

# Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

A meeting of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel will be held in the Council Chamber, The Guildhall, St Giles Street, Northampton NN1 1DE on Thursday 17 June 2021 at 1.00 pm.

## Agenda

1.	<b>Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members</b>
2.	<b>Appointment of the Panel Chair for 2021/22</b>
3.	<b>Appointment of the Panel Deputy Chair for 2021/22</b>
4.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> 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.
5.	<b>Chair's Announcements</b>
6.	<b>Minutes</b> (Pages 5 - 22) To confirm the minutes of the Panel meeting held on 24 <sup>th</sup> March 2021.
<b>SCRUTINY OF THE POLICE, FIRE &amp; CRIME COMMISSIONER</b>	
7.	<b>Introduction to the Police, Fire &amp; Crime Commissioner's priorities and challenges [verbal item]</b>
8.	<b>Police, Fire &amp; Crime Commissioner's Annual Report for 2020/21</b>
a)	<b>Police, Fire &amp; Crime Panel statutory responsibilities</b> (Pages 23 - 26)
b)	<b>Annual Report</b> (Pages 27 - 50)

<b>9.</b>	<b>Police, Fire &amp; Crime Commissioner's Fire &amp; Rescue Statement for 2020/21</b>
<b>a)</b>	<b>Police, Fire &amp; Crime Panel statutory responsibilities</b> (Pages 51 - 54)
<b>b)</b>	<b>Fire &amp; Rescue Statement</b> (Pages 55 - 62)
<b>PANEL OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<b>10.</b>	<b>Police, Fire &amp; Crime Panel Work Programme 2021/22 and operating arrangements</b> (Pages 63 - 72)
<b>11.</b>	<b>Appointments to the Police, Fire &amp; Crime Panel Complaints Sub Committee for 2021/22</b> (Pages 73 - 80)
<b>12.</b>	<b>Urgent Business</b> The Chair to advise whether they have agreed to any items of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.

Catherine Whitehead  
Proper Officer  
9 June 2021

**Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel Members:**

Councillor Jon-Paul Carr  
Councillor Zoe McGhee  
Councillor Russell Roberts  
Councillor Anna King  
Councillor David Smith  
Mr Robert Mehaffy  
Miss Pauline Woodhouse

Councillor Dorothy Maxwell  
Councillor Gill Mercer  
Councillor Andre Gonzalez De Savage  
Councillor Ken Pritchard  
Councillor Winston Strachan  
Mrs Anita Shields

## **Information about this Agenda**

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence and the appointment of substitute Members should be notified to [democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk) prior to the start of the meeting.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to declare interests at item 4 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**

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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:

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**Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2021**  
**Remote Meeting via Zoom**  
**(Meeting held in public)**

PRESENT:-

Councillor Gill Mercer	East Northamptonshire Council (Chair)
Councillor Richard Auger	Daventry District Council
Councillor Andre Gonzalez De Savage	Northamptonshire County Council
Councillor Martin Griffiths	Borough Council of Wellingborough [Items 15/21 to 16/21]
Councillor Ian Jelley	Kettering Borough Council [to Item 19/21]
Mr Robert Mehaffy	Independent Co-opted Member
Councillor Ken Pritchard	South Northamptonshire Council [from Item 17/21]
Mrs Anita Shields	Independent Co-opted Member
Miss Pauline Woodhouse	Independent Co-opted Member

Also in attendance for all or part of the meeting

Stephen Mold	Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (PFCC)
James Edmunds	Democratic Services Assistant Manager, Northamptonshire County Council
Emily Evans	Complaints & Customer Service Manager, Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (OPFCC)
Paul Fell	Director for Delivery, Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
Helen King	Chief Finance Officer, Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
Nicci Marzec	Director for Early Intervention, Head of Paid Service and Monitoring Officer, Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
Sophia Narthey	Deputy Monitoring Officer, Northamptonshire County Council

The meeting commenced at 1.00pm

10/21 Apologies for non-attendance

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Councillors Caine (Corby Borough Council), Duffy and King (Northampton Borough Council) and Strachan (Northamptonshire County Council). Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Griffiths (Borough Council of Wellingborough).

11/21 Notification of requests from members of the public to address the meeting

None received.

12/21 Declaration of Members' Interests

None declared.

### 13/21 Chair's Announcements

The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting and made the following points:

- The Home Secretary had issued a statement on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021 regarding the outcomes of the first part of the review of Police & Crime Commissioners started in 2020. Details had been circulated to Panel members. The outcomes included the development of a good governance training package for panels in conjunction with the Local Government Association; requiring all commissioners to appoint a deputy in future; and consulting on making the PFCC model the standard approach.
- The Chair had attended a virtual meeting of the East Midlands Police & Crime Panels Network on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021. The meeting had included discussion on a range of issues including the scope for panels to engage with other bodies such as the Police Federation and Crimestoppers; oversight of panel work programmes; and the latest phase of the Strategic Review of Policing in England and Wales.
- The current meeting had a full agenda and members were encouraged to make their contributions as focussed as possible.
- This was the final Panel meeting ahead of local authority and PFCC elections on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The Chair thanked members for their work during the past year and offered best wishes for the future.

### 14/21 Minutes of the Police, Fire & Crime Panel meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021

**RESOLVED that: the minutes of the Police, Fire & Crime Panel meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 be agreed.**

### 15/21 Responding to COVID-19 and the impact on policing and community safety in Northamptonshire

The PFCC introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) providing an update on the response to COVID-19 in the county, highlighting the following points:

- There was now a positive outlook but it was essential to come out of lockdown in a way that did not put at risk the efforts made so far.
- The COVID-19 pandemic was an unprecedented situation but it had demonstrated the ability of the local emergency services to respond to challenges. All were proud of the work that had been done and the positive and pragmatic approach taken.
- The outcomes of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)'s inspection of how well Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service (NFRS) had responded to the pandemic showed the benefits produced by joint working between NFRS and Northamptonshire Police.
- Additional financial support received from the government during the pandemic had been vital. The Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (OPFCC) and the two services had worked very hard to secure resources required.
- He thanked all involved in responding to the pandemic for their hard work. Lessons would be learnt where necessary and best practice would be implemented. The strength that resulted from organisations working together would not be forgotten.

The Panel considered the report and members made the following points during the course of discussion:

- The benefits of joint working between emergency services were endorsed and it was questioned whether any permanent changes in this respect were likely to result from recent experience.
- The conclusions of the HMICFRS inspection were impressive, although it was important that the future focus areas it identified were also addressed.
- A large number of laptops had been issued to force personnel during the pandemic and it was questioned how these would be used in future.
- Reassurance was sought as to how far the PFCC and service leaders were now planning for changes in demand and activity that may result from easing lockdown.
- Further information was sought about action being taken to improve engagement with particular local communities about lockdown regulations and the enforcement of these.
- It was questioned what planning had been done locally for a scenario in which infection rates got out of control again and a further lockdown proved necessary. Such a situation could lead to significant public frustration, which might be exploited by disruptive groups.
- The provision of appropriate guidance and information for members of the public, particularly young people who had received most Fixed Penalty Notices for breaching lockdown regulations, would now be important to counteract the idea that the pandemic was over.

The PFCC made the following additional points during the course of discussion:

- A white paper was due to be produced on the future role of Police & Crime commissioners, which would move towards making Police, Fire & Crime commissioners a standard model. This would reflect joint working during the pandemic.
- He was participating in the current meeting from the enabling services hub at Darby House, Wellingborough. This facility was an example of Northamptonshire laying foundations now that would pay off in future.
- Consolidating the force and NFRS control rooms would help to support a better response to future requirements arising, for example, from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and the Kerslake Review of the Manchester Arena attack.
- Work carried out by the OPFCC using Safer Streets funding would not have been possible without related activities by the force and NFRS such as home safety checks.
- Some of the future focus areas identified by HMICFRS were already being addressed: for example, appointing a joint head of IT services would help to improve services.
- It had been planned to expand the provision of laptops to the force as part of the roll out of MS 365. This had been accelerated in response to the pandemic, which had also produced a financial benefit as laptops had been purchased at a time when suppliers were keen to sell stock. It was likely that a more blended approach to work would continue after the pandemic.
- Significant planning was taking place through the Local Resilience Forum regarding the easing of lockdown, including contingency planning to take into account potential issues such as a further wave of COVID-19 or economic problems.
- Lateral flow testing would help to support the health of personnel who had not yet been vaccinated.

- He and the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer wanted their respective services to reflect the communities they served. Significant recent recruitment, particularly to the force, would help to enhance communication and engagement with different groups within local communities.
- Action was being taken to understand the different implications of the pandemic: for example, he had recently met with Somali community leaders to discuss the risk that cases of female genital mutilation could increase as lockdown was eased. Considerable work was being done to communicate with different community groups on matters relating to the pandemic.
- He was confident in the level of planning for future contingencies being done in Northamptonshire, which had generally been good. The recent situation in Germany regarding the impact of introducing a further lockdown was an example to all. It was important that easing lockdown measures did not lead to complacency.
- The force had been complemented by HMICRS for seeking to engage with people breaking lockdown regulations before moving to enforcement action. However, the force had also used its enforcement powers appropriately to deal with cases involving repeated or significant breaches.
- Personal responsibility was part of the response to the pandemic. People needed to be informed about risks, including correcting any misperceptions. However, once this had been done there was a role for enforcement action. He believed that the force had achieved the right balance between engagement and enforcement, which was not the case in some other areas.

[Councillor Griffiths entered the meeting during the preceding discussion].

The Chair emphasised that the pandemic had represented an unprecedented situation and all were aware of the massive challenges that it had created, even now when the outlook was improving. Members commended the efforts of those involved in the response to it.

**RESOLVED that: the Panel records its thanks to Northamptonshire Police and Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service personnel for their work in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

16/21 Operation of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner's responsibilities relating to the police complaints system

The PFCC introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated), highlighting the following points:

- The Policing & Crime Act 2017 had made significant changes to the operation of the police complaints system, including giving Police & Crime commissioners a greater role.
- He had sought to take this opportunity as the expanded role gave insight into the force's performance and into public concerns, which supported his role of holding the Chief Constable to account. Responding effectively to complaints also helped to support public confidence.
- The OPFCC had established a Complaints & Customer Service Team (CCST) to manage the complaints function.

The OPFCC Complaints & Customer Service Manager then presented an overview of the operation of the PFCC's responsibilities relating to complaints, making the following points:

- The 2017 Act gave Police & Crime commissioners three different models for carrying out the complaints function. The PFCC had chosen to adopt model two, which involved responsibility for dealing with reviews of non-serious complaints; for receiving and recording complaints; and for carrying out informal resolution or service recovery of non-serious complaints.
- The 2017 Act also updated the definition of a complaint to include any expression of dissatisfaction with a police force.
- The CCST consisted of the Manager and two full time equivalent caseworkers.
- When a complaint was received it was assessed by the CCST to identify if it involved potential misconduct. If this was not the case the complaint was deemed suitable for service recovery by the CCST. The CCST had access to police systems and body worn video footage. The outcomes of service recovery could include providing feedback to an individual's line manager on low level matters.
- Complainants were generally satisfied with the outcomes of service recovery. If the complainant was not satisfied the CCST was required to refer the matter to the force's Professional Standards Department (PSD).
- A member of the public could request a review if they were not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint. The PFCC taking responsibility for reviews provided more independence than when they were formerly dealt with by the PSD. The OPFCC had initially commissioned an external provider to carry out reviews to give sufficient capacity, with a view to bringing the function back in-house later. It had been possible to do this earlier than anticipated using additional capacity available during lockdown.
- A review considered whether all relevant lines of enquiry had been followed in relation to the complaint; whether all of the points made in a complaint had been properly addressed; and whether the outcome was reasonable and proportionate. The PFCC had delegated responsibility for decision-making on reviews to the Director for Delivery.
- A review could result in a recommendation for a complaint to be referred to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC); to be investigated; or for action intended to remedy the complainant's dissatisfaction.
- From 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021 the CCST had dealt with 464 formal complaints, 270 service recoveries and 672 questions and other matters. The IOPC identified 60 per cent as a good rate for service recovery and Northamptonshire was now above this level.
- The CCST had carried out 55 reviews: 7 of these had been upheld and 7 recommendations made to address complainants' dissatisfaction. In the other 48 cases it was concluded that the response to the original complaint had been satisfactory.
- The CCST operated to a Service Level Agreement (SLA) requiring complaints to be acknowledged and recorded within two days of receipt.
- The CCST received monthly reports from the PSD on all complaints that had remained open for over 12 months and carried out monthly dip-sampling of closed files. The PSD dip-sampled complaints dealt with by the CCST.
- The CCST was able to use IOPC information to compare performance in Northamptonshire with that of other forces.

The Director for Delivery made the following points:

- The IOPC had identified the CCST as an example of good practice in relation to the use of service recovery.
- It was possible that Police & Crime commissioners' current role could be extended in future beyond recommending actions as a result of reviews.
- The current SLA for acknowledging and responded to complaints resulted in a much better response than had previously been the case under the force.

The PFCC made the following points:

- He also commended the CCST's performance.
- Model two represented the best balance between the level of demand on the OPFCC and the outcomes seen by members of the public.
- Service recovery was an effective means of responding to low level complaints. He considered that members of the public wanted police officers to be able to use their judgement: a small mistake should be learnt from but should not end a career. At the same time, significant wrongdoing should be addressed appropriately.
- The 464 formal complaints dealt with in the past year was a notably small number given that the force dealt with 100,000s of incidents.

The Panel considered the report and presentation and members made the following points during the course of discussion:

- It was questioned whether there was any evidence of greater public satisfaction or confidence in the new complaints system in Northamptonshire.
- It was questioned whether the PFCC had a role in decision-making relating to individual complaint reviews. Members of the public could perceive that the system was not as independent as it should be if decisions were made by the Director for Delivery, who was a former police officer.
- Good work was being done in Northamptonshire in relation to police complaints.
- Service resolution could be a more descriptive term to use for the function than service recovery.
- It could be most productive to seek customer satisfaction feedback on the complaints process immediately after communicating the outcome to a complainant.
- A multi-agency approach could be helpful when dealing serial complainants. Repeated complaints might be an indication of an underlying need. However, it could also be useful to be able to identify if the same person was making multiple complaints to different organisations.
- Further information was sought as to how the number of complaint reviews carried out in Northamptonshire compared to the position in similar force areas.
- Reassurance was sought as to the PFCC's level of confidence in the effectiveness of the force's complaints function.

The PFCC made the following additional points:

- The PFCC was ultimately responsible for the delivery of the complaints function. He was satisfied that it was being administered effectively by the officers concerned.

- The Director for Delivery's knowledge as a former police officer put him in a better position to deal with complaints, including the liaison with the force that this involved.
- Ensuring that the OPFCC dealt with police complaints effectively could reduce the number of complaints about the PFCC that were made to the Panel.
- Greater public satisfaction with the complaints function in Northamptonshire could be reflected in increasing public confidence in the force.
- The current model did involve an anomaly that Police & Crime commissioners could not investigate a complaint independently as a complaint had to be investigated by the force. He would be making a case for this situation to be changed.
- There was an ambition to continue to improve the operation of the complaints function in Northamptonshire where necessary, which was reflected in the decision taken to bring the review function in-house after the first year of operation. The OPFCC would aim to take account of good practice in other force areas relating to surveying public satisfaction. The Ministry of Justice was also carrying out a national review of the effect of implementing the new approach. However, the fact that the CCST had been recognised by the IOPC for good practice should not be under-rated.
- He was confident that the force's complaints function was effective. This judgement was informed by regular dialogue with the IOPC, which had access to benchmarking information for different forces, as well as other activity such as dip-sampling of complaints. He was confident that no systematic issues existed in the force as the systems in place would be able to identify them. At the same time, there was still further scope to improve arrangements relating to complaints and this could be addressed in the second phase of the review of Police & Crime commissioners.

The Director for Delivery provided additional information in response to points raised by members during the course of discussion as follows:

- Service recovery could enable an explanation of a situation to be provided to a complainant, which was often sufficient to address their dissatisfaction. In other cases, the nature of a complaint could mean that there was no action that the OPFCC could reasonably take beyond providing an explanation of the original situation. Service recovery was only used for low level complaints. Service recovery was the title given to the function in legislation.
- The current model was still only a year old. The OPFCC had only started carrying out complaint reviews in late summer 2020 as the 2017 Act was not retrospective. The CCST had conducted surveys to gather customer satisfaction data but responses so far had been too small to be useful. It aimed to address this in future.
- The number of reviews needing to be dealt with by the CCST was similar to estimates that had been made before the decision was taken to establish it.
- Representatives from the force control room met regularly with other relevant agencies with regard to serial service users.
- Very few malicious complaints were received. Even serial complainants genuinely believed that they had been wronged.
- A complaint review considered the response to the original complaint by the PSD: it was not a re-investigation of the complaint.

The Complaints & Customer Service Manager provided additional information in response to points raised by members during the course of discussion as follows:

- The IOPC was due to produce a study of the complaints dealt with across all force areas early in 2021/22. Anecdotal evidence was that Northamptonshire was mid-range in terms of the numbers of complaints received and upheld.
- A complaint review could take hours or days to complete, depending on the complexity of the case.
- Dip-sampling of complaints would show if procedures were not being followed correctly. She also liaised regularly with the PSD Manager regarding complaints.

The Chair commented at the conclusion of discussion that the update had provided a reassuring picture.

**RESOLVED that: the Panel notes the overview of the operation of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner's responsibilities relating to the police complaints system.**

[Councillor Griffiths left the meeting at this point].

