

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CLEVELAND  
POLICE & CRIME PANEL**

**6 JULY 2021**

**REPORT OF ASSISTANT  
DIRECTOR OF  
ADMINISTRATION,  
DEMOCRATIC AND  
ELECTORAL SERVICES**

**POLICE & CRIME PANEL SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND TRAINING NEEDS  
2021/22**

**PURPOSE**

This report seeks to set the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2021/22 and consider any training needs for the Panel.

**DETAIL**

1. The Panel is reminded of its role as scrutinising the actions and decisions of the Police and Crime Commissioner, thereby holding the PCC to account.
2. In addition, the Panel may wish to carry out one or more in-depth scrutiny reviews into a particular issue or concern. This may be a policy or performance issue in relation to priorities contained in the Police and Crime Plan.
3. Any additional work which the Panel may wish to undertake should be supportive and complementary to its statutory functions with the Panel acting as a critical friend; a supportive, but independent voice seeking to scrutinise the PCC in the interests of recommending appropriate changes and improvements. In addition, the work programme should avoid duplication and remain flexible and responsive.
4. It is, however, important that when identifying topics for additional work, the Panel takes into account the capacity and resources needed to carry out the investigation, to ensure that the review programme is manageable. It is also important to prioritise the issues identified, so that the work of the Panel is adding value.
5. The Panel is therefore asked to identify and consider suitable topics for scrutiny review during 2020/21. In selecting topics, the Panel may wish to consider whether:-
  - there is public demand / a real need for the review
  - there is a genuine opportunity through the reviews to influence policy and practice
  - there is a clear focus for the review, recognising that going 'deep and narrow' can have more impact than 'broad but shallow'
6. The review topics that are on the Work Programme at present is the review of Cleveland Police Communications Strategy and the Review of Local Policing Precept. The Panel are asked to take into account the capacity and resources needed to carry out the review

programme to ensure that it is manageable. Any further potential suggestions for topic can be discussed by the Panel.

## REVIEW TOPICS 2021/22

### Review of Cleveland Police Communications Strategy

7. The following updates the Panel on the ongoing task and finish review of Cleveland Police Communications Strategy and the proposed future plan for this piece of work.

8. In July 2020, to further contribute to its statutory function in supporting the Police and Crime Commissioner in the effective exercise of their duties, the Panel agreed to undertake a task and finish review of Cleveland Police Communications Strategy. The following Panel members were subsequently appointed to a Task and Finish Group to carry out this work:

- Councillor Steve Nelson (Chair)      Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
- Councillor Lee Cartwright          Hartlepool Borough Council
- Councillor Vera Rider                Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
- Councillor Matthew Storey        Middlesbrough Borough Council

9. The Group held its first meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and considered evidence from the Commissioner's Officer for Communications and Information followed by the Head of Corporate Communications for Cleveland Police. Discussion points included the most effective methods of communication, the role of the PCC in operational announcements, partnership-working with wider stakeholders regarding communications, ensuring positive messages around policing are disseminated, and the use of social media.

10. A second meeting of the Group was intended for early-2021 but this had to be postponed due to the third COVID-19 national lockdown. Prior to a further meeting being arranged, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) received a proposal for a *Scrutiny Review of Police Communications in Stockton-on-Tees* which would focus on communications within the Borough between Cleveland Police and Ward Members. This piece of work (to be undertaken by a Task and Finish Group comprised from the Council's Crime and Disorder Select Committee) was subsequently approved by the Council's Executive Scrutiny Committee.

11. As part of the preparations for the SBC *Scrutiny Review of Police Communications in Stockton-on-Tees (Task & Finish)* work, it was suggested that there may be benefit in completing the Council review first, which could then be used to inform the resumed PCP (Task & Finish) Cleveland Police Communications Strategy work in the latter-half of 2021. This approach could also provide an opportunity for the three other Local Authorities covered by the Cleveland PCP to collect similar information (if desired) and feed this into the resumed PCP review. Both the Chair of the Panel and the Chair of the Panel Task and Finish Group were subsequently consulted on this plan and indicated support for such an approach.

12. The scope and plan for the SBC *Scrutiny Review of Police Communications in Stockton-on-Tees (Task & Finish)* was agreed on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021 and is scheduled to be completed by November 2021.

13. Changes to the Panel membership following the recent elections mean that three of the four Task and Finish Group members are no longer represented on the Panel. As such, the Panel are asked to identify three replacement members (one each from Hartlepool,

Middlesbrough, and Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council) to sit on the Group once its work resumes.

### **Review of Local Policing Precept**

14. The matter of the local policing precept proposals has been reviewed annually and subject to amendment continues to be scrutinised by a Task and Finish Group in order to facilitate sufficient time and analysis to the financial arrangements of the PCC and commissioned services. The number of agenda items for a full Police and Crime Panel meeting might preclude sufficient scrutiny of the local policing precept set, and therefore in recent years a Task and Finish Group has undertaken this work on behalf of the full Panel. This review would report in February 2022.

### **TRAINING NEEDS OF THE PANEL**

15. Members of the Panel were last trained on 10 September 2020 by the external training providers Frontline Consulting. The training took place remotely and Members found this training extremely informative. New Members of the Panel have received a copy of the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel Handbook but will still need training. It is therefore recommended that new Members receive the same training as used previously and that other Members of the Panel may use this training as a refresh session.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

- (1) Panel Members (one from each local authority area plus one non-political independent Member) are identified at this meeting to form the Task and Finish Group for the Review of Local Policing Precept .
- (2) That Panel members approve the proposed future plan for the Panel's review of Cleveland Police Communications Strategy (Task & Finish).
- (3) That authorisation is given for contact to be made with the scrutiny functions of other Cleveland Police area authorities regarding the consideration of information-gathering akin to that which is being initiated in Stockton-on-Tees around Police and Ward Member communications, which can then feed into the resumed overarching PCP (Task and Finish) work.
- (4) That the Panel identifies three replacement members (one each from Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, and Redcar and Cleveland) to be part of the Panel's Task and Finish Group once its work on the Cleveland Police Communications Strategy resumes later in 2021-2022.
- (5) The training provider Frontline Consulting be booked for a date as soon as possible to train the new Members of the Panel and that the training may be used as a refresh session for other Members.

**Contact Officer:** Margaret Waggott  
**Job Title:** Assistant Director of Administration, Democratic and Electoral Services  
**Tel:** 01642 527064  
**Email:** [margaret.waggott@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:margaret.waggott@stockton.gov.uk)