

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CLEVELAND POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

3 JULY 2018

**REPORT ASSISTANT
DIRECTOR OF
ADMINISTRATION,
DEMOCRATIC &
ELCTORAL SERVICES**

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

SUMMARY

Members are asked to give consideration to the Panel joining a Special Interest Group (SIG) for Police and Crime Panels, within the Local Government Association.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. that Cleveland Police and Crime Panel joins the SIG and each constituent authority contributes to the subscription as detailed in the report, at para 11.
2. that the Chair of the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel represents the Panel on the Special Interest Group, with the vice chair acting as substitute when necessary.
3. that the outline Terms of Reference at para 8, be considered

DETAIL

1. Unlike Police and Crime Commissioners who have established a National Association, the Police and Crime Panels have not had a similar collective voice through which representation to Government and the sharing of best practice could be facilitated.
2. Members will recall that at its February 2017 meeting it had agreed that the Chair of the Panel should further investigate, with other interested Panels, the potential formation of a National Association of Police and Crime Panels.
3. Since that time a number of options had been investigated and there was strong support for the formation of a Special Interest Group, within the Local Government Association.
4. It is open to any 10 or more full Local Government Association (LGA) Members with common features, interests or concerns to form a SIG, subject to approval of an application by the LGA's leadership Board. SIG's are able to make representations direct to government and elsewhere on matters arising directly from their special interest.

Issues/concerns considered in supporting the formation of a SIG

5. The SIG option provides the benefits of the LGA's strong links to Central Government and administrative support, whilst also being the most cost effective option.
6. There have been concerns voiced that the SIG would provide a 'talking shop' that creates a sense of solidarity but no practical change, at the Police and Crime Panel level. Any national body must have a worthwhile purpose. Robust terms of reference for the SIG would be required to achieve this.
7. Police and Crime Panels are responsible for scrutinising and supporting their respective Police & Crime Commissioner. Seeking to develop a national focus could detract from the primary purpose of Panels. However, it is considered that a representative body would give Panels a louder collective voice which would actually contribute to their role of scrutinising and supporting Police & Crime Commissioners, by providing an additional means for issues to be raised and pursued at national level.

Proposals for SIG

8. Terms of Reference would be developed and Panels are asked to consider the following outline
 - To provide a forum for collaborative discussion of issues relating to and impacting on Police and Crime Panels
 - To share ideas and experience in response to the expanding role of PCCs and thereby PCPs
 - To create a mechanism for direct liaison between PCPs and the Home Office
 - To provide an opportunity for dialogue with relevant bodies such as the Association of Police and Crime Panels, Association of Police and Crime Chief Executives and others
 - To support the development of joint PCP responses to relevant consultations
 - To promote professional standards
 - To share good practice and create guidance and other supporting materials for PCPs
 - To ensure stability and collective memory in a landscape where PCPs can have significant changes in membership
 - To provide capacity for horizon scanning across all PCPs.
 - To raise the public profile of PCPs.
9. It is proposed that a Chair and Vice Chair for the SIG should be elected on an annual basis, with one vote per Police and Crime Panel. Whilst some of the administration for the SIG will be carried out by the LGA the Chair should be able to arrange additional administration through his/her local facilities.
10. Meetings of the SIG would initially take place on a quarterly basis.
11. The suggested level of subscription for the SIG is a maximum of £500 per Police and Crime Panel. This equates to £125 per authority, for the authorities making up the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel. The subscription would assist with set up and running costs.

12. An initial work programme for the SIG might include:

- Meetings with relevant partner organisations and the Home Office.
- The development of guidance for PCPs on handling complaints.
- Updating the existing suite of LGA / Centre for Public Scrutiny guidance for PCPs.
- Exploring the impact of changes to FRA governance and the enhanced role for PCCs, and therefore PCPs, in this area.
- A review of panel resourcing.

Name of Contact Officer: Margaret Waggott
Assistant Director Administration, Democratic and Electoral
Telephone No: 01642 527064
Email: Margaret.waggott@stockton.gov.uk