

Rt Hon Theresa May MP
Home Secretary
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Councillor Roger Croad
Portfolio Holder for Environment
& Communities
Room G60
County Hall
Topsham Road
Exeter
Devon
EX2 4QD

Your ref:
My ref: NC/RC

Date: 25 October 2012
Please ask for: Sarah Hopkins

Phone: 01752 305542

e-mail: Sarah.hopkins@plymouth.gov.uk

Dear Ms May

Precept-setting Regulations

The meeting of Devon & Cornwall Police & Crime Panel held on 22 October discussed the timetable contained in the new Regulations for precept-setting and I was asked to write to you about concerns expressed.

The timetable leaves a minimum of just one week between notification by the Police & Crime Commissioner of the proposed precept, and the deadline for the Panel to respond. The same period applies to the arrangements for a revised precept following any veto. The Panel's concerns are:-

- This very short timescale appears to be arranged to allow maximum time for the Commissioner, at the expense of the Panel's time to respond, and does nothing to promote effective democratic oversight and scrutiny of the issue;
- The deadlines in Regulations (in February and March) take no account of the budget-setting processes of Local Authorities which need to know the precept earlier than this to allow effective planning;
- The timescales effectively make it impossible for the Panel to apply the provisions of the Local Government Act with regard to publishing a report by the required period in advance of the meeting(s).

Given these issues, our Panel asks you, for future years, to reconsider the timetable in Regulations (when the Commissioner will have more time to prepare for precept-setting).

Thank you in anticipation of giving this positive consideration.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Croad', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Roger Croad

Chair, Devon & Cornwall Police & Crime Panel

Chairman of Safer Devon Partnership &

Portfolio Holder for Environment & Communities for Devon County Council

cc: All Police & Crime Panels