

Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel

Annual Report 2019/20



North Warwickshire
Borough Council



Chair's Foreword



Councillor David Reilly

Chair of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel 2019/20

The termination of the Alliance between Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police in October 2019 meant that the previous twelve months have been like no other in the experience of any Police and Crime Panel nationally.

The challenge for the Police and Crime Panel of resolutely holding the Police and Crime Commissioner to account for the delivery of an efficient and effective service at a time of such fundamental organisational structural and cultural change has been unique. I would like to thank my fellow members of the Panel for their commitment and contribution throughout the last year. I would also like to thank the Police and Crime Commissioner, his Office, and the Chief Constable, for their constant trust and confidence in the Panel's membership, and their willingness to be scrutinised during what has been an incredibly professionally and personally challenging time for them.

As a Panel our purpose is to be a trusted body, whose members ask challenging and provocative questions, examine data carefully and take the time to fully understand the context of decision making and outcomes. The characterisation of the Panel as a 'critical and supportive friend' has been particularly appropriate during 2019/20.

We will continue to monitor and scrutinise the impact of the Alliance termination and we especially look forward to our scrutiny function contributing to the successful relaunch of Warwickshire Police as an independent force once again, but this time supported by a range of new partnership relationships with other police forces and organisations, the foundations of which will emerge in the coming year.

In February 2020, the Panel supported the Commissioner's proposed increase in the local policing precept of £9.99 (4.38%) for Band D properties (and equivalent percentage increase for all other bands). In its response, the Panel acknowledged the uncertainties ahead and indicated its intention to monitor the financial outlook in detail through the Police and Crime Panel's Budget Working Group.

The Budget Working Group and Planning and Performance Working Group have continued to support the Panel's ongoing programme of scrutiny and I would like to offer my thanks to those who have contributed to the working groups including the respective Chairs, Councillor Derek Poole and Councillor Sarah Whalley-Hoggins.

In the year ahead, the Panel will focus on the emerging structure of Warwickshire Police in the post-Alliance era, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on policing, the rescheduled Police and Crime Commissioner elections, and the response of the Force to the pressures of the climate emergency. We will also actively recruit a new independent member to the Panel, and I would like to record our sincere thanks to

Mr Bob Malloy, who will be leaving the Panel in December 2020. Bob is a founder member of our Police and Crime Panel, having been a member of the Police Authority before the P&CP's formation, and I am hugely grateful for his consistently insightful contribution to all aspects of our work.

It has been a pleasure to serve as Chair of the Panel. I would like to extend my thanks for the contribution made by each member of the Panel, and for the support and professionalism provided by Warwickshire County Council Democratic Services and Jane Pollard, our legal advisor.

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

Councillor David Reilly
Chair of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel

Key Activities and Achievements

The Police and Crime Panel performed its role as the Police and Crime Commissioner's 'critical friend' over six meetings held in public last year, scrutinising and challenging the Commissioner on the delivery of the four priorities identified in the Police and Crime Plan:

- Putting victims and survivors first
- Protecting people from harm
- Ensuring efficient and effective policing
- Preventing and reducing crime

All the reports considered by the Panel and minutes of the meetings can be found on the [Warwickshire County Council website](#). Panel meetings are also live streamed at <https://warwickshire.public-i.tv> and the footage is available for 12 months after each meeting.

The Planning and Performance Working Group has continued to complement to work of the wider Panel by monitoring and tracking the delivery of the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan, including detailed analysis of performance reports from Warwickshire Police, in order to identify key issues to raise with the Commissioner at Panel meetings. In 2019/20, the Group also undertook a Review of the Commissioner's funding of substance misuse services.

The Budget Working Group has performed a key role throughout the year by continuing to undertake detailed reviews of budget and quarterly finance reports, evaluating the proposed precept, and continuing to monitor the Commissioner's financial plans, including the capital and revenue programmes.

2020/21 Budget

The Police and Crime Panel has a statutory duty to review the Commissioner's budget and can veto the budget if it decides that the proposed increase in the policing element of the council tax (known as the 'precept') is either too high or too low.

In February 2020, the Commissioner presented his proposed budget for 2020/21 including an increase in the precept of £9.99 (4.38%) for Band D properties (and equivalent percentage increase for all other bands). In his presentation, the Commissioner welcomed the increased police funding settlement which enabled the setting of a budget which did not require council taxpayers to contribute a greater amount than that provided by central government. He stated that the improved funding would allow scope to increase the number of police officers and facilitate greater investment in crucial infrastructure.

After detailed scrutiny, the Panel resolved to support the Commissioner's budget proposals. In its response, the Panel identified four key areas for on-going focused scrutiny:

- 2020/21 Uncertainties

The Panel recognised that the development of a predominantly independent police force following termination of the Strategic Alliance with West Mercia Police represented a significant achievement. However, it was highlighted that, given the diminished level of reserves and uncertain resolution of the financial settlement with West Mercia, increased vigilance would be required to safeguard against overspending. In these conditions, the Panel noted that limited scope was available to respond effectively to unforeseen circumstances.