#### 17/21 Fire & Rescue Plan Delivery Update

The PFCC presented the report (copies of which had previously been circulated), highlighting the following points:

- Recent activity by NFRS had clearly been dominated by the response to the pandemic.
- The outcomes of the HMICFRS inspection into NFRS's response to the pandemic demonstrated the overall improvement it had made. The government recognised the scale of the challenge involved in rebuilding NFRS but good progress had been made so far: for example, average response times had improved month-on-month.
- NFRS had reached a better position by this point than might have been assumed when governance responsibility was transferred to the PFCC.

The Panel considered the report and Panel members made the following points during the course of discussion:

- It was questioned whether interoperability was an area where the PFCC wished to see further progress made.
- It would be important for relevant organisations to carry out joint exercises on the new Northamptonshire authorities' emergency plans, particularly to test the ability to deal with more than one incident at the same time.
- It was questioned when the PFCC would expect to have a balanced Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) in place if he was re-elected in May 2021.

The PFCC made the following additional points in response to points raised by members during the course of discussion:

- He had spoken earlier that day with the Fire Service minister regarding further development of interoperability. The PFCC thought that there were good opportunities to build on work done in Northamptonshire under the Safer Streets Scheme, including alley-gating and installation of smoke alarms.

- The Kerslake Review had highlighted the disconnection between the police and Fire & Rescue service responses to the attack. This created additional impetus to bring together the two control rooms serving Northamptonshire.
- Northamptonshire had held robust inter-agency emergency exercises before the pandemic. The key issue that needed to be resolved for the emergency services following local government reorganisation was establishing good communication links into the new authorities to match previous ones with Northamptonshire County Council.
- Establishing an affordable capital programme was a key issue in relation to NFRS. The capital programme would be reviewed in the next year. It was sustainable in the short term.
- The case that had been made for transferring the governance of NFRS had recognised risks connected with the MTFP. The position that had been reached was better than originally expected. It was his role to provide challenge to maintain progress.

The Chief Finance Officer provided additional information in response to points raised by members during the course of discussion as follows:

- The OPFCC worked to the principle that a budget needed to be balanced over a minimum three year period to demonstrate that it was a going concern. This could be done for the Fire & Rescue Authority but it was a very tight position and would require the use of reserves.
- The OPFCC was in extensive discussion with the Home Office about future base budget funding for Fire & Rescue. It was seeking change through the next spending review. It would also be helpful for future funding settlements to cover more than one year.
- The OPFCC was working towards achieving a balanced MTFP by the time of the next proposed precept but this was a long process that would be influenced by a range of factors, which meant it was not possible at this time to give a commitment that it would be achieved. However, the financial position of the Fire & Rescue Authority was more stable than it had ever been and better than had been assumed in the governance transfer plan.
- The OPFCC had advised the Home Office that additional funding provided to Northamptonshire for 2021/22 was very welcome but did not make up for pressures on resources in the longer term. The Home Office wanted to work with Northamptonshire to understand the challenges it faced: it could not give any commitments at this point about future action but would be able to have an input into the next spending review.

[Councillor Pritchard entered the meeting during the preceding discussion].

**RESOLVED that: the Panel notes the report.**

#### 18/21 Police & Crime Plan Delivery Update

The PFCC presented the report (copies of which had previously been circulated), highlighting the following points:

- Investment in frontline policing had been a key priority since he took office. He was proud that the number of neighbourhood police officers had been more than doubled, with more to come. This reflected an ongoing focus on neighbourhood policing.
- Overall, the force was still on-target to reach the largest number of police officers it had in its history.

- Work was continuing to install 150 new road safety cameras in the county, which would more than double the size of the Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) network. This would assist in the aim of creating a hostile environment for criminals in Northamptonshire.
- He considered that these focus areas reflected residents' priorities, as did work on other areas such as addressing residential burglary.
- The Safer Streets Scheme funding secured by the OPFCC had helped to deliver safety packs to homes, to provide other security measures and to invest in CCTV in Northampton, Kettering and Wellingborough.
- Investment in early intervention and crime prevention had been another of his focus areas as the PFCC and he was proud of the results achieved by the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) team that had been established.
- A lot had been delivered during his term in office, but there remained a lot more still to do.

The Panel considered the report. The Chair asked the PFCC to comment on the biggest achievement of his term in office and what he would have liked to have done better. The PFCC made the following points:

- He wished to highlight important successes in various areas: increased police recruitment; enhancing the ANPR network; the creation of the ACEs and Youth teams; the enabling services approach; and the recruitment of the current Chief Constable. The electorate would judge if he had done well enough.
- The difficult situation resulting from the previous decision to sell Wootton Hall Park without a clear plan for the future had been resolved during his term in office.
- Zoe Billingham was leaving her role as HMICFRS Inspector of the Constabulary for the Eastern Region in September 2021. He had sought an assurance from her that the force's recent progress was considered to be represent genuine improvement. Ms Billingham had advised that the force was now built on firm foundations both in relation to performance and finance. Northamptonshire Police was now a progressive and ambitious force.

Panel members made the following points during the course of discussion:

- The new area commander for the west was ensuring good attendance by force representatives at community meetings, which helped to promote visibility at a neighbourhood level.
- Good results had been achieved in Northamptonshire from operations focussed on particular types of crime, such as residential burglary. If the PFCC was re-elected he should work with the Chief Constable to consider the scope for the force to apply this approach to addressing domestic violence, which was a more significant issue.
- Concerns were raised about performance detailed in the report against key performance indicators for domestic abuse and sexual offences. Victim satisfaction with regard to domestic abuse was below the target. Reassurance was sought about the PFCC's level of confidence that the force would achieve necessary performance levels, particularly given factors such as the impact of the pandemic and the backlog in court cases.
- Concern was raised about the impact of lockdown on people experiencing domestic violence. The relevant organisations needed to make appropriate plans for future provision, particularly given that Refuge facilities in Northamptonshire had been reduced.

- A resident who had recently experienced an attempted burglary had received good support from Voice and a good response from the police officer working on the case. The perpetrator had been caught.
- The PFCC was asked to comment on the death of Sarah Everard in relation to policing and community safety in Northamptonshire.
- It would be helpful for future reports to include the dates of the decision records listed.

The PFCC made the following additional points during the course of discussion:

- He had invested in action to address domestic violence, including to support the use of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and a more proactive approach to domestic violence arrests. He considered that the force's response to domestic violence could be improved but was better than might be perceived. Domestic violence was also not an issue that could be addressed by policing alone.
- The criminal justice system in Northamptonshire had experienced a serious issue with a backlog in court cases for several years. His predecessor had offered to commit £1m funding to addressing this situation, but this proposal had not been accepted. Northamptonshire was no longer being considered as the location for a Nightingale court. The resident judge and others had done good work but this was not reducing the existing backlog.
- He was very concerned about the impact of court delays in relation to crimes of violence against women. It was more difficult for a victim of crime to seek to move on with their life if it took a long time for a case to reach court.
- He held the Chief Constable to account for the force's performance on different types of crime. HMICFRS had recognised that the force was making progress in all areas, although it had not yet achieved 'good' or 'outstanding' ratings. It took time to deliver sustained improvement, particularly given pressures on resources. Good work that was now being done by the force had also not yet reached court.
- He would still like to see a single agency made statutorily responsible for addressing domestic violence.
- Refuge provision was commissioned by central government.
- The crime clear-up rate in Northamptonshire was increasing in relation to recent crimes. The overall position had been affected by a large number of historic cases in the previous year and the effect of the court backlog, given that a clear up currently required a successful prosecution. This situation added to the need to consider other types of resolution, as an outcome without prosecution could be better overall. It would also be fairer if the clear up rate for the police was measured on the number of cases successfully submitted to court.
- It was important to speak responsibly about the death of Sarah Everard: it was an active police investigation and the cause of death had not yet been identified. The wider issues raised by the case concerned the safety of women in society. On his first day as PFCC he had stated that the force had the task of ensuring that a woman should be able to go out and about safely. This was reflected in subsequent work under the Safer Streets Scheme and other activity. Societal change was required to address all of the issues involved. However, it was a matter on which he felt strongly as well as being the father of a young daughter himself.
- The decision to end involvement in Multi-Force Shared Services (MFSS) with effect from 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 represented the end of several years' work. He and the Chief

Constable had reached the conclusion that MFSS did not provide best value for Northamptonshire. The development of enabling services allowed services to be brought back to the county and delivered more cost-effectively for both the force and NFRS.

The Director for Early Intervention provided additional information in response to points raised by members during the course of discussion as follows:

- Intervention activity was being used to respond to domestic violence at an early stage with a view to preventing issues from becoming more serious, supported by additional staff in the ACEs Team. It could be challenging to show the benefit of this work in purely numerical terms, as was the case with all early intervention activity.
- The new Northamptonshire local authorities were statutorily responsible for housing and would need to consider their approach to housing for vulnerable people.
- Refuge was intended to provide a place to stay for a short time rather than a long term response. There would always be a need for some Refuge provision but it should be used in the intended way.

**RESOLVED that: the Panel notes the report.**

#### 19/21 Fire & Rescue Authority Budget Update

The PFCC presented the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) setting out the latest forecast outturn position and an overview of the financial impact of COVID-19, highlighting the following points:

- The Fire & Rescue Authority had secured an additional £128,000 funding towards the response to the pandemic since the report had been completed. It had also received £71,000 funding from work with the Home Office relating to the impact of the pandemic.
- He continued to work with the Home Office towards securing a permanent increase in base budget funding for Northamptonshire.

The Panel considered the report and members made the following points during the course of discussion:

- The additional £2m funding provided by the Home Office to support the 2021/22 Fire & Rescue Authority budget was welcome, but it remained a concern that base budget funding had not been increased.
- The support that NFRS had provided to the East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) NHS Trust during the pandemic had been excellent, but it was questioned whether EMAS had contributed to the cost of this.
- COVID-19 would have an effect on people's health and wellbeing for years to come. Assurances were sought that NFRS personnel would be provided with continuing support, for example through proactive testing.

The PFCC made the following additional points during the course of discussion:

- Securing an increase in base budget funding would be a key future priority if he was re-elected in May 2021.
- NFRS personnel were provided with a range of support in relation to COVID-19. Further information could be provided to the Panel if required.

The Chief Finance Officer provided additional information in response to points raised by members during the course of discussion as follows:

- The Fire & Rescue Authority would not need to return any unused COVID-19 funding at the end of the financial year. In any case, there would be no issue with identifying uses for it. The Authority forecast usage to the end of 2021/22 and made monthly returns to the Home Office.
- EMAS had been invoiced in relation to support provided by NFRS during the pandemic. Further information on this could be provided to the Panel if required.
- The latest COVID-19 financial support provided to Northamptonshire represented the full amount for which the Fire & Rescue Authority had bid. The requirement to cover a proportion of the sum locally had not been applied in this case. This would have required Northamptonshire to contribute £50,000.

[Councillor Jelley left the meeting during the preceding discussion].

**RESOLVED that:**

- a) The Panel requests to be provided with off-agenda written information advising of the sums for which East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust has been invoiced for activity carried out by Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service personnel during the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- b) The Panel requests to be provided with off-agenda written information giving an overview of health and wellbeing support being provided to Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service personnel in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- c) The Panel notes the report.**

20/21 Policing Budget Update

The PFCC presented the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) setting out the latest forecast outturn position, highlighting the following points:

- The position set out in the report reflected improvements that had been made in financial planning and management. In turn, this put the PFCC and the Chief Constable in a better position to meet future challenges.
- He had committed to investing in frontline policing in Northamptonshire. The force would reach a strength of 1,367 officers by the end of 2020/21. There was a commitment then to reach 1,500 officers and to maintain this number for as long as possible.
- He had been guaranteed by the minister for policing that there would be a review of the policing funding formula during the current parliament.
- He wanted to take the opportunity to put on record his thanks to the Panel for their previous support. All were working in the interests of Northamptonshire. The Panel had held the PFCC to account in a constructive way, which was not the case in other areas.
- He thanked the Democratic Services Assistant Manager for his work to support the effective operation of the Panel, particularly whilst it had been meeting remotely.

The Chair also thanked the Democratic Services Assistant Manager for the support he had provided to the Panel.

The Panel considered the report and members made the following points during the course of discussion:

- Further information was sought about discussion at the Police Accountability Board meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021 concerning speeding up the disposal of some properties that had been identified for closure.
- It was questioned whether the policing budget included provision for responding to major public order incidents such as those that had recently occurred in Bristol.

The PFCC made the following additional points during the course of discussion:

- Some properties identified for closure had been subject to offers that had ultimately not come through. The pandemic had also affected the property market. However, he thought that more progress could have been made in some cases, particularly given that property disposals reduced running costs as well as generating a receipt.
- The policing budget included operational contingencies for the costs of responding to a major public order incident.

The Chief Finance Officer advised that the budget available to the Chief Constable included various contingencies for major incidents totalling around £5m. There were also options to use reserves or to seek funding from a Home Office grant funding stream, although the PFCC would need to meet the first 1 per cent of any cost.

A Panel member subsequently emphasised that the police response to an incident was based on the principle that operational need was the first priority.

**RESOLVED that: the Panel notes the report.**

#### 21/21 Handover to the Police, Fire & Crime Panel for 2021/22

The Democratic Services Assistant Manager presented the report (copies of which had previously been circulated), highlighting the following points:

- The current Panel meeting was the final one before elections to the new Northamptonshire local authorities and for the PFCC role, which could result in changes for the Panel.
- The Panel had previously identified that it would be useful to consider any learning points from its recent experience or similar matters that it wished to highlight to its successor.
- The report summarised the Panel's work during 2020/21 and identified some potential areas for consideration as a possible starting point for discussion.

The Panel considered the report. The Chair noted that the task-and-finish review carried out during July – December 2020 had already considered various aspects of the future operation of the Panel. The shadow authorities had also resolved how the future councillor membership of the Panel should be divided, adopting an equal 5 / 5 split between the two.

Panel members made the following points during the course of discussion:

- Consideration should be given to future arrangements for chairing the Panel and, for example, whether the chair should be rotated between the two Northamptonshire local authorities. The role should be open to all members and it was not healthy for it to be decided on a political basis.

- The Panel should clearly identify what information it needed to carry out its statutory role and ensure that the PFCC understood this.
- Performance information presented to the Panel should reflect its strategic remit. It should give a view of change in the longer term rather than focussing on short term detail.
- The Chair was thanked for her work in the role.
- Performance information should be presented clearly and succinctly, with the use of graphics not just text. The single page overview of NFRS's response to COVID-19 included in the update provided at the current meeting was a good example of this.
- The Panel could consider increasing its number of independent co-opted members.
- Training for Panel members continued to be important.
- The PFCC engaged with and supported the Panel to a good level, as did members of his staff such as the OPFCC Chief Finance Officer.
- It would be useful for the Panel to seek more clarity about performance against Key Performance Indicators, including changes over time and comparisons with the situation in other force areas. Performance information should be presented using the Red / Amber / Green rating format.
- The good relationship between the PFCC and the Panel was welcome and should be maintained.
- The Panel should seek to meet at least annually with the Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer in order to engage with them directly.
- Positions of responsibility should be shared amongst Panel members but without losing continuity in the work done.
- Individual Panel members' capacity to take the Chair depended on having the time available to do the role justice.

The PFCC made the following points during the course of discussion:

- The Panel operated more effectively than some of its counterparts, which could seek to act as proxies for the police or fire authority or had members with hidden agendas who only sought to attack the commissioner.
- There were times when he thought the Panel should be scrutinising particular matters and reflected this in the information he provided.
- The review of Police & Crime commissioners would result in an update to the Policing Protocol, which could affect panels.
- The provision of performance information to the Panel should reflect that its role was to hold to account the PFCC, who held to account the force. Information on performance at a specific point in time also needed to reflect the nuances of the overall position appropriately. The review of Police & Crime commissioners set new requirements relating to performance reporting. The provision of information to the Panel would continue to evolve.
- He had previously agreed that the Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer should attend annual sessions with the Panel to give an overview of key issues concerning the two organisations.

The Democratic Services Assistant Manager provided additional information in response to points raised by members during the course of discussion as follows:

- He understood that he would still be supporting the Panel in 2021/22.
- The Panel should avoid inadvertently limiting its own flexibility if it sought to change the existing arrangements for selecting the Chair and Deputy Chair. All members were currently eligible for these roles, with the exception that they could not both be held by councillors from the same local authority. Requiring the Chair to be rotated could, for example, mean that a member who carried out the role well could not stay in it.

A Panel member subsequently questioned whether there was scope for the Panel to pay an allowance to independent co-opted members in future, which could be beneficial. The Democratic Services Assistant Manager provided additional information as follows:

- All Panel members were currently able to claim expenses.
- The payment of an allowance would ultimately need to be agreed by the Northamptonshire local authorities, informed by any input from the Panel.
- It would be open to the Panel appointed for 2021/22 to give further consideration to this matter. In doing so it would need to take account of any relevant decisions by the new local authorities, for example on allowances for co-opted committee members in general.

Panel members suggested that the matter should be considered further, as the workload involved in Panel meetings and other supporting activity could justify some remuneration for independent co-opted members. Councillor Pritchard asked for it to be noted that he did not support such action, given that there were other responsible and time-consuming roles such as magistrates that did not carry an allowance. The Chair highlighted that the Panel recommending to its successor that further consideration be given to this matter was not suggesting what conclusion might be reached on it.

