

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

A meeting of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel will be held at the Jeffrey Room, The Guildhall, St Giles Street, Northampton NN1 1DE on Thursday 14 March 2024 at 2.15 pm

Agenda

1.	Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members
2.	Notification of requests from members of the public to address the meeting Any requests to speak on an item on the agenda should be notified to the Chair (c/o the Committee Manager) by 12 noon two working days before the date of the meeting.
3.	Declarations of Interest Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.
4.	Chair's Announcements To receive communications from the Chair.
5.	Minutes To confirm the minutes of previous Panel meetings.
a)	Minutes of the Confirmation Hearing held in public on 30 November 2023 (Pages 5 - 10)
b)	Minutes of the Confirmation Hearing held in private on 30 November 2023 (Pages 11 - 12)
SCRUTINY OF THE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER	
6.	Work of the Youth Violence Intervention Unit in Northamptonshire (Verbal item) Guide time: 2.30 – 3.00 pm

7.	Police, Fire and Crime Plan Delivery Update (Pages 13 - 42) Guide time: 3.00 – 3.30 pm
8.	Fire and Rescue Authority Finance Update (Pages 43 - 48) Guide time: 3.30 – 3.45 pm
9.	Policing Finance Update (Pages 49 - 56) Guide time: 3.45 – 4.00 pm
PANEL OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT	
10.	Police, Fire and Crime Panel Work Programme (Pages 57 - 64) Guide time: 4.00 – 4.15 pm
11.	Complaints and Conduct Matters Update (Pages 65 - 68) Guide time: 4.15 – 4.30 pm
12.	Urgent Business The Chairman to advise whether they have agreed to any items of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.
13.	Exclusion of Press and Public In respect of the following items the Chair may move the resolution set out below, on the grounds that if the public were present it would be likely that exempt information (information regarded as private for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972) would be disclosed to them: The Committee is requested to resolve: “That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that if the public were present it would be likely that exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act of the descriptions against each item would be disclosed to them.”

Catherine Whitehead
Proper Officer
6 March 2024

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel Members:

Councillor David Smith (Chair)

Councillor Gill Mercer (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Fiona Baker

Councillor Jon-Paul Carr

Councillor André González De Savage

Councillor Dorothy Maxwell

Councillor Zoe McGhee

Councillor Ken Pritchard

Councillor Russell Roberts

Councillor Winston Strachan

Miss Pauline Woodhouse

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence and the appointment of substitute Members should be notified to democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare interests at item 3 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item

Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare that fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

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Queries Regarding this Agenda

If you have any queries about this agenda please contact James Edmunds, Democratic Services, via the following:

Tel: 07500 605276

Email: democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk

Or by writing to:

West Northamptonshire Council
The Guildhall
St Giles Street
Northampton
NN1 1DE

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Minutes of a meeting of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel held at Jeffrey Room, The Guildhall, St Giles Street, Northampton NN1 1DE on Thursday 30 November 2023 at 3.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor David Smith (Chair)
 Councillor Gill Mercer (Vice-Chair)
 Councillor Jon-Paul Carr
 Councillor André González De Savage
 Councillor Dorothy Maxwell
 Councillor Zoe McGhee
 Councillor Ken Pritchard
 Councillor Russell Roberts
 Councillor Winston Strachan
 Mrs Anita Shields

Also Present:

Stephen Mold, Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
 David Peet, Interim Chief Executive, Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
 Helen King, Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
 Vaughan Ashcroft, proposed candidate for the appointment as Interim Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
 Stuart McCartney, Governance and Accountability Manager, Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
 James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager, West Northamptonshire Council
 Diana Davies, Democratic Services Officer, West Northamptonshire Council
 Josh West, Labour Group Political Assistant, West Northamptonshire Council

192. **Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members**

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Councillor Baker and from Miss Woodhouse. Councillor Lunn had been due to substitute for Councillor Baker but had subsequently also given his apologies.

193. **Notification of requests from members of the public to address the meeting**

None received.

194. **Declarations of Interest**

None declared.

195. **Chair's Announcements**

There were none.

196. **Proposed appointment by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire of an interim Chief Finance Officer**

The Chair welcomed Mr Vaughan Ashcroft to the meeting and Panel members present introduced themselves.

The Chair then invited the PFCC to introduce Mr Vaughan Ashcroft as his preferred candidate for the role as interim Chief Finance Officer of the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (OPFCC). The PFCC made the following points:

- Mr Ashcroft had the requisite skills and experience to undertake the statutory role.
- The PFCC was keen to retain Mr Ashcroft's valuable institutional knowledge.
- Acting as a strategic Finance Professional, Mr Ashcroft had considerable experience in the policing and fire financial arrangements.
- He had 5 years' experience as senior management, currently in the role as Chief Finance Officer for the Chief Constable.
- Mr Ashcroft had a record of providing high level financial and strategic support with extensive knowledge of the business and would provide the continuity of services to deliver the budget and precept processes for both the police and fire partners.
- Mr Ashcroft was an exceptionally strong candidate and would complement and enhance the OPFCC.
- To avoid a conflict of interest, Mr Ashcroft would step back from his substantive post as the Northamptonshire Police S151 Officer.
- It was an interim post to allow the newly appointed PFCC to make a substantive appointment. Preparatory recruitment processes would be undertaken to expedite the proceedings post-election.

The Panel then asked Mr Ashcroft a series of questions relating to his professional competence and personal independence.

Mr Ashcroft was asked what attracted him to this opportunity to carry out the role of Chief Finance Officer on an interim basis.

Mr Ashcroft advised that his professional experience was in policing and finance. As the Chief Finance Officer for the Chief Constable, he had experienced working with the OPFCC and felt that he could add value to their work. The role would offer him a challenge and an opportunity to make a difference.

Mr Ashcroft was asked what he saw as the main challenges involved in financial management and planning in policing and fire and rescue and how he would seek to address these.

Mr Ashcroft made the following points:

- Since the COVID-19 pandemic there had been a more volatile financial world. Mr Ashcroft would seek to address the risks through strategic planning and budget development work to account for all of the variances in political and economic changes both locally and nationally.

- He wanted to continue to carry out scenario planning, based on different assumptions, considering inflation and the economic position.
- The capital programme would continue to be progressed, addressing climate change issues.
- It was important to ensure that services were fit to meet future challenges by continuing to innovate and invest appropriately, not adding to demands on the precept.

Mr Ashcroft was asked how he would describe his approach to leadership and management and how he would aim to apply this in the role of interim Chief Finance Officer.

Mr Ashcroft made the following points:

- He was experienced in managing staff: in his current role he dealt with around 40 people.
- His leadership style was to lead by example; he listened to people; and empowered staff to carry out their jobs and to develop within their jobs. These were values which would transfer to the OPFCC.
- He recognised the importance of knowing how both the individuals in the team and their wider colleagues worked and embraced that diversity.
- He emphasised the importance of working together cohesively to instil trust and confidence in people. Transparency was also key.

Mr Ashcroft was asked to give an example of when he had moved into a new role or organisation at a strategic level and quickly needed to understand it so as to inform him in carrying out his role, the approach he had taken and how effective this had been.

Mr Ashcroft explained his experience of joining a force where the finance function was struggling and made the following points:

- He had familiarised himself with the team, ensured he was approachable, and that the team had an understanding of his role.
- He had met with key stakeholders, explored wider issues and identified factors contributing to challenges.
- In this was he had built a picture of the position, identified challenges and prioritised actions based on the threat, risk and financial issues. Ensuring correct governance procedures and policies were in place had been a key priority to address.

Mr Ashcroft was asked what approach he would take to maintain productive relationships with partners, particularly when dealing with challenging matters, in order to achieve good outcomes.

Mr Ashcroft referred to the challenges of exiting from Multi-Force Shared Services (MFSS), the provision of back-office services in collaboration with various forces in the East Midlands. This had involved navigating Northamptonshire through the various issues of exiting whilst building a new department, and a new finance system; informing, and engaging with all stakeholders and partners; providing an exit plan and providing progress updates therefore ensuring transparency; adopting a mutual understanding of the problems arising and collectively resolving issues.

Mr Ashcroft was asked how, as interim Chief Finance Officer, he would, aim to ensure that the operation of the OPFCC reflected good practice in relation to financial governance and planning.

Mr Ashcroft advised that the OPFCC, Fire and Rescue Service and Northamptonshire Police had a joint governance framework. It had been reviewed between the 3 organisations and would ensure the statutory responsibilities were aligned and that a consistent approach was applied. Mr Ashcroft added that he would work with the PFCC and colleagues to ensure the OPFCC complied, would challenge deviations and address any issues arising.

Mr Ashcroft was asked to give an example of when he had been required to challenge someone at a senior level about a course of action that they were proposing and how he went about doing this effectively.

Mr Ashcroft advised that the joint governance framework applied to all staff, officers and colleagues at all levels. Senior officers who had not followed correct governance would be provided with a valid reason for refusal of the action they sought. They would be advised to follow correct procurement procedures, ensuring best value for money, or asked to provide a business case identifying benefits, risks and route to market ensuring that the spend fit with the strategies of the organisation, Police Fire and Crime Plan or met with the priorities of the Force or Fire and Rescue Service.

Mr Ashcroft was asked what relationship he would seek to have with the Panel if he was appointed and how the Panel could contribute to supporting his role.

Mr Ashcroft made the following points:

- He would appreciate feedback from the Panel on the reports that he produced to ensure they were tailored to meet the Panel's requirements.
- The engagement sessions held with the Panel, were beneficial and would continue, with the precept session being held in January 2024.
- He anticipated an honest and transparent working relationship and would seek to address any questions raised by the Panel.

The Chair invited Mr Ashcroft to raise any questions that he wished to ask the Panel or further comments that he wished to make.

Mr Ashcroft thanked the Panel for its time.

197. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

198. Exclusion of Press and Public

The Chair requested the Panel to agree that the remainder of the meeting be held in private session.

RESOLVED that: under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that if the public and press were present it would be likely that exempt information under Part I Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to the act of the descriptions would be disclosed to them.

The remainder of the meeting took place in private session.

199. **Report and recommendation to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire on the proposed appointment of an interim Chief Finance Officer**

The Panel considered its report and recommendation on the proposed appointment.

At the conclusion of discussion the Chair invited the Panel to reach a resolution on the proposed appointment and it was unanimously:

RESOLVED that: the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel recommends that the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire appoints Mr Vaughan Ashcroft as interim Chief Finance Officer.

The meeting closed at 4.15 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____

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**Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel
14th March 2024**

Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner

POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PLAN UPDATE

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report updates the Panel on the work of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and the progress being made in relation to the delivery of the Police, Fire and Crime Plan for Northamptonshire which is set out in more detail in Appendix A.

2. Delivering the Police, Fire and Crime Plan

“Prevention That Keeps the County Safe”

- 2.1 **PEEL Report** - The latest PEEL report undertaken by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) found that Northamptonshire Police has made improvements in most areas and in particular how it communicates with its communities to identify local problems and gather intelligence.

Since its last inspection, Northamptonshire Police has improved its performance in six of the nine areas of work measured by the Inspectorate. The inspectors also found areas of innovative good practice that are at the leading edge, particularly around the approach to retail crime. The inspectors also found that the Force is doing well in some fundamental areas – it communicates well with communities, uses powers such as stop search fairly and treats victims of crime properly. Their report also says the Force is outstanding in the way it records crime, which is important so that victims of crime receive the service they deserve and so the public can hold the police to account.

However, the report does make clear that the Force clearly has immediate work to do to improve crime investigation and the Commissioner will support the Chief Constable to make the necessary improvements and monitor progress. For example, £590,000 will be invested in further training and development for police officers in the coming year, which will help improve the quality of crime investigations and meet the training needs of the Force, which has seen a major increase in the number of police officers since 2018. In addition to this, a further £800,000 will go into the Force control room, to help meet the growing demand in emergency calls from the public – an area that the Inspectors also said needed to improve.

