

## Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel

20<sup>th</sup> June 2014

### Warwickshire Police and Crime Annual Report 2013/14

#### Recommendations

That the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel consider and comment on the Panel's first Annual Report.

#### 1.0 Summary

1.1 At its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2014<sup>5</sup>, the Panel agreed to publish an Annual Report for 2013/14 and future years. Attached at **Appendix A** is the first Annual Report of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel, which highlights the Panel's key activity and achievements throughout 2013/14. The report also includes the following:

- Background to the Panel (for the first Annual Report, to give brief summary of when established and why);
- Membership;
- The role and purpose of the Panel;
- Key activity and achievements throughout the year;
- Looking forward – the Panel's plans for the coming 12 months; and
- Contact Information.

#### 2.0 Circulation and Publicity

2.1 A copy of the Annual Report was circulated to the Panel on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014 and was subsequently presented at Warwickshire's Annual Council meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2014. Panel members have also been encouraged to present the Annual Report to their authority's Council meeting as a method of informing elected members across the county.

2.2 To achieve wider promotion, the document has also been:

- Sent to the Police and Crime Commissioner
- Published on the Panel's dedicated web page:  
[www.warwickshire.gov.uk/policeandcrimepanel](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/policeandcrimepanel)
- Promoted through the Warwickshire Democracy blog
- Promoted through the Localities teams' communication channels, which includes: Facebook pages; Community Forum, District/Borough

and Parish Council mailing lists; community and youth groups; tenants groups; and SNT teams.

- Sent to the Chair of the Warwickshire Neighbourhood Watch Association for circulation within his contacts.
- Circulated via CAVAs distribution and communication streams.

2.3 Following the meeting, the Communications team will also issue a press release/email alert regarding the Panel's consideration of the report, which will be promoted through the County Council's 'Warwickshire News', Facebook and Twitter pages and via an electronic mailshot to all Parish Councils, media contacts, police contacts, MPs, key stakeholders, etc.

### 3.0 Feedback and Areas for Improvement

3.1 Members of the Panel are welcome to comment on the style, content and format for the report and consider any areas for improvement for inclusion in 2014/15.

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# WARWICKSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

## Annual Report 2013-14



North Warwickshire  
Borough Council



Warwickshire  
County Council

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# 1 Foreword – *by the Chair*

In November 2012, the landscape of policing underwent a significant change with the creation of the directly elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) – an individual who is elected every four years and has the mandate to direct the strategic priorities of the police force in a given area. The Commissioners replaced the Police Authorities, which had been in existence since 1994. At the same time, Police and Crime Panels were also introduced to hold the Commissioner's to account. These are cross-party and cross-authority bodies which have a number of statutory powers to both scrutinise and support the Commissioner's work.

Ron Ball was elected as Warwickshire's first Police and Crime Commissioner on 15th November 2012. Subsequently, the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel was formally appointed and held its first meeting on 5th December 2012.

In this, the first Annual Report of Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel, I describe the background work in setting up the Panel, the key activities and achievements in the first 18 months of its existence and how the Panel will develop over the coming year to expand its role to undertake, not just the statutory duties, but also proactive scrutiny of the Commissioner's policies and core areas of work.

As with any new body, there have been some challenges for the Panel; principally, getting to grips with its role and responsibilities, forming an effective working relationship with the Police and Crime Commissioner, raising awareness about its role and purpose and quickly adapting to a change in membership following the Warwickshire County Council elections in May 2013. Despite these early challenges, the year has not been without achievements and these are outlined in the report.

The people of Warwickshire can be reassured that, acting on their behalf, the Panel is committed to exercising its statutory duties of holding the Commissioner to account for the delivery of his Police and Crime Plan and supporting him by adding value to his work wherever possible.

Finally, I express my thanks for the support and dedication of my colleagues on the Panel and our support officers from Warwickshire County Council.



