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Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Minutes of a meeting of the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel held at Maybin Room, One Angel Square, Angel Street, Northampton NN1 1ED on Thursday 14 April 2022 at 1.00 pm.

Present Councillor Gill Mercer (Chair)
 Councillor Jon-Paul Carr [to item 55]
 Councillor Dorothy Maxwell
 Councillor Zoe McGhee
 Councillor Russell Roberts
 Councillor Ken Pritchard [to item 55]
 Councillor David Smith [to item 55]
 Councillor Winston Strachan [from item 52]
 Mrs Anita Shields

Also in attendance Stephen Mold, Northamptonshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
 Lauren Adams, Family Support Worker, Early Intervention Family Support Team, Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
 Gemma Childs, Domestic Abuse Specialist & Family Support Worker, Early Intervention Family Support Team, Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
 James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager, West Northamptonshire Council
 Shaun Hallam, Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Community Risk, Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service
 Jackie Jones, Early Intervention Services Manager, 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
 Stuart McCartney, Governance & Accountability Manager, Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
 Scott Richards, Fire Protection Manager, Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service
 Augusta Ryan, Senior Practitioner, Early Intervention Family Support Team, Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
 Claire Smith, Senior Practitioner, Early Intervention Family Support Team, Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner

There was also one member of the public in attendance.

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

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Councillors Gonzalez De Savage and King and from Miss Woodhouse. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Strachan.

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

None received.

49. **Declarations of Interest**

None declared.

50. **Chair's Announcements**

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

- Panel members had been sent information on various recent developments relating to Police & Crime commissioners and panels, including the recommendations from part two of the Home Office review of commissioners.
- The Chair had drafted a response to consultation on potential changes to the Policing Protocol, which had been circulated to Panel members for their comments.
- The Chair and the Democratic Services Assistant Manager had attended the latest meeting of the East Midlands Police, Fire & Crime Panels Network on 24th March 2022, which had been useful. The proposed date for the 2022 annual conference of Police, Fire & Crime panels was currently being identified.

51. **Minutes**

RESOLVED that: the minutes of the Police, Fire & Crime Panel meeting held on 3rd February 2022 be approved.

52. **Priorities in Northamptonshire for managing fire safety risks in residential properties, including houses in multiple occupation**

The Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (PFCC) introduced the report. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Community Risk and the Fire Protection Manager went on to present an overview of priorities, activity and challenges in Northamptonshire, highlighting the following points:

- Fires in the home had an effect on the household concerned but also on the local community and economy.
- Residential fires could occur anywhere and at any time of day. In practice, they were most likely to occur in urban areas, which had a higher population density and more business premises; during the evening; and in the kitchen.
- Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Service (NFRS) had adopted a Prevention Strategy that set out priorities designed to reduce the risks from fire in residential properties identified in its Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). A person-centred approach was taken to judging risks.
- NFRS used a tiered approach consisting of a universal offer, targeted activity and specialist support to get most benefit from overall resources. Targeted activity could be delivered by regular personnel as well as specialists: for example, all stations had targets relating to fire safety visits. The PFCC had invested in

specialist prevention activity and there was good evidence that this helped to change public behaviour to support safety.

- 37% of home safety visits (HSVs) were carried out by specialist support officers. 76% of HSVs involved people in the high or very high risk customer profile. NFRS had needed to change its approach to HSVs during the COVID-19 pandemic but had still done in-person visits in high risk cases.
- NFRS did well at getting referrals from partners for HSVs.
- NFRS carried out outreach and prevention activity in the surrounding area following a serious fire. This approach helped to make contact with people who might not engage in normal circumstances.
- NFRS aimed to carry out around 5,000 HSVs per year. It was now carrying out around 4,500 following the pandemic.
- There were significant fire risks connected with houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) due to the way that these properties were used. HMOs represented 5% of houses but accounted for 34% of fire deaths and 40% of fires. There were over 2,000 HMOs in Northamptonshire, both licensed and un-licensed. The establishment of HMOs in the county was slowing.
- Local housing authorities were primarily responsible for enforcing legislation relating to HMOs. NFRS had a more specific role in reducing fire risks, although it worked closely with local authority housing teams as part of this.
- NFRS operated a risk-based inspection programme of HMOs that prioritised overall capacity to have the most impact. 1,721 premises in the county were currently identified as higher risk. This included any premises previously subject to enforcement action and new HMOs identified each year.
- NFRS had developed a training package for regular crews during the pandemic assisting them to carry out checks on HMOs that had been visited in the past. This approach also took advantage of local fire crews' existing connection with the surrounding community.
- The legislative requirements relating to fire safety in HMOs only applied to communal areas. This brought home the need for NFRS to engage and work with members of the public in carrying out its role.

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

The Panel considered the report and presentation. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Community Risk and the Fire Protection Manager provided additional information in response to points raised by Panel members during the course of discussion as follows:

- If NFRS identified a significant fire risk when inspecting an HMO it was able to issue an immediate prohibition notice on the property. The occupants would be required to leave. NFRS had arrangements in place with local authorities to accommodate any people displaced from an HMO in this way.
- NFRS was able to give out free smoke alarms to owner-occupiers when it carried out HSVs. Landlords were responsible for providing working smoke alarms in

rented properties at the point when they were let. Local authorities enforced this requirement.

