



Surrey Police Authority's Budget Cuts – Fact Sheet – May 2009

Background

- Surrey is the **safest county in England** with serious crime down by more than 10% last year and over 80% public confidence in the policing of local neighbourhoods.
- **Yet as a result of Government's decision to cap Surrey Police Authority (SPA)*, Surrey Police is facing a severe financial crisis. Capping will restrict the amount of funding the Authority can raise locally through council tax – a situation further exacerbated by Government's failure to provide realistic long term funding for the force.**
- SPA is calling on Government to cancel its plan to 'cap' the Surrey Police Authority budget for 2009/10 and to introduce a fair funding formula that reflects the true cost of policing Surrey. For more information and to sign the SPA online petition please visit the SPA web site at www.surreypa.gov.uk

The Facts

- Surrey provides substantially **more in tax revenue** to the Exchequer than any other county (an average of £12,000 per person per year), yet in return our residents receive **the third lowest level of funding for policing in the country**. Over ten years ago (1997/8) the Government grant for policing in Surrey was £96 per head of population. This year the grant is £93 per head – a reduction of 39% in real terms.
- Government auditors have stated Surrey Police provides **the highest levels of value for money** – having made over £50m of savings in the past decade. Yet during this period Surrey Police received less funding from Government and more from Surrey taxpayers.
- Surrey Police has **cut bureaucracy and pioneered 'common sense policing'** to free up officers to use their own professional discretion to best serve local people rather than chase targets

- **Surrey Police is already shrinking. This year we are cutting 144 posts** – by focusing on non-operational areas and investing in new technology.
- **Capping the budget will erode the service Surrey Police can deliver to local people.** It will lead to the immediate loss of 50 key operational posts in order to balance the budget - leaving less resource with which to keep Surrey safe.
- The Government's decision to cap the budget will result in Surrey Police Authority having to re-bill Surrey residents for policing services (usually done as part of the annual council tax billing) at a cost of £1.2m, thus making each Band D household in Surrey just six pence a week better off.
- Posts to go would include safer neighbourhood officers working with young people in schools, officers giving crime reduction advice, major crime investigators and officers working in Special Branch, forensics and roads policing.
- **As a county force tackling metropolitan threats, Surrey Police faces unique problems.** Half of the criminal threats to Surrey (including burglary, organised crime and drugs supply) come from outside Surrey – mostly London. Work to stop these criminals is currently funded by Surrey taxpayers to the tune of £40 million. Government funding takes no proper account of cross-border crime.
- Surrey Police Authority has repeatedly asked to meet with Government officials secure sensible levels of funding and to avoid capping but our requests to meet have been refused.

Next Steps

Surrey Police Authority is asking the Government to reverse its decision to cap Surrey's policing budget and to provide realistic long term funding. For more information and to access the SPA online petition visit www.surreypa.gov.uk.

*Surrey Police Authority is an independent body made up of local people. Its job is to make sure that Surrey has an efficient and effective local police force that meets the needs of the community. It does so by consulting with the public, setting the budget and strategic direction for the force and holding the Chief Constable to account on behalf of local residents.