

REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Response by Devon and Cornwall Police Authority

Date	Topic	Request
28/08/07	Council Tax	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What steps have been taken over the last five years to consider the impact of council tax increases on those with fixed or index linked incomes?2. Has utilisation of section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (to address the needs of those on fixed or index linked income) been considered?

As you will know, policing makes up only a very small part of your total council tax – around 10%. Nevertheless, members are very much aware of the sensitivity of their council tax decisions particularly for those on low or fixed incomes.

Each year, the budget and council tax process for the Police Authority is long and complex. Meetings are held over several months dealing with the various aspects of costs, savings and new commitments which lead up to a police budget and the police element of council tax. These culminate in the Budget Meeting of the Authority in February. At every stage, members are very aware of the potential impact of their decisions on council tax payers, especially those you are concerned about. They have to balance service needs particularly for extra policing against the impact on council tax payers.

In addition, some of the key players in those decisions are councillors from counties and unitary authorities who will have had considerable experience of considering the needs of those on low or fixed incomes when setting council tax in their own authorities.

I am advised that section 13 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 applies to Billing Authorities like district councils rather than police authorities.