



Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel: Annual Report 2015/16

Foreword

The Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel (the Panel) holds the Police and Crime Commissioner (the Commissioner) for Cambridgeshire to account by acting as a 'critical friend'. Its role is to scrutinise, challenge and support the Commissioner, maintaining a check and balance on the performance of the Commissioner in regards to the strategic actions and decisions made.

The Panel is not responsible for holding the Chief Constable or the Constabulary to account; this is a role for the Police and Crime Commissioner. The principal role of the Panel is to scrutinise the actions and decisions of the Commissioner, not the performance of the police force. The key functions of the Panel are:

- To review the PCC's Police and Crime Plan
- To hold the PCC to account for the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan – the panel has powers to request any necessary information from the PCC on his decisions
- To review and report on the appointment of the Chief Constable and other senior appointments – the Panel has powers to veto the appointment of the Chief Constable
- To review the Commissioner's proposed police precept – the panel has powers to veto the precept
- To scrutinise the PCC's annual report
- To consider complaints against the PCC.

This is the third annual report of the Panel covering its work throughout 2015-16.

The work of the Panel

During 2015-16, the Panel met on six occasions and has scrutinised a number of key areas of the Commissioner's work. These include –

- Reviewing the Commissioner's performance reporting procedures which sets out what the police are expected to achieve and how the Commissioner holds the police to account.

- Reviewing Her Majesty's Inspection Constabulary's reports on crime data integrity and domestic abuse and the action that the Commissioner has overseen to address the issues raised within the reports.
- The role of the various community safety partnerships across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire and how the Commissioner supports them.
- Scrutinising the budget strategy and financial forecast for the Constabulary including the measures the Commissioner had taken to reduce costs and improve efficiencies within the police force.
- Understanding how violent crime was being recorded and the actions that the police were taking. The Panel were particularly interested to understand how domestic violence is being tackled.
- Assessing how the Commissioner and the Constabulary are addressing issues around cybercrime and how the Commissioner engages with the National Crime Agency.

In addition, the Panel has scrutinised the Commissioner's variations to his Police and Crime Plan throughout the year and the decisions which he has taken. Full details of the issues that the Panel have considered can be found on the website [here](#).

Commissioner Budget Precept

The Commissioner proposed that for 2015/16 there would be 0.99% increase in the precept. The Panel has the power to veto any proposed precept from the Commissioner through a two thirds majority vote of its members. The Panel undertook a thorough scrutiny in the Commissioner's budget for the Constabulary asking a number of detailed questions on areas of expenditure including:

- The use and amount of budget reserves
- Costs and performance of the 101 service
- Details of the Commissioner's office running costs
- The number of serving police officers
- Capital expenditure and the police estate

The Panel endorsed the Commissioner's proposed precept.

Chief Constable Confirmation Hearing

In September 2015, the Panel considered the Commissioner's proposed appointment for Chief Constable. Alec Wood was the Commissioner's preferred candidate following the resignation of the previous Chief Constable earlier in the year.

The Panel held a confirmation hearing with the candidate and asked a number of questions regarding his professional competence and personal independence of the role. The Panel also considered

- The criteria used to assess the candidate's suitability for appointment
- Why the candidate satisfied those criteria
- The terms and conditions on which the candidate was proposed to be appointed

Following careful consideration of the information provided by the Commissioner and answers given at the confirmation hearing, the Panel recommended the appointment of Alec Wood to Chief Constable.

About the Panel

The Panel comprises the current membership as at May 2016:

- Councillor Mac McGuire (Cambridgeshire County Council)
- Councillor Robin Howe (Huntingdonshire District Council)
- Councillor Andy Pearson (East Cambs District Council)
- Councillor Michael Shellens (Cambridgeshire County Council)
- Councillor Ben Shelton (South Cambs District Council)
- Council David Oliver (Fenland District Council)
- Councillor Dave Baigent (Cambridge City Council)
- Councillor Derek Giles (Cambridge City Council)
- Councillor James Lillis (Peterborough City Council)
- Councillor Ray Bisby (Peterborough City Council)
- Councillor Ed Murphy (Peterborough City Council)
- Edward Leigh (Independent Co-opted Member)
- Francesca Anderson (Independent Co-opted Member)