**Councillor Dennis Harvey**

*Chair of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel*

## 2 Background to the Police and Crime Panel

The introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and Police and Crime Panels (PCPs) was a key feature of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. The Panel is made up of ten local elected councillors and two independent members and is obliged to meet in public, publish agendas and minutes, and fulfil certain key statutory responsibilities.

The Panel holds the Police and Crime Commissioner to account by acting as a 'critical friend'. Its

role is to scrutinise, challenge and support the Commissioner, maintaining 'checks and balances' on the performance of the Commissioner in respect of the strategic actions and decisions made. The Panel is not responsible for holding the Chief Constable or the Constabulary to account and is not a replacement for the Police Authority. The Panel scrutinises the policies, plans, actions and decisions of the Commissioner, not the performance of the police force.

### Statutory Powers and Responsibilities of the Panel

The Panel's powers include:

- Making recommendations on the Commissioner's draft Police and Crime Plan. The Plan is a document setting out the Commissioner's priorities for a three-year period and how those priorities will be delivered.
- Making recommendations about the Commissioner's proposed policing budget and precept. The precept is the amount of money that the Commissioner proposes to levy on council taxpayers in Warwickshire. The budget sets out how both the money raised from the precept will be spent, and also how other funds over which the Commissioner has control will be spent. The Panel has the power, if appropriate, to veto the proposed precept level. The Panel can also require that the precept should be higher or lower than proposed.
- Reviewing the Commissioner's Annual Report, outlining his activities in the previous year and his performance against the targets set in the Police and Crime Plan.
- Holding Confirmatory Hearings for the proposed appointment of senior staff working for the Commissioner, such as the Chief Executive, Chief Financial Officer and Deputy PCC. The Panel cannot refuse appointments but can make recommendations to the Commissioner.
- Holding Confirmatory Hearings in relation to the proposed appointment of a Chief Constable by the Commissioner. The Panel has the power, if appropriate, to veto the proposed appointment.
- Monitoring and working to resolve, but not investigate, non-criminal complaints against the Commissioner.
- Requiring the Commissioner and his senior staff to attend Panel meetings to answer questions and provide information, so that the Panel can scrutinise the decisions of the Commissioner and subsequently respond with a report and/or recommendations, if necessary.

In November 2012, Warwickshire County Council was designated as the host authority for the Panel. This means that the County Council is responsible for training and supporting the Panel and its meetings, as well as providing legal, financial and constitutional advice. In 2013/14, all host authorities received a Home Office grant for the provision of this support of £53,000.

# 3 Key Activity and Achievements

## In the first few months of 2012/13...

Prior to its first meeting, the Panel undertook the necessary training to get to grips with its statutory powers and responsibilities. Two training workshops focused on the role of the Panel, as well as the differentiation between the strategic and operational aspects of policing, to help members understand their responsibilities in relation to PCC. Shortly after, the Panel was quickly thrown into fulfilling two of its statutory duties, as follows:

- Confirmatory Hearings for the appointment of the Deputy PCC and an interim Chief Executive in January 2013.
- Consideration of the PCC's proposed policing budget and precept in February 2013. The Commissioner had proposed a 0% increase in the precept for 2013/14 which was supported by the Panel.

## Key areas of work throughout 2013/14

### Involvement in the Commissioner's Recruitment Processes

The staffing of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) has been an area of interest for the Panel throughout the year. Of particular interest was the appointment of the permanent Chief Executive. In July 2013, the Panel held a further

Confirmatory Hearing for the proposed permanent appointment and asked the proposed candidate, Mr Neil Hewison, a number of questions relating to his experience, personal attributes and what he would bring to the OPCC.

