

# Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel

Thursday 20 June 2024

## Minutes

### Attendance

#### Panel Members

Andy Davis (Chair) (Independent Member)  
Councillor Derek Poole (Vice Chair) (Rugby Borough Council)  
Councillor Barbara Brown (Warwickshire County Council)  
Andrew Davies (Independent Member)  
Councillor Natalie Gist (Stratford-on-Avon District Council)  
Councillor David Humphreys (Warwickshire County Council)  
Councillor Tim Jenkins (Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council)  
Councillor Bhagwant Singh Pandher (Warwickshire County Council)  
Councillor Jim Sinnott (Warwick District Council)

#### Officers

Lucy Adams, Senior Solicitor – Team Manager, Planning and Litigation  
John Cole, Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Caroline Gutteridge, Senior Solicitor – Legal Service Manager, Commercial and Regulatory

#### Others Present

Polly Reed, Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner  
Philip Seccombe, Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire  
Dr Denise Taylor, Public Speaker

### 1. Appointment of Chair

Councillor Derek Poole nominated Mr Andy Davis to serve as Chair for the coming year. Councillor David Humphreys seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations and Mr Andy Davis was elected unanimously as Chair to the Police and Crime Panel for 2024/25.

### 2. Appointment of Vice Chair

The Chair nominated Councillor Derek Poole to serve as Vice-Chair for the coming year. Councillor Barbara Brown seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations and Councillor Derek Poole was elected unanimously as Vice-Chair to the Police and Crime Panel for 2024/25.

### 3. General

The Chair expressed his thanks to fellow members of the Panel following his reappointment. On behalf of the Panel, he congratulated the Police and Crime Commissioner following his re-election for a third term in May 2024.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Tim Jenkins to the Panel as the new representative of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council.

The Chair reminded attendees that the meeting was being held during a period of heightened political sensitivity ahead of the General Election on 4 July 2024. Therefore, particular care was needed to ensure that comments or questions could not be perceived as seeking to influence public support for any candidate or political party.

### **(1) Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jenny Fradgley and Councillor Ray Jarvis, as well as from Andrew Harper (Head of Strategic Finance).

### **(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

There was none.

### **(3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2024 be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

### **(4) Public Speaking**

Dr Denise Taylor was welcomed to the meeting and invited to put her question to the Panel and Commissioner.

Dr Taylor stated her view that there was overwhelming and irrefutable evidence of persistent offending by the Warwickshire Hunt over many years. No evidence had been found to show any convictions for any of these offences. She stated that the Chief Constable had a responsibility to ensure that Warwickshire Police enforced the law; however, events since 2021 showed that the Chief Constable had failed to do this. She stated that the Police and Crime Commissioner's role was to hold the Chief Constable to account. She highlighted that policing of the Warwickshire Hunt had attracted national media attention, including two Channel 4 News bulletins. She requested details of specific actions proposed by the Commissioner to ensure that the Chief Constable would be held accountable for the lack of enforcement against the Warwickshire Hunt as well as a timescale for when action would be taken.

Dr Taylor highlighted that the Commissioner had been quoted in an article published by the Kenilworth Nub News on 4 May 2024 that "I will be acting for all communities and residents of Warwickshire, without fear or favour. I am now looking forward to preparing a new Police and Crime Plan. I will be getting out amongst our communities and residents to listen to what they have to say and to feed that into my conversations with the Chief Constable and other senior officers. I want communities to understand that the Police are there to protect them, that there are increased numbers, and they are doing everything they can to engage with and listen to residents. That will be a priority for me, and I think this will also help with those who have a fear of crime." Given his public commitment to acting without fear or favour for all communities

in Warwickshire, Dr Taylor asked the Commissioner to confirm that he would act on his intention to engage with rural residents and arrange to meet with rural residents and community groups to ensure that the voices of those opposed to hunting could be heard. She highlighted the importance of ensuring that members of the community were given an opportunity to voice their concerns before the commencement of the cub hunting season in August.

The Chair moved that the question be referred to the PCC. This was seconded by Councillor Poole and agreed unanimously by the Panel.