The Panel observed that the National Policing Settlement had been determined for a period of one year only and recognised that the longer-term outlook of the budget would be subject to future governmental funding allocations. The Panel undertook to continue to monitor the financial position in detail through the Budget Working Group.

- Precept Consultation

The Panel acknowledged that the delayed declaration of the National Policing Settlement presented a challenging timescale for the precept public consultation, however, it was felt that wider engagement with Warwickshire residents would have contributed to improved representation. The Panel urged the Commissioner to consider strategies to broaden the scope of future precept consultations and encourage improved participation.

- Climate Change

The Panel emphasised the importance of ensuring that the proposed review of the policing estate included consideration of priorities determined by the climate emergency and highlighted the potential additional costs of retrofitting.

- Fairer Funding

The Panel strongly emphasised that the issue of fairer funding remained a concern for Warwickshire residents and expressed support for the Commissioner's efforts to secure a more equitable Policing Settlement formula and redress the bias towards urban forces. The Panel acknowledged that progress in advancing the issue had been impeded by parliamentary time being occupied by other matters but indicated its interest in receipt of an update from the Commissioner in due course.

The Panel thanked the Commissioner for the quality of the information provided and commended the open and transparent approach that his Office and Warwickshire Police had taken in setting the budget.

HMICFRS Police Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Legitimacy Assessment

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published its fifth PEEL (police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) assessment of Warwickshire Police in October 2019. PEEL is designed to provide information about how a local police force is performing in several important areas in a way that is comparable both across England and Wales, and year on year.

The Assessment found that:

- The extent to which the force is effective at reducing crime and keeping people safe is good;
- The extent to which the force operates efficiently and sustainably requires improvement;
- The extent to which the force treats the public and its workforce legitimately is good.

As a Panel we will continue to challenge the Police and Crime Commissioner to address HMICFRS's recommendations concerning Warwickshire Police's: current and future skills requirements; the organisation's understanding of investigative demand and the pressures placed upon officers; and the capability and capacity of officers to manage their investigative workload. The Panel consider these to be critical drivers of local efficiency and effectiveness.

Termination of the Strategic Alliance

The challenges associated with termination of the Strategic Alliance between Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police has continued to be a matter of significant focus for the Panel. Throughout the year, the Police and Crime Commissioner has provided regular updates to the Panel of the progress made towards development of a predominantly independent Warwickshire Police Force.

The Panel acknowledged the challenging timescale prescribed by the unilateral decision of West Mercia Police to terminate the Alliance and recognised the proactive response of Warwickshire Police, the Commissioner and his Office.

The termination of the Alliance was due to take effect on 8 October 2019, and in preparation a number of services were successfully migrated back into an independent Warwickshire Police Force. However, the intervention of the Home Secretary was sought by the Commissioner to secure the provision of a number of critical services that could not be uncoupled within the significantly restrictive 12-month period of notice that had been prescribed when the Alliance was created. This again was a first in British policing history, and the Home Secretary's extension of

the Alliance relationship to 6 April 2020, and provision of mediation services, enabled a termination settlement to be agreed that the Panel supported. Again, we extend our thanks to the Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable for their resolute leadership through these uncharted waters.

In March 2020, the Commissioner updated the Panel in respect of the four services (IT, Forensics, Transactional Services and File Storage) which had proved to be more complex to disengage from the Alliance arrangement. He advised the Panel of the agreement reached with West Mercia Police to enable joint provision of these services for a period of 12 months or longer, if necessary. He advised that, in the longer-term, a partnership arrangement with West Midlands Police would be enacted to secure the ongoing operation of these services.

In March 2020, it was announced that an agreement had been reached that would include provision of a settlement of £10.77million from West Mercia Police to Warwickshire Police.

The Panel will continue to take a close interest in the transition of the remaining services from the Alliance arrangements.

Report of the Planning and Performance Working Group: Review of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Funding of Substance Misuse Services

In April 2019, the Planning and Performance Group instigated a review of services orientated to address substance misuse that were directly funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner. The review was carried out by Councillor Neil Dirveiks, Councillor Nicola Davies, Andy Davis, and Bob Malloy.

The Group met with service providers funded by the Commissioner to gather evidence and consider the implications of the Commissioner's shift from supporting services exclusively by grant funding to a commissioning-based model. Evidence was also sought from partner organisations and other public sector bodies to examine the broader context of funding for substance misuse services. Research was undertaken to survey the approaches taken by other Police and Crime Commissioners to substance misuse across England and Wales. The evidence gathered pointed towards wider issues which were outside of the scope of the review but would be worthy of further investigation, particularly the practice of off-rolling in Warwickshire Schools and resourcing of naloxone to Police Officers and partner agencies.

