

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Independent Members Person Specification and Role Description

Candidates for appointment as independent members of the Panel will be assessed against the following person specification. The means of assessment will be by application and interview by a sub group of Panel members appointed for that purpose.

Person Specification

Competencies

Independent members of the Panel will have:

- The ability to think strategically: to have breadth of vision, to rise above detail, and to see problems and issues from a wider, forward-looking perspective.
- The ability to make good judgements: to take a balanced, open-minded and objective approach, for example, in evaluating the priorities of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC), assessing candidates' suitability for top level appointments or considering complaints against the PFCC.
- The ability to be supportive: to be able to support the PFCC and the other members of the Panel in delivering their duties.
- The ability to scrutinise and challenge: to be able to scrutinise rigorously and challenge constructively without becoming confrontational, using appropriate data, evidence and resources.
- The ability to be analytical: to interpret and question written material, including financial and statistical information and other data such as performance measures and identify the salient points.
- The ability to communicate effectively: to be able to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing and to interact positively with other members of the Panel, the PFCC, representatives of partner organisations and members of the public.

Personal Qualities

- Team working: the ability to play an effective role in meetings through listening, persuading and showing respect for the views of others, and the ability to do so as the chair of a meeting.
- Self-confidence: the skill to challenge accepted views constructively without becoming confrontational and show resilience even in challenging circumstances, remaining calm and confident and able to make difficult decisions.
- Enthusiasm and drive: the ability to be proactive in seeking out learning and developmental opportunities to enhance knowledge and understanding.
- Respect for others: the capacity to treat all people fairly and with respect, to value diversity and respond sensitively to difference.
- Integrity: the necessity to embrace high standards of conduct and ethics and be committed to upholding human rights and equality of opportunity for all.

Desirable additional criteria

Independent members of the Panel will have:

- Knowledge / experience in the fields of policing, the criminal justice system, Fire and Rescue or community safety.
- Knowledge / experience that will assist the Panel to represent and work on behalf of people from all parts of the community in Northamptonshire.

Requirements of the role

Independent members of the Panel:

- Must be able to attend Panel meetings at least 5 times a year, as well as attend other meetings and training sessions as required throughout the year. Panel meetings are normally held during office hours in Northampton, although other Panel activities may be held at different locations in Northamptonshire.
- Should have the time, energy and commitment to prepare for and attend regular meetings.
- Should have a willingness to learn.
- Must be prepared to commit to carry out their role in accordance with the 7 Nolan principles of public life:
 - Selflessness: holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.
 - Integrity: holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.
 - Objectivity: in carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
 - Accountability: holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
 - Openness: holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
 - Honesty: holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
 - Leadership: holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Eligibility for Appointment

Candidates must be eligible for appointment as an independent member of the Panel. People in the following positions cannot be considered for appointment:

- Anyone under 18 years of age
- Anyone who does not live or work in the Northamptonshire Police force area
- The Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner or members of their staff
- Police officers
- Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service officers
- Members of the civilian staff of Northamptonshire Police or of Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Members of Parliament
- Members of the National Assembly for Wales
- Members of the Scottish Parliament
- Members of the European Parliament
- Members of North Northamptonshire Council or West Northamptonshire Council

Role Description

Independent co-opted members will be treated equally to other councillor members on the Panel and therefore have the same responsibilities and duties.

All independent co-opted members have full voting rights and will have access to the same level of support and information as councillor members on the Panel.

The core role of both councillor members and independent co-opted members on the Panel is to:

- Scrutinise and support the work of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) to ensure that the PFCC is discharging their functions effectively.
- Bring any specialist knowledge, skills, experience and expertise that they may have to the scrutiny work of the Panel.
- Act as a critical friend to the PFCC, offering a balance of support and constructive challenge using appropriate data, evidence and resources. r role.

Independent co-opted members will also act as a non-party-political voice for those who live and/or work in Northamptonshire.

Responsibilities

An independent co-opted member of the Panel is expected to:

- Attend all formal meetings of the Panel (approximately 5 per year).
- Establish good relations with other Panel members and members of staff supporting the work of the Panel
- Attend additional meetings, for example working groups, as required.
- Prepare for meetings by reading the agenda papers and additional information to familiarise themselves with the issues to be covered during the meeting. Prior to the meeting consider the questions they may wish to put to the PFCC or other expert witnesses attending.
- At meetings to listen carefully, ask questions in a way which is non-judgmental, respects confidentiality and that helps the Panel to make practical suggestions for improvements in services.
- Assist in the preparation of reports and the formulation of recommendations by the Panel. This may involve volunteering to participate in a working group to conduct a scrutiny review investigation.
- Attend training and development events as needed.
- Abide by the Panel Arrangements and Rules of Procedure that set out how the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel operates.
- Keep abreast of key issues in relation to the responsibilities of the PFCC and the priorities within their Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan.
- Contribute to achieving an open, accountable and transparent decision-making process in relation to policing, Fire and Rescue and community safety issues in Northamptonshire.