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Cleveland Police and Crime Panel

Roles and Responsibilities of Independent Co-optees on the Panel

Note: Independent co-optees will be treated as equally as other elected members on the panel and therefore have the same responsibilities and duties.

Generally

All co-optees are full voting members and will have access to the same level of support and information as elected members on the panel. The core role of both elected members and independent co-optees on the panel is to:-

- scrutinise the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner to ensure that the Police and Crime Commissioner is discharging its functions effectively
- bring any specialist knowledge, skills, experience and expertise they may have to the scrutiny work of the panel
- ensure that there is an effective independent challenge to the Police and Crime Commissioner and that this challenge is constructive to support the Police and Crime Commissioner in carrying out their role
- act as a non-party-political voice for those who live and/or work in the force area

Responsibilities of co-optees

A co-opted member of the police and crime panel is expected to:-

- attend formal meetings of the panel (approx 4 per year)
- establish good relations with other members, officers and co-optees
- attend additional meetings eg working groups or evidence gathering sessions, as required
- prepare for each meeting by reading the agenda, papers and additional information to familiarise yourself with the issues to be covered during the meeting. Prior to the meeting consider the questions you may wish to put to the Police and Crime Commissioner and other expert witnesses
- listen carefully at the meetings, ask questions in a way which is non-judgmental, respect confidentiality and help the panel to make practical suggestions for improvements in services
- assist in the preparation of reports and the formulation of recommendations; this may involve volunteering to participate in a task group to conduct a scrutiny review
- attend training and development events as needed
- abide by the panel arrangements and rules of procedure which set out how the police and crime panel will operate in the Cleveland Force area
- keep abreast of the key issues in relation to the responsibilities of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the priorities within the police and crime plan

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- contribute to achieving an open, accountable and transparent decision-making process in relation to policing and community safety issues in the force area

Note: all panel members would also be expected to adhere to the 'seven principles of public life' which are listed below:

Nolan Principles^{1 2}

Preamble: The principles of public life apply to anyone who works as a public office-holder. This includes all those who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in the civil service, local government, the police, courts and probation services, and in the health, education, social and care services. All public office-holders are both servants of the public and stewards of public resources. The principles also have application to all those in other sectors delivering public services.

Selflessness: Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity: Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity: Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability: Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness: Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty: Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership: Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

¹ Nolan Committee's First Report on Standards in Public life from the First Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life (1995)

² Amended as a result of the Fourteenth Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life – Standards Matter – A review of best practice in promoting good behaviour in public life (2013)