**RESOLVED that:**

**a) The Panel recommends that the presentation of performance information to the Panel by the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner in future should reflect the following principles:**

- **Performance information should be focussed more on longer term trends than detail in the short term.**
- **Performance information should be presented in a clear format, making use of graphics and Red/Amber/Green ratings where possible.**

**b) The Panel recommends that the Police, Fire & Crime Panel appointed for 2021/22 considers the question of whether there should be remuneration for Panel members in future.**

22/21 Police, Fire & Crime Panel Meeting Dates 2021/22

The Chair introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated), setting out a proposed meeting schedule for 2021/22.

The Chair invited members to raise any points relating to the report that they wished the Panel to consider.

**RESOLVED that: the Panel agrees the proposed meeting dates for 2021/22 set out in the report:**

- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021
- Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2021
- Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021
- Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022
- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2022 (Reserve)
- Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2022

All meetings to start at 1.00pm

#### 23/21 Future use of Remote Meetings

The Chair introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated), highlighting the following points:

- The Panel was asked to support the case being made to the government for extending the ability for panels to hold virtual meetings beyond the current cut-off of 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. This would have various benefits, including supporting public engagement.
- It was understood that the government was due to consider its position on this matter shortly.

The Chair invited members to raise any points relating to the report that they wished the Panel to consider.

The PFCC advised that there was a large meeting room at Darby House, which might be used for a Panel meeting in future. This would also enable Panel members to see the base for enabling services.

The Democratic Services Assistant Manager subsequently clarified that the legislation permitting the Panel to hold virtual meetings was due to expire on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The Panel would therefore not be able to meet remotely after this point unless the law was changed to permit this.

**RESOLVED that: the Panel agrees that the Chair should write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government encouraging an extension of the current provisions permitting Police (Fire) & Crime panels to hold remote meetings.**

The Chair thanked members for their commitment during what had been a long meeting. The Chair went on to thank members for their previous support and hard work and hoped to see them again in person in future. The Chair also thanked the PFCC for the work he had done in the role to support the interests of Northamptonshire residents.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 5.10pm.

Next scheduled Panel meeting: 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 1.00pm.

This information can be made available in other formats upon request. Please contact James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager on tel. 07500 605276 or e-mail: [jedmunds@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:jedmunds@northamptonshire.gov.uk)

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## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL

**17 JUNE 2021**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Northamptonshire Police, Fire &amp; Crime Panel's statutory responsibilities relating to review of the Annual Report for 2020/21 produced by the Police, Fire &amp; Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire.</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	<b>James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager, West Northamptonshire Council</b> <a href="mailto:James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk">James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk</a>

Contributors/Checkers/Approvers		
<b>West MO</b> (for West and joint papers)	Catherine Whitehead	08/06/2021
<b>West S151</b> (for West and joint papers)	Martin Henry	07/06/2021

### List of Appendices

**None**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1. The report is intended to set out the statutory requirements on the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel to review the Annual Report for 2020/21 produced by the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire.

#### **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1 The report summarises the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel's statutory responsibilities relating to reviewing and making a report on the Annual Report for 2020/21 produced by the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire. This Annual Report appears on the agenda for the current Panel meeting as the next item of business.

#### **3. Recommendations**

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- 3.1 It is recommended that the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel reviews the Annual Report for 2020/21 produced by the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire.

- 3.2 Reasons for Recommendation(s) – The recommendation is intended to enable the Panel to carry out its statutory responsibilities relating to scrutiny of the Annual Report effectively at the current meeting.

#### **4. Report Background**

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- 4.1 The Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011 (sections 12 and 28) states that a Police & Crime Commissioner must produce an “annual report”.
- 4.2 The annual report must report on:
- a) the exercise of the Police & Crime Commissioner’s functions in the financial year, and
  - b) the progress which has been made in the financial year in meeting the police and crime objectives in the police and crime plan.
- 4.3 The annual report must be sent to the relevant Police & Crime Panel as soon as practicable following its publication by the Police & Crime Commissioner.
- 4.4 The Police & Crime Panel must arrange a public meeting of the Panel to be held as soon as practicable after the Panel receives the annual report.
- 4.5 The Police & Crime Commissioner must attend the relevant meeting of the Panel to present the report and to answer such questions from the Panel about the report as the Panel members think appropriate.
- 4.6 The Police & Crime Panel must then review the annual report and make a report outlining any recommendations to the Police & Crime Commissioner. The report or recommendations of the Panel must also be published.
- 4.7 The Police & Crime Commissioner must provide a response to the panel and must also publish that response.

#### **5. Issues and Choices**

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- 5.1 The current Panel meeting is the first to take place in the 2021/22 municipal year and following the re-election of Mr Stephen Mold to serve as the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire for the next three years. Mr Mold has now produced an Annual Report for 2020/21 and this has been sent to the Panel to review, reflecting the requirements summarised in section 4 of this report.
- 5.2 Reviewing and reporting on this Annual Report is a mandatory task for the Panel. Local Government Association guidance for panels on policing and fire governance gives the following advice on good practice in this regard:

*Scrutiny of the annual report should focus on:*

- *understanding whether the objectives set out in the police and crime plan have been met*
- *using panel members' own insight and independently gathered evidence to evaluate whether the commissioner's conclusions on this matter are robust, and*
- *supporting the commissioner to hold the chief constable to account on operational delivery.*

*An effective panel annual report session should use the report as a tool to carry out an annual review of the commissioner's activities, looking back at the last year's successes and challenges, and forward to the next year's opportunities and priorities.*

*A less beneficial session could involve the panel highlighting apparent factual inaccuracies in the annual report, asking for additional narrative information on details or pointing out typographical or grammatical errors. None of these would add value to the effective scrutiny of the commissioner and all of them would represent a poor use of time for everyone involved.*

## **6. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **6.1 Resources and Financial**

6.1.1 There are no resources or financial implications arising from the proposal.

### **6.2 Legal**

6.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposal.

### **6.3 Risk**

6.3.1 There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendation in this report.

## **7. Background Papers**

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Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011

Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel Terms of Reference.

Policing and fire governance – Local Government Association guidance for police and crime panels (2019)

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Northamptonshire Police,  
Fire and Crime Commissioner

# Annual Report

2020-2021

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# Introduction



This year has been one like no other with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the unprecedented challenges this has placed on both the Police Force and the Fire and Rescue Service.

As the PFCC I have been incredibly proud of how we have collectively risen to this challenge and ensured that our communities have been protected and supported.

The pandemic has also impacted on every aspect of our work as we have all had to adapt to new ways of working to ensure the day to day working of my office can continue smoothly to continue to hold the Police Force and Fire and Rescue Service to account whilst ensuring all of our statutory roles and responsibilities are delivered. This has been a real challenge for my team and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work and dedication over the last twelve months.

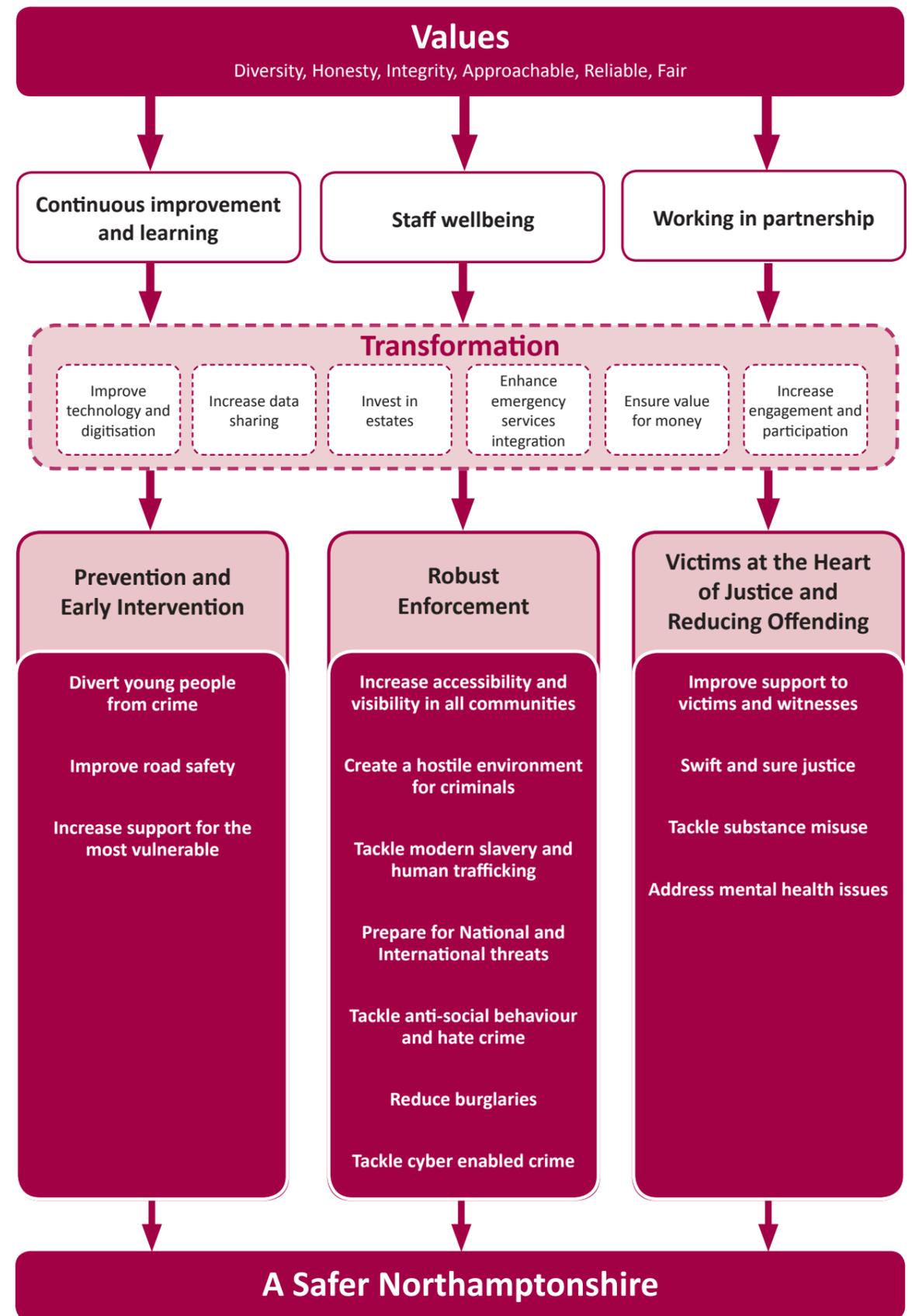
This annual report highlights that despite the pandemic, a great deal of work has been delivered towards both the Police and Crime Plan and the Fire and Rescue Plan. I have invested in new technology and equipment that will help the force ensure Northamptonshire becomes a hostile environment for criminals to operate in. This will be supported by my investment to increase the number of frontline officers which will also see a new focus on local policing which will more than double the number of neighbourhood police officers.

My commitment to investing in early intervention has continued, helping to protect and support some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. Not only does this work help to prevent people from entering the criminal justice system, it also provides victims with the opportunity to choose a different path in life, which can enable them to make their own choices in life, free from any coercive control or violence.

This year has shown that by working closely together, the Police Force and Fire and Rescue Service and my office are greater than the sum of its parts. We have brought teams closer together, invested in new technology and reimagined how we deliver our services; all of which is bringing real benefits to the frontline. Our work is being recognised by both the Government and HMICFRS as being innovative and ground-breaking which we can all be very proud of. Despite the pandemic, a great deal of work has been delivered and this report sets out how we have continued to work towards delivering a safer Northamptonshire.

Stephen Mold  
Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime  
Commissioner

# Plan on a Page



# Prevention and Early Intervention

## Early Intervention

The ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) team launched in February 2019 to identify families in difficulty at an early stage and to step-in and offer support. To date the team have supported 830 families across Northamptonshire, which means a total of 1,541 children and young people have benefited from family and individual support as well as advice and guidance on a range of issues such as domestic abuse, healthy relationships, parenting, on line safety, mental health of parent or young person, substance misuse, parenting issues and school exclusions. The ACE team fill a gap in early intervention and prevention that is not currently provided by partners.

Almost half of all referrals to the team (40%) are a result of a Police Public Protection Notices (PPN). During the numerous lockdown periods, the team have received reduced referrals from schools, however referrals for support did increase when schools reopened. The ACE team worked throughout the pandemic, supporting families by phone, video conferencing and when permitted, meeting with a young person in school, or in an agreed safe outdoor area.

Since January 2021, the ACE team have initiated a family feedback project which aims to provide qualitative feedback about the service and most importantly gives a voice to how the families

view their current situation and if they feel they are in a better place. This feedback also helps identify any further support required.

To date 62% of the 39 families who have been contacted have provided feedback of which 96% were happy with the support they received and 83% confirmed that their family were in a better place. Other notable highlights from the project were that 67% of families have seen an improvement in school attendance and 75% have had no further police call outs since direct support from the ACE team. This project is ongoing and to continue receiving additional information, the team have now included obtaining the families' permission to be contacted three months after completion of ACE support.

In January 2021, two domestic abuse (DA) ACE support officers were established to help people who have received a police officer call out for an incident assessed as "standard" low level domestic/family conflict. During this time, 272 incidents were assessed as suitable and allocated to be supported by the DA ACE team (includes supporting 458 children), of which 60% of cases were offered advice and assessed as not needing further support. 20% were referred to specialist services for further support.

The team have also referred some families to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) after gathering further information and assessing the presenting risks. The advice, guidance, support and referral to specialist domestic abuse agencies educates and empowers adults and children to consider making changes to their personal circumstances and gives the practical expertise to do this. Additional support with finances, housing, legal issues and safeguarding is also offered and these support elements decrease the opportunity for further domestic incidents and increases the likelihood the police will not be called.

This project has been put together in response to the growing number of Police callouts for domestic/family conflict related incidents unlikely to result in prosecution. The Early Intervention Domestic Abuse ACE Practitioners contact every family who have had the police respond to a standard-graded domestic incident within 48 hours. The practitioners have extensive knowledge and experience of supporting victims, perpetrators, children and young people who have witnessed or experienced domestic abuse and work in the same way as the rest of the ACE team, uncovering the underlying reason for the incident.

Longer term, it is our ambition to deliver the following:

- An outcome for all PPNs completed for a domestic incident ("An outcome" refers to contact being made for all domestic non crime incidents assessed as standard)
- Increase the Force's professional curiosity and knowledge of trauma informed practice
- Better identification and classification of domestic incidents
- Improve consistency of domestic abuse referrals across the county.

My office now has the skills and experience to provide a much-needed service that will meet the needs of couples and families who, without some support are highly likely to come into contact with Northamptonshire Police and ultimately may enter the criminal justice system. By getting upstream we are able reduce the demand on front line policing and hopefully provide beneficial outcomes for those who need our help or support.

# Prevention and Early Intervention

## Youth Service

The Targeted Youth Service was established in January 2020. The team have developed positive networks with the Force and within our communities which include wider agencies such as local authorities and the voluntary sector. We work with agencies to ensure provision is in place for young people with an appropriate, relevant, and meaningful youth offer incorporating places to go, things to do and someone to talk to.

Youth workers support vulnerable children and young people across Northamptonshire identified as being at risk of exploitation from adults and at risk of entering the criminal justice system.

During the last 12 months the team have had 2647 contacts with children and young people through 352 individual detached/street based youthwork sessions in Kettering, Northampton, Wellingborough, Daventry and Corby. These sessions are designed to address the underlying causes of offending, steering children and young people away from criminality in the community. The Youth Service offers bespoke groupwork packages which typically consist of 6/12

sessions with young people on issues identified by referrers or by children and young people themselves.

The team deployed throughout the pandemic, supporting vulnerable children and young people to understand Covid guidance and have provided access to have face to face Youth Worker support (safely distanced). School based groupwork and 1:1 work was paused in late winter because of Covid restrictions; however, the Team were able to resume support programmes in four schools in the county delivering to 22 young people and were able to continue Covid compliant 1:1 sessions within the community with 35 young people.

The team returned to 1:1, groupwork interventions and targeted support in communities they had already engaged with to complete the work they had started. The team have added new key areas across the county, Rushden, Northampton and Irthlingborough offering action-based research with a view to deploying detached sessions and developing school and community based targeted sessions.

In 2020/21 the team delivered an informal educative session to 141 young people highlighting their vulnerabilities to exploitation from gangs, child criminal exploitation and child sexual exploitation. During the final quarter of the year, the team supported 92 individuals, using groupwork and 1:1 interventions. 23% of these were for support with emotional wellbeing and 20% for gang awareness.

The team use a nationally recognised assessment to measure progress and reduction in the likelihood of further difficulties. The end of Q4 20/21 saw 38 young people who had a starting point and 11 individuals reaching their midway progress point. Early indications show Youth Team interventions are making a positive impact to those individuals, with 64% (7 of 11) registering an improvement in their confidence and self-esteem and 55% feeling safer.

## Youth Commission

The purpose of the Youth Commission is to enable the voice of young people to be heard by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

The Youth Commission was integrated into the Youth team this year with 26 new members and the development of 7 peer mentors. The sheer number of applications resulted in the Commission being expanded to 15 schools-based Youth Commission Champions, with the aim of helping reach their school communities on the topics chosen by this year's intake - water safety and healthy relationships.

As young ambassadors, they develop their self-confidence and as they see their work is making a difference in the community, their self-esteem and aspirations are raised. They develop skills in listening, and mutual respect, and see how by working collectively, they can bring about greater change.

# Robust Enforcement

## £1.5m For Crime Fighting Projects in Northamptonshire

At the beginning of 2020, the Home Office launched the Safer Streets Fund which provided funding for Police and Crime Commissioners to bid for. The fund was set up to support initiatives to tackle crime in areas particularly affected by acquisitive crime such as burglary, vehicle crime and robbery. The funding was for measures that are proven to cut crime, including changes to the street scene such as the installation of CCTV, locked alley gates and better street lighting. The Office of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner was successful in its three bids and was awarded almost £1.5m by the Home Office to fund crime fighting projects in Wellingborough, Kettering and Northampton.

