

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel – Outline Work Programme

MEETING DATE	STATUTORY BUSINESS	DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS	BUSINESS RELATING TO PANEL OPERATION	OTHER BUSINESS
30 November 2023		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PFCC’s response to the Panel report on decisions relating to the appointment of an interim Chief Fire Officer - PFCC’s Delivery update - PFCC’s Finance updates - Joint Independent Audit Committee Annual Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work programme - Complaints and conduct matters update 	
6 February 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PFCC’s proposed Police precept for 2024/25 - PFCC’s proposed Fire and Rescue precept for 2024/25 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work programme - 2024/25 meeting dates - Arrangements for recruitment of independent co-opted Panel members 	
20 February 2024 (Reserve meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PFCC’s revised Police precept for 2024/25 [if required] and/or - PFCC’s revised Fire and Rescue precept for 2024/25 [if required] 			

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14 March 2024 (subject to confirmation)		- PFCC's Delivery update - PFCC's Finance updates	- Work programme - Complaints and conduct matters update	
June 2024		- Introduction to the PFCC elected in May 2024 and their priorities	- Appointment of Panel Chair and Deputy Chair - Appointment of independent co-opted members - Work programme - Appointment of Complaints Sub Committee members	
September 2024			- Work programme - Complaints and conduct matters update	

Additional topics not yet scheduled

The Panel agreed at its meeting on 15 June 2023 that its work programme should include reports from the PFCC on the following matters:

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

Briefings / Training (open to all Panel members)

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

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

(B) A workshop session on the development of the PFCC's proposed precepts for 2024/25 in January 2024

The Panel usually holds a workshop session with the PFCC and the OPFCC Chief Finance Officer in January of each year to consider the financial environment and key factors informing the development of the PFCC's budget and precept proposals. This session feeds into scrutiny of the final proposals by the whole Panel at its formal meeting in February. The Panel agreed at its meeting on 15 June 2023 to continue this approach.

(C) Training for Panel members

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

Further Information

(A) Statutory Business

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

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

(B) Discretionary Business

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

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

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

(C) Business relating to Panel operation

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

Recruitment of independent co-opted members – The Panel is required to include a minimum of two independent co-opted members in its membership and has previously secured approval from the Home Secretary to increase this to three. The co-option of independent members is intended to assist in supporting the aim that the membership of the Panel, when taken as a whole, has the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to enable it to carry out its functions effectively. Independent co-opted members should be drawn from the local community through an open recruitment and selection process. The sitting independent co-opted members of the Panel were appointed in 2020 for a four-year term running until the day before the date of the first Panel meeting in the 2024/25 municipal year. The Panel will need to consider arrangements to advertise for and recruit independent co-opted members to join the Panel from this point.