The Group was pleased to learn that the Commissioner and his Office were well regarded by service providers. It was felt that the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner had a well-developed understanding of the work being undertaken and that this was a significant asset in a field where successes are often difficult to fully present as quantifiable outcomes.

The Report detailing the Review identifies seven recommendations for the Commissioner's consideration. These will be presented to the Police and Crime Panel for to consider the report's submission to the Commissioner.

Policing Priorities Consultation

In February 2020, the Panel received an update from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner in respect of the Policing Priorities Consultation. It was reported the services of a professional market research company had been engaged by the Commissioner in tandem with Warwickshire Police to deliver the jointly funded consultation and to analyse the results.

The Panel learned that the consultation would aim to reach 750 residents primarily by means of a telephone-based survey with a supplementary on-line questionnaire. The Panel was advised that the consultation would target a representative sample of Warwickshire residents based upon a proportionate geographic spread alongside factors such as age, gender and ethnicity; minority groupings would be prioritised to ensure that the results of the survey accurately represented the population demographics of the County. The consultation would seek an opinion from the public in respect of priorities for policing, areas or issues that should receive attention, levels of confidence in the police, reasonable response times for 101 calls, perceptions of stop and search practices, deployment of tasers and body worn video apparatus, and attitudes towards policing governance arrangements following termination of the Alliance.

The Panel continues to take a close interest in the scope and delivery of the consultation, recognising the impetus provided by the HMICFRS PEEL Report, which recommended that future policing governance arrangements be publicly consulted upon. The Panel will await the findings of the consultation with interest.

Rural Crime Team

The Panel was grateful to receive an update from the Commissioner in respect of measures to be introduced to address the issue of rural crime. Members of the community in rural locations had previously contacted the Panel to voice their concern that crime in remote locations was a growing problem. The Panel was encouraged to learn of the renewed focus on policing in these areas and the injection of resources to reinforce the Rural Crime Team.

COVID-19

The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus has had an unprecedented impact and development of strategies to adapt to the effects and implications of the pandemic will undoubtedly be a major priority for the Commissioner and Warwickshire Police. As an outcome of the virus, the scheduled Police and Crime Commissioner elections to be held across England and Wales were postponed from 7 May 2020 to 6 May

2021. As a result, it was determined that the terms of the Commissioner be extended by a period of 12 months.

At the meeting of the Panel in March 2020, the Commissioner advised that his Police and Crime Plan covered the period up to 2021 which mitigated the urgency of producing an updated plan at short notice. Since then, a COVID-19 Police and Crime Plan Supplement has been issued by the Commissioner identifying measures to address the emerging crisis. The ongoing response of the Commissioner and Warwickshire Police to the pandemic will be a subject of intense interest to the Panel.

Looking Forward

It is likely that the implications of coronavirus will impact upon the agenda of the Police and Crime Panel in 2020/21 beginning with consideration of the COVID-19 Police and Crime Plan Supplement in June. The rescheduled Police and Crime Commissioner elections in May 2021 will also receive attention by the Panel.

The emergence of Warwickshire Police as an independent force will be a key area of scrutiny during the forthcoming 12 months and the Panel will look to examine the structure of the organisation with a focus on the newly created service areas. The development of the partnership arrangement with West Midlands Police will be closely monitored by the Panel as well as any plans to modify and upgrade the police estate.

The findings of the Policing Priorities Consultation will be a subject of interest for the Panel alongside the development of the new Police and Crime Plan for the period beyond May 2021.

The Panel's role as 'critical friend' will be to challenge the Commissioner to gain assurance that the steps taken to establish a predominantly independent Warwickshire force will continue to provide a high standard of service to residents and communities as well as support the development of new policies.

Membership for 2020/21

There are 12 members of the Police and Crime Panel representing the six first and second tier authorities in Warwickshire as well as two independent members. The membership of the Panel is politically and geographically balanced. Each district or borough area is represented by one councillor from the district/ borough and a county councillor who represents an electoral division in that area. The number of seats allocated to the political parties is determined by the number of seats held by that party across all the authorities.

The two independent members are politically neutral and are appointed to the Panel for four-year terms.

The Panel wishes to convey its thanks to Mr Bob Malloy, whose second term as an independent member will conclude at the beginning of December 2020. Mr Malloy has made an outstanding contribution to the work of the Panel from its outset in December 2012.

The Panel will be seeking to recruit a new independent member in Autumn 2020.

The Membership for 2020/21 is:

District and Borough Representatives

Councillor David Reilly	North Warwickshire Borough Council
Councillor Chris Watkins	Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
Councillor Derek Poole	Rugby Borough Council
Councillor Sarah Whalley-Hoggins	Stratford-on-Avon District Council
Councillor Ian Davison	Warwick District Council

Warwickshire County Council Representatives

Councillor Andy Wright
Councillor Pete Gilbert
Councillor Maggie O'Rourke
Councillor Nicola Davies
Councillor Jenny Fradgley

Independent Members

Andy Davis

Bob Malloy (to December 2020, when the term of a new independent member will commence).