The Commissioner thanked Dr Taylor for her questions. He refuted the suggestion that Warwickshire Police operated with a pro-hunting bias, stating that the Force sought to treat all parties fairly. He emphasised Warwickshire Police's duty to enforce the law and gather evidence where the law had been broken. He stated that some of the points raised by Dr Taylor had been addressed at earlier meetings; however, Dr Taylor was right to assert that the Chief Constable was in operational command of Warwickshire Police, and it was the role of the PCC to hold her to account. He had discharged this duty faithfully by speaking with the Chief Constable on several occasions about breaches of fox hunting legislation as well as anti-social behaviour on Warwickshire's roads. Reports from members of the public were treated with seriousness by Warwickshire Police – where evidence allowed, prosecutions would follow. He highlighted the complexity of hunting legislation. The Crown Prosecution Service required a high standard of evidence to make a prosecution. At present, matters were proceeding through the courts to charge members of the Warwickshire Hunt for breaches of the Hunting Act 2004. He highlighted Dr Taylor's statement that there had been no convictions for offences under the Hunting Act – this was a consideration for the Judiciary which operated independently from Warwickshire Police or the PCC. However, he emphasised that Dr Taylor's questions had alighted on areas where there was learning to be done by Warwickshire Police. He expressed his hope that this learning would inform development of the proposed Public Code of Behaviour and lead to improved public confidence.

The Commissioner stated that he had held many meetings with rural communities including meetings with farmers, community groups and parish councils. He had also accompanied the Rural Crime Team to broaden engagement activities.

The Chair advised that further discussion of the question should be curtailed due to pre-election period sensitivities. However, the subject could be revisited at future meetings. The Panel would write to Dr Taylor following the meeting to provide guidance about options to progress her concerns.

A second request for public speaking had been received by the Panel from Ms Rachel Tipping. As Ms Tipping was unable to attend the meeting, the question was read aloud on her behalf:

I am getting in touch with the Panel as a very upset and concerned Warwick resident to raise the issue of the way the Warwickshire Hunt operate and the nature of the relationship it has with Warwickshire Police.

I note that the 'secret deal' between Warwickshire Police and the Warwickshire Hunt has

now been replaced with a proposal to introduce a Public Code of Behaviour to "set out in a transparent way the expectations for anyone taking part in trail hunting activities in the county". Please can the Police and Crime Commissioner explain how this differs from previous police action/protocols regarding the Warwickshire Hunt and what assurances do the public have that there will be tough police action for blatant breaches of the hunting legislation?

Please can the Panel also outline how they intend to keep pressing the Police and Crime Commissioner on this matter to ensure that the Warwickshire Hunt is held to account for the crimes they are committing? I am deeply concerned that Warwickshire Police are seemingly turning a blind eye to what is happening and are facilitating this barbaric sport through weak action which seems to be supported by the Police and Crime Commissioner. I have contacted Warwickshire Police about this matter, but they have remained silent on all accounts. I feel deeply saddened and powerless that a public body trusted with upholding the laws of the UK in my local town is ensuring cruelty to animals persists in the Warwickshire countryside.

Fox hunting and the terrible way this crime is dealt with in Warwickshire is a matter that is important to the local community and an issue that Warwickshire residents will not forget.

The Chair moved that the part of the question directed to the PCC be referred for a response. This was seconded by Councillor Poole and agreed unanimously by the Panel.

The Commissioner emphasised that he rejected the assertion that he, or anybody else, had been involved in any concerted effort to protect the Warwickshire Hunt. As he had previously stated, there was no pro-hunt bias. Any individual or group anywhere in the County was expected to abide by the law. Warwickshire Police would investigate any reports of unlawful behaviour and, where appropriate, make charges. The Commissioner highlighted his responses to public questions about policing of the Warwickshire Hunt at previous meetings. He had sought to give full and complete answers to these questions; there had been no attempt to ignore the issue. The Commissioner stated that he could not become involved in operational matters. However, he had consistently highlighted public concerns to the Chief Constable.

The Commissioner stated that, ultimately, his role was to hold the Chief Constable to account and to ensure an effective and efficient police force for Warwickshire. He had discussed the issue of policing of the Warwickshire Hunt with the Chief Constable on many occasions. The Chief Constable had provided assurance that evidence was carefully examined to determine whether there were grounds to bring about prosecutions. It was common for difficulties to be experienced with submitted evidence. Often, video evidence could not be verified or those reporting incidents expressed unwillingness to attend court hearings to support their statements.