The successful bids were:

- Almost £546k to implement a range of security improvements on the Victoria and Isebrook wards in Wellingborough. This included the installation of security gates on a number of alleyways behind homes. Alley gating is proven to reduce burglary by more than 40%, as well as reducing fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour. The project also included providing crime prevention surveys and free crime prevention measures to residents in the wider area. Working in partnership with other organisations, notably The Borough Council of Wellingborough, we were able to fit 74 gates to secure local homes as well as ensuring a significant uplift in CCTV in the town, in terms of both numbers and quality of

cameras. We also ensured over 2500 homes received direct crime and fire prevention advice, materials and security devices.

- The sum of £280k to support the extension of CCTV in Kettering as well as the proposal to install a small number of secure alley gates and the provision of home security literature and devices to several hundred homes.
- The sum of £650k to fund projects to create safer parking and other environmental improvements – including improved lighting, along with a door replacement programme at vulnerable locations to enhance safety and security in the Portland Place, Bouverie estate and surrounding areas of Northampton

The three areas were identified as they had higher than average levels of acquisitive crime in the County and where we were able to implement effective remedies in the short timescales allowed by the fund. Work to deliver all three projects has been successfully delivered and is already making a real difference to the lives of local residents as we continue to create a hostile environment for criminals across communities in Northamptonshire.

My office has already submitted bids for Safer Streets Fund, round 2, which will be announced by early Summer. If successful, this funding will allow similar much needed work to take place in other areas of the County this year.

## Hi tech investment will deny criminals the use of the roads

During the year, I set aside a £1.3 million injection of funding to add 100 new cameras to the ANPR network across Northamptonshire as part of our investment strategy to disrupt crime, support road safety and deny criminals the use of the county's roads. This investment has delivered new, fixed and mobile cameras across the county and marks a significant expansion of the ANPR network. The cameras are being used by Northamptonshire Police to fight crime and keep people safe, providing additional tools to detect crime, disrupt criminals who are using the roads and deter them from committing crime in this county.

The investment has also delivered:

- additional cameras on the county's major, strategic routes and at the county borders
- an increased ANPR footprint in rural communities, with cameras at strategic routes on roads in rural areas
- increased coverage in the county's major towns

The plan also included increased mobile ANPR capacity in police vehicles as well as rapid deployment cameras that can be sent to hotspots around the county.

The expanded camera network is part of a wider strategy to strengthen crime fighting and links several initiatives, including the establishment last year of the road crime team to focus on denying criminals the use of the roads and the new rapid response Interceptor cars. Taken together, these initiatives significantly strengthen the tools available to help Northamptonshire Police fight crime and keep the county safe. The cameras will also support police in tackling antisocial driving and identify uninsured vehicles, as research shows that drivers who drive uninsured are more likely to be involved in serious road traffic collisions and be involved in other types of criminality.

# Robust Enforcement

## Investments drive crime fighting boost in Northamptonshire

More than £1.5 million has been invested to give a crime fighting boost in Northamptonshire with rural policing, neighbourhood policing, knife crime and high-tech investigation all receiving extra funding to increase capacity and strengthen the police response to tackle crime and keep people safe in Northamptonshire. Taken together these projects are part of an ongoing push by my office and Northamptonshire Police to improve policing across the county and marks one of the most significant investments in the Force of recent years.

The funding is made up of £750k from local investment through the council tax precept and £400k from special grant fund from the Home Office, topped up to £1.5 million from existing resources and savings. It will support initiatives including:

- More officers and specialist vehicles in Rural Policing teams to increase engagement

with and operational capacity in rural communities. This includes mobile police stations to increase the visible police presence in rural areas

- Deploying 20 extra officers to neighbourhood policing teams across the county, working in communities to tackle issues such as anti-social behaviour and crime in our town centres
- Committing an additional £100k to support the Force in tackling knife crime
- Continuing support for the dog section with five new handlers and new vehicles
- Improving the way data is retrieved from phones and other devices by creating a digital hub to speed up and improve the quality of investigations
- Investing £80k to fund programmes that will prevent sexual violence

## Modern Slavery and Exploitation Film

A short film called 'Take a Closer Look' was commissioned by my office to raise awareness of modern slavery and exploitation. The nine-minute film depicts a scenario following a road traffic collision which highlights signs of modern slavery that aren't immediately obvious. It invites viewers to 'take a closer look' whereby signs of exploitation become apparent.

The film's release was timed to coincide with the launch of a new campaign to raise awareness of forced labour in the logistics sector, in partnership with independent charity Crimestoppers. The key messages the film contains have never been more pertinent. National bodies have warned there is a serious risk coronavirus could lead to a rise in modern slavery and human trafficking. The main drivers – poverty, lack of opportunity and other vulnerabilities – have intensified and increased the risk of exploitation and abuse.

The film is aimed at frontline professionals who are likely to have the opportunity to spot the signs of slavery in their areas of work and make referrals, ensuring victims are safeguarded and intelligence is provided so offenders can be brought to justice. It has also been distributed to a wide range of partners across the County to raise awareness among their staff and the wider public as modern slavery is often hidden in plain sight and people may well have witnessed it without realising.

We know this is a heinous crime where victims are often controlled by force, threats, coercion, abduction, fraud and deception. We are committed to doing all we can to help raise awareness across our communities and among frontline workers so we can protect the vulnerable and put a stop to the exploitation.

The film can be viewed at:  
<https://youtu.be/FMKwCcppWZM>

# Robust Enforcement

## Neighbourhood Watch

The first Neighbourhood Watch scheme under Operation Target, funded by my office, was launched in the Pineham Lock area of Northampton.

Crime prevention literature and window stickers were delivered to residents and street signs were erected to deter criminals from operating in the area. Members are registered on the NHW database so that regular dialogue can begin within the community. Residents are also being encouraged to join Neighbourhood Alert to keep up to date with relevant information from the police about what is happening in their area.

The Northamptonshire Neighbourhood Watch

Association was awarded £9,500 for Operation Target, which aims to reduce crime and build stronger and safer communities in crime hot spot areas by establishing Neighbourhood Watch schemes. We have also been working with Neighbourhood Watch to reinvigorate non active schemes and create new schemes in the three Safer Streets locations. This will provide an opportunity for greater community cohesion and contact in areas disproportionately affected by crime and aid the flow of engagement and community intelligence in these locations.

We have also worked with Neighbourhood Watch to increase the footprint of schemes in the three Safer Streets areas that I referred to earlier in this report.

## Local Policing

A major new focus on local policing in Northamptonshire will more than double the number of neighbourhood police constables.

Police officers in neighbourhood teams across rural and urban communities will be doubled, growing from 50 to 100 over the next 18 months, with an aim to add a further 60 in coming years. These will be additional officers to add to the neighbourhood police and PCSOs already working across the county.

Neighbourhood policing will now be at the heart of our fight against crime, with visible, locally accountable policing to tackle the problems that matter to people. This new focus has been made possible by the increased number of police officers in the Force. In addition to the national investment, I have prioritised local investment in police officers over the past four years and

Northamptonshire Police is on target to have over 1500 police officers by March 2023, as compared with 1170 four years ago. This means that we can now strengthen our neighbourhood teams without taking resources from emergency response or other specialist areas of crime fighting.

Local residents place a great deal of value on knowing that they have a local, neighbourhood policing team dedicated to tackling problems in their area. As our plans develop, we will make sure that every neighbourhood has a dedicated, named local team dealing with the issues that matter to them at the earliest opportunity. In addition to this, we are also investing in two mobile police stations which will help to provide more visible and accessible local policing in the more remote and rural communities across Northamptonshire.

## Making Northamptonshire Safer Fund

Northamptonshire organisations continue to receive a funding boost thanks to my 'Making Northamptonshire Safer Fund' which provides grants of between £3,000 and £10,000 for initiatives that support the aims of the Police and Crime Plan. Details of the grants awarded can be found on my website at:

<https://www.northantspfcc.org.uk/making-northamptonshire-safer-fund-grants-awarded-2020-21/>

## Road Safety Community Fund

Supported by the Northamptonshire Safer Roads Alliance, grants of between £500 and £5,000 will be considered for initiatives that support the Northamptonshire Strategic Road Safety Plan which addresses road safety issues in local areas.

For example, we have worked with parish councils from across the county who were successful in their bids to the Road Safety fund and will use the money to install speed control devices in areas of concern. Details of the grants awarded can be found on my website at:

<https://www.northantspfcc.org.uk/public-funding/grants/road-safety-community-fund>

## Supporting Communities Fund

The Northamptonshire Fire and Rescues Service's Supporting Communities Fund provides grants between £250 and £1000 to Fire Fighters and staff to carry out initiatives that support the aims of the Fire and Rescue Plan.

Supporting Communities Fund 20-21	Scheme	Amount Granted
Op Bells	Bells for Bags	£401.00
Christmas Operation	Purse Bells and Chains	£783.00
Bobby Bears additional funds	Knitted bears to provide to children in DA situations	£84.04
Priority Area Crime Prevention	Alarms and padlocks for issue to victims of crime	£1,000.00
Victim Essentials	Clothing and toiletries packs for victims	£1,000.00
Community Cycling Event	To purchase safety products for gift bags	£524.00
Op Baric Signs for What 3 Words	Lorry thefts	£1,097.00
Op Cougar	Car thefts in Corby	£1,000.00

All of these projects are working in different ways to make their communities a safer place to live. The hard work and creativity that people put in to help make our communities safer and during these very difficult times is inspiring and is helping people who may be at risk from criminality and exploitation.

# Victims at the Heart of Justice

## Victims

During 2020 -2021 organisations working with victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence were able to apply for funding made available by the Ministry of Justice, through my office to support them through the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. Over £409k was awarded (in two rounds) to support and extend domestic and sexual abuse services in Northamptonshire, with the condition that the funding should have been spent by March 2021.

Six organisations were successful in their bid for a share of the funding to tackle short-term disruption to their services due to the pandemic, help support essential costs of their current activities, such as moving to remote working, and to meet increased demand for their services due to Covid-19. Funding was made available from the Ministry of Justice, within separate pots, to organisations who are already commissioned by the PFCC, and to organisations that are not currently commissioned by the

PFCC. This was done with the aim of widening the availability of the funding to reach a greater number of victims.

A summary of the six organisations that were funded and the activity they will provide is below:

- Voice for Victims and Witnesses were awarded over £91k towards:
  - ✧ The purchase of equipment so that emotional and practical support can be provided online, and to increase the ways in which victims can access support,
  - ✧ to undertake a campaign raising awareness on child on parent violence and signposting to relevant support (will work together with the Rise bid below)

- ✧ To provide additional training to staff in relation to domestic abuse and sexual violence with nationally accredited programmes, and
- ✧ to undertake an educational and support programme aimed at the risks facing children and young people online in respect of sexual offences

- RISE CIC were awarded almost £65k for activity which focussed on working with victims of Domestic Abuse where children are violent in the family home. This will involve working with both parents and children and young people through a programme and 1:1 work.
- Northamptonshire Domestic Abuse Alliance were awarded over £73k towards increasing capacity to provide outreach support for children who have experienced Domestic Abuse, this included programme provision and targeted 1:1 work across the county.

- Eve were awarded over £75k - to increase capacity to support adult victims of Domestic Abuse and their children/young people, which involved programmes and 1:1 activity.
- Northamptonshire Rape Crisis were awarded £33k – to increase Independent Sexual Violence Advisor capacity so that more victims were able to receive support, together with additional PPE equipment where face to face contact was necessary.
- ASSIST Trauma Care were awarded over £71k - to provide therapeutic support for victims of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence through delivery of a step by step programme and individual support sessions.

# Victims at the Heart of Justice

## Local Criminal Justice Board

Since March 2020, the Local Criminal Justice Board which I established and chair, continues to draw key criminal justice agencies together to draw up a coordinated response to the COVID pandemic which has had a significant impact on the operation of the local criminal justice system.

In particular, I have both supported and challenged Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) to work differently to reduce the backlog of court cases which has been exacerbated by the pandemic. Unfortunately, the proposed Nightingale Court proved prohibitively expensive and HMCTS are looking to increase court sitting hours as their preferred method of reducing the Crown Court backlog.

I continue to ensure that politicians nationally are focused on the impact of the backlog as we work to ensure that delays in the court process do not cause victims and witnesses to lose confidence in the justice system.

## Reducing Reoffending Board

As chair of the Northants Reducing Reoffending Board, I have agreed several priorities aimed at reducing reoffending.

My office is coordinating the local refresh of the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) scheme.

I am funding an IOM project manager who is working to a multi-agency project board (made up of Police, Probation and local authority representatives).

Next year I have earmarked funding for services to support the coordinated multi agency management of cases within the refreshed scheme. Cases managed by the scheme will include the most prolific local offenders, many of whom cause significant harm to our communities.

## Project NOVA

We are continuing to work with Project NOVA which is a project delivered in a partnership between RFEA (Forces employment charity) and Walking with The Wounded (WWTW). The concept of Project Nova is to provide holistic support to veterans who come into police custody, with the aim of reducing offending. The Project NOVA Coordinator for Northamptonshire will work in direct partnership with NHS Liaison and Diversion Teams who sit within Police Custody, with Police staff and officers within custody suites and the community.

The Coordinator will provide advice, guidance and support to veterans by using a Project Nova network of military charities and local and national organisations that can assist veterans, depending on their individual needs. The role will be peripatetic in nature and their core focus is diversion at point of arrest, in order to prevent repeat offending and/or a prison sentence.

A range of support is offered including assistance with obtaining employment, education and housing needs as well as helping access for support with substance misuse and mental health concerns.

Project NOVA is already running in 18 other Force areas and they have shown some very positive results.

# Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

During the last twelve months, we have all lived through an unprecedented event and a great deal of work was undertaken to ensure that the county was able emerge from lockdown in a safe and sensible way which does not put at risk all the gains we have all collectively made during this difficult period.

It is easy to use words like unprecedented, unique or unparalleled to describe the situation we have all lived through over the last year, but it has also demonstrated how our county's emergency services are able to respond to a difficult and changeable situation.

I am proud of the work our emergency services have undertaken and the positive and pragmatic approach of our officers and staff during the pandemic and the lockdown. We also received a letter from HMICFRS, praising the work of the Force and the Fire Service and the benefits that working more closely together can bring to the frontline.

The financial support we have received has been vital in our response to the pandemic. Colleagues from my office, the force and fire and rescue service have worked incredibly hard to ensure we had the resources available to support the frontline over the last twelve months, and I would like to thank them for their work and dedication.

NFRS's strategic priorities during the Pandemic were:

- To maintain the 999 emergency response service
- Adapt Prevention and Protection activities to support the most vulnerable
- Assist in the multi-agency response to the pandemic
- Ensure the Safety and wellbeing of staff

Over the last year NFRS have maintained a normal response capability, with an average of 20 appliances available on a day to day basis and maintained their standards of response of a first appliance at an average of 10 minutes.

During the Pandemic NFRS's Prevention and Protection teams continued to support the most vulnerable by delivering safe and well checks to those who most needed them while the Protection team focused on ensuring that high risk premises such as care homes and building that were adapted for the homeless were safe.

Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue (NFRS) have played a full part in the multi-agency response being at both the Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG), the Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) the Strategic Co-ordination centre and also relevant sub groups such as the Community Resilience Cell, and Excess Deaths Cell as well as more recently the Vaccination Cell. Most of this has been co-ordinated via the Joint Operations Team.

In the first wave of the pandemic NFRS were undertaking:

- Urgent Care Ambulance driving for East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS)
- Mortuary support, moving the deceased from Hospital mortuaries to the temporary mortuary at Wollaston
- Pharmacy deliveries to those who were shielding to ensure that the most vulnerable received their medication
- A range of logistical support to assist with PPE and food deliveries

During the second wave, from the beginning of December, NFRS stepped up again supporting other agencies by:

- Ambulance driving for EMAS, with staff trained to undertake this activity working shifts as required by EMAS
- Mortuary support, with staff trained and doing two or three days per week moving the deceased to temporary mortuaries
- Clearing snow from the vaccination centres during poor weather to ensure they remained operable

- Assisting with COVID surge testing in Corby
- Twenty volunteers await training to become vaccinators, the plan being for our staff to potentially step in later in the year should volunteers need to return to the own employment

By the 31 March 2021, in addition to lost sales fees and charges, council tax and business rate support grants, NCFRA had received the sum of £841k in COVID grants from the Home Office. Of this amount, £128k was provided towards the cost of providing services with and for other agencies. The sum of £243k has been carried forward to support additional costs in future years, with the balance of £598k spent on:

- Staffing, either backfilling those who are off work or funding those who are doing work supporting other agencies
- PPE
- Hygiene and cleaning materials
- ICT equipment to facilitate home working and remote meetings

# Northamptonshire Police - Operation Talla

Operation Talla is Northamptonshire Police's response to the Covid-19 Coronavirus pandemic.

During the early stages of the pandemic, the Force defined and prioritised which functions were critical to maintain to ensure the core role of policing continued to be met.

The Force defined its critical functions as being able to maintain the ability to deal with:

- Major, Critical and Emergency Incidents
- Serious Crime
- Firearms Incidents
- Protecting Vulnerable People
- Serious Public Order
- Fatal and Serious Road Traffic Collisions
- Ensure the health, safety & well-being of staff through the provision of effective training, equipment, support and governance to deal with operational challenges.

