

Norfolk Police and Crime Panel



Annual Report 2020-21

Introduction & background

This is the second annual report of the [Norfolk Police and Crime Panel](#) (“the Panel”), which was established in 2012 in compliance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. The report covers the Panel’s activities during the past year, but also reflects on the impact it has had throughout the term of office of Norfolk’s second Police and Crime Commissioner, Lorne Green.

The [Police and Crime Commissioner](#) for Norfolk (“the Commissioner”) has responsibility for securing an efficient and effective police force for the area, setting objectives and the budget for Norfolk’s police force and holding the Chief Constable to account. In addition, the Commissioner has a duty to bring together Norfolk’s community safety and criminal justice partners to make sure local priorities are joined up, provide support services for victims of crime and get communities involved in keeping Norfolk safe. They may also commission services which contribute to the Police and Crime Plan.

The Panel’s role is to challenge and support the work of the Commissioner. It also has a role in handling complaints about the Commissioner’s conduct and confirming appointments the Commissioner makes to key posts, including the Chief Constable and senior members of staff.

Who’s who

The Panel comprises ten elected members from local authorities across Norfolk and two co-opted independent members.

Membership during 2020-21 was as follows:

Main Member	Substitute Member	Representing
Cllr Gordon Bambridge	Cllr Mark Robinson	Breckland District Council
Cllr Stuart Clancy	Cllr Peter Bulman	Broadland District Council
Cllr Mr Mike Smith-Clare	Cllr Jade Martin	Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Cllr Colin Manning	Cllr Brian Long	King’s Lynn and West Norfolk Council

Cllr William Richmond (Chair)	Cllr Michael Chenery of Horsbrugh	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Martin Storey	Cllr Phillip Duigan	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Sarah Butikofer	Cllr Dan Roper	Norfolk County Council
Cllr Tim Adams	Cllr John Toye	North Norfolk District Council
Cllr Kevin Maguire	Cllr Paul Kendrick	Norwich City Council
Cllr Michael Edney	Cllr Mr James Easter	South Norfolk Council
Air Commodore Kevin Pellatt FCMI RAF (Vice-Chair)	(no substitute member)	Co-opted Independent Member
Mr Peter Hill	(no substitute member)	Co-opted Independent Member

Panel activity during 2020-21

The Panel met formally 5 times during 2020-21. Copies of the agenda and minutes are available to view [here](#).

In this exceptional year, the Covid pandemic brought about some significant and unexpected changes both for our working practices and our work programme. The Panel's meeting in March 2020 was cancelled as the country moved towards national 'lockdown' and in adherence to national directives. However, the Panel was able to respond proactively and positively to the challenges faced and quickly migrated to virtual meetings. Perhaps more importantly, the local and PCC elections scheduled for May 2020 were postponed for 12 months, which enabled the Commissioner to continue in his role for an extended period.

Our public meetings are the occasions on which we carry out our required functions. These are summarised below:

- To consider the Commissioner's proposed police precept (the amount that individuals contribute to the police budget through council tax).

The Panel unanimously endorsed the Commissioner's proposed maximum increase in the police precept for 2021/22. To inform our discussion, the Commissioner provided comprehensive information to support his proposal. This included an outline of the budget and financial impact of the 2021/22 precept proposal, his Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25 including the Capital Programme, together with details of the various financial strategies that he is required to publish, as well as the result of his public consultation. A view from the Chief Constable was also included. Having asked the Commissioner questions about the information provided, and examined his proposal alongside public expectations of policing and the pressures facing the force, the Panel voted to support the increase. You can read the letter from the Panel's Chair, formally reporting the Panel's decision, [here](#).

- To monitor delivery of the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan

The Commissioner must publish a Police and Crime Plan after they take office. This plan must set out their policing and crime objectives, details of grants made to partners, the resources the Chief Constable will be given and how the Commissioner will hold them to account. Part of the Panel's role is to monitor the progress being made by the Commissioner towards meeting their objectives. For that purpose, the current Commissioner provides a report for each of our meetings, setting out progress against his priorities, two at a time. Once a year, the Panel also reviews the Commissioner's draft annual report which covers progress against his whole plan. Throughout the current Commissioner's term of office, we have challenged him on the clarity of his reporting. Members have encouraged him to report on specific outcomes, in addition to describing the activity he has undertaken, so that it is possible to judge the impact he is making. These changes have enabled us to thoroughly examine the Commissioner's achievements, on behalf of our local community. In this exceptional year, we also focused our attention on the local policing response to the Covid pandemic, and the impact the pandemic was having on victims, witnesses and perpetrators of crime. You can read our recommendations in the minutes of our meetings.

- To review and scrutinise action and decisions taken by the Commissioner

At each meeting, the Panel considers an information bulletin which summarises both the decisions taken by the Commissioner and the range of activity he has undertaken, in the period between one meeting and the next. This provides an opportunity for the Panel to publicly hold the Commissioner to account for the full extent of his actions in a timely way. You can read the bulletins and the issues discussed by viewing our agendas and minutes. This year we have reviewed the way in which confidential PCC decisions are reported, in conjunction with the Commissioner's Office, which has enhanced transparency.

- To handle PCC conduct complaints

One of the Panel's responsibilities is to deal with complaints made about the Commissioner's conduct. Any complaints alleging criminal conduct (or which indicate criminal conduct may have occurred) by the Commissioner must be recorded, and then referred to the Independent Office for Police Conduct for investigation. Any other complaints are handled by the Panel, usually through informal resolution, which means encouraging, helping and bringing about the resolution of a complaint without going through legal or formal proceedings. You can find out more about the process [here](#). The Panel receives regular reports, which set out the number and themes of complaints handled during the period, as well as the main themes of Freedom of Information requests received both by the Commissioner's Office and Norfolk County Council in relation to the Panel. This allows the Panel to monitor the issues being raised and to ensure the complaints process is being carried out appropriately. We welcome the fact that no conduct complaints have been submitted since the Panel's last annual report was published.