The Commissioner re-emphasised that the issue was treated with seriousness by Warwickshire Police. However, there was a need for greater transparency and the Force needed to do more to give confidence to members of the public. For these reasons, he had committed to an Independent Review of policing of the Warwickshire Hunt which would examine adherence to the Hunting Act as well as reported incidents of anti-social behaviour on the highway. The terms of reference and the agency to undertake the Review were in the

process of being finalised. An announcement would be made shortly after the General Election. He advised that the Force was in the process of developing a Public Code of Behaviour. Efforts would be made to feed learning derived from the Independent Review into the Public Code of Behaviour to inform its operation.

The Chair stated that the issue of policing of the Warwickshire Hunt remained an ongoing concern for the Panel. The Panel would take a close interest in the progress of the Public Code of Behaviour as well as the proposed Independent Review. He advised that the Panel would write to the Commissioner to outline its wish for transparency in the development of the Independent Review including details of the agency appointed to undertake the work, its terms of reference, how the findings of the Review will be reported, and a timescale for completion of the work.

#### **4. Report of the Police and Crime Commissioner**

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) presented his report which provided an update on key activities since the meeting of the Panel in March 2024. He advised that work had begun to produce a new Police and Crime Plan for Warwickshire. This would be informed by a comprehensive public consultation. Efforts would be made to present the draft Police and Crime Plan to the Panel at the meeting in November 2024 with the aim of publishing a final version in late 2024. He emphasised that the current Police and Crime Plan ran to March 2025 which provided some leeway should there be any unforeseen delays.

The Chair highlighted commentary on page 2 of the Report outlining the Commissioner's priorities for the next four years as set out during the PCC election campaign. He asked if rebuilding public trust and confidence in policing should feature more prominently as a priority.

The Commissioner acknowledged the importance of ensuring that Warwickshire residents had trust and confidence in the Force, stating that delivery of the six priorities set out in the report would help to achieve this. The updated Police and Crime Plan would also include a dedicated section on trust and confidence in policing.

In response to Andrew Davies, the Commissioner stated that there were serious concerns within the Criminal Justice System about the national shortage of prison places. 'Operation Safeguard' was in place to make police cells available to temporarily accommodate prisoners to ease pressure on prisons. At present, Warwickshire Police's custody blocks were not being used to accommodate any prisoners. He advised that the Government proposed to open a new prison in the north of England to accommodate approximately 1,200 inmates. This would significantly ease pressure on prison places. He stated that the early release of prisoners was concerning. However, eligibility criteria prevented certain categories of offenders from being allowed early release. To date, early release of prisoners had not resulted in any serious problems in Warwickshire.

In response to Councillor Gist, the Commissioner advised that, conditional upon her re-appointment, the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner would take an active role in the Warwickshire Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Board. He emphasised that Domestic Abuse and VAWG were treated as high priority areas. Following the meeting, he would provide an update to the Panel on the progress of research being undertaken by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to produce a gap analysis examining diversionary support offered to perpetrators of Domestic Abuse and VAWG.

In response to the Chair, Polly Reed (Chief Executive, OPCC) advised that it was planned to update the layout of the OPCC website to make it simpler to locate minutes of 'holding to account' meetings between the PCC and Chief Constable. She advised that the format of 'holding to account' meetings had been updated since May 2024 which had resulted in changes to the type of minutes uploaded to the website. An update on the refreshed approach would soon be posted on the website. However, she emphasised the OPCC's willingness to provide help to locate specific minutes if needed.

In response to the Chair, the Commissioner advised that it was a statutory requirement for the PCC to consult with the public to gather views about policing ahead of producing a new Police and Crime Plan. He emphasised the benefits of ensuring that a comprehensive and far-reaching consultation was undertaken. This would encompass engagement with a diverse range of communities across ethnicities. The consultation would gather views from residents and businesses covering a representative geographical spread across boroughs and districts. He advised that the consultation would be underway by the time of the Panel's next meeting in September 2024. There would be an opportunity to update the Panel on its progress at this meeting.

Polly Reed suggested that the Panel's Planning and Performance Working Group may wish to examine plans for the consultation in more detail. It was agreed to add this as an item on the Group's Work Programme.