It is clear from the latest PEEL report that Northamptonshire Police has moved forwards in most areas, which is testament to the work undertaken by every police officer and member of staff to provide an even better service, against a challenging

background for policing. Victims of crime are supported to an extremely high standard, and this is clearly a Force that treats people fairly and with respect. The work being done to tackle retail crime is leading the way nationally and the Force is top performing in the quality of evidential files passed to the Crown Prosecution Service. We need quick action to ensure that there are consistent and thorough crime investigations to bring offenders to justice and ensure the public receive the best service when they report a crime.

The HMI report gives an objective, external view of Force performance and is important in helping the Commissioner hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of an efficient and effective police service. It shows how far Northamptonshire Police has come over the last few years.

2.2 **Safer Streets** As part of Round Five of the Safer Streets Fund, the Commissioner has secured £646,570 to support practical and targeted projects to tackle burglary and vehicle crime and reduce violence against women and girls. This is the fifth successful Safer Streets bid since the scheme was launched four years ago. As a result of those bids, the Commissioner has been awarded nearly £4m to invest in crime prevention. The three successful Safer Streets projects in the latest round were:

- **Weston, Northampton and Kingswood, Corby:** A forensic property marking, and asset recording scheme called 'Stand up to crime' will be rolled out to residents to help tackle residential burglary. Equipment to identify stolen property will be installed in custody suites and given to second-hand dealers and UV torches will be issued to all front-line officers, and second-hand dealers to aid routine searching of stolen goods. As of February 2024, plans are in place for the forensic property marking scheme to begin rollout in May 2024 in the two pilot areas. Forensic marking & asset recording kits are currently being created, in preparation for the rollout. UV infrastructure work including torches and custody suite lighting is also underway.
- **Junction 15 A and Watford Gap M1 Services:** Several physical security measures such as improved fencing, lighting, CCTV and ANPR will be put in place to tackle theft from HGVs and other vehicles. As of February 2024, a Crimestoppers campaign tackling HGV theft and general vehicle crime has launched. Commercial work has commenced in relation to the upgraded fencing, ANPR, additional CCTV and lighting.
- **Violence against women and girls.** This work will focus on and around public transport. Additional training will be provided to staff at stations about spotting signs of vulnerability and how to act once identified. Funds have been provided to West Northamptonshire Council to operate a taxi marshal scheme in the nighttime economy. These activities will be supported with materials from the "It only takes one" campaign, previously developed by the Commissioner's office with partners.

As the panel know, the Commissioner has already carried out Safer Streets projects across the county including the delivery of crime prevention improvements to homes and streets in residential areas of Northampton, Kettering and Wellingborough. CCTV has been upgraded and home security products distributed in Wellingborough, Kettering and Northampton, alleys have been gated in Wellingborough and Kettering and training schemes for staff and ID scanning technology has helped to make the night-time economy safer.

Another award-winning measure was the introduction of Operation Kayak, a policing initiative to keep people safe on weekend nights out funded as a pilot by the Commissioner. The patrols have since been adopted as a core operational activity. Officers working in the night-time economy are briefed to be proactively on the lookout for suspicious activity, sexual aggression, harassment, inappropriate or predatory behaviour. The NPCC award also acknowledged the effectiveness of the Safer Nights Out (SNO) vans, funded by the Commissioner to be a haven for anyone who needs support while on an evening out. The SNOvans are staffed by trained volunteers, who give practical help to anyone who needs it.

- 2.3 **Tackling Violent Crime** - The Commissioner continues to bring people together to collaborate on major issues. Recently over seventy-five representatives from partners, community groups and voluntary sector organisations attended an engagement event hosted by the Northamptonshire Serious Violence Prevention Partnership (NSVPP). The event marked a significant step forward in fostering collaboration to develop a joint response to tackle serious violence across the county. As part of the Serious Violence Duty, the NSVPP was formed to develop a joint approach to tackling the root causes of serious violence.

NSVPP partners include the Commissioner, Police, Fire and Rescue Service, Youth Offending and Probation Services, Integrated Care Board, North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council. This event and the work undertaken over recent months has led to the development and launch of the first serious violence strategy, aimed at reducing violence in the County by addressing root causes.

We will only begin to make a difference to violent crime if we work as one. It was powerful that partners across Northamptonshire came together for this event, to share and learn. The voice of the community will be at the heart of everything we do to tackle violent crime. This opportunity to listen and share is an important step towards a Strategy that will really make an impact and reflect the views of the people who best understand what works in the communities we serve.

- 2.4 **Retail Crime** - The issue of retail crime and violence and abuse against shop staff is also a growing concern for many across our county. The Commissioner has convened roundtable discussions giving retailers the opportunity to share their concerns and experiences, with the Northamptonshire Business Crime Partnership, and officers from Northamptonshire Police.

Colleagues from the Force also updated those present on the work of Operation Elegance, which is a countywide policing operation that is targeting prolific and violent retail crime offenders. Op Elegance sees police working alongside the Northamptonshire Business Crime Partnership's two specialist civilian investigators, funded by the Commissioner. Their work is to support retailers and gather the best possible evidence to assist in prosecution of offenders. This approach has been recognised as promising practice by HMICFRS.

- 2.5 **Prevention Team of the Year Award** - The NFRS Home Safety & Safeguarding Team received the Prevention Team of the Year Award as part of the sector specific NFCC Prevention & Protection Awards 2023 – this was presented to a team that can demonstrate being productive, approachable, supportive, inclusive and respectful of others and working collaboratively internally and externally through high performance to achieve their working objectives. The nomination was supported by the Northamptonshire Adult Safeguarding Board Business office as a key partner. The Staywise education platform which is nationally supported by the NFCC and NPCC has now been formally adopted by NFRS. An implementation plan is now in place to encourage sign up by Police and other partners such as there are useful education resources across community safety and prevention themes, including in relation to the Serious Violence Duty. NFRS now utilise the NFCC Early Intervention Framework and Bespoke Theories of Change to respond to needs emerging from the Local Area Partnerships of the Integrated Care System.
- 2.6 **Fire Protection Team** - Our Fire Protection Officers do vital work behind the scenes, regularly undertaking inspections of premises, and acting quickly on intelligence. The hard work of the Protection Team has helped result in the owner of a Northampton restaurant being fined for breaching a fire prohibition notice. After inspecting the venue, NFRS issued a notice banning people from sleeping on the premises, but a follow-up inspection three days later found evidence that the notice had already been breached. On November 29, the owner of the restaurant pleaded guilty at Northampton Magistrates' Court to breaching the notice and was fined. As of the end of 2023 the Fire Protection Website had received over 19,000 hits demonstrating the protection advice, information, and guidance is being accessed. Following a recent refresh of this information.
- 2.7 **"Effective and efficient response"**
- 2.8 **Increasing Frontline Visibility** - Extra policing patrols will soon be deployed in areas with high levels of anti-social behaviour in Northamptonshire with £3 million having been awarded to the county over two years to crackdown on such behaviour. Northamptonshire Police will receive at least £1 million to help deploy uniformed patrols in anti-social 'hotspot' areas. The new patrols will help Northamptonshire Police to tackle behaviour such as drug taking, criminal damage, public nuisance, shoplifting and dealing with drunk and disorderly people. It is proposed that these additional patrols will be undertaken through a combination of Police Officers, Police Community Support Officers and Engagement and Enforcement Officers from the two Unitary Authorities, with funds supplied via this grant.

- 2.9 **Immediate Justice** - The hotspot patrols will build on the Immediate Justice work already taking place in Northamptonshire – one of just 16 Forces across the country to trial the scheme. Adults found committing anti-social behaviour are made to repair the damage they have inflicted on victims and communities. This could see them being made to pick up litter, remove graffiti or carry out other work to make environmental improvements in the areas where they have offended.

A number of Immediate Justice Supervisors, who work directly with the perpetrators, now sit within the Commissioner's office. The pilot scheme was launched in Northamptonshire very recently and has already seen offenders out and about in the community carrying out reparative work following referrals from Northamptonshire Police staff. Referrals are doubling month on month and have included a 20-year-old male in possession of cannabis and Nitrous Oxide who received a Conditional Caution for possession of class B drugs undertaking litter picking in and around Becketts Park in Northampton and a 30-year-old man who received a Community Resolution for possession of class B drugs carried out similar work in Eastfield Park in Wellingborough.

- 2.10 **Roads Policing Team** - A crackdown on traffic offences and a greater police presence are just some of the benefits resulting from the newly formed Roads Policing Team (RPT) who are driving down crime and improving road safety across Northamptonshire.

The Commissioner chose to fund the RPT which consists of five teams of one sergeant and eight police constables who benefit from a state-of-the-art fleet of vehicles as well as drone and Automatic Number Plate Recognition capability. They work a 24-hour shift pattern, providing comprehensive, vigilant cover for the county for the first time in over a decade. Roads policing has a critical role to play in reducing casualties, improving driver and rider behaviour as well as targeting and disrupting serious organised crime committed using the County's road networks. A key part of the work carried out by the RPT will focus on the fatal five – not wearing a seatbelt, using a mobile device, being under the influence of drink or drugs, careless driving or excess speeds.

- 2.11 **New Firefighter Recruits** - The new intake of wholetime recruits will be attending the Fire Service College after being welcomed to the Service. The group completed an induction which saw them gain a greater understanding of NFRS by spending time with Prevention, Protection and Business Services. The cohort will spend eight weeks at the Fire Service College, where they will undertake training on how to use breathing apparatus, put out different types of fires and deal with hazardous materials. In addition to this, the team responsible for overseeing roughly 15,000 water hydrants across Northamptonshire has been bolstered with two hydrant inspectors. The team are responsible for regularly inspecting water hydrants and making sure that they are ready for use by operational crews.

2.12 **“Protect & Support Those Who Are Vulnerable”**

2.13 **Domestic abuse and family conflict project**

This project team support the Force where a Public Protection Notification (PPN) has been completed by a Police Officer called to a domestic abuse incident and children are present. This incident is police graded as ‘no action required’. The team contact the victim and offer advice, guidance, safety planning and family support to reduce the chances of a further incident and Police call out. From the beginning of November 2023 to end of January 2024 the Domestic Abuse project accepted 374 referrals from the submission of a Public Protection Notification (PPN). The Adult Domestic Abuse project commenced in July 2023, offering the same support to couples who have no children but have had a Police call out for domestic abuse.

This Domestic Abuse project is demonstrating positive outcomes for victims who previously would not have received support. Our commitment to offering a recognised quality service has resulted in six domestic abuse practitioners training to become Independent Domestic Abuse Advisors (IDVAs). - a nationally recognised qualification in the field of domestic abuse. The Domestic Abuse project team have also continued to offer workshops ranging from ‘Healthy & Unhealthy Relationships’ to ‘Emotional impact on Children who experience Parental Conflict’ and ‘Benefits of Effective co-parenting’ with excellent feedback.

2.14 **Youth Violence Intervention Unit**

The Commissioner’s Early Intervention Support Officers are the first point of contact for the young people referred to this innovative unit. They work in a multi-agency team to ensure the young person receives tailored support for their needs in order to reduce their risk of harm, exploitation and further contact with the Criminal Justice System. Between November 2023 – Jan 2024 the team have met 1 to 1 with eighty-two young people identified as requiring education and support. The team work alongside Neighbourhood Police Officers in the community and in schools when there has been a significant incident involving young people and knife crime. Working within a multi-agency approach and utilising the skills of a London based educative gangs programme “Exodus”. This intervention has been delivered to over eight hundred students.