#### **Key outcomes:**

- The Panel was satisfied that Mr Hewison could operate with the necessary independence and integrity. Members of the Panel stressed the important role of the Commissioner in positively supporting and encouraging such independence to ensure the OPCC can operate in a way which maintains public confidence. The Panel was fully supportive of the Commissioner's proposal to appoint Mr Hewison as the Chief Executive.
- The Commissioner was asked to use a general recruitment website over a wider geographical area, for any future appointments to the Office. The Panel also requested earlier involvement in the recruitment process, such as at the initial consideration of posts or in drafting job descriptions. As a result, in December 2013 the Panel was then given the opportunity to observe candidate interviews for three Policy and Research Officer posts at the Police Commissioner's Office.

## Appointment of the Budget Working Group

The Panel agreed to appoint a Budget Working Group, as a Sub-Panel of the PCP, in June 2013. This gives authority to three members of the Panel to closely examine the Commissioner's budget and report its findings back to the Panel.

The Working Group met in August 2013 and February 2014 to undertake detailed analysis of the Commissioner's Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan.

### **Key outcomes:**

- A focus on the Commissioner's use of reserves.
- The critical importance of achieving Alliance savings plans.
- A thorough assessment of the Commissioner's rationale to increase the policing precept by 1.99% in 2014/15.
- A focus on the management and monitoring of the Capital Programme.

## Scrutiny of the Local Policing Precept 2014/15

One of the key roles of the Panel is to consider the PCC's proposed policing budget and precept. The Panel held a meeting in February 2014 to consider the Commissioner's proposed increase of 1.99%. The Commissioner explained that the Council Tax Freeze Grant of one per cent was insufficient for sustaining resources. He calculated that a 1.99% increase would amount to £0.01 per day increase per household for a Band D property, which he considered barely noticeable for the household; however, a decision to not increase the precept would leave a shortfall in the Base Budget of approximately £3 million. This would ultimately have a significant impact on

service delivery. The Panel also focused on the use of reserves, the savings plans, funding to Community Safety Partnerships and funding for the rural, business and cyber-crime initiatives.

This was a challenging exercise for the Panel. There were concerns that the budget, as presented, did not give sufficient details about where the savings will come from and how the expenditure will be allocated. The Panel felt unable to make an informed judgement about the appropriateness of the budget.

### **Key outcomes:**

- The Panel agreed to note the proposed 1.99% increase in precept and decided not to exercise a veto after receiving the Commissioner's assurance on the key areas of questioning raised by the Panel.
- There was acknowledgement that the formation of the policing budget was complex and the Commissioner has agreed that an informal briefing will be provided to the Panel every November, to achieve a greater knowledge and understanding of how the budget is formed.



## Monitoring the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner

The Panel monitored the Police and Crime Plan and the Commissioner's key activity in line with his five priorities:

- To reduce crime and disorder
- To protect the public from harm
- To empower local communities to prevent crime and disorder
- To deliver an efficient and effective police service
- To respond to the Strategic Policing Requirement

Regular update reports on the recent activity and decisions taken by the Commissioner have provided the Panel with a valuable insight into the varied work of the Commissioner, whilst also improving the Panel's understanding and appreciation of his role and responsibilities. The Panel will continue to undertake regular monitoring of the plan over the next 12 months with a view to identifying key areas of interest for more in-depth scrutiny.

### Reviewing the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan 2013-17 and Annual Report 2012/13

One of the key responsibilities of the Panel is to consider and comment on the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan 2013-17 and track progress against each of the seven priorities. In March, the Panel carried out an examination of the Plan and welcomed the opportunity to comment and challenge the priorities that had been proposed; however, the Panel did express disappointment at the lack of detail and the absence of targets/measures of expected outcomes. The Panel has requested that key performance indicators are developed for monitoring the delivery of the Plan 2013-17. This will be a key priority for the Panel in the new municipal year.

In September 2013, the Panel received the Commissioner's Annual Report 2012/13 – a document which the Commissioner is legally obliged to publish at the end of each financial year. The Panel noted that as the Commissioner only took office in the November 2012, the report could only

The Panel reviewed the role of the Commissioner in the incident involving officers of the Police Federation and Rt. Hon. Andrew Mitchell MP. At the November 2013 meeting of the Panel, the Commissioner stated his view that the campaign by the Police Federation at the time of the incident was both improper and unprofessional. In accordance with his role in holding the Chief Constable to account, the Commissioner had reviewed the decisions made by the Chief Constable and believed that those decisions were both legally and morally sound.