The Panel continues to take a special interest in Police Integrity Reforms set out in the Policing and Crime Act 2017. This Government policy was introduced to overhaul the police complaints and disciplinary system as a result of what was believed to be a loss of public confidence in policing over a number of high-profile police investigations. We have a permanent working group of five members, whose role is

to maintain a specialist knowledge on complaints matters and advise the Panel accordingly. In addition to maintaining oversight of the Panel's procedure for handling conduct complaints about the Commissioner, it has monitored the development and implementation of the Police Integrity Reforms. Through that work, we have been able to not only improve our own complaints procedure but assist colleagues nationally, through delivering workshops and briefings on the reforms at regional network meetings and national Panel conferences. The reforms went live in February 2020 and we have kept under review their implementation by the Commissioner. Regular updates provided by the working group's Chairman are included in our agendas.

Panel development

Members appointed to the Panel get together at the beginning of each year, before the Annual General Meeting, for induction training about our role and functions. For those continuing in their position, this is an opportunity to refresh their knowledge and share their views. This year, however, our training necessarily focused on building our confidence with virtual meeting technology and the local protocols that were put in place to ensure the openness and transparency of public meetings undertaken in this way. Additional briefings are provided in advance of specific functions, such as consideration of the Commissioner's precept proposal. This ensures that we are fully prepared to challenge and support the Commissioner at our public meetings.

The Panel is a member of an Eastern Region Panel Network, which meets twice a year, and provides a forum for Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and support officers to share information, problem solve and collaborate.

A national conference for Panels is convened each year and representatives from Norfolk regularly attend, having found this is another invaluable opportunity to learn about national policy development and challenges across policing, fire and the criminal justice sector. It also enables us to share experiences and good practice with colleagues from across the country.

In this exceptional year we have continued to benefit from learning and development with our colleagues around the country through these events, which have taken place virtually.

In addition, the Panel is provided with a fortnightly round-up of policing and crime related news to ensure that we are kept up-to-date with national and local matters.

Public engagement

The Panel has a Public Question Time at each ordinary meeting, to enable the public to engage with the Panel and pose questions relating to its remit and functions. It is not a platform for the public to put questions to the Commissioner or the Chief Constable, both of whom have separate arrangements for discussion with the public. You can read our public question time guidance note [here](#).

The Commissioner has regular public meetings to hold the Chief Constable to account for Norfolk's policing service. These are held in public and people are welcome to attend and observe. The Commissioner also holds regular question and answer sessions for members of the public to receive policing updates for their district and put their questions, observations and concerns to him and the Chief Constable. Details are made available on the Commissioner's website [here](#).

Home Office grant funding

The Home Office provides a grant of up to £64,340 to Norfolk County Council to maintain a Police and Crime Panel for the police force area. This is to cover the costs of administration (including support staff, specialist advice, recruitment of independent members, subscription to the Eastern Region Panel network) and member expenses (the cost of travel to attend Panel meetings, regional network meetings and the national conference, as well as any delegate fees). The Panel reviews its funding at each AGM and you can read the reports, which include the year-end returns submitted to the Home Office, [here](#).

While making sure that the Panel is effectively supported and developed, we aim to achieve value for money by minimising expenditure where possible. For example, public meetings take place at our host authority to keep costs to a minimum and ensure accessibility requirements are met. Our induction training and briefings are delivered by support officers from the host authority. On the whole, information is circulated electronically and printed copies of agendas are provided only to main Panel members. Attendance at carefully selected external events is agreed at the beginning of each year, and we ensure the whole Panel benefits through formal and informal reports, which keeps everyone updated and signposts them to matters of interest.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman meet with the Commissioner and his leadership team in advance of public meetings. This provides an opportunity to discuss and plan future business, the content of agenda and reports, and keep each other informed of developments which may impact on our work. It allows the Panel to ensure that it is making the best use of everyone's time and the resources available.

Forward look

The Panel reviews and agrees a forward work plan at each meeting. This ensures that we deliver our functions in a timely way and means others know what we will be doing. You can see our latest forward work plan [here](#), by selecting the most recently published agenda.

Norfolk 2020, the Chief Constable's new model of policing, has been fully implemented. We continue to ensure the Commissioner is monitoring the impact of this on the local community through regular performance reports and information bulletins.

An independent Strategic Review of policing is underway. The first of its kind in many years, hosted by the Police Foundation, it aims to set a national long-term strategic direction for the police service. The first phase of this review, which explored the challenges facing policing, has been completed. The second phase, which will explore the solutions to those challenges, is currently underway. Both the National Association for Police and Fire and Crime Panels (NAPFCP) and individual Panels have been encouraged to respond to the Police Foundation's second call for evidence, particularly on questions around governance.

The Government has also undertaken a review of the role of Police and Crime Commissioners. At the time of writing we are waiting for the outcome of part one of

that review to be published. We will continue to watch these national conversations as they develop and participate where appropriate.

It has been confirmed that local and PCC elections will take place in May 2021. With the current Commissioner due to stand down, the Panel is looking forward to establishing an effective working relationship with a new Commissioner.

Further information

If you would like further information about the Norfolk Police and Crime Panel, please visit our [website](#) or contact Norfolk County Council on 0344 800 8020 or committees@norfolk.gov.uk



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