2.15 **Child Exploitation Webinars**

The Commissioner’s delivery teams have developed a Child Exploitation Webinar which they jointly deliver with RISE and Missing Person Unit. The Webinar is aimed at parents/carers and professionals to gain an understanding of child exploitation, the different kinds of exploitation and to highlight the link between children missing from home, adverse childhood experiences and child exploitation. Another webinar covering Child Exploitation and Knife Crime was delivered to Years 8, 9 and 10 in December and reached 720 learners.

2.16 Missing Person Unit Project

The Commissioner funds an Early Intervention Worker who supports the Missing Person's Unit (MPU), visiting young people who, have three or more missing episodes. The aim of this project is to identify needs of support early to reduce further missing episodes & reduce risks and demand on police time. Between November 2023 – Jan 2024 the dedicated Early Intervention worker visited 72 young people. Out of those 72 visited, only 8 went on to be a repeat missing person.

2.17 Family Support Officers

The tier 2 support work is a county wide offer, working alongside partners to get the right support at the right time to children, young people and families and prevent further incidents of distress and reduce the likelihood of entering the criminal justice system. The team consists of 12 Practitioners and each Practitioner holds a case load of approximately twelve cases for a period or around twelve weeks. Organisations referring to the team include Northamptonshire Childrens Trust (NCT) schools, nursery settings, midwives, health visitors, school nurses and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), where referrals are assessed as not meeting Tier 4 or Tier 3 thresholds.

2.18 Parenting Workshops

My teams offer online parenting workshops to accommodate parents who are working and those who are lone parents and carers to make it easier for them to access the workshops. The team offer advice on positive parenting and how to manage challenging behaviours.

2.19 Youth project:

The youth work offer is county wide, supporting young people on a one-to-one basis or in groups ages 10 to 18. Sessions were educative and focused on risk-taking behaviours, consequential thinking, healthy relationships, knife & crime awareness, and managing anger. All support is centred around the young person, increasing their chance of staying within mainstream education and decreasing risk of exploitation. Online workshops offered to parents compliment the work of the youth worker with the young person. The Youth work team also delivered group work programmes to ten targeted schools in the county.

2.20 “Effective Justice”

2.21 Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) Update

An effective Criminal Justice system is a priority for the Commissioner who chairs the LCJB meeting ensuring all partners are delivering effectively on behalf of victims, witnesses, and offenders and reviewing Key Performance Indicators on outcomes, impact, and quality across the CJS.

2.22 **Custody Volunteer Scheme Update**

Independent Custody Volunteers (ICV) are a group of volunteers who attend police custody locations to check on the treatment of detainees, the conditions in which they are held, and that their rights and entitlements are being observed. The service offers protections and confidentiality to detainees and the police, and reassurance to the community. ICVs visit the Criminal Justice Centre (CJC) and the Weekley Woods Justice Centre (WWJC) on a weekly basis. Issues were resolved by ICVs include providing blankets, jumpers, and medication.

2.23 **Rehabilitative Services**

Several service provider contract extensions are being progressed to ensure rehabilitative services are evaluated and retained where effective, including for combatting drugs, educating offenders, and supporting victims.

Examples include the Good Loaf programme for female offenders which support female offenders with issues around domestic abuse, wellbeing, mental health, education, and employment. Data evaluated between September 2021 and August 2023 found positive benefits for women in terms of building resilience, self-esteem, and wellbeing; especially for those that have low levels to begin with. Women reported changes to their understanding of what healthy relationships are, understanding domestic abuse experiences, how to avoid negative situations, and feeling better equipped for future relationships.

The RISE – Project Pipa program (Preventing Intimate Partner Abuse) evaluation found that individuals who attended the programme are less likely to reoffend as domestic abuse offenders, particularly in the long term (2 or more years), demonstrating positive behaviour change. The assessment of comparison data shows that those who completed PIPA had a reoffending rate of 19.9%, and those who did not do PIPA had a reoffending rate of 35.6%, a variance of 15.7%, demonstrating the impact PIPA has on recidivism.

2.24 **“Modern Services That Are Fit for Purpose”**

2.25 **New Thermal Cameras** - Thanks to the increased resources we have been able to make available for the Fire and Rescue Service, they were able to invest £360K in new thermal cameras that will offer enhanced search and rescue capabilities and is the first investment in the Thermal Image Camera stock in over a decade. The first phase of the rollout will see eleven appliances receive two cameras respectively, and ten will be delivered to the Training department replacing all their current cameras.

2.26 **FRS Speak Up** - FRS Speak Up is an independent phone line and website set up by Crimestoppers specifically for the Fire and Rescue sector to report instances of unacceptable behaviour. The service provides a safe space to talk with someone not

connected with NFRS. Also launched is a new version of Flag It. Not only can you use the email to raise a concern, but there is also now a new Flag It app available. Reporting through both channels is confidential. Every disclosure will be reviewed and depending on the circumstances and the information received, appropriate action will be taken. The Fire and Rescue Service is committed to safeguarding and protecting its current and future workforce, and building a suite of support services with clear reporting lines is the beginning of an action plan that will help us tackle the issues that have been experienced and raised.

- 2.27 **OPFCC Customer Service Team** - The Customer Service Team continues to experience increasing levels of demand however upholding service level agreements remains critical to the team. The latest data available from the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) indicates we are providing an excellent level of service to complainants. For example, initial contact is made within one working day of receipt of the complaint which is significantly quicker than the national average of five working days. The Customer Service Team have also resolved an average of 73% of complaints to the satisfaction of the complainant in the past 6 months. The Customer Service Team consistently identifies valuable learning opportunities and feedback for the force, allowing them to take swift action to tackle poor behaviour or address organisational failings.

Having identified an increase in the number of complaints we are receiving relating to dissatisfaction with how police have dealt with incidents of sudden death, our Senior Customer Service Caseworker has been appointed as a SPOC for this type of complaint which are difficult to resolve as families are understandably seeking answers to questions that at times simply cannot be answered. Through our involvement, ensuring the right senior officers are aware of the concerns, we have been able to have additional investigative steps considered, including the introduction of the offer of a family meeting with senior investigators at the end of investigations into unexplained deaths.

All members of the Customer Service Team have recently spent time with the Fire and Rescue service, since adopting responsibility for the receipt, recording and resolution of complaints against the Fire and Rescue Service in April 2023. The Customer Service Team have also used this as an opportunity to promote the complaints process across the service, increasing awareness of how complaints are dealt with.

- 2.28 **Northamptonshire Talking**

Listening to the concerns and priorities of residents is vital to policing and the Northamptonshire Police community messaging service, previously known as Northamptonshire Neighbourhood Alert, provides a simple and convenient way for local people to receive news and updates about crime and policing in their area. Work continues to promote this service to the public, with nearly 40,000 local people now signed up.

3 Holding the Chiefs to Account

- 3.1 The role of the Accountability Boards is to support the PFCC in exercising the statutory duties of holding the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer to account and they form part of a wider ranging programme of assurance across the breadth of policing and fire & rescue activities.

The Accountability Boards focus on areas of concern in performance and service delivery at a strategic level; undertake discussions strategic budget setting, medium term financial planning and other matters requiring ongoing levels of assurance; strategic consideration of key identified corporate level risks and strategic consideration of matters relating to PFCC scrutiny activity.

Recent work of the Accountability Boards is summarised below:

Fire Accountability Board – 10th October 2023

- Strategic outcomes requirements letter update
- Performance update
- Budget Monitoring Report

Fire Accountability Board – 14th November 2023

- HMICFRS Cause of Concern
- Community Risk Management Plan annual review

Fire Accountability Board – 12th December 2023

- Draft Budget for 2024/25
- Investment Proposals

Fire Accountability Board – 9th January 2024

- Budget Setting 2024/2025
- Strategic outcomes requirements letter update
- Performance update

Police Accountability Board – 10th October 2023

- Strategic Outcomes Requirements Letter Update
- Force matters of priority performance update.
- Budget Monitoring Report

Police Accountability Board – 14th November 2023

- Claire's Law and Sarah's law
- HMICFRS PEEL Inspection

Police Accountability Board – 12th December 2023

- Draft Budget for 2024/25
- Investment Proposals

<https://northantspfcc.org.uk/category/opfcc/accountability-opfcc/accountability-board-minutes/>

4 Summary of PFCC Decisions taken

- [Decision Record 405 - Interview Recording System with Capita SSS](#)
- [Decision Record 406 - Replacement Body Armour with Mehler Vario System GmbH](#)
- [Decision Record 407 - Variation to Custody Detention Officers Contract with Mitie Care and Custody](#)
- [Decision Record 408 - Variation to Provision of Staff to Upgrade Servers with NEC Solutions Software-Zetron](#)
- [Decision Record 409 - Variation for 1 x XEC Director Licence with Micro Systemation](#)
- [Decision Record 410 - Fleet Purchase with Audi UK](#)
- [Decision Record 411 Fleet Purchase with Volkswagen UK](#)
- [Decision Record 412 - Contract for Firearms and Covert Body Armour with Mehler](#)
- [Decision Record 413 - Contract for Laptops and Monitors with XMA Ltd](#)
- [Decision Record 414 - Extension to Gritting Services Contract with SPA Environmental Care](#)
- [Decision Record 415 - Variation of Hybrid Motorbikes Contract with White Motorcycle Concepts](#)
- [Decision Record 416 - Extension for Outsourcing of Digital Material with CCL Forensics Ltd](#)
- [Decision Record 417 - SPS Agreement 2023 British Grand Prix with Silverstone Circuits Ltd](#)
- [Decision Record 418 - Extension of Windscreen Replacement Contract with National Windscreen Ltd](#)
- [Decision Record 419 - Extension of Dry Cleaning and Laundry Contract with Priory Dry Cleaners](#)
- [Decision Record 420 - Variation of ERP HR Module with Softcat](#)
- [Decision Record 421 - Variation of ERP Recruitment Module with Softcat](#)
- [Decision Record 422 - Extension of Waste Disposal Services with Veolia](#)
- [Decision Record 423 - Joint Control Room Provision with Apira](#)
- [Decision Record 424 - Oracle Licences with DSP Explorer Ltd](#)
- [Decision Record 425 - Storm Licence Support and Maintenance with Specialist Computer Centres](#)

- [Decision Record 426 - Variation to Firearms Command Training Venue with Calder Conferences](#)
- [Decision Record 427 - Variation of Telephony Maintenance Support with CAE Technology Services](#)
- [Decision Record 428 - Tasers and Consumables with Axon Public Safety Ltd](#)
- [Decision Record 429 - IT Health Checks with PenTest People](#)
- [Decision Record 430 - Contract Extension for Language Services with CINTRA](#)
- [Decision Record 431 - Specialist Computer Centre](#)
- [Decision Record 432 - Variation of PCDA with University of Northampton](#)
- [Decision Record 433 - Variation of DHEP with University of Northampton](#)
- [Decision Record 434 - Variation of Body Worn Video Managed System with Insight Direct](#)
- [Decision Record 435 - Online Auditing with Corporate IT Systems](#)
- [Decision Record 436 - Variation of Intelligent Intranets Contract with Agilysis](#)
- [Decision Record 437 - Social Media Management Platform with Orlo](#)
- [Decision Record 438 - Variation to Interview Recording system with Capita SSS](#)
- [Decision Record 439 - Variation of Maintenance Support Network Telephony Infrastructure with CAE Technology Services](#)

Key Fire and Rescue Decisions

- [NFRS Decision Record 123 - Contract for IT Hardware with Softcat](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 124 - Contract for Thermal Imaging Cameras with Terberg DTS](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 125 - Variation of Occupational Health Services with BHSE](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 126 - Variation of Microsoft 365 Licences with Softcat plc](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 127 - Oracle Licences with DSP Explorer Ltd](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 128 - ICT Maintenance for Joint Command Unit with Excelerate Technology](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 129 - Purchase of Officer Cars with Kia](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 130 - Extension to HGV Servicing Parts with Truck East](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 131 - Duty Management System with Fire Service Rota BV](#)

- [NFRS Decision Record 132 - Contract for Connectivity Services with Spitfire Network Services](#)
- [NFRS Decision Record 133 - Contract for Drill Tower Remedial works with Lindum Group](#)

5 **Recommendations**

That the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel considers the content of the report and its appendix.