#### **Key outcome:**

- Although there were differing views about the impact of the Andrew Mitchell incident on the public's confidence in the Police, the Panel agreed that it did not have any specific issues to raise about the role or actions of the Commissioner.

provide details of activity over a four-month period and considered it be an interim report. The Panel is looking forward to receiving a comprehensive Annual Report 2013/14.

### Community Safety Ambassadors (CSAs)

The decision to appoint Community Safety Ambassadors in September 2013 was closely monitored by the Panel throughout the year. The Ambassadors are one of a number of mechanisms employed by the Commissioner to gather local intelligence regarding crime and disorder issues across the county. Since their appointment, the Ambassadors had become highly visible in their areas, attending Community Forums, liaising with Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams, and making contact with their local District and Borough councillors.

The Panel initially expressed concern that the role of the Ambassador was unclear and that a number had purportedly replicated the role of the local elected member. Members were also concerned

at the public's perception of the Ambassador role as being more than just the 'eyes and ears' of the Commissioner and the ambiguity of their position at Community Forum meetings.

The Commissioner has acknowledged that, although overall the scheme has been successful, there have been a few minor issues – which had been anticipated given the originality of the scheme – and that the initial launch of the CSAs could have been improved.

**Key outcomes:**

- Constructive challenge to the Commissioner regarding the role and purpose of the Ambassadors, with the opportunity for members to express their concern and raise issues.
- The Panel recommended that an informal discussion between Councillors and the Police and Crime Commissioner would be useful to discuss the issues that had been reported, particularly regarding clarification and public understanding of the Ambassador role.
- The Commissioner has agreed that a re-launch of the Ambassador scheme will be undertaken to raise public awareness and provide greater clarification regarding the role.

**Monitoring the Delivery of the Strategic Alliance**

During the year, the Panel received a number of presentations and updates on the Strategic Alliance between the Warwickshire and West Mercia Police Forces. This involves the sharing of resources in order to deliver policing services across Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, Warwickshire and Worcestershire under one model. The aim is to

enable each force to respond positively to budget cuts by aligning and streamlining operations, processes and procedures thus creating economies of scale. Both forces have retained a Chief Constable, who is accountable to their Police and Crime Commissioner for the delivery of policing.

**Key outcomes:**

- Regular monitoring of the delivery of the aims of the Strategic Alliance, with important consideration of the new policing model and the impact on policing services in Warwickshire.
- Providing challenge on:
  - the Alliance Savings Plans;
  - the Commissioner's role in holding the Chief Constable to account;
  - the arrangements for the Safer Neighbourhood Teams; and
  - the initiative to increase the number of Special Constables.
- The Panel was reassured by the Commissioner's confidence that the formation of the Alliance has provided many cost-saving opportunities without a detrimental impact on performance and service delivery. The Panel had noted the Commissioner's commitment to monitoring performance and to ensuring that the Chief Constable takes rapid action if there is any deterioration in performance.

## Methods to increase Public Engagement in the Panel

In accordance with the legislation, all meetings of the Police and Crime Panel have been open to the public; however, public participation has been

extremely low and the Panel recognised the need to raise awareness of the Panel and encourage greater involvement from the public.

### **Key outcomes:**

- Public Question Time scheme introduced, enabling any person who lives or works in Warwickshire to put a question to the Panel or the Commissioner.
- Improved web presence, with more information on the Panel's website regarding its role and purpose, details for future meetings and advice on how the public can participate.
- Meetings will be held around the county, so that residents in all localities will have the opportunity to attend a 'local' Police and Crime Panel meeting every year.
- Greater use of social media, including the use of the Council's 'Warwickshire News' site and Facebook pages for each locality.
- Electronic mailshots to all Parish Councils, Community Forums, media contacts, police contacts and key stakeholders to promote meetings of the Panel and draw attention to public interest topics.