- To provide custody facilities and associated justice department functions
- To deal effectively with all matters which impact upon community cohesion, or the legitimacy of the Force
- To maintain a cadre of Police Staff with specialist knowledge e.g. Firearms and Critical Incident Commanders

In many ways, Northamptonshire Police were both innovative and leaders in the model of approach to Covid-19. The Force was one of the first in the country to identify an elevated risk to visible ethnic minority officers and staff. The risk assessment and associated mitigation was identified as national best practice. The Force was also the first to design and utilise a Joint Enforcement Team for Covid, working closely with partners in joint patrols well ahead of the government introduction of marshals, and culminating in a multi-agency enforcement and compliance team.

The Force Control Room (FCR) ensured that many staff were able to take non-emergency calls from home. Those who were identified as having to 'shield' or were otherwise vulnerable, to continue to provide vital services to the public. Northamptonshire Police also made use of Single Online Home, the national online reporting portal for police forces across the UK. A process for ensuring that incidents reported online were treated with the same expediency as calls was devised, ensuring all reports were turned into incidents. A dedicated team of staff not only monitored the reports but were responsible for re-contacting those who reported personally. This received hugely positive feedback from the public; to date over 14,000 reports have been personally responded to.

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the finances of all public sector organisations and Northamptonshire Police have been similarly impacted. Additional costs have been incurred

in areas such as:

- PPE equipment;
- Arrangements to safeguard staff and buildings;
- Support for agile working, virtual meetings and different ways of working
- Additional funding to support COVID enforcement

Excluding additional support for council tax, as at 31 March 2021, funding of £1.204m has been received and total costs incurred of £1.613m. The Chief Constable and I have sought all available funding opportunities to mitigate the impact of any costs on the policing budget and have also ring fenced the sum of £733k within reserves to support any future costs. In addition to this, in policing, the majority of recently procured PPE equipment was provided directly by the Department of Health.

# Transformation and Estates

## Transformation

My commitment to ensuring my office operates in an open and transparent manner has again been recognised by CoPaCC who have awarded us with their Open and Transparent Quality Mark. Over the years the process, criteria and rigour of this assessment have been refined and strengthened, to support OPCCs to improve standards of transparency. CoPaCC now considers how easy it is for a member of the public to find the information disclosure. This means it's not sufficient to just make the information available, it should be easy to identify where the information can be found and simple to navigate. They expect to see clear, non-technical language and simple navigation to ensure true public transparency. Northamptonshire was one of just 18 OPCCs in England and Wales that scored very well and were highly commended for their work on this important area of work.

## Delivering the Estates Strategy

A great deal of work has been undertaken to radically overhaul and improve both Fire and Police buildings in line with the joint Estates Strategy. This year marked the opening of our new landmark joint building Darby House which is a state of the art two-storey office building in Wellingborough. Once it is fully operational, it will accommodate over 500 police and fire staff and serve as the Fire & Rescue Service HQ. This will help to free up outdated and inefficient police and fire buildings for disposal and allow us to build an estate that will support the effective delivery of emergency services for generations to come.

In addition to this, a new base will be created in Weston Favell for the neighbourhood police team so that they are even closer to the community they serve, as part of a renewed focus on neighbourhood policing in Northamptonshire. The current Weston Favell police station will then be sold.

This development also supports the Force's new focus on neighbourhood policing, which will see a growth in the number of neighbourhood officers who will be based in communities and more visible and accessible to the areas they serve. Weston Favell is currently the town's main response base. It is in a poor state of repair and no longer meets the needs of policing in the area.

The building at Weston Favell is 40 years old and needs significant repairs – work that would cost more than the building is worth. Even if these repairs were carried out, the building does not meet the current operational needs of the Force or the community. The longer term plan to move out of the current Weston Favell station supports the broader strategy of streamlining the number of buildings in the police and fire estate: sharing buildings rather than owning two nearby sites, disposing of those that are expensive to run and providing visible, accessible, practical bases in communities. This will manage costs and allow funds to be focussed on the delivery of frontline services. Over the coming months and years, there are plans to develop the fire stations at Daventry and Towcester into shared police and fire buildings and to dispose of the nearby police stations.

Northamptonshire Police and Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service will share buildings wherever possible. The two services already share some support teams and the move to joint buildings will encourage even closer working and strengthen support to the front line.

A new, joint garage workshop has been purchased in Earls Barton which will be the base for a joint police and fire fleet team and will open the way for further streamlining: The old Fire Service headquarters at Moulton can now be sold and the small retained fire station in Earls Barton can eventually be disposed of, with a new fire station being incorporated into the new workshop site, subject to any future planning permission.

Significant investments have been made in Northamptonshire Police and the Fire and Rescue Service over the last four years. We have more police officers than ever before and have been able to expand neighbourhood policing teams. Our police and fire buildings need to put neighbourhood officers in the heart of the community and to be shared, so that they cost taxpayers the least amount possible.

## New bespoke police training centre opens in Weston Favell

Giffard House, the new Northamptonshire Police training centre in Northampton, was officially opened by the Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP.

Giffard House was purchased last year and the interior of the building has since undergone a complete refurbishment. It has now been transformed into a modern and professional, bespoke police training facility that will enable the Force to deliver a range of training to new recruits and existing officers and staff alike. The new facility is an important investment for policing in the county and will add much needed capacity that will support the Force's drive to recruit hundreds more police officers. It replaces two small modular buildings in the driveway at Wootton Hall that were earmarked for replacement more than 10 years ago.

Northamptonshire Police is seeking to attract and recruit another 200 police officers over the next few years and those new recruits need to be trained to the highest standards. The investment in a new training hub was vital to create a professional learning environment that I believe now is one of the best in the region. Giffard House is an important addition to the Force estate and will ensure we are able to continue to provide effective, professional and quality training in a much improved and dedicated learning environment for many years to come.

# Improving Technology and Digitisation

## Cyber Alarm

The cyber security monitoring tool was developed with a local Northamptonshire company and piloted using businesses in Northamptonshire with funding from my office. Due to the success of the project, the Police Cyber Alarm has had new features added and is now being rolled out nationally. Cyber Alarm is a free monitoring tool, which includes vulnerability scanning and helps businesses to protect themselves against cyber threats. The data collected from the tool also helps policing to identify trends and emerging threats in cyber crime. The data collected can also be used to assist in investigations.

Cyber crime can be at best disruptive and at worst truly devastating for businesses and organisations. Policing online crime is one of the biggest challenges that policing faces today and it continues to increase. That's why I will continue to champion the development of systems like Cyber Alarm, which provide a tool to help an organisation take steps to protect itself, as well as gathering intelligence that can be used to help organisations take steps to protect themselves. I'm proud that the system has proved its value and will now be used to help protect more widely around the country.

## Northamptonshire Cyber Security Forum

The Commissioner holds a Cyber Security Forum every month to provide an opportunity for IT directors, managers and specialists from any business or public sector organisation in Northamptonshire to come together with police to discuss and understand cyber security threats. Due to the pandemic this Forum was then taken online through MS Teams. There have been numerous presentations from Forum attendees for subjects such as account compromise, safer online shopping, threat landscape and enterprise IT monitoring.

The Forum is well attended by various organisations not only in Northamptonshire but also from organisations within the East Midlands. The Forum also provides an informal support network for businesses and organisations to discuss their experiences and garner technical advice and guidance from cyber experts. This Forum has a collaboration with Digital Northampton and has supported the Merged Futures event, now in its third year. Merged Futures is an opportunity to showcase the digital innovation across Northamptonshire and spread the cyber security message across local businesses.

## Digital Evidence Management System (DEMS)

The new Digital Evidence Management System (DEMS) has streamlined digital evidence collection and sharing and was fully rolled out to the Force, following a very successful pilot, in March 2020. This system provides better tooling for our investigators by drawing on integrations from numerous source systems to put digital evidence all in one place. It enables investigators to locate, view and manage digital material within one single system. In addition, it allows sharing of digital material with other agencies, such as the CPS, and the public can upload and share their images with us, such as photographs and CCTV. The system is already proving to have many benefits in time-saving and efficiency, audio and video files can be redacted in situ using an intuitive interface and other Forces can now share critical digital information electronically.

## Microsoft 365

The Force are now well underway with the National Enabling Programme (NEP), which is providing the IT foundation for a digitally enabled and collaborative Police Force nationally. This includes a new productivity suite (Microsoft 365), identity management and a national monitoring capability. A significant portion of the workforce has been migrated to MS365 which has allowed collaborative working throughout the pandemic with the use of MS Teams. With this new productivity suite, more opportunities to increase effectiveness will follow with the optimisation happening this year.

## Fire infrastructure

NFRS have made significant improvements to their underlying infrastructure this year to enable the service to become more digitally focussed and improve collaboration. The rollout of Microsoft Teams has also enabled the service to work more effectively whilst remotely located.

# Complaints against Northamptonshire Police

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 gave the PFCC additional responsibilities in relation to complaints. The aim of the legislation was to:

- Improve public confidence and satisfaction
- Provide a more customer focused service
- Increase transparency
- Make appeals more effective by providing greater independence
- Make the process more time efficient
- Simplify the system
- Enable trends and areas for concern to be identified more effectively

All PCCs became the relevant review body for less serious complaints and were given additional oversight and accountability responsibilities in relation to the complaints process. Prior to the implementation of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, a complaint was only considered recordable where it related to the conduct of a specific officer. Post February 2020, the definition of a complaint has been updated to 'any expression of dissatisfaction'.

The OPFCC Complaints and Customer Service Team is responsible for recording all complaints against the Force, the informal resolution of low-level complaints and for ensuring that all reviews are appropriately processed and considered. The standards of recording have shifted to a two-tier approach.

This means that complaints that are successfully service-recovered by the Customer Service Team are not formally recorded under schedule 3 of the Police Reform Act. They are logged using the same system as those formally recorded to ensure that there is continuity, a clear audit trail and to ensure accurate records are maintained.

Whilst the Customer Service Team are increasing the percentage of complaints dealt with by service recovery, they have effectively dealt with 196 complaints that did not need to be submitted to the Professional Standards Department and 570 other matters that would have otherwise required action from the Force.

We had estimated that the Customer Service Team would deal with approximately 1634 matters per year, which is likely to be slightly high given the figures below, however given that reviews are now being carried out by the Customer Service Team, this is a good balance.

Number of complaints against Northamptonshire Police 2020-21

Type of complaint	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Total
<b>Schedule 3</b>	35	31	22	45	51	67	55	31	28	44	27	30	35	499
<b>Service Recovery</b>	17	12	11	23	17	12	15	24	23	42	32	42	35	305
<b>Other</b>	44	49	43	41	54	51	73	80	66	69	45	57	56	728
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>1542</b>

# Holding the Chiefs to Account

Throughout the year, I hold formal Accountability Board meetings to hold both the Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer to account for the performance of their respective organisations. These meetings help undertake one of my statutory duties on behalf of the residents of Northamptonshire and they form part of a wider ranging programme of assurance across the breadth of both policing and fire and rescue activities.

The Boards scrutinise areas of concern in relation to performance and service delivery at a strategic level and allow for open and constructive discussions in respect of performance, strategic budget setting, medium term financial planning and other matters requiring ongoing levels of assurance. The minutes of these meetings are publicly available on my website and can be found at: <https://www.northantspfcc.org.uk/police-fire-accountability-boards/>

Over the last twelve months, I have raised a number of important and wide-ranging issues and where necessary sought further clarification that they are being dealt with and performance is improving. For Northamptonshire Police, these included:

Information relating to the positive outcome rates for the following areas for Northamptonshire Police:

- All Crime
- Burglary (residential and commercial)
- Rape and serious sexual offences
- Violence (all and by category)
- Domestic Abuse
- Knife Crime
- Shoplifting

From the information I received, I was assured that under the leadership of the Chief Constable and wider Chief Officer Team improvements were being seen in relation to positive outcomes. I am confident that the Chief Constable has a vision for Northamptonshire Police to become an excellent force and that positive outcome levels needs to form a part of the achievement of this vision. Whilst I accept that further improvements need to be made in this area, the force appear to understand where the gaps are and where improvements relating to peer performance need to be made. This important information is kept under constant review.

An annual update specifically relating to domestic abuse which covers the levels of recorded incidents and crimes over a three-year period and the rates of positive action and victim satisfaction. This year I was assured that the Force overall had a good response to domestic abuse, a fact borne out in some respects by the satisfaction levels of victims of these crimes. I believe there is a need for a fuller understanding and greater insight about what services victims expect or require when contacting the police to better meet victim needs at the point of contact. This is something that I will continue to work with the Force on.

The Force's work with the Information Commissioner's Office to improve their performance and I was assured that progress had been made in this area., notably in relation to the management of Freedom of Information requests. I was assured by the Chief Constable that progress was continuing in terms of performance and resource recruitment. This is an important part of the business in relation to transparency and I was provided with reassurance that plans were in place and on track to deliver and demonstrate good progress to the ICO.

Since the governance of Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service was transferred to the OPFCC, a great deal of work has been undertaken to invest in the service and improve its performance. The Fire Accountability Board has played a key role in ensuring that we continue to build on the hard-won investment and improvements we have been able to deliver.

Over the last twelve months, I have sought information and assurance in relation to the performance of the service, as well as on a number of series issues that have far reaching implications for the safety of our residents.

I receive regular reports on the performance of the Fire and Rescue Service set against the measures and metrics contained within the Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP). I have been able to commend the service for the significant improvements in pump availability and the increase in the number of firefighters achieved within the tight financial constraints facing the service. Overall the performance figures look positive and I have impressed on the Service the need to maintain the performance they had achieved.

# Holding the Chiefs to Account

Following the Grenfell Tower Fire and the Manchester Arena bombing there has been some scrutiny of the London and Greater Manchester Fire Services in terms of their response at those scenes. Whilst it is accepted that the findings of the inquiries into these two incidents is not complete, I requested a level of assurance relating to the planned responses to this type of incident by Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service. I was assured that Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue service had done all that was possible for them to do in order to respond effectively to a range of potential terrorist or major incidents. I was also both assured and pleased that both NFRS and Northamptonshire Police had adopted the principles of The Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) and that having a shared Fire and Police Joint Operations Team supported this. I welcomed the fact that NFRS was involved at a national level in supporting the agenda for some of this work, notably in some specialist roles and I have encouraged the Chief Fire Officer in conjunction

with the Chief Constable to ensure that joint agency training and operations took place where appropriate and possible, to include the scoping around a joint Fire and Police control room function.

Road traffic collisions can have a devastating and dramatic impact on victims and their families. Therefore, I requested a report on the progress being made to achieve an average response time (for all incidents) of 10 minutes as detailed within the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IPMP) 2019/22. I was pleased with the work undertaken to reduce response times overall and to increase appliance availability. I was reassured that good progress has been made in reducing response times to all types of incidents, as well as overall since the governance transfer in January 2019. Recognising that RTC response times are those that are most difficult to achieve in 10 minutes, I was reassured that the Chief Fire Officer has a plan to seek to reduce these further and I will receive a formal update in relation to this at a future accountability board.

The impact of this work can be seen in the positive feedback we have received from HMICFRS. Zoe Billingham, who is the HMICFRS Inspector for the East Midlands, has formally recognised that Northamptonshire Police has addressed many of the important areas of concern and has made good progress. She also states that we have put significant effort into reviewing and changing many aspects of the force. In relation to the Fire and Rescue Service, she has stated that overall, HMICFRS were pleased that Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service has improved how it manages its fire engine availability, and how it maintains and assures itself about the competence of its staff. They have recognised that considerable work that has been carried out to support these improvements. As a result, they now consider sufficient action has been taken to close the causes of concern they had.

This is very welcome and positive feedback and highlights the considerable hard work and determination of the OPFCC, Northamptonshire Police and The Fire and Rescue Service to improve our emergency services to deliver a safer Northamptonshire. This feedback has confirmed my view that effective progress is made and continues to be made in relation to the performance and service delivery of both Northamptonshire Police and Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service. There are still improvements to be made in both organisations however I remain confident that the positive progress seen so far will continue, with appropriate support and challenge from myself and my office.

# 2020-21 Budget and Financial Outturn

The PFCC is the recipient of all funding for both Fire and Policing. This includes all central funding, Business rates (Fire) and funding raised by the Council Tax precepts, one precept related to Fire and Rescue Services and one related to Policing and Crime reduction.

Under current legislation. Fire and Rescue and Police have separate council tax precepts, funding streams and budgets.

How this money is allocated in each service is a matter for the PFCC, except in relation to a small number of specific grants (such as those for counter-terrorism in policing). The PFCC consults the Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer when setting his budgets and they provide professional advice and recommendations.

A public consultation carried out at the end of 2020 informed our 2020-21 budgets and considerations for the year. These were set out in detail in my precept proposals as considered by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel in February 2020. Headlines include:

## 2020-21 Fire Budget

Total Budget £25.3m

98% allocated to Chief Fire Officer

1% allocated to OPFCC

1% allocated to Fund Capital Expenditure

Band D Council Tax £61.97

## 2020-21 Police Budget

Total Budget £146.8m

93% allocated to Chief Constable

4% Delivery and Commissioning

2% Funding Capital Expenditure

1% OPFCC

Band D Council Tax £255.04

# Joint Independent Audit Committee (JIAC)

During the year I received and considered regular financial monitoring reports in Policing and Fire I scrutinised and challenged them in detail at the Force and Fire Accountability Board meetings. I also received regular financial monitoring reports for Fire. I provided regular financial update reports throughout the year to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable and Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (NCFRA) produce Statement of Accounts each year and the deadline for the draft accounts to be published for 2020-21 is 31 August 2021.

