

Suffolk Police and Crime Panel

Information for inclusion in District and Borough Councils' Outside Bodies Reports

Background

The Suffolk Police and Crime Panel is responsible for supporting and challenging the Suffolk Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in the delivery of his functions. It is a joint committee, established under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

The Panel has the following statutory functions, as set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011:

- Reviewing the PCC's [Police and Crime Plan](#);
- Reviewing the PCC's [Annual Report](#);
- Carrying out confirmation hearings for certain senior appointments in the PCC's office;
- Carrying out confirmation hearings for the Chief Constable;
- Handling non-criminal complaints about the PCC; and
- Supporting and scrutinising the effective exercise of the functions of the PCC.

The Panel comprises elected members of local authorities across Suffolk working alongside two independent co-opted members. Together the Panel members should reflect the breadth of communities in Suffolk. The Police and Crime Panel has 13 members in total, comprising:

- Four County Councillors;
- Seven representatives from the District and Borough Councils in Suffolk; and
- Two independent co-opted members.

The Panel is politically balanced, with the 11 local authority councillor representatives appointed to achieve political proportionality across Suffolk.

Meetings

The Panel holds 4 formal meetings per year, in January, March, July and October, plus additional meetings as required, for example to consider the appointment of the Chief Constable or to carry out confirmation hearings for senior officers in the PCC's office.

All formal meetings are held in Endeavour House, Ipswich. Members of the Panel also meet online to set the key lines of enquiry for each meeting, and for pre-meetings.

Latest Meeting: The Panel last met on 6 October 2023

- 1.1 The Panel ratified the appointment of Simon Furlong as **Independent Co-opted Member** of the Panel in accordance with the '[Panel Arrangements](#)'. This followed a full recruitment process overseen by the Chair and Vice Chair, and including liaison with the Equalities and Inclusion Team to ensure that the advertisement was accessible to hard-to-reach groups and communities.
- 1.2 The Panel scrutinised the effective exercise of the PCC's functions by reviewing actions he had taken under **Police and Crime Plan Objective 1**: "An efficient and effective police force for Suffolk", with a discussion based around the following six key themes:
 - The Recommendations of the Baroness Casey Review
 - Response Times
 - Makeup of the Force
 - Policing Suffolk
 - Demand on the Constabulary
 - Service Standards and Priorities.

The Panel questioned the PCC on a range of issues, with the main focus being around the PCC's role in providing the public with assurance about the propriety of policing behaviour in Suffolk. The Panel also had the opportunity to discuss the new Local Policing Model, which was coming into force from December 2023, and made relevant recommendations to the PCC.

- 1.3 The Panel reviewed and commended the **PCC's Annual Report 2022-23** and the Panel's response to the PCC's Report will be available on the County Council's [website](#) once approved. The Panel expressed concern at the additional unfunded burdens placed on the PCC's team and asked that he update the Panel on the impact of these on an annual basis, together with the success or otherwise of any applications to the Home Office for funding to enable the PCC's office to undertake that additional work without needing to increase the precept.
- 1.4 The Panel also questioned the PCC on the 2023-24 **financial position** and received an update on the use of precept funds. The Panel asked the PCC to suggest to the Chief Constable that an awareness raising campaign be undertaken prior to the introduction of Rapid Video Response (RVR) for domestic abuse 999 calls. It also requested an update on the performance of both RVR and the Digital Public Contact and Engagement Team once these have been in place sufficiently long for data to be available, initially scheduled for the July 2024 Panel meeting. Finally, the Panel asked that the PCC monitor the slippage in the Capital Programme for both operational implications and the inflationary impact on the budgeted cost of delayed projects.