### **To conclude...**

After a busy and challenging 18 months, the Panel has got to grips with its role and has successfully fulfilled its statutory duties. The Panel appreciates that this has also been a very busy and challenging

time for the Commissioner and his Office, and feels positive that an effective and constructive working relationship with the Commissioner will continue to be developed over the coming year.





# 4

## Looking forward

As this report is produced, the Panel is once again preparing for the annual round of meetings to undertake its statutory duties in considering the Police and Crime Plan 2013-17, the PCCs Annual Report 2013/14 and the proposed local policing budget and precept for 2015/16. Equally important, the Panel recognises the need to provide constructive challenge and support to the Commissioner through engaging in proactive scrutiny work. This will be detailed work investigating issues of priority to both the local area and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

In order to effectively manage its responsibilities and additional scrutiny work, the Panel has already appointed two small Sub-Panels which will have delegated responsibility to focus on the following three areas of activity:

- Planning and Performance - to meet on a quarterly basis to review performance and risks against the Police and Crime Commissioner's

priorities, as outlined in the Police and Crime Plan 2013-17.

- Commissioning of Victims Services – this is a significant and crucial piece of work by the OPCC. The Sub-Panel will be involved at an early stage to provide constructive challenge to the Commissioning Strategy and the policy approach for commissioning victim services.
- Budget monitoring on a quarterly basis to be undertaken by the Budget Working group.

Over the next 12 months, the Panel hopes that the engagement methods that it has introduced will encourage greater public and partner participation in its meetings. To enhance and inform its role in holding the Commissioner to account, the Panel will be widening its involvement and gathering feedback from key statutory bodies, such as the Community Safety Partnerships, Voluntary Sector, Police, Criminal Justice agencies regarding their experience of the role and performance of the Commissioner.



# 5 Membership 2013/14

Warwickshire's Police and Crime Panel consists of five Warwickshire County Councillors and one Councillor from each of the five District/Borough areas of Warwickshire (North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth, Rugby, Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick). There are also two co-opted independent (i.e. non-councillor) members.

***The membership for 2013/14 was, as follows:***



**Chair** – Councillor Dennis Harvey,  
*Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council*



**Vice-Chair** - Mr Robin Verso,  
*Independent member*



Councillor Michael Coker,  
*Warwick District Council*



Councillor Nicola Davies,  
*Warwickshire County Council*



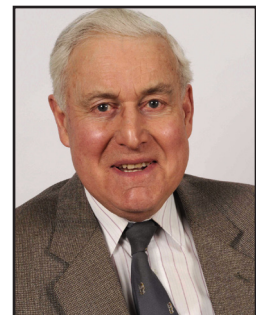
Councillor Peter Fowler,  
*Warwickshire County Council*



Councillor Jenny Fradgley,  
*Warwickshire County Council*



Mr Bob Malloy,  
*Independent member*



Councillor Phillip Morris-Jones,  
*Warwickshire County Council*



Councillor Peter Morson,  
*North Warwickshire Borough Council*



Councillor Derek Poole,  
*Rugby Borough Council*



Councillor Gillian Roache,  
*Stratford-upon-Avon District Council*



Councillor June Tandy,  
*Warwickshire County Council*

# 6 How to Get Involved

You can keep up to date with the work of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel by visiting our website **[www.warwickshire.gov.uk/policeandcrimepanel](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/policeandcrimepanel)**.

Listening to the views of local residents is an important part of the work of Panel. All meetings are open to the public and anyone who lives or works in Warwickshire is welcome to submit a question to either the Panel or the Police and Crime Commissioner. If you wish to submit a question, please contact the Panel at the details below:

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**Blog:** [www.warksdemocracy.wordpress.com](http://www.warksdemocracy.wordpress.com)