

**INAUGURAL MEETING
SHADOW POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
AVON & SOMERSET**

Wednesday 29th August 2012, at 11.00am
Gordano Room, Police Headquarters, Portishead

Present:

Bath and North East Somerset

Councillor Francine Haeberling, Councillor Lisa Brett

Bristol City Council

Councillor Jon Rogers, Councillor Peter Hammond

Mendip District Council

Councillor Cllr John Parham

North Somerset Council

Councillor Nigel Ashton, Councillor Roz Willis

Sedgemoor District Council

Councillor John Swayne

Somerset County Council

Councillor William Wallace

South Gloucestershire Council

Councillor Mike Drew, Councillor Justin Howells

South Somerset District Council

Councillor Tony Lock

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Councillor Jane Warmington

West Somerset Council

Councillor Stuart Dowding

Other officers present: Ian Pagan, Jude Williams, Patricia Jones, Lorraine Howells and Vicky McLoughlin (Bristol City Council), Julian Gale (Somerset County Council), Bruce Lang (West Somerset DC), Graham Turner (North Somerset CC)

**PCP
1.8.12**

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Tim Taylor (West Somerset DC), Councillor Duncan McGinty (Sedgemoor DC), Councillor Mark Edwards (Taunton Deane DC), Councillor Simon Cook (Bristol CC).

**PCP
2.8.12**

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

**RESOLVED – that Councillor Ashton be elected
Chairman.**

**PCP
3.8.12**

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

**RESOLVED – that Councillor Haeberling be elected
Vice-Chair.**

**PCP
4.8.12**

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

**PCP
5.8/12**

PANEL MEMBERSHIP, PANEL ARRANGEMENTS AND PANEL RULES OF PROCEDURE

The PCP (the Panel) were invited to approve a range of issues in relation to the Panel Membership, Panel Arrangements and Panel Rules of Procedure, previously agreed and developed through the Leaders JSC.

(a) Panel Membership

By majority vote at the 11th June meeting of the Leaders JSC, it had been agreed that the Panel should comprise 14 councillors in total (based on 2 members from each of the unitary councils, 1 member from Somerset CC and 1 member each from the Somerset DCs). The Chairman confirmed that the position remained unchanged for the present time following further discussion at the JSC earlier today, but that agreement had been reached to revisit councillor membership in the light of the Bristol mayoral election in November. This would provide further opportunity to adjust the membership in line with the Home Office balanced appointments objective.

Councillor Hammond added that he would welcome the opportunity to review the position post election as the

councillor membership when taken together should reflect the political balance of the force area.

(b) Independent Co-optees

It was noted that the recruitment process would be covered in detail in a separate report later in the meeting.

IP summarised the decision reached at the earlier JSC to appoint 2 co-optees in line with the statutory requirement, with the option of making additional co-optee appointments subject to the skills and experience of the applicants coming forward.

The Chairman confirmed that interviews would take place at the end of September and emphasised the importance of securing the right people for these roles. With this in mind, there was further discussion around the feasibility of extending the publicised date closing date for applications. Members were agreed that any extension should not delay or interfere with the selection process.

Councillor Brett inquired if specific approaches had been made to not for profit organisations, victim support and similar organisations. Officers reported that the recruitment exercise included a press release, a bespoke page on the host authority website and wide circulation around the mainstream media. Community safety partnerships, voluntary organisations, and BME groups had also been targeted.

The Lead Officer (Ian Pagan) then sought the Panel's instructions in relation to the arrangements for long listing and short listing of candidates. It was agreed that all councils should be invited to take part in the process and interests declared where appropriate.

(c) Panel Arrangements

The Lead Officer invited members to endorse the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel Arrangements document (Appendix A) setting out the framework in which the Panel

will operate and subject to further change in the light of impending legislation changes and guidance.

