to know that the 1.99% increase, which equates to 6p a week for an average Band D household, will enable an additional £1.16m to be raised to support policing in Cheshire. However, it does not cover the cost of inflation, existing commitments and priority developments. These additional costs, together with the net change in funding, will need to be met through efficiencies and savings."

Cheshire Constabulary has already made £52.4m of savings since 2010. A further £5.4m of savings have been identified this year with the overall

aim to protect local policing services.

David said: "The investments for the forthcoming year will focus on ensuring that our police service is ready to meet current and future challenges in a robust and sustainable way. This will assist to meet the vision for Cheshire to have a police service focused on community policing, putting victims first."

He added: "This is a budget that will enable the Chief Constable to protect the public of Cheshire and achieve the priorities of the Police & Crime Plan."



Mobile tablets to improve policing efficiency

Day-to-day policing is being transformed in Cheshire as all officers across the Constabulary have been issued with a new Microsoft tablet.

Surface 3 tablets have now been fully rolled out to 1,675 officers, enabling them to work more flexibly, allowing them stay out on the streets for longer periods and enabling them to work more efficiently.

The overall aim is to make policing more effective and further protect our communities across Cheshire.

The Surface tablets enable officers to capture digital evidence and upload statements without having to head back to the station. This helps to speed up investigations and improve the quality of evidence gathered whilst helping officers do more with their time and spend more time working out in communities.

Superintendent Matt Welsted, who is leading the Digital Policing Programme, said: "The rollout of Windows 10 tablets will underpin our position as an outstanding police force.



"Officers can now spend more time out on the streets whilst also doing some of the many other tasks required of them.

"The digital world is a tremendously fast-moving area, but the move to Windows 10 tablets puts us in a great place both now and in the future."

Commenting on the roll out Police & Crime Commissioner David Keane added: "The full roll out of the tablets

is a positive step in ensuring we have a police service fit for the future and illustrates investment in technology that supports our officers in the community.

"The tablets will support the efficiency and effectiveness of our police service and I will be monitoring how our investment in new ways of working is allowing officers to spend more time in, and connect to our local communities."

Crimefighting team gets ready to light up the small screen

Cheshire Constabulary's Interceptor team are the new stars of prime time TV.

Police Interceptors follows the elite teams of officers who live to fight crime.

The team featured in a special one-off episode on Channel 5 on February 5, in which presenters Ortis Deley and Rick Edwards were granted unlimited access to the toughest law enforcers.

Camera crews have been embedded with officers around the clock as they tackle the criminals prepared to smash and grab to get what they want.

Whether it's smashing into shops, grabbing stolen motors or ripping off the public, the dedicated team of enforcers are always in the thick of it, bringing order to chaos.

Following the one-of episode, the Constabulary's team will now feature in a 12-part series of Police Interceptors on Channel 5, starting in March.

Steve Griffiths, from Cheshire Constabulary's Roads Policing Operations Team, said: "Our Interceptor team have been operating professionally with a high level of skill for a number of years, and this work will now be highlighted in the

Channel 5 show.

"We work every day to target criminals and bring them to justice and now the public will be able to see how we go about this work and what is involved in the job."

It's the second time in just six months that the Constabulary will have featured in a major documentary series - Cheshire officers drew widespread praise during their appearances on 999:What's Your Emergency?, which was shown on Channel 4 last autumn.

Crackdown ahead of new phone legislation

Officers caught more than 100 drivers using their mobile phones illegally as part of a week-long nationwide operation.

More than 100 drivers were caught using their phones illegally as part of a week-long nationwide operation.

The Constabulary's Roads Policing Team took part in the national operation targeting those motorists intent on breaking the law by driving while using a handheld mobile device.

They stopped anyone who using a handheld mobile device behind the wheel and the drivers were issued with a penalty notice.

From March 1, any motorists caught driving while using handheld mobile devices will face double the penalty under new legislation. Anyone caught driving while using a handheld mobile device will receive



six penalty points and a £200 fine. Currently, the penalty is three points and a £100 fine.

Assistant Chief Constable Darren Martland said: "Driving while using a handheld mobile device is dangerous, completely reckless and will not be tolerated in Cheshire."

"The safety of Cheshire's roads is paramount and our Roads Policing

Team will do all they can to enforce the new legislation to keep our roads safe."

Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire David Keane said: "Road safety is a priority for communities across Cheshire and I am sure the public will be reassured to see the work the roads policing team have been doing to keep our roads safe."

Force among most LGBT-friendly employers

Cheshire Constabulary has been named as one of the best employers in the country for lesbian, gay, bi and transgender staff.

The force was ranked 16th out of 439 in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index (WEI) Top 100 Employers for 2017. The list is compiled from submissions to the Workplace Equality Index, a benchmarking tool used by employers to create inclusive workplaces.

Last year, the Constabulary was ranked 135th, but a big push to improve staff engagement has seen Cheshire rise to its highest ever position in the rankings.

Police and Crime Commissioner David Keane added: "To be ranked 16th out of 439 employers in Stonewall's WEI is a fantastic

achievement for Cheshire Constabulary and testament to all the hard work that has been done across the force during the past 12-months.

"This is very positive step forward and there is still more to be done. We will continue to work hard to ensure we create the best workplace possible for all lesbian, gay, bi and transgender staff."

In 2015 Cheshire Constabulary was ranked 91st. But 2016 saw an increase in applicants and the score needed to enter the top 100 increased making it harder for organisations to maintain their position.

Kate McStein, HR Manager for Positive Action at Cheshire Constabulary, said: "The results for Stonewall WEI for this year have reflected all the hard work that the organisation has been putting in to

ensure that equality and inclusion across all protected characteristics have been embedded throughout all levels of the organisation.

"Cheshire Constabulary is very lucky to have a senior leadership team who provide a high level of visible and accountable support, plus highly engaged staff networks

"The Positive Action team within HR played a pivotal role in ensuring that the organisation has not only re-entered the top 100, but has risen so significantly to our highest ever position which we are absolutely delighted with.

"We will continue to work with our staff, community groups and partners within Cheshire to continually strive to be one of the best performing organisations in the country."

Round-up from your area...

THE Constabulary has had a busy few weeks dealing with a range of incidents. The following are some of the highlights from your area...

Warrington

A new Chief Inspector has taken up the reins at Warrington Local Policing Unit. Sarah Pengelly arrives from Ellesmere Port, taking over from her predecessor Pete Shaw, who has been promoted to the rank of superintendent. Sarah has been involved in policing for 25 years and has held a number of uniform and detective roles at Cheshire Constabulary.

Halton

Two teenagers have been sentenced over the death of a father from Widnes. The pair, both aged 16 and who cannot be named for legal reasons, appeared at Chester Crown

Court on January 20 in relation to the death of Lee Briggs. One of the teenagers was sentenced to 4 years' detention. The second teenager was sentenced to a 2 year detention and treatment order.

Cheshire East

A witness appeal has been launched following the suspected arson of a 38ft straw sculpture of children's favourite Peter Rabbit. The incident occurred on February 2 at the Snugbury's ice cream farm near Nantwich. Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service attended the scene and the fire was extinguished, and police are now investigating to find out who was responsible..

Cheshire West and Chester

An art thief who stole an 18th century icon from Chester Cathedral and replaced it with a cheap angel figure has been jailed for



nine months. Vasily Apilats, 61, of Edleston Road in Crewe, was previously found guilty of stealing 'The Raising of Lazarus' in August 2014. Apilats was arrested at his home after officers discovered the piece of art, thought to be worth around £2,500, wrapped inside a black bin bag in his dining room. It was found hoarded with a number of other religious artefacts.

And finally...



Cheshire Constabulary set tails and tongues wagging as thousands of people took to social media to choose the name of the newest canine recruit.

The public was invited to suggest a name, which drew thousands of weird and wonderful suggestions.

From the vast array of ideas, a shortlist of three was drawn up – Axel, Rebel or Saxon.

It was then put back to the public vote on Twitter and Facebook, which saw Axel receive 1,695 votes, while Saxon came second with 1,359 and Rebel received 979 votes.

Sergeant Andy Burrage said: "We asked you to give us a name as big as his presence as a general purpose police dog and you voted for Axel.

"This is a fitting name for a dog who will be doing everything from catching criminals to searching for missing vulnerable people.

"Thank you to everyone for taking the time to take part in naming our budding crime fighter."