Work is in progress to close the accounts for 2020-21. A detailed financial outturn, together with an assessment of reserves and financial outlook for both Police and Fire will be contained within the 2020-21 Statement of Accounts which are produced separately for each service. Work is underway to produce the three sets of accounts and it is anticipated that the statutory date will be met. The accounts will be subject to external audit.

Copies of both the draft and the final audited accounts will be available on both the Police and Crime Commissioner and Force websites in line with the statutory timescale.

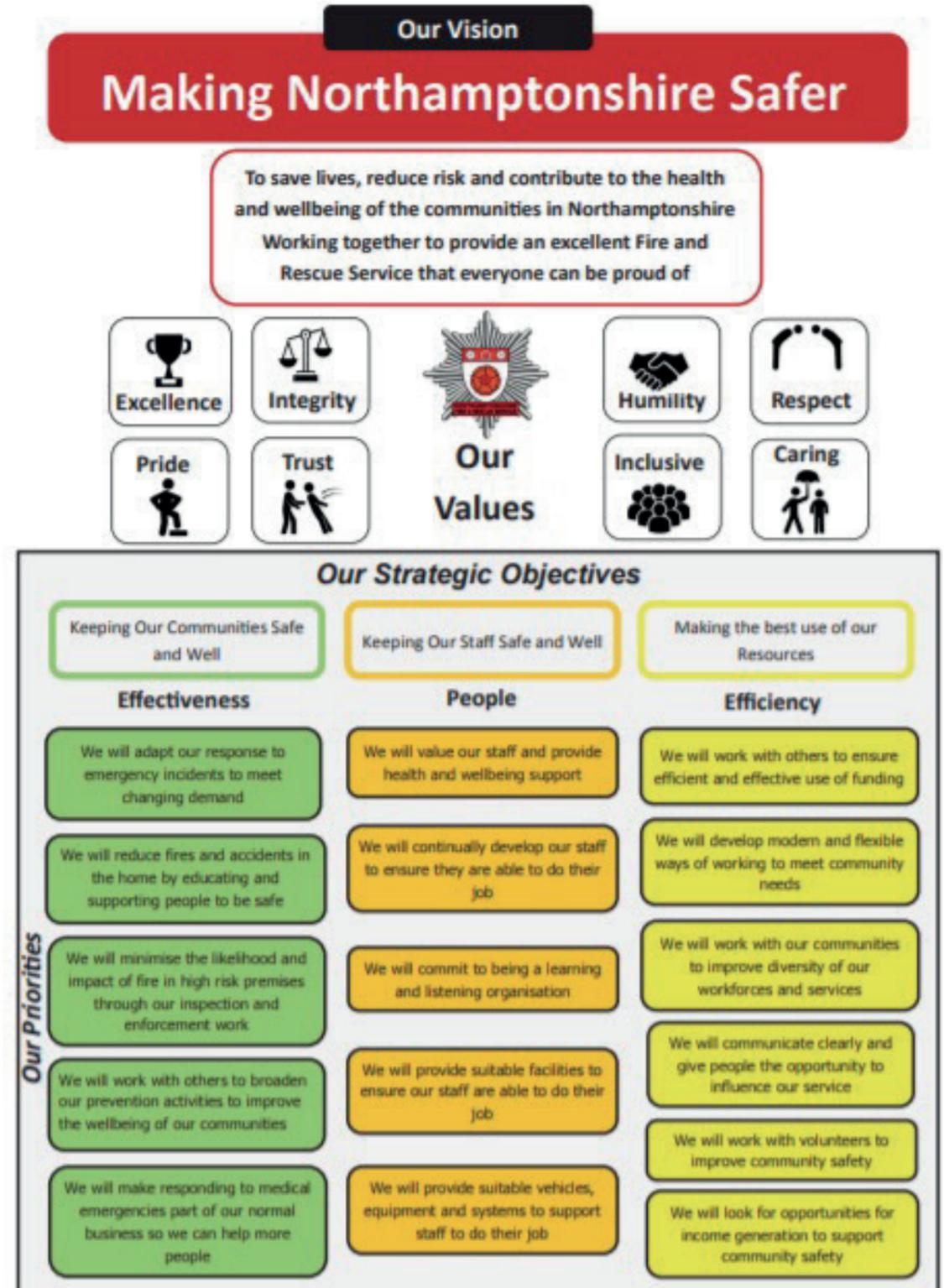
The Joint Independent Audit Committee provides independent assurance on the adequacy of the corporate governance and risk management arrangements in place and the associated control environment, advising according to good governance principles and proper practices.

The Committee supports the Northamptonshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Chief Constable, Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority and statutory officers in ensuring that effective governance are in place and functioning efficiently and effectively and making any recommendations for improvement.

The Committee produces an annual report and presents to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel annually.

Details of the Joint Independent Audit Committee, its members and its work can be found on the OPFCC website.

<https://www.northantspfcc.org.uk/our-information/jiac/>



# Work Delivered by NFRS

## Strategic Response Capability

The Service pledged to maintain a minimum of 14 fire engines to support our strategic response capability. Over the last 18 months, the Service has worked hard to achieve this and have increased average appliance availability from 16 to 20. This means that more Fire engines are available to immediately respond to incidents across the County.

Improved appliance availability has meant that average response times to all incidents within the County have improved month on month since the governance change to the PFCC. In December 2018, average response times were 11 minutes 36 seconds. This has now reduced to the agreed SOR time of a 10-minute average to all incidents. In addition, these improvements have been delivered against a backdrop of reducing overtime costs.

This improvement in strategic capability was crucial during the Christmas period when the service received over 300 calls to flooding incidents in the 48 hours from Christmas eve. This included the wide scale evacuation of the Billing Aquadrome caravan site which was completely flooded requiring specialist boat teams from 3 Fire Services as well as crews from across the County. This was in addition to wide scale flooding caused by the very heavy rainfall on Christmas eve which left many County residents the victim of surface water flooding.

## NFRS Pandemic Response

Early in the pandemic, NFRS became one of the fire and rescue services asked to take part in work that included performing tasks such as driving Urgent Care Ambulance for East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) and the safe moving and handling of patients. In total, 25 firefighters from NFRS took part in supporting the work of EMAS during the Covid-19 pandemic.

All the firefighters who have supported this work for EMAS have volunteered to take this on and it has been a huge learning experience for them and a rewarding one. In order to carry out the work alongside Urgent Care colleagues in EMAS, firefighters undertook specialist training to gain the skills needed to perform their new roles. NFRS Firefighters remain ready to resume their role supporting EMAS should the need arise.

Firefighters also assisted in work around excess deaths by assisting in the movement of the deceased from the hospital mortuaries to the Temporary Mortuary set up at Wollaston. The Fire service volunteered to undertake this task as they wanted to utilise their experience to ensure that the deceased were treated with dignity and respect while being moved.

Throughout the pandemic, firefighters and non-operational staff worked to help those who are shielding and at particular risk from Covid-19 by volunteering to aid in pharmacy deliveries to people's homes. In total, firefighters from 11 of NFRS's on-call fire stations assisted in the deliveries. Support has also been provided by whole-time crews and members of NFRS's Home Safety Team. The Fire and Rescue Service were asked to help support with pharmacy deliveries quite soon after lockdown began as the pandemic left so many people particularly

vulnerable to the worst effects of Covid-19, so having access to medication deliveries at home went some way to minimising their daily risk levels.

Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service has won praise for its 'positive contribution' to the community during the coronavirus pandemic. The service has supported other agencies in a tough year by helping to drive ambulances, deliver food and medicine, check on care homes and homeless people, and transfer the deceased from hospitals to the temporary mortuary facility at Wollaston.

In August 2020, the Home Secretary asked HMICFRS to inspect how Fire & Rescue Services in England were responding to the pandemic. And in a recent letter to the Chief Fire Officer Darren Dovey, announcing her findings, Inspector Zoe Billingham said: "I am very grateful to your service for the positive contribution you have made to your community during the pandemic." The report shows how NFRS has managed to balance its COVID response while maintaining its core role of responding to calls from the public and attending emergencies.

Firefighters and staff have gone the extra mile to look after the vulnerable and to protect lives in Northamptonshire and I don't underestimate the pressure that comes with continuing the day job while taking on roles to support other organisations and I thank everyone for the way they have got on with the task in hand. I am glad that the report also notes how well fire and police have worked together in response to the pandemic, and that has laid the foundations for even closer working in the future.

## Enabling Services

A great deal of work has been undertaken to deliver our Enabling Services function which is bringing together services such as HR, ICT, Fleet, Estates and Facilities and Finance across Police and Fire and Rescue to make them as efficient and effective as possible, which will help us to deliver improvements to our front-line services. We now have new Joint leads for all these services and the move to Darby House will bring geographically disparate teams from both services under the same roof for the first time in the history of both services.

A review of the ICT systems being used by the Fire and Rescue Service has been undertaken that will help deliver efficiencies and enable us to IT systems that can properly talk to each other and support front line operational working.

Finally, a review of the capital programme for the service and the work being undertaken to purchase new fire appliances has progressed well with 8 new appliances to be delivered over the next two years the tender having been awarded. In addition, the specification for a new aerial (high reach) appliance was released to the market before Christmas 2020 with the tender being awarded soon afterwards with a new aerial appliance now in build for delivery in the next year. The disposal of old fire appliances is undertaken through a framework to ensure the best return on them in order to meet best value requirements.

## Prevention and Fire Protection

Following the closure of businesses and waste centres in the first national lockdown, Fire Protection officers were tasked with contacting and/or visiting all waste sites within the county to understand if there were any developing or emerging risks.

Within the first week of the first national lockdown, Protection officers undertook a significant change in the application of their legislative function. Due to the pandemic and the impacts of the lockdown, proactive physical visits ceased and the Service reviewed the community risk and reapplied staff in way that met the emerging risk.

The Service targeted care premises which provided accommodation to those who were both vulnerable and in need of assistance when evacuating a fire. As physical attendance to provide advice would create a risk of infection spread, the Service called all relevant premises before the end of April. The key aim was to discuss staffing levels, contingencies and evacuation which allowed for a focused discussion with managers of these premises and

open dialogue for assistance and advice. As the pandemic evolved and premises began to re-open, we targeted officer activity towards schools. These premises presented a significant community risk and, due to measures taken to become Covid secure, there was a clear risk that fire precautions could be compromised. The Service's experience of undertaking remote auditing activity under Covid restrictions has helped us develop systems and processes which allow the team to recommence the risk-based inspection program. Officers can now maximise their activity away from premises to help understand the risks onsite prior to their physical inspections and be better prepared to target their time onsite.

NFRS's prevention team continued to deliver Safe and Well checks to those who are most vulnerable in society in addition to being fully embedded with other partner agencies in the community resilience cell. This ensured that those who needed assistance were able to receive it. The prevention team also co-ordinated the Pharmacy delivery programme as previously mentioned.

## Multi-agency response to COVID

As can be seen the Fire and Rescue Service have played a full part in the multi-agency COVID response. In addition to the activity already mentioned the Police and Fire Joint Operations Team (JOT) played a significant role in co-ordinating the many agencies responding by managing the Strategic Co-ordination Centre. The Service has been embedded as an active partner within the multi-agency arrangements since the beginning of the pandemic.

## Response to the Grenfell Tower enquiry Phase 1

The Service is responding positively to the requirements that are coming from the Grenfell Tower enquiries, enquiries that are having an impact on the sector as a whole. The wide-ranging plan includes the equipping of all appliances with smoke hoods. The hoods offer a one-time use for 15 minutes of protection from breathing in toxic fumes during a fire. They were first deployed by firefighters from the Mounts, Moulton and Brixworth who attended a first-floor fire at a block of flats in Oakley Street, Northampton in the early hours of January 22. Station Commander Richie Stevens explained that the building was filled with very thick smoke and if they had not had the smoke hoods, there is a good chance that the man and woman who were rescued would have needed medical attention. Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service bought 120 smoke hoods using special funding secured from the Government to support developments after the Grenfell fire. Additionally, the Service has introduced new high-rise bags and has purchased new digital radios both of which will improve the incident command at high rise incidents.



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## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL

**17 JUNE 2021**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Northamptonshire Police, Fire &amp; Crime Panel's statutory responsibilities relating to review of the Fire &amp; Rescue Statement for 2020/21 produced by the Police, Fire &amp; Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire.</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	<b>James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager, West Northamptonshire Council</b> <a href="mailto:James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk">James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk</a>

Contributors/Checkers/Approvers		
<b>West MO</b> (for West and joint papers)	Catherine Whitehead	08/06/2021
<b>West S151</b> (for West and joint papers)	Martin Henry	07/06/2021

### List of Appendices

**None**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1. The report is intended to set out the statutory requirements on the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel to review the Fire & Rescue Statement for 2020/21 produced by the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire.

#### **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1 The report summarises the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel's statutory responsibilities relating to reviewing and making a report on the Fire & Rescue Statement for 2020/21 produced by the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire. This Fire & Rescue Statement appears on the agenda for the current Panel meeting as the next item of business.

### **3. Recommendations**

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- 3.1 It is recommended that the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel reviews the Fire & Rescue Statement for 2020/21 produced by the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire.
- 3.2 Reasons for Recommendation(s) – The recommendation is intended to enable the Panel to carry out its statutory responsibilities relating to scrutiny of the Fire & Rescue Statement effectively at the current meeting.

### **4. Report Background**

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- 4.1 The Fire & Rescue National Framework for England sets out the government’s priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities. Every fire and rescue authority must have regard to the National Framework in carrying out its functions. Every authority must publish an annual statement of assurance of compliance with the National Framework (“the Fire & Rescue Statement”). This requirement applies to Police & Crime commissioners who take on the functions of a fire and rescue authority under the provisions of the Policing & Crime Act 2017, as is the case in Northamptonshire.
- 4.2 The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (sections 12 and 28) as amended by the Policing & Crime Act 2017 Schedule 1 requires that the Fire & Rescue Statement published by a Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner must be subject to scrutiny by the relevant Police, Fire & Crime Panel.
- 4.3 The Fire & Rescue Statement must be sent to the relevant Police, Fire & Crime Panel as soon as practicable following its publication by the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner.
- 4.4 The Police, Fire & Crime Panel must arrange a public meeting of the Panel to be held as soon as practicable after the Panel receives the Fire & Rescue Statement.
- 4.5 The Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner must attend the relevant meeting of the Panel to present the Fire & Rescue Statement and to answer such questions from the Panel about it as the Panel members think appropriate.
- 4.6 The Police, Fire & Crime Panel must then review the Fire & Rescue Statement and make a report outlining any recommendations to the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner. The report or recommendations of the Panel must also be published.
- 4.7 The Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner must provide a response to the panel and must also publish that response.

## **5. Issues and Choices**

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- 5.1 The current Panel meeting is the first to take place in the 2021/22 municipal year and following the re-election of Mr Stephen Mold to serve as the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire for the next three years. Mr Mold has now produced a Fire & Rescue Statement for 2020/21 and this has been sent to the Panel to review, reflecting the requirements summarised in section 4 of this report.
- 5.2 Reviewing and reporting on this Fire & Rescue Statement is a mandatory task for the Police, Fire & Crime Panel. The Panel should seek to carry it out in accordance with its overall role of scrutinising and supporting the effective exercise by the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner of his responsibilities.

## **6. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **6.1 Resources and Financial**

- 6.1.1 There are no resources or financial implications arising from the proposal.

### **6.2 Legal**

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

### **6.3 Risk**

- 6.3.1 There are no significant risks arising from the proposed recommendation in this report.

## **7. Background Papers**

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Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011

Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel Terms of Reference.

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## Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire & Rescue Authority Annual Report & Fire & Rescue Statement 2020/21

### 1. Introduction & Background

- 1.1 The Fire and Rescue National Framework sets out a requirement for Fire and Rescue Authorities to provide annual assurance on financial, governance and operational matters. In addition, the annual report is required to show due regard to:
- The Fire and Rescue National Framework
  - The Fire and Rescue Plan for the area
  - The Integrated Risk Management Plan for the area
- 1.2 This year's statement comes at the end of a year that continues under the governance of Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. It also reflects performance within a year of Global pandemic in which the Service has had to restrict face to face preventative and protection visits during periods of lockdown, deliver elements of its service in innovative ways and assist other agencies to deliver other community priorities through a collaborative response model.
- 1.3 In addition, the service has been subject to a revisit from the inspection team of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services to view progress made against the causes of concern and recommendations made as a result of the inspection in November 2018, and to conduct a covid-19 inspection. Further detail is found in section 6: Operational Assurance.

### 2. Performance

- 2.1 The Authority continues to monitor progress against the Fire and Rescue Plan and an Integrated Risk Management Plan. Community outcome measures and operational objectives are included within the plans.