(d) Panel Procedure Rules

The Lead Officer invited the Panel to endorse Appendix B of the report setting out the standing orders governing the conduct of meetings, including any sub-committees. It was pointed out that future government legislation was likely to impact on these rules, which as a result were also subject to change. The Lead Officer proposed submitting revised rules to the next meeting to include formal rules of debate and details of how the public can participate in meetings (Public Forum). It was noted that members would also welcome some clarity around the conduct and funding of complaint hearings.

There was brief discussion around the eligibility of substitute members to vote and it was confirmed that substitutes could not vote at Panel meetings. Whilst it was accepted that the attendance of substitutes at meetings was occasionally unavoidable, it was agreed that regular attendance of full members would ensure consistency and continuity.

It was agreed that the first public meeting of the Panel would be held at the Castlewood site in Clevedon, an additional office base of North Somerset Council with easy access off the motorway. The venue for future meetings would be reviewed after the first meeting.

(e) Code of Conduct for Independent Panel Members

In the absence of a formal mechanism governing the conduct of independent members, it was agreed that officers would liaise with the LGA and produce a draft protocol for consideration by the Panel. It was also noted that whilst 5.5 of the Panel Arrangements document (Appendix A) made provision for the termination of a co-optees's appointment, this did not cover all eventualities and required some minor change.

The Lead Officer summarised the decisions reached by the Panel. It was noted that Councillor Hammond dissented from

the recommendation to confirm the arrangements for councillor membership of the Panel.

- RESOLVED -**
- (1) that the Panel councillor membership comprise 14 councillors in total (based on 2 members from each of the unitary councils, 1 member from Somerset CC and 1 member each from the Somerset DCs), to be revisited in the light of the Bristol mayoral election.**
 - (2) that all councillors be invited to take part in the shortlisting and selection process for independent members and interests declared where appropriate.**
 - (3) that the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel Arrangements document setting out the framework in which the PCP will operate be endorsed (subject to further change in the light of impending legislation changes and guidance).**
 - (4) that the Panel Procedure Rules setting out the standing orders governing the conduct of Panel meetings, including any sub-committees be endorsed (subject to further change in the light of impending legislation changes and guidance).**
 - (5) that the first public meeting of the Panel be held at the North Somerset Castlewood site in Clevedon.**

(6) that officers liaise with the LGA and produce a draft protocol governing the conduct of independent members for consideration by the Panel.

**PCP
6.8/12**

ARRANGEMENTS FOR RECRUITING INDEPENDENT CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Officers reported that 16 applications had been received to date, 7 from within Bristol and 9 outside. Adverts were placed in the Bristol Evening Post, Bath Chronicle and Somerset Gazette. The bespoke page set up on the BCC website had received 358 hits. Whilst the decision to be flexible about late applications was noted, officers expressed some reservations about this approach.

It was agreed that possible dates for interview should be circulated to the panel as soon as possible. One copy of the completed application pack would be sent to the Leaders of each council, who in turn would make the pack available to other Panel members in their authorities (the additional unitary representatives and those authorities where the Leader was not the representative). Panel members from each of the councils were welcome to be involved in the interview process but the decision to participate or not would be left with individual members.

In conclusion, it was agreed that HR advice should be sought on the proposal to extend the closing date. It was also agreed that shortlisting should be carried out without equalities data (age, gender, ethnicity) to ensure the process was equitable.

- RESOLVED -**
- (1) that possible dates for interviews be circulated to the Panel as soon as possible.**
 - (2) that one copy of the completed application pack be sent to the Leaders of each council for their consideration, and onward**

distribution to other Panel members.

(3) that HR advice be sought on the proposal to extend the closing date.

**PCP
7.8/12**

**PROMOTING THE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL –
PROPOSED COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL**

Officers sought approval of a communications protocol setting out how the members of the Panel will relate to the media. Specifically,

- Proposals for how the Panel as a whole will communicate
- Arrangements as to how individual members can communicate with the media
- Access of the media to formal meetings

The protocol set out at paragraph 2 of the report was agreed. The Chairman also highlighted the following:-

- The importance of conveying to the public and the media that the role and function of the Panel is distinct to that of the Police Authority – ie to scrutinise the performance of the Police and Crime Commissioner and provide support and constructive challenge to that role.