Stephen Mold
Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner

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Appendix A:

POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PLAN

Q3 23/24

PERFORMANCE REPORT



PERFORMANCE REPORT: Introduction

The Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Plan 2021-2026 sets out five priority areas:

PRIORITY 1: Prevention that keeps the county safe

PRIORITY 2: Effective and efficient response

PRIORITY 3: Protect and support those who are vulnerable

PRIORITY 4: Effective justice

PRIORITY 5: Modern services that are fit for the future

Within these priorities, the Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) monitors Northamptonshire Police in respect of repeat victimisation, fraud, crime prevention, workforce recruitment, burglary, vehicle crime, anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood policing, violent crime, rural crime, knife crime, domestic abuse, positive outcomes, investigations of crime and disruption & detection of crime. Public confidence, emergency response times, early interventions and workforce characteristics are also monitored.

The OPFCC also monitors the Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service in respect of prevention activity, workforce capacity, emergency cover, specialist skills collaboration, safeguarding and response.

There are no numerical targets set within the Police, Fire & Crime Plan.

Instead, the plan monitors Northamptonshire Police and Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service for continuous improvement. The OPFCC recognises that monitoring performance in relation to police, crime and fire and rescue services is complex and, in many cases, cannot be determined with a single indicator. Therefore, this performance report, which informs the Police, Fire and Crime Panel, is based on a range of indicators that demonstrates all aspect of the PFCC's priorities are tracked.

This performance report will focus on the key (not all), performance indicators which are tracked for statistical exceptions from the reporting period (based on 12-month performance), as well as highlighted activities during the period, from the OPFCC, Northamptonshire Police and Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service.

In terms of statistical exceptions, where a performance indicator moves outside of this range, performance is termed 'exceptional'. This does not necessarily mean performance is good or bad, but that variation is greater than normal.



Q3 23/24 **Fire** Priority Commentary

At a Glance:

Diversify prevention activity into a wider range of topics: The prevention strategy is structured around five key priorities, encompassing road and water safety, early intervention, youth engagement, and fire safety.

The service has appointed a case officer to collaborate with partners in adult risk management. This role also involves conducting themed work focusing on safer homes, alongside efforts related to Domestic Abuse and Child Protection. As part of the Fire Service's fire safety program, assistance is provided during home fire safety visits (HFSV) to ensure prevention and safety measures for medical equipment such as airflow mattresses and home oxygen. These efforts align with nationally agreed core components for HFSV.

Additionally, enhanced HFSVs conducted by a central team include guidance on preventing domestic burglary, doorstep crime, and fraud, in collaboration with law enforcement agencies.

The service remains an active participant in the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board, contributing to the development of a hoarding framework for the county in response to increased referrals for hoarding and neglected homes.

With the implementation of the Serious Violence Duty, the Fire Authority has been designated as a statutory agency. NFRS, in partnership with other agencies, has contributed to the initial draft of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and strategy aimed at reducing violence in the county, with finalisation expected in the upcoming year.

Further increase the involvement of our staff in prevention activities to target risk in our communities: Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue service has recently engaged in collaborative efforts with Local Area Partnerships of the Integrated Care System to proactively prevent fires and enhance community safety. A notable example of this occurred during Q3 23/24, where White Watch conducted environmental audits alongside partners on the Kingswood estate in Corby. These audits aimed to address issues such as fly tipping and environmental improvement.

Throughout 2023/24, crews across the county have contributed to the delivery of nine waterside responder courses, aligning with the service's water risk program. These initiatives, including the provision of throwlines funded by the OPFCC, aim to enhance water safety awareness and response capabilities.

Furthermore, Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service has provided training and support to 945 front-line staff across children and adult safeguarding systems during 2023/24. This training, facilitated by the Services Central team, focuses on raising awareness of fire safety and its interconnection with issues such as self-neglect and hoarding.

Increase organisational capacity in protection, ensuring our warranted Protection Officers can focus on the most complex areas: Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service has enhanced training efforts to elevate all existing Fire Protection Officers (FPOs) to the level of 'Fire Safety Inspector.' This strategic decision bolsters the service's ability to handle more intricate and technical fire safety tasks, formal enforcement procedures, and on-call responsibilities. This initiative marks a shift from having five staff members (equivalent to 4.5 full-time equivalents) to now having eight staff members (equivalent to 7 full-time equivalents). Furthermore, all staff members included in the on-call roster are now equipped to offer expert, detailed, and tailored fire prevention advice and activities, further strengthening the service's proactive approach to community safety.



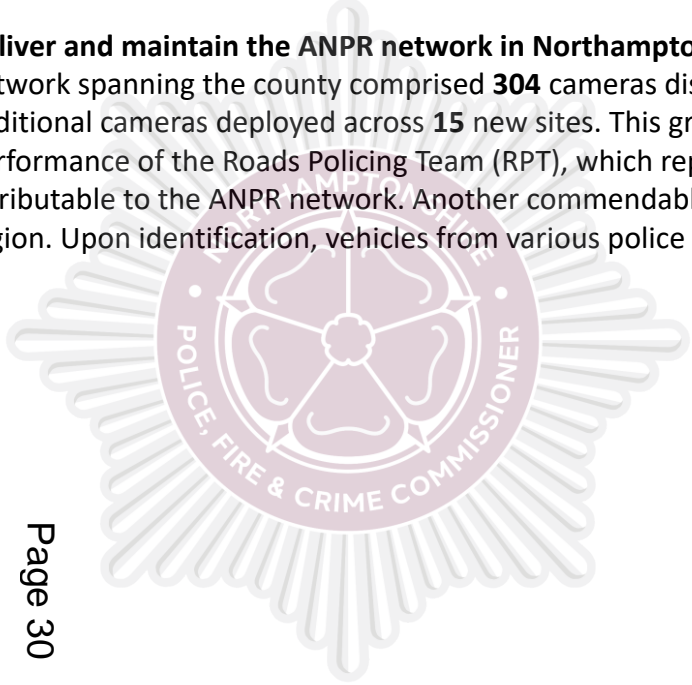
Q3 23/24 **Police** Priority Commentary

At a Glance:

Reduce Repeat Victimization: There has been a continued downward trend in repeat victim rates across all risk levels of domestic abuse. Additionally, there has been a decrease in repeat victimisation rates for serious sexual offences, which is a positive development.

As of the end of 2023, the overall domestic abuse repeat rate stands at **36.7%**, marking a notable improvement of **-5.9%** compared to the end of 2022/23 (42.6%). Notably, the Sunflower Centre has experienced a **10.5%** reduction in repeat victim referrals compared to the same quarter last year. However, it's worth noting that there has been an increase in new victim referrals. Moving forward, the OPFCC remains committed to closely monitoring and supporting the Force in its efforts to empower victims of domestic abuse to come forward and report harm. The VAWG (Violence Against Women and Girls) agenda continues to be a national priority.

Deliver and maintain the ANPR network in Northamptonshire to ensure it supports the prevention, disruption and detection of crime: By the close of December 2023, the ANPR camera network spanning the county comprised **304** cameras distributed across **283** distinct sites. In the preceding nine months, the ANPR network in Northamptonshire saw an expansion, with **20** additional cameras deployed across **15** new sites. This growth has yielded notable benefits, including marked increases in ANPR interactions and favourable outcome rates. Noteworthy is the performance of the Roads Policing Team (RPT), which reports **5,919** vehicle stops, **903** arrests, **3,663** traffic offenses, and **1,511** vehicle seizures within the county over the past 12 months, all attributable to the ANPR network. Another commendable outcome of the ANPR network is evident in a collaborative multi-force operation, which effectively identifies criminals entering the region. Upon identification, vehicles from various police forces are promptly dispatched to pursue them, resulting in the recovery of several stolen vehicles.





Q3 23/24 Working Together Priority Commentary

At a Glance:

Give people the opportunity to participate in schemes that make the county safer: A new grants scheme was launched in August 2023, to tackle knife crime and youth violence. The scheme is making up to £10,000 available to voluntary and community sector organisations for projects working to tackle youth violence and knife crime in local communities. The grant scheme is now closed and information about the grants that have been awarded can be seen below:

- [Knife crime and youth violence Grant scheme \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk)

Making Northamptonshire Safer: The OPFCC continues to award grants through the Making Northamptonshire Safer Community Fund of between £3,000 and £10,000 for initiatives that support the aims of the Police, Fire and Crime Plan. As an example, three initiatives recently received funds for projects that are working with young people, diverting them away from knife crime, getting them more active and supporting youth engagement in the community. Since April 2019, **31** projects have received funding, totalling **£248,368**. The latest information on the grant scheme can be found in the article below:

- <https://www.northantspfcc.org.uk/opfcc-grants/>

Develop fraud prevention programme, including reducing the risk of cyber related crime: The OPFCC Digital and Technology Delivery Manager plays a pivotal role in overseeing the Digital, Data, and Technology department (DDaT) to ensure accountability and scrutiny. This role extends to cyber engagement within the county, offering free fraud and cybercrime advice in collaboration with the Cyber Protect and Prevent Officers and the Fraud Protect Officer from Northamptonshire Police. Additionally, she has conducted tailored cyber security presentations and delivered cyber security training.

The development of the Cyber Awareness Game has been successfully completed, and its launch is scheduled for April 2024. This game is designed to educate businesses and individuals about the impact of fraud and cybercrime, while providing guidance on how to protect themselves and others.

Furthermore, the Northamptonshire Cyber Security Forum has been nationally recognised and honoured with the Cyber Public Service Award at The Real Cyber Awards 2023. This prestigious award acknowledges the OPFCC's commitment to delivering high-quality cyber security support and education to SME businesses and organisations, both locally and beyond.



Q3 23/24 **Fire** Priority Commentary At a Glance:

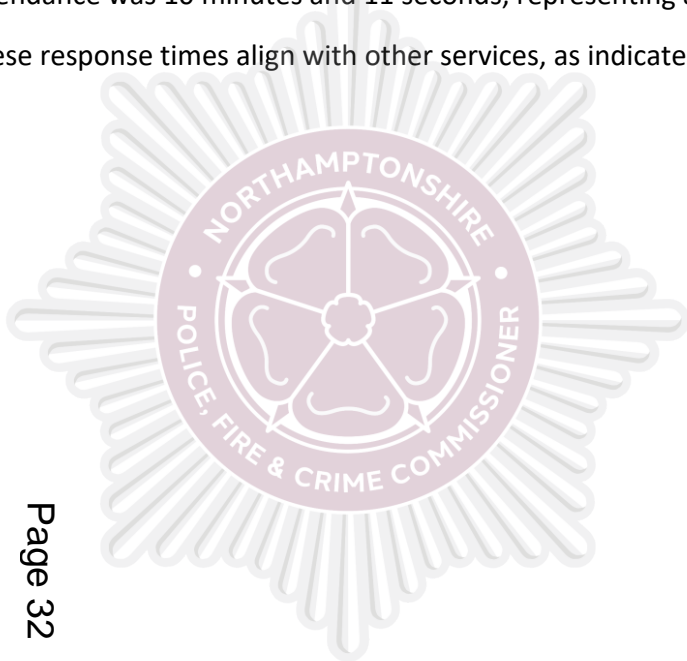
Ensure we fully understand the risk profile of the county, which will enable us to better shape the organisation and the way in which we respond: Appliance availability has maintained relative stability over the past 24 months, but recent data, particularly up to December 23, indicates a downward trend. Seasonal fluctuations, notably lower levels observed in Q3, have impacted response and mobilisation, with appliance availability slightly lower than the same period last year.