### 3. Community Outcome Measures:

		2020/21						
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2019/20 EOY	2020/21 EOY	Compared to previous EOY
NI 33 (A)	No. of Deliberate Primary Fires per 10,000 population	0.67	0.80	0.68	0.48	3.79	2.64	↓
NI 33 (B)	No. of Deliberate Secondary Fires per 10,000 population	1.55	1.35	0.78	0.74	5.82	4.42	↓
NI 49 (1)	No. of Primary Fires per 100,000 population	29.72	29.72	27.31	22.49	132.80	109.24	↓
NI 49 (2)	No. of Fatalities in Primary Fires per 100,000 population	0.00	0.13	0.00	0.27	0.13	0.40	↑
NI 49 (3)	No. of Non-fatal Casualties in Primary Fires per 100,000 population	1.61	0.94	0.40	1.07	3.48	4.02	↑
BVPI 143 (i)	The No. of deaths arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population	0.00	0.13	0.00	0.00	0.13	0.13	→
BVPI 143 (ii)	The No. of injuries (excluding precautionary checks), arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population	0.67	0.40	0.13	0.67	2.81	1.87	↓
BVPI 142 (iii)	Accidental fires in Dwellings per 10,000 dwellings	2.64	2.30	2.54	2.40	10.49	9.89	↓
BVPI 207	Non-Domestic Primary Fires per 1000 Non-Domestic	1.04	1.19	1.39	0.88	6.13	4.50	↓
LPI 8ai	LPI 8ai Sickness - Wholetime (days/shift lost per head)	1.44	1.11	2.81	1.63	7.00	8.04	↑
BV 12 (ii)	Sickness Absence (All staff, excluding RDS)	1.58	1.64	2.74	1.62	7.59	8.68	↑

		2020/21						
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2019/20 EOY	2020/21 EOY	
	Home Fire Safety Checks and refits completed	305	486	434	546	5376	1771	↓
LPI 77	Total number of Protective Full Risk Inspections (FI) and Re-Inspections (RI) Completed	27	42	101	52	735	222	↓
LPI 78	Percentage of Protective Risk Inspections in high risk areas (sleeping risk)	88.89%	80.00%	71.11%	72.73%	78.26	75.72	↓
	Average of Full Response Time*	9.49	9.53	10.10	10:17	10.19	10.17	↓

\*\*The quarterly figures are not cumulative

### Table Notes:

**NI 49 (2)** - No. of Fatalities in Primary Fires per 100,000 population – This indicator includes all fire related fatalities in all property types (not just accidental dwelling fires). During 2020/21 there were 3 fire fatalities, 2 of which were within vehicles and one within a property.

**NI 49 (3)** - No. of Non-fatal Casualties in Primary Fires per 100,000 population – There was an overall increase of 30 non-fire casualties in 2020/21 compared to 26 within 2019/20. The majority of non-fire casualties related to injuries which appear to be slight (20 people). A total of 6 people were taken to hospital with what appeared to be serious injuries. More casualties were taken to hospital as a result of the fire being considered deliberate (or where there was intent to cause damage but not deliberate ignition).

**BVPI 143 (i)** - The No. of deaths arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population – This figure has remained at the same level as the previous year.

**LPI 8ai** - Sickness - Wholetime (days/shift lost per head) – Sickness for Wholetime overall has risen during 2020/21, this is partly due to the recording of Covid related absences which included confirmed and non-confirmed symptoms. In 2019/20 there was a rise in Musculoskeletal sickness (400 more sickness days across all staff types), this was reduced significantly during 2020/21, with 234 days lost to Musculoskeletal absence across the Wholetime.

**LPI 12 (ii)** - Sickness Absence (All staff, excluding On-Call) – Although we have had fewer days lost regarding sickness (580 fewer sickness days/shifts lost in 2020/21), the impacts of Covid absence due to confirmed/non-confirmed symptoms has impacted on the overall sickness figures.

**Home Fire Safety Checks and refits completed** - Home Fire Safety Visit (HFSV) numbers continue to be lower than the previous year as Prevention is still working within the NFCC Strategic Intentions during COVID to target only those at most highest risk. Though the number of visits is lower, 100% of these are for those at the highest level of risk – Very High and many with complex needs.

**LPI 77/LPI 78** - Total number of Protective Full Risk Inspections (FI) and Re-Inspections (RI) Completed – The total number of Full Risk inspections, Re-Inspections and Protective Risk Inspections have been impacted by the Covid Pandemic restrictions. A high number of inspections were completed via remote auditing and there has been a gradual return to more routine fire safety audits with the 3 year risk based inspection program starting to be rolled out, originally due to start 1st April 2020. There is a planned change to the future reporting statistics will be a progress report against the premises which the department will plan to proactively inspect within the 3 year risk based inspection program.

**Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service Response to Covid-19 Pandemic** (data time period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 unless otherwise stated)

Activity	Total	Commentary
Total Calls to Fire Control	12187 Calls handled by Fire Control 4846 Total Incidents	This included localised flooding and national lockdown periods. An overall reduction of Road Traffic Incidents by 34.2%
Average Appliance Availability	20 Appliances	The Service maintained on average 20 appliances per day from 1 <sup>st</sup> July 2020 – 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2021.
Collaborative working with partner agencies (EMAS and NHS)	1096 shifts conducted with EMAS 26 NFRS Volunteers	The Service supported EMAS with Ambulance driving transporting patients. The Service also supported local hospitals with mortuary work from 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2020 – 2 <sup>nd</sup> May 2021.
Wellbeing Support	55 wellbeing referrals 39 wellbeing calls 1 hour average time spent per wellbeing case	The Wellbeing Team supported 59 individuals during the pandemic, with a total of 39 wellbeing calls made to check in on volunteers who supported EMAS and Body Movement Teams
Pharmacy Deliveries	2959 Pharmacy Deliveries	Pharmacy Deliveries were made to the vulnerable people in our community

## **4. Financial Assurance**

- 4.1 The Authority is responsible for ensuring that our Services business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for. The Authority is required to ensure that finances are used to ensure a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 4.2 Regular financial monitoring reports are considered monthly by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and regularly throughout the year at the Accountability Board. Financial updates are considered by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel throughout the year.
- 4.3 Financial performance, level of reserves and medium term financial outlook is included within the annual NCFRA Statement of Accounts.
- 4.4 Since the Governance change on 1 January 2019, the Authority has produced two Statement of Accounts:
- The 2018/19 accounts cover the 3 month period 1 January to 31 March 2019 , and
  - The 2019/20 accounts cover the 12 month period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.
- 4.5 The Statement of Accounts were produced ensuring compliance with Codes of Practice issued by CIPFA and include within it an Annual Governance Statement which assesses controls within the Authority, making recommendations for changes in the following year.
- 4.6 The pre-audit Statement of Accounts for 2019/20 were published by the statutory deadline of the 31 August 2020 and a workshop took place with auditors, officers and Joint Independent Audit Committee members scrutinising the Statements in September 2020.
- 4.7 The Statement of Accounts were externally audited by Ernst and Young and the accounts, alongside the audit report to those charged with governance (the ISA260) were signed off and received an unqualified audit opinion on 31 March 2021.
- 4.8 The 2019/20 audited Statement of Accounts can be found at the following link:
- <https://www.northantspfcc.org.uk/our-information/financial-information/>
- 4.9 Work is well progressed on the 2020/21 statement of accounts for NCFRA which cover the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. The pre-audit Statement of Accounts will be published prior to the statutory deadline and available on the PFCC website after that time, with the external audit taking place shortly after this date.

## 5. Governance Assurance

- 5.1 The governance of Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service is the responsibility of The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire
- 5.2 Governance is concerned with how the Authority manages its affairs on a day to day basis including its business practices, standards of conduct and overall management procedures. The 'rules' for how the Authority conducts business are set out in the Corporate Governance Framework which can be found [here](#).
- 5.3 For the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 20, the Authority prepared an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) as part of the Statement of Accounts and which included:
- an acknowledgement of responsibility for ensuring there is a sound system of governance and system of internal control;
  - a brief description of the key elements of the governance arrangements including explicit areas such as internal audit and risk management;
  - a brief description of the process that has been applied in maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance arrangements;
  - an evaluation of the level of assurance that the systems and processes that comprise the governance arrangements can provide an outline of the actions taken, or proposed, to deal with significant governance and internal control issues.
- 5.4 The 2019/20 Annual Governance Statement for the Authority for the 12 month period is included in the Statement of Accounts and can be found by accessing the link above.
- 5.5 With 2019/20 as a full year of Internal Audit for NCFRA, the Chief Internal Auditor provided his annual opinion on the NCFRA Internal Control environment which he assessed as **"Satisfactory."**
- 5.6 This Chief Internal Auditor's opinion was considered by the PFCC and statutory officers charged with governance in the formulation of the Annual Governance Statement for the year and the report and opinion were considered in full at the Joint Independent Audit Committee (JIAC) in July 2020.

## 6. Operational Assurance

- 6.1 The Northamptonshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority has carried out its functions in accordance with the defined statutory and policy framework in which it is required to operate. The key documents setting this out are:
- [the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#)

- [the Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)
- [the Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)
- [the Fire and Rescue Services \(Emergencies\) \(England\) Order 2007](#)
- [the Localism Act 2011](#)
- [the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#)
- [the Health and Safety Act at Work etc Act 1974](#)

6.2 Whilst the Authority is primarily a locally based service, mutual aid arrangements are in place with other services to provide resilience for large scale or complex incidents where additional resources need to be called on. The Authority contributes to national resilience and can make a number of its assets available to support a national emergency.

6.3 The Authority has robust Business Continuity Management (BCM) plans in place which are integral to our strategy in managing corporate risk and to provide, in the event of a major disruption, a fire and rescue service to the community.

6.4 The Authority publishes an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) that sets out details of its operational service provision and improvement plans at a local, regional and national level, together with individual delivery plans. The current Plan covers the period 2019 – 2022.

6.5 A copy of the Current Fire and Rescue plan, IRMP, and related documents can be found on our website at:  
<http://www.northantspfcc.org.uk/fire-and-rescue-plan/>

6.6 The service was subject to an inspection by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) in November 2018. The report findings were:

Effectiveness	Requires Improvement
Efficiency	Requires Improvement
People	Requires Improvement

6.7 Understanding the risk of fires and other emergencies, as well as promoting the rights values and cultures were both graded as Good.

6.8 Two areas (responding to fires and other emergencies and getting the right people with the right skills) were graded inadequate and were therefore subject to a revisit in June 2019. The inspectorate found that encouraging signs of progress were there on both areas in the revisit.

6.9 The service was subject to a further revisit in March 2020. The inspection team found that the tangible improvements the Service had made had mitigated the risks to public

safety that they identified in their original inspection and there was no longer any requirement to carry out any further revisits on these causes of concern.

- 6.10 In March 2021 HMICFRS wrote to PFCC Stephen Mold and CFO Darren Dovey releasing NFRS from the Causes of Concern. The letter can be found following this link.  
<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publication-html/northamptonshire-fire-and-rescue-service-causes-of-concern-revisit/>

The summary findings in a letter from Zoe Billingham, HM Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services NFRS

*“After reviewing your plans, it is clear the service now has established procedures in place to make sure it has appropriate oversight on fire engine availability. Action is also being taken to increase fire engine availability.*

*We also recognise the service’s increased focus on recruitment, selection and staff training. Regular audits of training and competence records make sure that staff meet the required standard or revalidation timescales.*

*There continue to be effective governance arrangements within the service and through the police, fire and crime commissioner to scrutinise progress.*

- 6.11 In October 2020 HMICFRS inspected NFRS in respect of the service’s response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. In the summary findings of the inspection, Zoe Billingham: HM Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services praised NFRS for their response to the Pandemic, stating:  
*“Proactively providing additional support to the community” and “Worked closely with partners supporting the needs of their local communities.”*

## **7. Overall Assurance Arrangements**

- 7.1 The assurance arrangements that the Authority had in place are considered to meet the requirements set out in the National Framework.

## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL

**17 JUNE 2021**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Northamptonshire Police, Fire &amp; Crime Panel Work Programme 2021/22 and operating arrangements</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	<b>James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager, West Northamptonshire Council</b> <a href="mailto:James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk">James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk</a>

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<b>West S151</b> (for West and joint papers)	Martin Henry	07/06/2021

### List of Appendices

#### **Appendix A – Outline Work Programme 2021/22**

##### **1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1. The report is intended to enable the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel to consider and agree its work programme for 2021/22 as well as to consider and agree the approach it will take on certain matters connected with the operation of the Panel.

##### **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1. The report invites the Panel to consider and agree its work programme for 2021/22, including any specific areas or priorities for scrutiny, reports to be requested from the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner, and the timetable for identified activities. The work programme will support the Panel in carrying out its statutory responsibilities effectively through the year ahead.
- 2.2. In addition, the report invites the Panel to consider and agree arrangements with regard to the following matters relating to the operation of the Panel:
- Location of Panel meetings
  - Participation in network groups: the East Midlands Police & Crime Panels Network and the National Association of the Police, Fire & Crime Panels.

### **3. Recommendations**

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- 3.1 It is recommended that the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel:
- a) Agrees the content of its work programme for 2021/22
  - b) Agrees the location(s) to be used for Panel meetings in 2021/22
  - c) Agrees to continue its membership of the East Midlands Police & Crime Panels Network for 2021/22.
  - d) Agrees to continue its membership of the National Association of Police, Fire & Crime Panels for 2021/22.
- 3.2 Reasons for Recommendation(s) – The recommendations are intended to support the effective operation of the Panel during 2021/22 and the delivery of its statutory responsibilities by establishing a work programme for the year; identifying where Panel meetings will be held; and agreeing the Panel’s membership of relevant information-sharing network groups.

### **4. Report Background**

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- 4.1 The Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011, the Policing & Crime Act 2017 and supporting legislation give various specific responsibilities to the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel (“the Panel”). These are principally as follows:
- Scrutinising and reporting on the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (PFCC)’s proposed Police and Fire & Rescue precepts
  - Scrutinising and reporting on the PFCC’s Police & Crime Plan and Fire & Rescue Plan
  - Scrutinising and reporting on the PFCC’s Annual Report on the delivery of Police & Crime Plan objectives and on the annual Fire & Rescue Statement reporting compliance with the Fire & 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 & Rescue Service)
  - Dealing with complaints from members of the public about the conduct of the PFCC.
- 4.2 In addition, the legislation referred to in paragraph 4.1 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 his 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 his functions.
- 4.3 It has previously been 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 can then be 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. Issues and Choices

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### Work Programme 2021/22

- 5.1 An outline work programme for the Panel for 2021/22 is included with this report (at Appendix A). This incorporates statutory business outlined in paragraph 4.1 above; regular monitoring reports that the previous Panel chose to receive to support its more general scrutiny role; and items of business relating to the operation of the Panel. The document also lists potential areas for consideration and briefing sessions that the previous Panel wished to bring to the attention of its successor.
- 5.2 It is emphasised that this outline work programme is being presented to the Panel as a starting point for discussion that will produce the final version. The work programme for 2021/22 should be set by the current Panel. The work programme can be informed by input from a range of sources, including suggestions from the previous Panel, from individual Panel members and from the PFCC. The Panel should consider suggested topics from all sources on their merits, with a view to setting a work programme that reflects the Panel's remit, has the support of Panel members, is realistically deliverable within available resources and that has the potential to produce the most worthwhile outcomes.

### Location for Panel meetings

- 5.3 The Panel should use the current meeting to consider and agree the location(s) for its meetings in 2021/22, taking account of relevant factors such as the expiry of legislation that previously permitted remote meetings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and any implications resulting from local government reorganisation in Northamptonshire.
- 5.4 Since it was established in 2012 the Panel has largely met at County Hall in Northampton. Panel members have found the use of a single, central location to be practically beneficial. Live webcasting has also been used at different times to enhance the visibility of Panel meetings. The Panel rotated its meetings between different locations across Northamptonshire during 2017/18 but ultimately concluded that this did not represent the best approach available to it.
- 5.5 The Panel now needs to decide the approach that it wishes to take for the resumption of physical meetings. It is open to the Panel to agree that it will seek to hold all of its meetings at one suitable location, similar to the approach that it took up to March 2020. This would be a legitimate choice as the Panel continues to serve the same 'constituency' as it has done since it was first established, which is the Northamptonshire Police area.
- 5.6 An alternative approach could be for the Panel to rotate its meetings between different locations. Options for this might include alternating meetings between locations in the North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council areas or even rotating meetings through different locations in each of the former district / borough council areas. When considering its preferred approach on this matter the Panel should have a clear view of the practical implications that may be connected with different options, of the outcomes that the Panel wishes to achieve and of the best way of achieving these.

## Participation in the East Midlands Police & Crime Panels Network

- 5.7 The Panel has previously participated in the East Midlands Police & Crime Panels Network that has operated since 2014. The Network is intended to be an information and support network for the five panels in the region: Derbyshire; Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland; Lincolnshire; Northamptonshire; and Nottinghamshire. It is administered by Frontline Consulting Associates (FCA), which provides advice, consultancy and learning and development activity in the public sector. The Network holds two information-sharing meetings per year, which can be attended by 2-3 representatives from each panel. Network members also get access to sources of information and guidance on good practice and a 10% discount on the cost of any training activity purchased from FCA. The Panel is invited to consider whether to continue its membership of the Network for 2021/22. The cost of this is £400 plus VAT.

## Participation in the National Association of Police, Fire & Crime Panels

- 5.8 The National Association was established in April 2018 as a special interest group of the Local Government Association. The National Association aims to represent and promote the views and interests of Police, Fire & Crime panels in England and Wales. Its specific purposes include providing a forum for discussion of issues affecting panels; sharing ideas and experience; promoting good practice; supporting liaison and dialogue with other relevant agencies; facilitating common responses by panels to relevant consultations; horizon scanning; and promoting better public understanding of the role of panels. The National Association is led by an elected Chair and Executive Committee and administered by Democratic Services at Essex County Council. The National Association operates on a non-subscription model and there is no cost for membership. The Panel has been a member of the National Association since January 2020. The Panel is invited to consider whether to continue its membership for 2021/22.