## **5. Annual Report of the Police and Crime Commissioner 2023/24**

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) introduced his Annual Report which outlined activities and progress over the course of 2023/24. He stated that it had been an eventful period which included the PCC Elections in May 2024 and the culmination of the Police and Crime Plan 2021-25. Efforts had been made to realise as many of the remaining Police and Crime Plan objectives as possible within its final full year. There was more work to be done which would be outlined within the next iteration of the Police and Crime Plan.

Councillor Sinnott highlighted commentary in the report relating to Police and Crime Plan monitoring to assess progress against the success measures of the Plan via Red, Amber, and Green (RAG) status ratings. He sought clarification of the levels of progress indicated by RAG ratings against each priority area.

The Commissioner advised that a red rating would indicate that no progress had been made. A green rating signified that the objective had been achieved. In some cases, an amber rating was appropriate. For example, the Force had a target to recruit 1,100 officers in 2023/24. It had surpassed this target by achieving a headcount of 1,130. However, the target to increase the number of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) had presented some challenges. As a result, an amber rating was indicated to acknowledge that the Force had prioritised recruitment of police officers over PCSOs. However, Warwickshire Police was making good progress to recruit PCSOs. There would be opportunities to convert this rating from amber to green by the conclusion of the current Police and Crime Plan in March 2025.

In response to Councillor Sinnott, the Commissioner advised that a data-led approach had been taken to gauge progress against Police and Crime Plan priority areas in keeping with the Panel's previous recommendation that specific attention be given to performance against targeted

outcomes. There were areas where statistical analysis was informative. However, in some circumstances statistics could be misleading. For example, increased reporting of Domestic Abuse could be interpreted as a positive indicator, demonstrating that more victims felt confident to come forward allowing better progress to be made. Rather than relying solely on statistics, a complex set of indicators were used by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to judge Warwickshire Police's performance against priority areas. He suggested that analysis by the Panel's Planning and Performance Working Group would help to inform a more developed understanding of how the RAG ratings had been determined.

In response to Councillor Jenkins, the Commissioner advised that he held regular meetings with the OPCC's Performance Team to examine the gamut of performance indicators across categories of crime. This provided an opportunity to identify areas that required additional attention which could then be raised during meetings with Chief Constable.

Polly Reed (Chief Executive, OPCC) advised that RAG ratings were determined by a series of complex spreadsheets to analyse performance across sub-categories of Police and Crime Plan priority areas. This information was regularly presented to the Panel's Planning and Performance Working Group. She advised that the Commissioner's new term of office provided an opportunity to review methodologies and adjust the approach to performance monitoring if required. She highlighted elements of the PCC's role that required negotiating and influencing skills, such as working with partnership organisations to achieve better outcomes. In these cases, delivery of services was outside of the Commissioner's direct control.

In response to the Chair, the Commissioner stated that the 'People' pillar of the Empower Change Programme had been implemented. The geographic policing model with command centres in the north, east, and south of the County had embedded well. It was considered that the new operating model provided resilience and stability.

The Commissioner advised that the 'Place' pillar of Empower, which focused on the Force's estate, would take longer to fully implement. A programme to refurbish, renovate and modernise police buildings was underway. Much of the Force's estate was comprised of freeholds. Therefore, it was prudent to look after these buildings. It was also proposed to update car parking arrangements at Leek Wootton Police Headquarters to mitigate pressure on spaces. There would also be a focus on carbon emissions and advancement of the sustainability programme including a pilot scheme to increase the number of electric vehicles used by the Force. Attention would also be given to opportunities to rationalise the estate. However, he emphasised the importance of retaining a police presence in town centres.

The Commissioner provided an overview of the 'Technology' pillar of Empower, stating that during the era of the Strategic Alliance with West Mercia Police, Warwickshire Police was among the worst served police forces nationally for provision of ICT. Since then, Warwickshire Police had established itself as one of the leading forces nationally for ICT. This had been achieved by investment of c.£30m leading to provision of strong ICT infrastructure. The Force was equipped with modern equipment which supported more efficient working. The introduction of robotics to automate routine administrative tasks had also increased efficiency.