Call handling times for Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) stood at 12 minutes and 16 seconds at the end of Q3 23/24, marking an increase of 28 seconds compared to the preceding year. This growth in demand for RTCs likely contributed to the rise in handling time.

Overall response times to all incidents are showing signs of stabilisation, with Q3 23/24 achieving an average response time of 10 minutes and 31 seconds, consistent with the same period last year. However, variations exist across stations and incident types, with the service conducting monthly checks to address outliers.

Response times to FIRE incidents consistently outpace other incident types, albeit falling just outside the 10-minute target for a third consecutive quarter. The overall response time for fire attendance was 10 minutes and 11 seconds, representing a 33-second improvement compared to the same period last year.

These response times align with other services, as indicated by data from 2022/23 provided to HMICFRS.





Q3 22/23 **Police** Priority Commentary At a Glance:

Police Officer Recruitment: According to the latest data from the Home Office within the framework of the Police Uplift Programme, Northamptonshire Police currently boasts a **37%** female officer representation, slightly up from **36.5%** in Q4 22/23. The recruitment of female officers is steadily increasing, with aspirations for the force to align with the County's female population representation, currently standing at **50.5%**. Similarly, the force aims to reflect the county's BAME population of 8.1%, but currently achieves **4.2%** representation (up from 4.30% in September 2022). Achieving both these goals represents a significant endeavour at both local and national levels, which may require several years to fully mirror the county's demographic makeup. However, the Force, with the support of the OPFCC, has established a proactive positive action team dedicated to realising these aspirations. This proactive approach underscores our commitment to fostering diversity and inclusivity within the force, ensuring it is reflective of the communities it serves.

Strengthen Local Policing: The Home Office mandated Northamptonshire Police with an uplift target of 1,480 officers to be reached by March 31, 2023. In alignment with the Chief Constable's and Commissioner's shared vision, the aim was to surpass this target, striving for over 1,500 police officers within the same timeframe, which was achieved. As of September 2023, the official headcount stood at **1,521**. To sustain these heightened numbers, additional recruitment drives are planned over the next couple of years. Furthermore, as of December 2023, the Force employed **79** PCSOs, up from 75 in February 2023 and it is anticipated there will be further increases in PCSO numbers over the next 12 months as part of ongoing recruitment efforts.

Neighbourhood Crime (burglary, vehicle crime & anti-social behaviour): As of December 2023, the overall neighbourhood crime demand on the force has significantly decreased, falling below the 2-year average. This decline is primarily attributed to a reduction in vehicle crime offenses, while instances of robbery and theft from individuals remain relatively low. However, there are notable concerns regarding a recent upsurge in residential burglary offenses. Over a rolling 12-month period, rates have increased by **7.3%**. December witnessed the highest demand for residential burglary since 2020, propelled by a force tactical operation in Northampton and a series of attempts in Wellingborough.

While the Force currently maintains a ranking of **24th** nationally for residential burglary, sustained high demand poses potential challenges to its directional performance compared to other forces. Should this trend persist, there's a risk of becoming an outlier. Consequently, this represents one of the most significant risk areas for the force, warranting a comprehensive end-to-end review if heightened demand persists in the coming months. The Commissioner will continue to monitor this situation vigilantly.

Furthermore, as part of the Safer Streets Round 5 initiative, the Weston ward in Northampton and Kingswood in Corby will form part of a pilot program. This innovative initiative aims to combine crime prevention and property marking efforts to encourage householders to adopt improved security routines, with the goal of further reducing burglary levels.

Neighbourhood Policing: Elevated Grade 1 demand persists, albeit with December's urban Grade 1 demand only slightly surpassing last year's figures by **0.5%**. Notably, Grade 1 median response times during December dipped below the 24-month mean for the first time since April 2023. The urban Grade 1 12-month rolling average response time stood at **12 minutes and 53 seconds**, indicating a notable improvement compared to the end of September 2023 (13 minutes and 14 seconds). Additionally, rural Grade 1 response times have shown enhancements in comparison to September 2023. The OPFCC remains committed to evaluating response times holistically, considering improvements in investigation standards and advancements in victim satisfaction levels. These efforts underscore the Commissioner's ongoing dedication to optimising operational efficiency and enhancing service delivery.



Q3 23/24 **Working Together** Priority Commentary

At a Glance:

Communities Accessing Information:

Recent articles ensuring communities have access to information about the activities that police officers and fire crews can be viewed within the newsletter section of the OPFCC website:

- [Newsletters - Northamptonshire Police & Fire Commissioner \(northantspfcc.org.uk\)](https://www.northantspfcc.org.uk/newsletters)

Road Safety Fund:

The OPFCC continues to award grants through the Road Safety Community Fund of between £500 and £5,000 that help to support the Northamptonshire Strategic Road Safety Plan, developed by the Northamptonshire Safer Roads Alliance (NSRA). In order to secure a grant, a local community simply has to identify a local road safety issue, along with a plan to resolve it. The funds that support these grants are taken exclusively from fines of people who attend speed awareness workshops within the county of Northamptonshire. Information on the grants awarded to date are detailed within the link below:

- <https://www.northantspfcc.org.uk/road-safety-community-grants-awarded-final/>



PERFORMANCE REPORT: Protect & Support those who are vulnerable



Q3 23/24 **Fire** Priority Commentary At a Glance:

Further develop the fire service role and expertise in safeguarding:

Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service to meet and exceed the national Fire Standards for Safeguarding

- Safeguarding Standard Gap Analysis completed, one area outstanding to be discussed at Safeguarding Management Group, likely to be led by Enabling Services in relation to DBS checks.

Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service to develop a training needs analysis and implement planning for any gaps which are identified as a result of the analysis.

- Training Needs Analysis completed, NFCC Train the Trainer levels 1-4 safeguarding completed by 2 x DSLs at NFRS. Since then, Level 2 training for supervisors rolled out. Level 3 completed by all relevant staff, provided by NSAB and NCSP. Level 4 training to be delivered by NSAB to relevant DSLs and Strategic lead in Q3 and Q4.

Broaden protection activities into areas such as HMOs: The Fire Service possesses regulatory authority limited to the common and shared areas of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), particularly kitchens. Fire Protection Officers collaborate with landlords, offering informal assistance and guidance to ensure their HMOs adhere to safety standards. This collaboration extends beyond shared areas, enabling officers to assess safety throughout the entire property.

In addition to assessing fire safety within premises, fire crews engage with residents, delivering advice and information on fire safety appliances. By the end of December 2023, a total of 120 comprehensive fire safety audits were conducted in HMOs. Over the past 12 months, 11 enforcement notices were issued concerning this type of property.

In response to a revision of service priorities, alongside continued HMO checks, the service has shifted focus to protection assessments in licensed premises. Detailed activities will be outlined in the upcoming Q4 23/24 performance update.

PERFORMANCE REPORT: Protect & Support those who are vulnerable



Q3 23/24 **Police** Priority Commentary At a Glance:

Deliver robust enforcement & awareness campaigns to reduce the number of knives on our streets: Knife crime levels continue to trend below forecasted levels, with a notable reduction of **11.7%** over the past 12 months compared to the 2021/22 baseline. Although the rate of decrease is slowing, there has been sustained progress in reducing knife-related incidents.

Repeat offenders in knife crime have also decreased by **4.4%** year-on-year, reflecting a sustained reduction trend. Notably, involvement of individuals under 18 in knife crime has significantly decreased throughout the year, with the force witnessing an **18.1%** reduction in knife-related incidents involving under-18 suspects or offenders, and an **8.5%** decrease in child-on-child knife crime.

Given the ongoing priority placed on addressing knife crime, it remains imperative for the Force to target repeat offenders, particularly those under 18. Addressing this demographic has the potential to significantly reduce overall demand and mitigate harm resulting from knife offenses.

Regarding the prosecution of perpetrators, as of December 2023, **15.2%** of knife crimes were positively resolved over a 12-month period, representing a slight improvement of **0.2%** compared to the same period last year. This incremental progress underscores ongoing efforts to hold offenders accountable and ensure justice is served.

Reduce harm from domestic abuse, pursuing perpetrators, supporting victims, and using rehabilitation and prevention programmes to improve positive outcomes for victims: During the third quarter of 23/24, domestic abuse demand returned to expected forecasted levels, with December showing a notable increase in recorded incident demand, aligning with seasonal trends. Despite this, there has been a year-on-year reduction of **2.4%** in overall demand. Arrest rates have seen a **3.2%** increase over the past 12 months. As of December 2023, high-risk arrest rates were at **82.6%**, slightly lower than the previous year (82.8%), yet higher than the average of the past four financial years. Medium-risk arrest rates also show improvement and are on an upward trajectory.

However, the positive outcome rate continues to decline, with the past 12 months yielding a ratio of **11%**, down by 2.1% compared to the previous year. It's worth noting that the Force's baseline target of 13.5% will not be met this financial year. Charge ratios for domestic abuse will be pivotal nationally in driving positive outcomes, necessitating focused attention from the force in the upcoming 12 months, which the Commissioner will closely monitor.

Regarding victim support at the Sunflower Centre, referrals from repeat victims remain stable, with just over **52%** of referrals stemming from repeat victims (compared to 62% in Q2 23/24). All referrals into the Sunflower Service undergo subsequent contact by the team for support, advice, and safeguarding.

PERFORMANCE REPORT: Protect & Support those who are vulnerable



Q3 23/24 **Working Together** Priority Commentary At a Glance:

Continue to invest in support for families to reduce exclusions from school, involvement in crime & to mitigate the impact of DA: The ACE Early Intervention team continues to play a crucial role in addressing domestic conflicts through early intervention strategies. By providing families with family and individual support, including guidance on various issues such as domestic abuse, healthy relationships, parenting, online safety, mental health, substance misuse, parenting challenges, and school exclusions, the team aims to mitigate potential risks and promote well-being.

Since February 2019, nearly **1,700** family referrals have been made to the service, with **74.9%** being accepted and directly supported by the ACE team. The remaining referrals have been appropriately escalated to organisations such as CIRV. Of the accepted referrals, **93% (1,177)** have been successfully closed, with all identified needs addressed through early intervention family support. This underscores the effectiveness of the ACE Early Intervention team in delivering timely and comprehensive support to families in need.

Continue to invest in provision for young people, to prevent them from becoming involved in, or victims of, crime with a specific focus on the impact of knife related crime: The OPFCC Youth service continues its impactful work with individuals, focusing on smaller group settings and one-to-one sessions. The team has established positive working relationships with numerous schools across the county, facilitating effective interventions.

Since September 2020, the team has engaged with **1,105** individuals, providing support through group work and personalised sessions. Approximately **77%** of referrals have been directly supported by the team, while the remaining referrals have been appropriately escalated to organisations such as CIRV. The majority of individuals referred to the team seek assistance with behavioural issues and crime/ASB-related concerns. Of the accepted referrals, an impressive **92.8%** have been successfully closed, with all identified needs effectively addressed through the youth service support interventions and the proactive steps taken by the individuals. This demonstrates the significant positive impact of the OPFCC Youth Service in addressing the needs of young individuals and promoting positive outcomes.