## **6. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **6.1 Resources and Financial**

- 6.1.1 It is intended that the resource implications associated with the proposed decisions set out in this report will be accommodated within grant funding that the Panel's host authority is able to claim from the Home Office for the purpose of maintaining a panel for the Northamptonshire Police area. The host authority for the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel was able to claim up to £64,340 in grant funding for 2020/21 (made up of £53,300 for administration and £11,040 for member expenses). This grant funding can be used to fund the provision of secretariat support for the Panel and to pay expenses incurred by members in carrying out their roles on the Panel. Membership of the East Midlands Police & Crime Panels Network is also a cost that is eligible to be covered from grant funding. It is anticipated that the Panel will seek to use local authority venues for its meetings and that these will be available free of charge, as the Panel is formally a joint committee of North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire councils.

## 6.2 **Legal**

6.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposal.

## 6.3 **Risk**

6.3.1 The principal risk associated with the recommended decisions is that the Panel agrees a work programme that is not sufficiently effective. This situation could be caused by a range of factors: for example, if the work programme did not reflect the Panel's statutory functions; if the work programme was unfocussed or included too much business to be realistically deliverable; or if the work programme 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 taking a considered view of the work programme at the start of the year, informed – but not bound – by the work of its predecessor. The Panel should then review the work programme at each of its subsequent meetings through the municipal year and amend it as may be considered necessary. Throughout, the Panel should ensure 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.

## **7. Background Papers**

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Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011

Policing & Crime Act 2017

Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel Rules of Procedure

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Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel – Outline Work Programme 2021/22

MEETING DATE	STATUTORY BUSINESS	DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS	BUSINESS RELATING TO PANEL OPERATION	OTHER BUSINESS
17 June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PFCC’s Annual Report on Policing for 2020/21</li> <li>- PFCC’s Fire &amp; Rescue Statement for 2020/21</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appointment of Panel Chair and Deputy Chair</li> <li>- Work programme</li> <li>- Appointment of Complaints Sub Committee members</li> </ul>	
9 September 2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PFCC’s Delivery updates</li> <li>- PFCC’s Budget updates</li> <li>- Joint Independent Audit Committee Annual Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work programme</li> <li>- Complaints monitoring report</li> </ul>	
9 December 2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PFCC’s Delivery updates</li> <li>- PFCC’s Budget updates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work programme</li> </ul>	
3 February 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PFCC’s proposed Police precept and budget for 2022/23</li> <li>- PFCC’s proposed Fire &amp; Rescue precept and budget for 2022/23</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work programme</li> </ul>	

MEETING DATE	STATUTORY BUSINESS	DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS	BUSINESS RELATING TO PANEL OPERATION	OTHER BUSINESS
17 February 2022 (Reserve meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PFCC's revised Police precept and budget for 2022/23 [if required]</li> <li>and/or</li> <li>- PFCC's revised Fire &amp; Rescue precept and budget for 2022/23 [if required]</li> </ul>			
14 April 2022		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PFCC's Delivery updates</li> <li>- PFCC's Budget updates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work programme</li> <li>- 2022/23 meeting dates</li> <li>- Complaints monitoring report</li> </ul>	

### Further Information

#### (A) Statutory Business

**PFCC's Annual Report and Fire & Rescue Statement** – The Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (PFCC)'s responsibility for producing these items and the Panel's role in reviewing and reporting on them are summarised in separate reports on the agenda for the current Panel meeting.

**PFCC's proposed Police and Fire & 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.

**PFCC's Police & Crime Plan and Fire & Rescue Plan** – The PFCC is required to issue a Police & Crime Plan setting out his police and crime objectives and associated matters during the financial year following an election. The PFCC is also expected to issue a Fire & Rescue Plan setting out strategic priorities and objectives 'shortly after' taking office. In both cases, proposed plans must be reviewed and reported on by the Panel. The Panel should therefore anticipate that this task will need to be included in its work programme for 2021/22, although the timing is not yet known.

(B) Discretionary Business

**PFCC's Delivery Updates** – These were two regular reports received by the previous Panel setting out actions by the PFCC supporting progress towards the delivery of the strategic outcomes set out in his Police & Crime Plan and in his Fire & Rescue Plan. The Delivery Updates also included contextual information about Northamptonshire Police and Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service performance.

The previous Panel recommended at its final meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021 that performance information presented in future should be focussed more on longer term trends than detail in the short term; and that it should be presented in a clear format, making use of graphics and Red/Amber/Green ratings where possible.

**PFCC's Budget Updates** – These were two regular reports received by the previous Panel 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 & 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 was customarily presented by its Chair to the Panel, to reflect the complementary roles of the two bodies.

(C) Business relating to Panel operation

**Complaints monitoring report** – 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.

(D) Potential task-and-finish work

**Development of the PFCC's proposed precepts and budgets** – The previous Panel appointed a task-and-finish working group for this purpose in 2020/21 following an invitation received from the PFCC. The working group met with the PFCC and his Chief Finance Officer in January 2021 to consider the budget environment and key factors informing the development of the PFCC's proposals, feeding into scrutiny of the final proposals by the whole Panel at its formal meeting in February. All parties found this to have been a useful exercise and it is open to the current Panel to decide whether to repeat it this year.

(E) Other potential work programme matters

**Remuneration for Panel members** – The previous Panel agreed at its final meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021 to recommend that the Panel appointed for 2021/22 should consider the question of whether there should be remuneration for Panel members in future. In practice this would be likely to focus particularly on the independent co-opted members of the Panel, as councillor members' involvement is covered by the basic allowance paid to all councillors by their respective local authorities. Different views on this question were expressed by members of the previous Panel; in any case it was recognised that the previous Panel was not in a position to pursue the matter further at that point. It is open to the current Panel to consider how it wishes to respond to the recommendation from its predecessor. In doing so it should take into account that the Panel is formally a joint committee of the two local authorities in Northamptonshire, which are ultimately responsible for determining fundamental matters concerning the composition and maintenance of the Panel.

(F) Potential Briefings / Training

**Briefings with the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer** – The previous Panel agreed during 2020/21 that it would be beneficial for the Panel's future work programme to include annual briefing sessions with the Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police and the Chief Fire Officer of Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service. These sessions would be 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 PFCC offered to facilitate this approach.

**Other briefings or training for Panel members** – The Panel may wish to consider whether there is particular information or support that could assist the new membership of the Panel to carry out its role effectively and, if so, how this might best be delivered.

## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE & CRIME PANEL

**17 JUNE 2021**

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Appointments to the Northamptonshire Police, Fire &amp; Crime Panel Complaints Sub Committee for 2021/22</b>
<b>Report Author</b>	<b>James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager, West Northamptonshire Council</b> <a href="mailto:James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk">James.edmunds@westnorthants.gov.uk</a>

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<b>West MO</b> (for West and joint papers)	Catherine Whitehead	08/06/2021
<b>West S151</b> (for West and joint papers)	Martin Henry	07/06/2021

### List of Appendices

**Appendix A – Informal Resolution Protocol regarding non-criminal complaints against the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner and Deputy Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner.**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1. The report is intended to enable the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel to appoint members to serve on the Panel's Complaints Sub Committee for 2021/22.

#### **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.2. The report summarises the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel's statutory responsibilities for considering non-criminal complaints about the conduct of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner and the approach that the Panel has adopted to carry out this function, using a Complaints Sub Committee. In order to continue this approach the Panel must appoint members to serve on the Sub Committee for 2021/22.

### **3. Recommendations**

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- 3.1 It is recommended that the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel agrees to appoint the following Panel members to serve on the Panel's Complaints Sub Committee during 2021/22:
- a) 4 councillor Panel members, 2 from each of the political groups represented on the Panel; and
  - b) 3 independent co-opted Panel members to act as a pool providing 1 independent co-opted member for Sub Committee meetings.
- 3.2 Reasons for Recommendation(s) – The recommendation is intended to enable the Panel to fulfil statutory requirements using an approach that has previously operated effectively.

### **4. Report Background**

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- 4.1 The Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints & Misconduct) Regulations 2012 require Police (Fire) & Crime Panels to adopt a process for carrying out "Informal Resolution" of non-criminal complaints about the conduct of the relevant Police (Fire) & Crime Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner, should a Deputy Commissioner be appointed.
- 4.2 Informal Resolution is intended to represent a locally-agreed process for resolving a complaint as far as possible by mediation between the complainant and the subject of the complaint. It is not an investigation of the complaint: a panel is prohibited from taking any action intended to gather information about a complaint other than inviting comments from the complainant and the subject of the complaint.

### **5. Issues and Choices**

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- 5.1 The Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel agreed in 2012/13 to incorporate in its Rules of Procedure the following arrangements for carrying out Informal Resolution:
- Adoption of an Informal Resolution Protocol (included with this report at Appendix A).
  - Establishment of a Complaints Sub Committee with the following powers and duties:
    - Where a complaint or conduct matter comes to the Sub Committee's attention it must secure that all appropriate steps are taken, both initially and from time to time after that, for obtaining and preserving evidence relating to the conduct in question and to comply with any directions given by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) in this regard.
    - To provide the IOPC and every member of its staff with such assistance as it may reasonably require in connection with the carrying out of any investigation by the IOPC or by anyone appointed to carry out an investigation on its behalf.
    - To determine whether a complaint that has been recorded should be subject to Informal Resolution, or should be excluded from Informal Resolution on grounds identified in the 2012 Regulations, and in that case, to determine how to handle the matter or whether to take no action in relation to it.
    - To deal with the Informal Resolution of complaints in accordance with the requirements of the 2012 Regulations.

- 5.2 The Panel has updated the composition of the Complaints Sub Committee since it was originally established when this has been considered necessary. The following changes have been made:
- 2014/15: The Panel reviewed the Sub Committee’s original membership, which consisted of three Panel members: one councillor from each of the two political groups represented on the Panel and one independent co-opted member. In light of experience and to give the Sub Committee more flexibility the Panel agreed to increase the membership of the Sub Committee to 5 members, consisting of two councillors from each of the political groups represented on the Panel and one independent co-opted member, who could also be substituted by another independent co-opted member.
  - 2020/21: The Panel agreed that the independent co-opted member on the Sub Committee should be drawn from the pool of all three independent co-opted members on the Panel, rather than a specific member being identified. Again, this change was intended to increase flexibility and to enable the Panel to make more use of independent co-opted members in this area of its work.
- 5.3 It is proposed that the composition of the Complaints Sub Committee established by the Panel in 2020/21 still represents an effective and practical approach and should therefore continue to apply in 2021/22. The composition of the Sub Committee should give it the necessary capacity to carry out its role and enable it to do so in way that reflects the Panel’s role of scrutinising and supporting the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner. It is open to the Panel to consider and agree alternative ways of achieving this if it sees this as necessary.
- 5.4 For reference, the members of the Complaints Sub Committee in 2020/21 were Councillors Richard Auger (Daventry District Council / Conservative), Janice Duffy (Northampton Borough Council / Labour), Ken Pritchard (South Northamptonshire Council / Conservative) and Winston Strachan (Northamptonshire County Council / Labour) and Mr Robert Mehaffy, Mrs Anita Shields and Miss Pauline Woodhouse (independent co-opted members). All Sub Committee members are provided with appropriate training and support to carry out the role.
- 5.5 It should be further noted that the workload of the Complaints Sub Committee is substantially determined by the number of complaints about the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner that it needs to consider. The number of Sub Committee meetings in each of the years since it was established has been as follows:

Municipal year	Complaints Sub Committee meetings
2013/14	4
2014/15	1
2015/16	0
2016/17	0
2017/18	1
2018/19	0
2019/20	2
2020/21	1

## **6. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **6.1 Resources and Financial**

6.1.1 The resource implications associated with the proposal consist of the reimbursement of expenses that may be claimed by Complaints Sub Committee members for any meetings that need to be convened and/or other activity involved in carrying out their role. These can be met from Police & Crime Panel grant funding that the Home Office makes available to the local authority that hosts each panel. As stated in paragraph 5.5 above, the Complaints Sub Committee will only be convened during 2021/22 if there is a specific need to do so.

### **6.2 Legal**

6.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposal. It represents an established approach that has been used by the Panel to carry out part of its statutory functions.

### **6.3 Risk**

6.3.1 The recommended decision will mean that the Complaints Sub Committee can be convened should the need arise for it to consider a complaint about the conduct of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner. The risk of not taking the decision is that the Panel would not be in a position to carry out part of its statutory functions, which would have a practical and reputational impact. It is open to the Panel to consider alternative means of carrying out the complaints functions but this could take time to establish and be unproven, whereas the Complaints Sub Committee in its current form has previously operated effectively.

## **7. Background Papers**

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Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011

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

Northamptonshire Police & Crime Panel's statutory responsibilities relating to complaints against the Police & Crime Commissioner – report to the Police & Crime Panel (5<sup>th</sup> March 2013)

Future operation of the Northamptonshire Police & Crime Complaints Sub Committee – report to the Police & Crime Panel (3<sup>rd</sup> July 2014)

Appointments to the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Complaints Sub Committee for 2020/21 – report to the Police, Fire & Crime Panel (16<sup>th</sup> July 2020)

**Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Panel**

**Informal Resolution Protocol regarding non-criminal complaints against the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner and Deputy Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire.**

1. The Monitoring Officer of the host authority ('the Monitoring Officer') will act as the first point of contact for all complaints made against the Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (PFCC) and Deputy Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (DPFCC) and will deal with any such complaints in accordance with the requirements of the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012 ("the Regulations").
2. Any complaints received by Panel Members, by any of the Panel's constituent authorities, by the Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (OPFCC), or by the Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police will be forwarded to the Monitoring Officer as soon as is practicable on their receipt.
3. The Monitoring Officer will determine whether or not a complaint should be recorded.
4. When a complaint is recorded the Monitoring Officer will:
  - (a) Send a copy of the record made of the complaint to the complainant.
  - (b) Send a copy of the complaint to the person complained against, subject to any decision taken not to supply a copy of the complaint or to supply the complaint in a form which keeps anonymous the identity of the complainant; and
  - (c) Refer the record, and copies of all the associated paperwork, to the Panel's Secretariat no later than 2 working days after the complaint has been recorded.
5. On receipt of the complaint the Panel's Secretariat will:
  - (a) Convene a meeting of the Panel's Complaints Sub Committee, normally to be held within three weeks of the Secretariat's receipt of the complaint.
  - (b) Write to the complainant, setting out timescales and providing details about the Informal Resolution procedure; and giving the complainant an opportunity to make further comments in support of their complaint. Where the Panel's Secretariat believes that the circumstances of the case are such that the Complaints Sub Committee may decide to treat the complaint as having been resolved the complainant will be asked to provide their representations in this regard for the Complaints Sub Committee to take into account.
  - (c) Write to the person complained about, setting out timescales and providing details about the Informal Resolution procedure; and giving them an opportunity to make comments in response to the complaint.

6. The Panel's Monitoring Officer will compile a brief report for the Complaints Sub Committee, setting out the pertinent details of the complaint, recording any failure by the person complained about to comment on the complaint and making suggestions for the next steps.
7. The Complaints Sub Committee will first consider whether the complaint has been satisfactorily dealt with and, subject to any representations by the complainant, may decide to treat the complaint as having been resolved. In such a case, the Complaints Sub Committee's reasons will be recorded and notified to all parties.
8. If, on considering the report, the Complaints Sub Committee feels that the matter needs to be resolved, it will decide its course of action. In accordance with the Regulations the Complaints Sub Committee may not conduct an investigation. The Complaints Sub Committee may use its delegated powers to require the person complained against to provide information or documents or attend before it to answer questions or give evidence, as this will not be regarded as an investigation. However, any other step intended to gather information about the complaint, other than inviting the comments of the complainant and the person complained against, will be likely to amount to investigation and will not therefore be undertaken.
9. The Complaints Sub Committee will consider whether to devise an action plan (to be drawn up by the Panel's Secretariat) and in so doing will take into account any applicable guidance issued by the Secretary of State and may also consider any guidance issued by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) pursuant to Section 22 of the Police Reform Act 2002 on local resolution. Any such action plan will include an indicative timeframe.
10. Any such action plan may include (for example):
  - (a) An explanatory letter being written by the Panel's Secretariat (or on behalf of the Complaints Sub Committee),
  - (b) An explanatory letter being written by an officer of the OPFCC,
  - (c) A suggested change to OPFCC policy, practice or action; or
  - (d) A request that an apology is tendered (no apology may be tendered on behalf of the person complained against unless that person has admitted the alleged conduct and agreed to the apology).
11. The Complaints Sub Committee will also decide whether it wishes to:
  - (a) Reconvene to take any steps identified in the action plan,
  - (b) Authorise any named individual (who may not be the PFCC, the DPFCC or the OPFCC Chief Executive) to take any steps in accordance with the action plan; or
  - (c) Refer the matter to the full Police, Fire & Crime Panel recommending that the identified action be taken.

12. Once the actions from the plan have been completed the matter may be referred back to the Complaints Sub Committee or an authorised individual may determine that the matter has been resolved. The Panel's Secretariat must make a record of the outcome of the informal resolution as soon as practicable, normally within 3 working days, after the process is completed and provide copies to the complainant and the person complained against. The matter will then be closed.
13. No part of the record may be published by the Complaints Sub Committee unless, having given the parties an opportunity to make representations about the proposed publication and having considered any such representations, the Complaints Sub Committee considers that publication is in the public interest.
14. The Monitoring Officer will present a half-yearly update report to the full Police, Fire & Crime Panel about all complaints dealt with in the preceding six months, 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.
15. If, at any stage, the IOPC informs the Panel that they require the complaint to be referred to them, or if the Complaints Sub Committee decides that the complaint should be referred to the IOPC, the Informal Resolution process will be discontinued. The Complaints Sub Committee may only decide that the complaint should be so referred if matters come to light during the Informal Resolution process that indicate the commission of a criminal offence, thus leading to the earlier decision as to whether or not the complaint was a serious complaint being reversed.

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