In response to the Chair, the Commissioner advised that an ongoing process of evaluation had been followed throughout the implementation of the Empower Programme to gauge where improvements could be made and monitor the timescale for delivery. Empower had improved the

resilience of Warwickshire Police. However, there was a need to continue to adapt and respond to changing circumstances. He stated that the findings of His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in relation to Empower would be received with interest following the anticipated inspection of Warwickshire Police in January 2025.

The Chair stated that the briefing by the Chief Constable and her Senior Leadership Team to the Panel in January 2024 had provided insight into the benefits of Empower. He emphasised the advantages of a detailed evaluation of the implementation of Empower to judge whether it had delivered against each of its objectives and provided the best possible value for money.

The Commissioner emphasised that there had been a need for Warwickshire Police to rebuild itself as a standalone force following termination of the Strategic Alliance. He expressed confidence that the focus on 'People', 'Place', and 'Technology' had provided an effective means to undertake this work. He had sought to monitor the implementation of Empower from an independent vantage point and to represent the views of Warwickshire residents of what was required to provide the best possible delivery of police services.

The Chair thanked the Commissioner for his Annual Report. It would be responded to formally in writing following the meeting.

The Panel's letter to the Commissioner in response to the Annual Report is appended to these minutes.

## **6. Community Safety Partnerships**

The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) introduced the report which provided details of the relationship between the PCC and the five Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in Warwickshire as well as an overview of CSP responsibilities.

The Commissioner expressed his support for CSPs. He had sought to provide funding to help CSPs achieve their objectives, and there were no plans to make any significant changes to the arrangements in place for CSPs. He encouraged members of the Panel who also served on CSPs to take steps to promote multi-agency working – for example, by inviting representatives of housing associations, health services and other organisations to CSP meetings to broaden discussion of community safety.

## **7. Appointment of the Planning and Performance Working Group**

The Chair introduced the report, stating that the Planning and Performance Working Group had operated effectively over the 2023/24 municipal year. He praised the contributions made by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) which had been highly valued by the Group. The Working Group provided an effective means to explore topics in detail and inform the Panel's broader work programme. He highlighted the Terms of Reference and sought volunteers from the Panel to join the membership of the Working Group for 2024/25. Councillor Barbara Brown, Councillor Jim Sinnott and Mr Andrew Davies indicated that they would like to sit on the Working Group in the municipal year ahead.

The Chair suggested an amendment to recommendation 3 of the report to authorise the Panel's Support Officer to "confirm arrangements for working groups, and appointments thereto, following



liaison with Panel members.” This would make it possible to also reconvene the Budget Working Group in 2024/25. The Support Officer would contact members of the Panel following the meeting to seek volunteers to sit on the Budget Working Group.

In response to the Commissioner, the Chair advised that the Terms of Reference of the Budget Working Group would be reviewed with the PCC and his Office prior to any decision to formally reconstitute the Group.

### **Resolved:**

That the Police and Crime Panel:

1. Confirms the continuation of the Planning and Performance Working Group.
2. Confirms the Working Group’s Terms of Reference.
3. Authorises the Panel’s Support Officer to confirm arrangements for working groups, and appointments thereto, following liaison with Panel members.

## **8. Report of the Planning and Performance Working Group**

Councillor Barbara Brown introduced the report which summarised the Planning and Performance Working Group’s meeting of 28 March 2024. She highlighted the value that the Group brought to the wider work of the Panel. Meetings were utilised to undertake detailed analysis of Warwickshire Police’s performance and the content of ‘holding to account’ meetings between the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and Chief Constable. An evidence-based approach was taken. This provided insight into how strategic initiatives set by the Commissioner were operating in practice.

Councillor Brown highlighted the work that would be undertaken to develop an approach to measuring performance across specific areas of community concern with a focus on the tangible outcomes of the Commissioner’s Budget for 2024/25. Four areas had been selected for this work – Anti-social Behaviour, Performance of the 101 Service, Crime Detection Rates, and the impact of the 10 new officers funded by the PCC’s Budget. She highlighted the scale of this undertaking which would require a systematic, methodical approach by the Group.

The Commissioner highlighted the considerable improvements which had been made to the performance of the 101 Service, including a significant reduction in the average response time for a non-emergency call. He also highlighted the range of resources available to the Working Group including detailed data analysis across categories of crime. This information could be procured from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC).