- Raising awareness of Panel meetings with the public, and ensuring that people know that they can participate.

RESOLVED – (1) that the communications protocol setting out how members of the Panel will relate to the media be approved.

(2) that the comments of the Chairman regarding the importance of raising

**awareness with the media
and the public of the Panel's
role be noted by officers.**

**PCP
8.8/12**

DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13

Members noted the draft work produced in consultation with officers from the current Police Authority. Attention was drawn to:-

- The proposed planning meeting in November with the new PCC.
- the Precept and Budget scrutiny sessions in December and January.
- The induction date for all members (date in October to be fixed)

Below is a summary of the comments made by members:-

- Some members felt that agendas should include a standing item on community engagement in line with the PCP's requirement to scrutinise the engagement and consultation activity of the PCC and ensure that the interests of local people are being taken into account.
- The proposed confirmatory hearing for the Deputy PCC in January/February should take place at an earlier stage in the work programme, although this was dependent on the timing of the appointment. It was agreed that this would be discussed in more detail at the first planning meeting with the PCC.
- The timeline for Precept and Budget scrutiny was particularly tight and needed to be well managed. Specialist advice would be sought if necessary to assist with the process.
- The process for confirmatory hearings to be addressed by officers as soon as possible and notified to the Panel.
- As previously agreed, the next meeting would be held at Castlewood.

It was anticipated that the independent members would be in place by early October in time for the intended induction day. The Chairman urged members to confirm their availability as soon as possible.

- RESOLVED -**
- (1) that the work programme be amended in line with the suggestions and comments put forward by the Panel.**
 - (2) that the process for confirmatory hearings be addressed by officers as soon as possible and notified to the Panel.**

**PCP
9.8/112**

BUDGET REPORT

The Lead Officer confirmed that £53,300 was being made available from the Government for the cost of supporting and maintaining the Panel, plus a further £920.00 per annum per member. As agreed earlier, the aim was to contain the total running costs within this funding.

Mileage, fares and dependent care allowance would be paid by Bristol payroll at Bristol rates on submission of a claim form (to be brought to each meeting). Later in the year it would be possible to provide an educated estimate of these expenses based on the number of meetings to be held.

The largest cost was inevitably officer time, and the Panel would be supported by existing Bristol staff. Reproduction and papers would be kept to a minimum and there would be advertisement costs associated with the independent member recruitment process and the flat payment of £250.00 agreed earlier in the meeting.

Panel members would be kept apprised of spend and advance warning of variations reported as soon as possible.

The costs associated with the conduct of complaint hearings could not be ascertained at this stage and officers would seek to clarify funding arrangements.

- RESOLVED – (1) that a further detailed budget report be presented to the Panel later in the year.**

(2) that a budget for 2013/14 be presented to the Panel ahead of the new financial year.

PCP

10.8/112

INDUCTION SESSION FOR MEMBERS

It was reported that the induction day could be tailored to suit the needs and experience of Panel members. It was recognised that specialised training would be needed to assist with the scrutiny of the precept and budget.

It was anticipated that a morning session would be adequate to cover the following areas:-

- The key points of the draft Police and Crime Needs Assessment, to be circulated to members in advance (*becomes available end September*)
- The budget process
- The role and responsibilities of the Panel (in brief as probably not essential).

It was noted that not all members had responded to the proposed dates previously circulated. Based on the agreement to have a morning session only, officers would refer back to the consulting firm and circulate further dates.

RESOLVED – officers to refer back to the consulting firm and circulate further possible dates for the induction session.

PCP

11.8/112

DATES TIMES AND VENUE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

- Castlewood in accordance with earlier decision.
- Members were urged to respond as quickly as possible to emails regarding possible dates for meetings and induction session.

(The meeting ended at 12.20pm)

CHAIRMAN