Q3 23/24 **Fire** Priority Commentary At a Glance:

Ensure that enforcement activity in relation to fire safety legislation prioritises public safety: Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service continue to ensure that enforcement activity in relation to fire safety legislation prioritises public safety and enforce the requirements of the fire safety order, acting when suitable and required. The number of notices are monitored within the department and recorded on the Protection Department scorecard are as follows:

- 2022/23 = 29 x Enforcement notices and 21 x Prohibition notices
- 2021/22 = 24 x Enforcement notices and 7 x Prohibition notices

The service will continue to gather evidence in respect to non-compliance, where persons have been placed at a serious and imminent risk to life and when responsible persons have failed to meet their duties and where required, evidence will be presented to legal services for consideration.





Q3 23/24 **Police** Priority Commentary At a Glance:

Increasing positive outcome rates for victims of crime: The positive outcome ratio has remained stable for the year to date, standing at **14.5%** as of December 23. This represents a notable improvement of **0.6%** compared to the previous 12 months. Furthermore, as of the end of Q3 2023/24, the Force maintains a strong national position, currently ranking **10th** nationally (up from 11th in September 2023) and **3rd** within its most similar group (MSG).

In terms of VAWG (Violence Against Women and Girls) conviction rates, the county has consistently demonstrated strong performance over the latest 12-month period (January 23 – December 23). With a conviction rate of **81.3%**, the Force stands as the top performer within its MSG and rank 2nd best nationally. December also marked a significant achievement in domestic abuse conviction rates, with Northamptonshire recording an impressive **88.6%**, surpassing the national average by **12%** and ranking 3rd highest nationally.

Moving forward, the Commissioner will continue to closely monitor and discuss these outcomes at the East Midlands Local Criminal Justice Board monthly meetings.

Monitoring the quality of investigations and work to further improve standards: The Directors Guidance Assessment (DGA) serves as a vital compliance framework for the police, facilitating the transmission of essential information during charging decisions and investigations to support prosecutions. As of November 2023, Northamptonshire Police achieved an outstanding overall DGA rate of **84%**, surpassing the national average of 57.2% and securing the highest position in the country. This consistent performance throughout 2023 significantly contributes to the accuracy and appropriateness of information crucial for charging decisions and prosecutions.

Furthermore, the rate of non-convictions due to victim issues has remained relatively stable over the latest twelve months, consistently below the national average. At **17.8%**, the non-conviction rate due to victim issues ranks as the **11th** lowest nationally, underscoring the Commissioner's commitment to prosecuting offenders while prioritizing victim support.

At the end of December 23, conviction rates continue to exceed the national average in both Magistrates and Crown Courts. Notably, Q3 23/24 reflects positive improvements, with the Crown Court achieving a conviction rate of **79.3%**, surpassing the 2019 baseline of 67.9%. While the Magistrates Court's conviction rate stands at **84.8%**, slightly below the baseline by 1.2%, the Commissioner remains vigilant in monitoring the criminal justice system and addressing any concerns through engagement with the Local Criminal Justice Board.



PERFORMANCE REPORT: Effective Justice

Q3 23/24 **Working Together** Priority Commentary At a Glance:

Working with partners to ensure justice is as swift as possible: Timeliness for charging decisions by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) remains a pressing concern, not only in Northamptonshire but across the region. As of December 2023, only **43.2%** of CPS charging decisions in Northamptonshire were made within the 28-day service level agreement, reflecting a **24%** reduction compared to the 2019 baseline achieved by Northamptonshire and falling significantly below the national average of 60.5%. Additionally, the county is witnessing an increase in hearings per case at the Crown Court, with an average of **4.8** days, slightly outperforming the national average, albeit with a narrowing gap.

In response to these challenges, as chair of the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB), the Commissioner directed his office to collaborate with the Force and local Criminal Justice System (CJS) partners to develop a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for regular presentation at the LCJB. This initiative has resulted in the creation of a comprehensive whole-system approach, encompassing twenty-four measures that provide a holistic view of performance, monitoring inputs such as timeliness, processes, outcomes, and quality across the CJS.

The implementation of this dashboard has proven to be invaluable in assessing the overall performance of the local CJS and ensuring accountability among relevant stakeholders.

Provide effective support for victims and witnesses that meets their needs: During the third quarter of 23/24, referral volumes into VOICE adult services experienced a reduction of **1.8%** compared to the same period last year. Nevertheless, contact times by the VOICE team remain robust, with **97%** of victim referrals being contacted within 3 working days (**53%** within 24 hours).

Conversely, the Sunflower Centre, specialising in support for victims of domestic abuse, witnessed a notable increase of **6.1%** compared to the corresponding period last year. Among these referrals, **44.8%** were new victims, marking a significant surge of **30.6%** compared to the previous year. The OPFCC, in collaboration with the Force, will closely monitor these trends, particularly referral patterns by relationship type, to identify any sustained changes.

As of December 2023, the VOICE Witness Care Team reported an average witness attendance rate of **83%**, aligning with the team's average over a 12-month period. Although Northamptonshire currently trails **3.1%** below the national average, the team continues to excel under considerable pressures, managing a consistently high caseload amidst numerous adjournments to individual cases.

In light of these challenges, the Commissioner remains committed to providing support to VOICE, and the Local Criminal Justice Board serves as a vital platform to highlight the impact of increasing caseloads and adjournments on victims, witnesses, and the VOICE Witness Care Team.

PERFORMANCE REPORT: Modern services that are for the future



Q3 23/24 **Working Together** Priority Commentary At a Glance:

Development of plans to deliver shared systems, networks, and infrastructure: Progress within the Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) department has been good over the past year with new systems and upgrades in hardware.

The Portfolio Tool, now fully introduced, has allowed the prioritisation of project delivery across Northamptonshire police, Northamptonshire fire and Rescue Service and the Northamptonshire Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. It provides a clear view of the pipeline, delivery and tracking of projects ensuring that all three organisations have an auditable log of when projects and their associated benefits will be achieved. Investment in the Microsoft 365 programme will continue to be leveraged and the most recent rollout of new mobile phones now allows officers and staff to work more collaboratively and efficiently.

The Enterprise Architecture function within DDaT has been producing technical roadmaps which allow the OPFCC, Police and Fire to take advantage of newer technologies but also ensuring they are effectively utilising assets and reusing systems where possible. This provides a holistic view of the technology within all three organisations and enables better decision making. As of the 1st January 2023, joint savings have been achieved of £322,650.35, by combining contracts across organisations and securing multiyear deals. These savings include £15,000 in joint audits across Police and Fire Services, £14,292.99 in carrying out commercial processes to explore the market and evaluating suppliers and on average £1440 has been saved on hardware orders ensuring the most competitive pricing is achieved.



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NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL

14 MARCH 2024

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COMMISSIONER FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

FIRE - FINANCIAL UPDATE AS AT PERIOD 9 2024/25 (DECEMBER 2023)

REPORT BY THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

Purpose and Context

1. This report sets out at a high level the forecast financial outturn for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Forecast Summary Revenue Outturn as at 31 March 2024

2. At forecast outturn at Period 9 shows a total projected net underspend of £487k, which is subject to fluctuations should assumptions change in the final quarter.

Budget Heading	Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Variance £'000
Managed by the Chief Fire Officer	29,673	29,817	144
Managed by the PFCC	571	571	0
Funding	(30,244)	(30,875)	(631)
Total Fire Forecast Outturn	0	(487)	(487)

3. The Chief Fire Officer and funding budgets reflect the £640K additional cost for the firefighter pay award and some of the additional funding received from business rates after the budget and precept were set.

Chief Fire Officer's Budgets

4. The net overspend on the Chief Fire Officer's budgets mainly relates to unavoidable and unexpected pressures in engineering/stores and estates/facilities due to inflation, unexpected maintenance pressures and the increase in utilities costs following the end of a fixed price period.
5. Smaller overspends such as the impact on pay awards, pension opt-in rates and IT contracts have been offset by underspends from staff vacancies and additional interest income due to higher than expected interest rates.

Funding

6. Due to the statutory reporting dates for Business Rates and the dates of the final local government settlements, the PFCC is required to propose the Fire precept prior to these areas being finalised by the local authorities. Therefore, estimates are used, and the actual position is supported by the funding reserve held for this purpose. Business rates in 2023/24 are much better than anticipated.
7. Local authorities advice is that this benefit is one-off, and the timing of the future national Business Rates reset which will impact on Business Rate values remains uncertain. Therefore, there is no assurance that there will be permanent or sustainable business rates increases in future years. Given this uncertainty, in keeping with other authorities, NCFRA hold a funding reserve which is used to smooth the potentially volatile impact of Business Rates over the Medium Term Financial Plan.
8. The majority of the Fire budget is delegated to the Chief Fire Officer. The conditions of this allocation are set out in a formal strategic outcomes letter from the PFCC to the Chief Fire Officer each year. This letter sets out a number of requirements and expectations, including that the Chief Fire Officer will manage the resources within their delegated budget and that any overspends would be discussed with the PFCC.
9. If the Chief Fire Officer is unable to manage within the funding envelope options available include but are not limited to:
 - a. Unavoidable or unexpected costs could be met by additional funding if available.
 - b. Efficiencies could be sought.
 - c. Funding from reserves could be provided in extenuating circumstances and/or any overspend could be taken from the following year's budget allocation.

10. As the inflationary pressures on the Chief Fire Officers budget are unavoidable, the PFCC has advised that for this year, the additional funding from business rates will be used to meet these costs if they cannot be contained within the original envelope.
11. Whilst Northamptonshire has established a reasonable level of reserves following the transfer of governance, they are not excessive and are still one of the lowest reserves nationally. Therefore, it is welcome that the current levels can be maintained to meet any future unforeseen eventualities.
12. The PFCC scrutinises the budget monitoring throughout the year and receives regular updates at the Accountability Board.
13. The PFCC also receives an annual update on the internal control framework which forms the head of internal audit's annual audit opinion and is set out within the annual governance statement in the annual statement of accounts.
14. The PFCC takes all opportunities to secure additional funding for Northamptonshire. Since January 2019, over £5m has been received for additional Fire funding.

Financial Outlook

15. Work has already started on putting in place the approved 2024/25 budget investments made possible by the funding settlement and precept increase.
16. The Medium Term Financial Plan is under constant review and will be updated if more information is received around future funding, or if there is reason to update forecast assumptions. In this regard, a close eye is kept on economic updates and regular benchmarking takes place with the regional and national picture.