## **9. Annual Report of the Police and Crime Panel 2023/24**

The Chair introduced the Annual Report which provided a summary of the Panel’s activities and achievements during 2023/24 as well as priorities for the municipal year ahead.

The Chair highlighted the ‘Looking Forward’ section of the Annual Report outlining the key areas of focus for the year ahead. He suggested that an additional paragraph be added to provide details of the work that would be undertaken by the Planning and Performance Working Group to measure performance across the four areas of community concern so that clearer visibility around progress can be reported to the public with a focus on the tangible outcomes of PCC’s Budget for 2024/25.

The Chair suggested that details of the Panel's intention to examine holding to account activities by the Commissioner also be added to the 'Looking Forward' section of the Annual Report. This would include advocating transparency in the development of the Independent Review into the circumstances of policing of the Warwickshire Hunt as discussed earlier during the meeting.

It was resolved that these amendments would be made to the Panel's Annual Report. The updated version would be presented at the meeting in September 2024 to be endorsed by the Panel.

#### **10. Issues Raised by Community Safety Partnerships**

No issues had been raised by Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) ahead of the meeting.

#### **11. Work Programme**

The Panel noted the Work Programme.

#### **12. Dates of Meetings**

The Panel noted the dates of future meetings.

#### **13. Any Urgent Items**

There was none.

#### **14. Reports Containing Confidential or Exempt Information**

##### **Resolved:**

That members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the items mentioned below on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

#### **15. Exempt Minutes**

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2024 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

#### **16. Complaints**

It was confirmed that no complaints had been received since the last meeting requiring the Panel's attention.

The meeting rose at 15:25.

.....  
Chair



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5 July 2024

Dear Mr Seccombe,

## **Annual Report of the Police and Crime Commissioner 2023/24**

Thank you for attending the meeting of the Police and Crime Panel on 20 June 2024 and presenting your Annual Report for 2023/24. The Panel was grateful of your detailed responses to questions raised at the meeting.

The Panel was encouraged to receive details of the range of performance measures taken into consideration to determine Red, Amber, and Green (RAG) ratings to assess Warwickshire Police's progress against Police and Crime Plan priority areas. The suggestion that the Panel's Planning and Performance Working Group continue to undertake analysis of across key areas of performance was welcomed by the Panel. This will provide insight into how strategic initiatives are operating in practice, broadening the Panel's ability to provide challenge and support as your 'critical friend'.

The proposed briefing to the Working Group on the consultation to gather views about public priorities for policing ahead of preparation of the new Police and Crime Plan will also support the Panel's ability to provide challenge and support. The Panel has indicated its interest in gauging levels of trust and confidence in policing, and members were encouraged to hear that a comprehensive and far-reaching consultation is proposed. The Panel will take a close interest in the findings of the consultation.

At the meeting, the Panel was grateful to receive details of the progress of implementation by Warwickshire Police of the Empower Change Programme across the three pillars of 'People', 'Place', and 'Technology'.

The Panel noted that, under 'People', the geographic policing model with command centres in the north, east, and south of the County has embedded well. Under 'Technology', the Panel recognised the scale of the work undertaken to transform Warwickshire Police from one of the worst served police forces nationally for provision of ICT to a national leader in this field. This has been an impressive achievement. Under 'Place', the Panel noted that there was still work to be done, including progression of the Force's Sustainability Programme. Details of the pilot scheme to increase the number of electric vehicles used by the Force were received with interest, and the Panel would welcome an update on the findings of this trial at an appropriate time.

The Panel was encouraged to hear that an ongoing process of evaluation has been followed throughout the implementation of the Empower Programme to gauge where improvements could be made and monitor timescales for delivery. The Panel recognises the scale of the project, and the need to continue to adapt and respond to changing circumstances. At the meeting, the Panel emphasised the potential advantages of a detailed evaluation of the implementation of Empower to judge whether it has delivered against each of its objectives and provided the best possible value for money. The Panel would be grateful to receive any details should such an evaluation be undertaken. This could be contrasted with the findings of His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in relation to Empower following the anticipated inspection of Warwickshire Police early next year.

In conclusion, the Panel was pleased to note your Annual Report and looks forward to continuing to work as your 'critical friend' in the municipal year ahead.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Davis', written in a cursive style.

**Mr Andy Davis**  
**Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel Chair**