




# Building Better

139 Outcomes and recommendations  
from the CPCP Task and Finish Group  
Scrutiny Improvement Review

December 2020 - July 2021





## Purpose of the Review

- To review how effectively and efficiently the Panel carries out its functions
- To explore areas for development and how best practice can be embedded
- To further develop challenging and constructive scrutiny that adds value, improve outcomes and builds better, stronger and safer communities



## Process for the Review

- The Panel established a Task and Finish Group
- The Group engaged the services of the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny to undertake evidence gathering activities and provide external perspective, independent authority and support to implement change



## Review Findings

- Overall no critical issues with the Panel and many Members are clearly passionate about ensuring better outcomes for the safety of their communities
- To further develop the impact of the Panel there are a number of <sup>142</sup>interlinked Areas for Development identified together with some suggested Improvement Actions



## Area 1 : Clarification of the Panel's role and responsibilities

... of the Panel in holding the PCC to account and enhance public accountability  
... Force is well understood. However, in practice challenge can focus on operational  
... matters, leading to scrutiny of the Chief Constable more than the PCC.

### Recommendations

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Clarification, through training, of exactly what constitutes strategic and operational  
... and the nature of scrutiny to consider the What (actions) and So What (impact)  
... to cease having the Chief Constable at Panel meetings to focus on scrutiny of the P  
... creation of a Panel Protocol to establish and embed principles and practice



## Area 2 : Panel – PCC Relationships

It is important to have a culture of trust, transparency and mutual respect between the Panel and the PCC to enable open and candid exchange. Positive engagement between the Panel and PCC is vital in re-establishing relationships that are conducive to effective scrutiny.

### Recommendations

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- Creation of a Panel Protocol which covers the practical workings of the Panel as well as the cultural dynamics
- Other development actions seek to re-balance the power dynamic to ensure that the Panel is a proactive partner in governance





# Area 3 : Collaboration and Commitment

Members recognise the importance of strong and productive working relationships within the Panel and that scrutiny is most effective when it is cross party and an equal voice is given to all. There is a mixed level of engagement but all Members agree they have a duty to prepare for, attend and contribute to meetings and work towards shared goals.

## Recommendations

- Development actions identified in other areas are intended to refresh commitment and enthusiasm for the task, build on existing skills and further develop knowledge and expertise relevant to the role



## Area 4 : Panel's focus

The Panel would benefit from a clearer focus on strategic issues where it can add value and have influence. For the majority of substantive items on Panel Agendas there is no clearly articulated outcome required from Panel's scrutiny of the topic, or Panel is asked to merely report, leading to opportunities to add value.

### Recommendations

The Panel need earlier access to information and greater involvement in the process of developing and reviewing the Police and Crime Plan

The Panel should focus on cross cutting issues affecting communities and receive information that is fit for the purpose of scrutiny

Agendas should be shorter to allow more time for focused discussion, with other points issued for information





## Area 5 : Work programming

Work programming is key to ensuring the Panel stays focussed on strategic issues where it can make an impact. Greater collaboration with the OPCC, using the Police and Crime Panel as a basis for forward planning and setting priorities is required. Work programming needs to be Member led, ongoing and regularly reviewed.

### <sup>147</sup>Recommendations

The Panel would benefit from an agreed process to select topics for scrutiny

The Panel would benefit from an annual workshop to develop a workplan and create agendas to prompt requests for information from the OPCC

The Panel would benefit from developing smaller Interest groups around the themes of the Police and Crime Panel and work of the PCC



## Area 6 : Meeting Preparation

It is important the Panel receives the right strategic information in order to sufficiently support and challenge the PCC. The practice of re-cycling reports provided to other meetings, or those for noting or information, should be avoided with these updates sent to Members outside of the meeting. There are missed opportunities for Panel members to work as a team, follow clear lines of enquiry or pose insightful questions.

### <sup>14</sup>Recommendations

- Implementing development actions in other areas will ensure that the Panel has the right information to prepare for, and deliver, effective scrutiny
- Development of Interest groups would further increase focus, support and challenge




## Area 7 : Member development and Diversity

Members need a clear sense of what is required of them as well as the opportunity to make a difference. The reactive nature of the relationship between the PCC and Panel, together with the presentation of information that is not fit for purpose, has eroded interest, enthusiasm and focus, and therefore undermined potential value and impact.

### <sup>149</sup> Recommendations

The Panel would benefit from refresher training to address gaps in knowledge and further develop identifying strategic priorities, work planning, questioning and scrutiny skills.

The Panel would benefit from a greater diversity of representation and participation.





# Task and Finish Group Summary : What we need to do

Panel needs to move from it's current **reactive** position where it is the recipient of recyc  
mation to a **proactive** position where it;

Establishes a fresh approach to working relationships with the OPCC and PCC in the spirit  
providing open, respectful challenge, scrutiny and effective governance

owns the work planning and drives meeting agendas which hold the PCC to account for  
Impact of the Police and Crime Plan

requests relevant information/reports that are fit for the purpose and support effective sc

invigorates and re-enthuses members to further develop their knowledge and confiden  
d capacity for focused scrutiny



## Ask and Finish Group Summary : How we do it

Panel has an excellent opportunity with the  
of a refreshed membership and a new PCC  
Better relationships and engage in more  
ve scrutiny and governance.

Group proposes to hold a training day with  
t from the Centre for Governance and  
y in September 2021 to incorporate the  
ng;

role, purpose and function of the Panel  
etting Panel / PCC / OPCC relationships  
y of strategic and operational issues

- Scrutiny Skills including questioning
- How to add value, have influence, and in
- Methodology for selecting priority topics
- Work planning, setting agendas and requ  
fit for purpose reports
- The development of Interest groups
- Framework for a Protocol (which CfGS wi

And a workshop session to apply this learning  
the draft Police and Crime Plan



## Next Steps

- The Task and Finish Group present recommendations to the Panel in July 2021
- Once accepted a Training event will be planned for September 2021, facilitated by CfGS