Recommendation

17. That the Police, Fire and Crime Panel considers the report.

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Appendix A - Northamptonshire Fire – Forecast Outturn as at 31st December 2023 (P9)

Budget Heading	Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Variance £'000
Response Wholetime	15,112	15,186	74
Response Retained	2,196	2,105	(91)
Response Control	922	876	(46)
Business Planning & Performance	215	104	(111)
Joint Operations Team	104	104	0
Commercial Training	0	0	0
Community Prevention	600	619	19
Community Protection	623	639	16
Corporate Budgets	91	91	0
Engineering Services & Stores	1,137	1,224	87
Digital, Data and Technology	1,163	1,222	59
Occupational Health & Wellbeing	159	169	10
Workforce Planning	341	246	(95)
Wellbeing	0	0	0
Estates & Facilities	1,373	1,762	389
Securing Water Supplies	88	56	(32)
Strategic Leadership Team	1,141	1,046	(95)
Training	500	521	21
Corporate Finance	1,254	1,243	(11)
Police and Fire Shared Support Teams	2,648	2,648	0
Service Information Team	129	178	49
Investment Interest	(123)	(222)	(99)
Total Chief Fire Officer Managed Budgets	29,673	29,817	144
Inflation Contingency held by the PFCC	120	120	0
Capital Financing Costs	444	444	0
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	7	7	0
Total PFCC Managed Budgets	571	571	0
Total Expenditure	30,244	30,388	144
Funding	(30,244)	(30,875)	(631)
Total Fire Forecast	0	(487)	(487)

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NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL

14 MARCH 2024

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

POLICE - FINANCIAL UPDATE AS AT PERIOD 9 2023/24 (DECEMBER 2023)

REPORT BY THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

Purpose and Context

1. This report sets out at a high level the forecast financial outturn for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Forecast Summary Revenue Outturn as at 31 March 2024

2. At forecast outturn at period 9 shows a total projected net underspend of £662k, which is subject to fluctuations should assumptions change in the final quarter.
3. This is made up of a projected Force underspend of £571k and a £118k underspend in the budgets managed by the PFCC, offset by transfers from reserves and funding.
4. The majority of the Policing budget is comprised of the Force budget which the PFCC consents to the Chief Constable annually. The conditions of this allocation are set out in a formal strategic outcomes letter from the PFCC to the Chief Constable each year. This letter sets out a number of requirements and expectations, including that the Chief Constable will manage the resources within his delegated budget and that any overspends would be discussed with the PFCC at an early stage.
5. The forecast is attached in detail as an Appendix and is summarised below:

Budget Heading	Budget	Outturn	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Budgets Consented to the Chief Constable	160,684	160,113	(571)
Force Investments and Savings	446	446	0
	161,130	160,559	(571)
<u>Managed by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner</u>			
- PFCC Staff and Office Costs	1,276	1,311	35
- Commissioning and Delivery Services	6,678	6,440	(238)
- Victims and Witnesses Grants and Other Income	(2,074)	(1,989)	85
	5,880	5,762	(118)
Capital Financing Costs	2,798	2,798	0
Budgeted Transfers to/(from) Reserves	(1,561)	(1,511)	50
Funding		(23)	(23)
Total Policing Forecast	168,247	167,585	(662)

Chief Constable Budgets

6. Pressures on the Chief Constable's budget have mainly arisen from inflation and the impact of the re-opened staff pay award negotiations. However, tight financial management and appropriate contingency levels have enabled these pressures to be contained where possible or one-off savings identified.
7. Key highlights are as follows:
 - a. There is forecast to be a small underspend on the Police Pay budget. Expenditure on officers is subject to variations in recruitment and attrition levels throughout the year, along with any changes to the number of officers seconded to regional units. Thus, it is subject to change and forecasts updated each period to reflect the most up-to-date position.
 - b. Additional one-off uplift funding is due to be provided to forces whose police officer recruitment is above the recruitment profile – this includes Northamptonshire. Although this is not yet built into the forecast, it is expected to equate to circa £1.2m. It is planned that any underspends in police pay will be earmarked in reserves specifically to fund officer strength in the future.

- c. As in previous years, given the timing of PCSO intakes, the PFCC has agreed with the Chief Constable that any PCSO underspends in the year will be transferred to reserves in order that funding can be ring-fenced for neighbourhoods. As highlighted within the appendix, it is currently anticipated that £399k will be transferred to reserves. This transfer to reserves has already been accounted for in the forecast.
 - d. Additional recruitment is underway in the Force Control Room following approval of additional budget in 2024/25. The small overspend is the result of job evaluation of call handler roles that ensures their pay fairly reflects their responsibilities, improving morale and staff retention.
8. The most significant variance in the Chief Constable's budget envelope relates to an underspend as a result of additional national funding provided for police cell availability. This is one off funding and whilst it is possible that this will reoccur, it is expected to be on a smaller scale.
 9. On behalf of Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire, the Joint Commercial and Property Team maintain and service commercial frameworks which have been established to provide value-for-money procurement for public sector organisations to use and which also generates some income for Northamptonshire.
 10. It is predicted that almost £2m will have been generated in income from these frameworks by 31st March 2024. This includes around £1m retained in the county to help support the budget in providing essential police and fire services for local Northamptonshire residents.
 11. Recent frameworks established are the new Estates and Facilities Frameworks set up to cover pre-planned and reactive property maintenance. These frameworks are open to policing and non-policing organisations across the local areas of Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire, Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire. Whilst they meet our own procurement needs, they support local businesses, and it is anticipated that additional framework income for Northamptonshire will also be generated.

PFCC Office and Delivery Budgets

12. The PFCC budgets are currently envisaged to underspend by £118k during the year, mainly due to staff vacancies in Early Intervention and Youth.

13. Key headlines are:
- a. Pressures in the PFCC Staffing and Complaints budgets mainly relate to the higher than anticipated pay award. Underspends in the office non-pay budgets such as travel, subsistence and printing have offset most of these costs.
 - b. The Police, Fire and Crime Plan Delivery Fund includes the work the PFCC commissioned on community engagement and consultation, with a particular focus on women's views to get a broader understanding of what would make them feel safer in Northamptonshire.
 - c. The OPFCC delivery budgets are underspent in the area of Early Intervention and Youth Provision due to staff vacancies which are taking longer to fill than originally anticipated.
 - d. Victims and Witnesses income due from MOJ is slightly lower than budget as the grant allocation was not confirmed until after the budget was set.
 - e. An underspend is expected in Reducing Reoffending as costs in Integrated Offender Management are lower than originally envisaged.
14. The PFCC scrutinises the budget monitoring regularly throughout the year and receives regular detailed updates on Force performance at the Accountability Board.
15. The PFCC also receives an annual update on the internal control framework which forms the head of internal audit's annual audit opinion and is set out within the annual governance statement in the annual statement of accounts.
16. The PFCC takes all opportunities to secure additional funding for Northamptonshire. Since his term in office, the PFCC has managed to secure over £18m for additional funding for Policing.

Financial Outlook

17. Work has already started on putting in place the approved 2024/25 budget investments made possible by the funding settlement and precept increase.
18. The Medium Term Financial Plan is under constant review and will be updated if more information is received around future funding, or if there is reason to update forecast

assumptions. In this regard, a close eye is kept on economic updates and regular benchmarking takes place with the regional and national picture.

Recommendation

19. That the Police, Fire and Crime Panel considers the report.

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Appendix A – Northamptonshire Police – Forecast Outturn as at 31st December 2023 (P9)

Budget Heading	Budget £'000	Outturn £'000	Variance £'000
<u>Budgets Managed by the Chief Constable</u>			
Non-Devolved Budgets			
Police Pay and Oncosts	83,236	82,925	(311)
Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)*	3,627	3,227	(399)
Other Pensions Costs	1,151	1,320	169
	88,014	87,472	(541)
*Anticipated PCSO Underspend transferred to neighbourhood reserve		399	399
	88,014	87,872	(142)
Devolved Budgets			
Devolved Operational Budgets	21,337	20,811	(527)
Control Room	7,441	7,600	159
Enabling Departments	30,953	30,980	27
Corporate Services	2,670	2,571	(99)
Central Budgets	2,844	2,803	(42)
Collaboration Units	7,424	7,476	51
	72,670	72,241	(429)
Budgets consented to the Chief Constable			
Investment and Savings	446	446	0
Total Budgets Managed by the Chief Constable	161,130	160,559	(571)
<u>Budgets Managed by the PFCC</u>			
PFCC Office Budget			
Staff and Office Costs	1,475	1,510	35
Contribution to Governance Costs from Fire	(199)	(199)	0
	1,276	1,311	35
Commissioning and Delivery Budgets			
Victims and Witnesses Services			
- Costs	2,724	2,675	(49)
- MoJ Grants and transfers from reserves	(1,999)	(1,914)	85
	725	761	36
Commissioning & Grants	100	100	0
Proceeds of Crime and Property Act funding to support grants	(75)	(75)	0
Customer Services - Complaints	181	185	4
Delivery, Accountability and Initiatives	341	450	109
Domestic and Sexual Abuse Provision	138	135	(3)
Early Intervention & EI DA support	2,373	2,172	(201)
Joint Communications Team with Fire (net)	105	98	(7)
Reducing Reoffending	716	625	(91)
	4,604	4,451	(153)
Total Budgets Managed by the PFCC	5,880	5,762	(118)
Capital Financing Costs	2,798	2,798	0
Budgeted Transfers to/(from) Reserves	(1,561)	(1,511)	50
Funding		(23)	(23)
Total Policing Forecast	168,247	167,585	(662)

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NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

14 MARCH 2024

Report Title	Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel Work Programme
Report Author	James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager, West Northamptonshire Council James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk

Contributors/Checkers/Approvers		
West S151 (for West and joint papers)	Martin Henry	28/02/2024

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Outline Work Programme

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The report is intended to enable the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel to review overall progress with the development and delivery of its 2023/24 work programme and to identify any matters that it wishes to highlight for potential inclusion in the 2024/25 work programme.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The report invites the Panel to review the latest version of its outline work programme for 2023/24 and to endorse this subject to any changes that the Panel considers to be necessary.
- 2.2. The report also invites the Panel to identify any matters that it wishes to highlight for potential inclusion in the outline work programme that will be agreed by the Panel at the start of 2024/25.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel:
- a) Endorses the latest version of its outline work programme for 2023/24, subject to any changes that the Panel considers to be necessary.
 - b) Identifies any matters that it wishes to highlight for potential inclusion in the outline work programme for 2024/25.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The recommendations are intended to support the effective operation of the Panel and the delivery of its statutory responsibilities during 2023/24 and into 2024/25.

5. Report Background

- 5.1 The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Policing and Crime Act 2017 and supporting legislation give various specific responsibilities to the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel (“the Panel”). These are principally as follows:
- Scrutinising and reporting on the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC)’s proposed Police and Fire and Rescue precepts
 - Scrutinising and reporting on the PFCC’s Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan
 - Scrutinising and reporting on the PFCC’s Annual Report on the delivery of Police and Crime Plan objectives and on the annual Fire and Rescue Statement reporting compliance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework
 - Scrutinising and reporting on proposed appointments by the PFCC to certain positions (: Deputy PFCC; Chief Executive; Chief Finance Officer; Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police; and Chief Fire Officer of Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service)
 - Dealing with complaints from members of the public about the conduct of the PFCC.
- 5.2 In addition, the legislation referred to in paragraph 5.1 above gives the Panel the general responsibility to review and scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, by the PFCC in connection with the discharge of the PFCC’s functions and to make reports or recommendations to the PFCC with respect to these matters. The Panel is required to carry out its role with a view to supporting the PFCC in effectively exercising the PFCC’s functions.
- 5.3 It is standard practice for the Panel to set an annual work programme to provide a framework within which it carries out its functions and the practical tasks these involve. The work programme is made up of a combination of statutory and discretionary scrutiny work; matters relating to the operation of the Panel; and any supporting activities such as briefings or training. The work programme covers a rolling 12-month period. The work programme is considered at the first Panel meeting in the municipal year. It is then kept under regular review by the Panel and modified or updated as necessary, with a view to ensuring that it is focussed on the aim of using available capacity to best effect.

5.4 It should be noted that the work programme does not represent the sum total of activity that the Panel may carry out during that period. The work programme focusses on the regular meetings of the Panel and on the functions that it must carry out at set points during the year, such as scrutiny of the PFCC's proposed precepts and Annual Report. The Panel carries out other functions when the need to do so arises, which must then be added to the planned work programme. Scrutiny of a proposed senior appointment by the PFCC is a case in point as the need for the Panel to do this may arise at any time, it is one of the Panel's statutory functions, and it requires the Panel to hold a meeting to carry out a confirmation hearing with the candidate in order to make a recommendation on the proposed appointment.

6. Issues and Choices

6.1 The Panel considered its outline work programme at its meeting on 15 June 2023 and identified items of business that it wished to consider during the year ahead alongside its mandatory tasks. The resulting outline work programme is included with this report (at Appendix A).

6.2 The work programme should not be seen as fixed and it is open to the Panel to review and modify it at any time as the municipal year progresses. The work programme can be informed by input from a range of sources, including suggestions from individual Panel members and from the PFCC. The Panel should consider suggested business from all sources on its merits, with a view to maintaining a work programme that reflects the Panel's remit, has the support of Panel members, is realistically deliverable within available resources and has the potential to produce the most worthwhile outcomes.

6.3 As this is the final Panel meeting in the current municipal year there is also an opportunity for the Panel to identify any matters that it wishes to highlight for potential inclusion in the outline work programme for 2024/25. In practice, this new work programme may largely represent a continuation of its predecessor: the Panel will have the same core functions; there is likely to be some continuity in Panel membership between 2023/24 and 2024/25; and the Panel already operates a rolling 12-month work programme. However, the Panel that is appointed for 2024/25 should set its own work programme. A draft outline work programme will be presented to the first Panel meeting in 2024/25 as a starting point for consideration. This draft outline work programme can include any matters that may be highlighted by the current Panel.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources and Financial

7.1.1 There are no specific resources or financial implications associated with this report. The normal operation of the Panel is supported by grant funding that the Panel's host authority can claim from the Home Office for the purpose of maintaining a panel for the Northamptonshire Police area.

7.2 Legal

7.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposal.

7.3 Risk

7.3.1 The Panel should ensure that its work programme enables it to carry out its statutory role and functions effectively. Factors that might represent a risk to this could include setting a work programme that did not reflect the Panel's statutory functions; that was unfocussed or included too much business to be realistically deliverable; or that was fixed at the start of the year and did not allow the flexibility to respond to issues that might subsequently arise. These risks should be mitigated by the Panel reviewing its work programme and any associated matters at each of its normal meetings during the municipal year. This will enable the Panel to consider any changes to existing arrangements that may seem necessary, with a view to ensuring that the work programme and the specific activities contained within it remain deliverable within the Panel's overall capacity and the resources available to support it.

8. Background Papers

Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

Policing and Crime Act 2017

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel Rules of Procedure

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel – Outline Work Programme

MEETING DATE	STATUTORY BUSINESS	DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS	BUSINESS RELATING TO PANEL OPERATION	OTHER BUSINESS
14 March 2024		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PFCC’s Delivery update - PFCC’s Finance updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work programme - Complaints and conduct matters update 	
13 June 2024		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction to the PFCC elected in May 2024 and their priorities - Draft report from task and finish scrutiny of support for early intervention activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointment of Panel Chair and Deputy Chair - Appointment of independent co-opted members - Work programme - Appointment of Complaints Sub Committee members 	
5 September 2024		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint Independent Audit Committee annual report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work programme - Complaints and conduct matters update 	
5 December 2024			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work programme 	
5 February 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PFCC’s proposed Police precept for 2025/26 - PFCC’s proposed Fire and Rescue precept for 2025/26 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work programme - 2024/25 meeting dates 	

19 February 2025 (Reserve meeting)	- PFCC's revised Police precept for 2025/26 [if required] and/or - PFCC's revised Fire and Rescue precept for 2025/26 [if required]		-	
13 March 2025			- Work programme - Complaints and conduct matters update	

Additional topics not yet scheduled

The Panel agreed at previous meetings that its work programme should include reports from the PFCC on the following matters:

Topics identified at the Panel meeting on 15 June 2023

- (A) Action plans developed to address areas for improvement in service delivery by Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service as identified in the HMICFRS 2021/22 inspection.
- (B) The outcomes of the IPSOS Mori public consultation exercise on community safety in Northamptonshire carried out in 2022/23
- (C) The latest version of the PFCC's full Estates Strategy
- (D) The local impact of implementing the Serious Violence Duty under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022
- (E) The local impact of delays in the Criminal Justice System

The Panel also agreed at its meeting on 30 November to review on a regular basis the progress with actions taken in response to its recommendations resulting from scrutiny of decisions by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner connected with the appointment of an interim Chief Fire Officer.

Scrutiny of support for early intervention activity

The Panel agreed in 2022/23 to carry out a piece of task-and-finish scrutiny work on early intervention activity with young people at risk of becoming involved in criminal activity in Northamptonshire. A working group was appointed for this purpose and met three times during the first half of 2023. The Panel agreed at its meeting on 15 June 2023 that the work should be progressed in order to produce a report back to the Panel as soon as possible. The Panel subsequently needed to give its overriding attention to other matters during the second half of 2023, which meant that the scrutiny work on early intervention was in abeyance during this period. The Panel agreed at its meeting on 30 November 2023 that this work should be resumed. An updated version of the terms of reference was agreed by the Panel at its meeting on 6 February 2024, which involved the work being concluded in order to report back to the Panel at its first meeting in 2024/25.

Briefings / Training (open to all Panel members)

(A) Briefing sessions with the Chief Constable and with the Chief Fire Officer

The Panel generally includes in its work programme briefing sessions, held at least annually, with the Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police and the Chief Fire Officer of Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service. These sessions are intended to give an overview of the operating environment for the two organisations and their key priorities and challenges, to help to inform the Panel in carrying out its role of scrutinising and supporting the PFCC. The Panel last met with both chiefs on 27 May 2022 and again with the Chief Constable on 1 December 2022. The Panel agreed at its meeting on 15 June 2023 to continue this approach. The ability to organise a briefing session has since been affected by issues relating to each position. The Panel resolved again at its meeting on 6 February 2024 that these briefings sessions should be sought.

(B) A briefing session on action being taken in Northamptonshire to address domestic violence and the outcomes produced

The Panel agreed at its meeting 30 November 2023 to request that a briefing session on this topic be organised.

(C) Training for Panel members

The Panel discussed the potential to organise more training for Panel members at its meeting on 15 June 2023. A training session on effective scrutiny by Police, Fire and Crime panels was held on 22 November 2023.

Further Information

(A) Statutory Business

PFCC's Annual Report and Fire and Rescue Statement – The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) is required to produce an Annual Report on the exercise of the PFCC's police and crime functions during the previous financial year and the progress made in meeting objectives set out in the PFCC's Police and Crime Plan. The PFCC is also required to publish an annual statement of assurance of compliance with the priorities set out in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. The Panel must review and report on both the Annual Report and Fire and Rescue Statement as soon as practicable after they are received.

PFCC's proposed Police and Fire and Rescue precepts – The PFCC's proposed precepts must be reviewed and reported on by the Panel before they can be issued. The Panel has the power to veto a proposed precept, in which case the PFCC is required to produce a revised proposal that must also be reviewed by the Panel at the reserve meeting included in the outline work programme (if the Panel does not veto either of the proposed precepts the reserve meeting will not be held). The steps involved in this process must take place by specific deadlines set in legislation.

(B) Discretionary Business

PFCC's Delivery Update – This is a regular report setting out actions by the PFCC supporting progress towards the delivery of the strategic outcomes set out in his Police, Fire and Crime Plan. The Delivery Update also includes contextual information about Northamptonshire Police and Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service performance.

PFCC's Finance Updates – These are two regular reports setting out the latest in-year position for the budgets for policing and the Office of the PFCC and for the budget for the Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority.

Joint Independent Audit Committee Annual Report – The Joint Independent Audit Committee (JIAC) is responsible for providing independent assurance of the corporate governance, risk management and financial control arrangements operated by the PFCC and the Chief Constable. The JIAC's Annual Report is customarily presented by its Chair to the Panel, to reflect the complementary roles of the two bodies.

(C) Business relating to Panel operation

Complaints and conduct matters update – The Panel has adopted specific arrangements to carry out its responsibilities for dealing with complaints and conduct matters relating to the PFCC. These include the provision by the host authority Monitoring Officer of a half-yearly monitoring report about all matters dealt with in the preceding period. In this way the Panel is able to monitor the operation of the arrangements it has made to deliver this aspect of its statutory responsibilities.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

14 MARCH 2024

Report Title	Complaints and Conduct Matters Update
Report Author	James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager, West Northamptonshire Council James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk

Contributors/Checkers/Approvers		
West S151 (for West and joint papers)	Martin Henry	28/02/2024

List of Appendices

None

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The report is intended to provide the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel with an update on complaints and conduct matters relating to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire, in accordance with arrangements agreed by the Panel.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The Panel is advised that during the period December 2023 – February 2024 no new non-criminal complaints relating to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner were recorded. There are no other outstanding complaints or conduct matters at the time of writing this report.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel notes the update.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The recommendation is intended to assist the Panel to oversee the operation of arrangements it has adopted to deliver its statutory responsibilities concerning complaints and conduct matters relating to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire.

5. Report Background

- 5.1 The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012 set out certain responsibilities on Police and Crime Panels for dealing with complaints against Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioners (DPCCs) and conduct matters. The Regulations define these terms as follows:
- “Complaint”: means a complaint about the conduct of the PCC or DPCC.
 - “Conduct”: includes acts, omissions, statements and decisions (whether actual, alleged or inferred).
 - “Serious Complaint”: means a complaint made about conduct which constitutes or involves or appears to constitute or involve a criminal offence.
 - “Conduct Matter”: means a case where there is an indication that the PCC or DPCC may have committed a criminal offence (for example, where an indication comes to light through media reporting).
- 5.2 In summary, the Regulations require the Panel to make suitable arrangements for:
- Receiving and recording complaints and conduct matters.
 - Initial sorting of complaints and conduct matters to determine whether they appear to have a criminal element that requires referral to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), which is the body responsible for their investigation.
 - Informal Resolution of complaints that do not have a criminal element. Informal Resolution is intended to represent a locally-agreed process for resolving a complaint, involving engagement with the complainant and the person complained against. It is not an investigation of the complaint: the Panel is prohibited from taking any action intended to gather information about a complaint other than inviting the comments of the complainant and the person complained against.
- 5.3 The Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel has previously agreed arrangements for delivering its statutory responsibilities relating to complaints and conduct matters. The main elements of these arrangements are:
- Delegation to the Monitoring Officer of the host authority of the Panel’s responsibilities for receiving, recording and referring complaints and conduct matters.
 - Establishment of a Complaints Sub Committee with delegated responsibility for the Informal Resolution of non-criminal complaints, according to an agreed Informal Resolution Protocol.
 - Provision by the Monitoring Officer of a half-yearly monitoring report to the Panel about all complaints and conduct matters dealt with in the preceding period, the actions taken (including any obligations to act, or refrain from acting, that have arisen under the Regulations but have not yet been complied with or have been contravened) and the outcome of the process.

6. Issues and Choices

- 6.1 The last update report was presented to the Panel at its meeting on 30 November 2023, reporting the position for April – November 2023. This update report covers the period December 2023 – February 2024. This is clearly a shorter reporting period than normal. The report has been brought to the current meeting to enable the normal half-yearly reporting schedule to be re-established for 2024/25, with future update reports to be presented to the Panel meetings on 5 September 2024 and 13 March 2025.
- 6.2 As noted in paragraph 2.1 above, no new non-criminal complaints relating to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner were recorded during the period covered by this update report. There are no other outstanding complaints or conduct matters at the time of writing this report.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources and Financial

- 7.1.1 There are no resource or financial implications arising from the proposal.

7.2 Legal

- 7.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposal.

7.3 Risk

- 7.3.1 It is important that the Panel deals with complaints and conduct matters in accordance with statutory requirements and the arrangements that that Panel has adopted to deliver its specific responsibilities. In this context it should be recognised that the complaints and conduct matters update is not presented to the Panel with a view to it discussing matters relating to individual complaints, which would be inappropriate. Rather, the update provides the Panel with an overview of complaints dealt with during the preceding period in order to support the Panel's role of monitoring the operation and effectiveness of the arrangements that it has adopted.

8. Background Papers

Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

The Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012

Police and Crime Panel Regulations: Non-Criminal Complaints and Misconduct – Home Office Guidance

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel Rules of Procedure

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