- NFRS worked with landlords who approached it for advice and also attended local landlords forum meetings. This relationship led good landlords to provide intelligence about bad ones. NFRS made use of intelligence from local crews and partner agencies as well as running media campaigns to encourage members of the public to report bad landlords. NFRS was happy to receive intelligence from local councillors.
- Residents were permitted to use gas cookers in HMOs or flats. The gas supply to a building was more of a risk factor than the actual cooker.
- Liquid petroleum gas (LPG) was used safely to power many houses in the county. NFRS did horizon scanning to identify new fire risks. This could help to show if there was an issue with LPG being used unsafely in the home.
- NFRS was able to investigate the person responsible for an HMO, whether this was the owner, an agent or someone else with control over the property.
- The transfer of responsibility for the governance of NFRS to the PFCC had given it access to a bigger communications team. This put NFRS in a better position to run media and social media campaigns on issues such as home fire safety.

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

- NFRS was held to account by the PFCC on behalf of Northamptonshire residents. This included for its performance and how well resources were used for home fire safety as for other functions.
- All residents were encouraged to check that the smoke alarms in their homes.
- Public bodies sharing information relating to home fire safety only benefited members of the public.

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

- The approach taken in Northamptonshire was impressive. HMOs could have a significant impact on the surrounding area.
- It was questioned how NFRS dealt with landlords who could not be contacted.
- Bad landlords should be encouraged to see how their tenants were living.
- NFRS had previously made good use of social media to provide information on issues like fire safety and water safety. This was a very helpful, interactive approach.

RESOLVED that: the Panel notes the overview of priorities and activity in Northamptonshire.

53. **Activity on Early Intervention and Adverse Childhood Experiences in Northamptonshire**

The PFCC introduced the report, highlighting the following points:

- Early intervention (EI) was a priority area and a focus for work by the Office of the PFCC (OPFCC).
- The dedicated Early Intervention Family Support (EIFS) Team established in 2019 provided specialist support in Northamptonshire.
- The value of EI activity was undeniable as it prevented young people from entering the criminal justice system and helped them to lead more fulfilling lives.

The Director for Early Intervention advised that the EIFS Team focussed on interventions at a tier 2 targeted services level, working with people before they reached the threshold for statutory services. It had three main focus areas: general family support; young people involved in knife crime and gang-related activity; and families referred for support as a result of domestic abuse incidents.

The PFCC then introduced members of the EIFS Team who commented on their roles and gave examples of the types of support provided to young people.

Augusta Ryan outlined the case of a young person referred to the EIFS Team as they were at risk of becoming involved in knife crime and had been excluded from school and alternative provision. Dealing with the Team rather than a police officer had helped the young person to engage with available support. They had subsequently received individual mentoring, family support and support for anger management. A new education setting for the young person had been identified and they had been able to access training opportunities in a field that interested them. This had prevented a real risk of them becoming involved in serious violence.

Lauren Adams outlined the case of a young person referred to the EIFS Team by their school safeguarding lead after taking an overdose, who had mental health issues, was demonstrating risky behaviour and was missing school. Work by the Team had identified that the young person would benefit from support about protective behaviours and personal safety. This had helped the young person to stop self-harming, to attend school and to build better relationships with their parent and peers.

Gemma Childs outlined the case of a family affected by domestic violence, debt and housing issues, with children who also needed support for additional needs and school attendance. The EIFS Team had helped to improve co-ordination between different professionals involved in the case. The mother's wellbeing had been improved by getting their partner to leave the home; fire safety issues in their home had been addressed; they had been given support on healthy relationships; and support from Community Law on debt. This was an example of work by the Team with a family who might not otherwise have received intervention.

The Panel considered the report. The EIFS Team members present provided additional information in response to points raised by Panel members during the course of discussion as follows:

- There were pressures on the capacity of local services: for example, longer waiting times for referrals to Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) were a reflection of staff numbers.

- Schools were responsible for educational psychology. It was useful to have an in-house service available as had been the case in the past in Northamptonshire. However, local schools were still in a position to be able to offer this service to young people when needed.
- Family support referrals could be made directly to the EIFS Team by anyone, including self-referrals. This approach had been introduced one month ago: previously, referrals had come via a local authority. Referrals connected with domestic abuse tended to come from police Public Protection Notices (PPNs).
- Schools could make referrals to the EIFS Team. The Team had been contacted by Northampton International Academy (NIA) regarding particular issues affecting the school. The Team was responding to family support referrals and NIA had also been offered support by the OPFCC's Targeted Youth Team. The neighbourhood police team was working on local anti-social behaviour issues.
- The EIFS Team had created a 'non-engagement' pathway for working with young people who would not engage with the police in connection with anti-social behaviour.
- EI work was intended to provide support to young people before they reached the point of coming into contact with magistrates courts.
- Some schools operated a zero tolerance policy regarding young people found to have a knife or drugs at school. Work was being in Northamptonshire to enable a more nuanced approach to be taken in conjunction with the provision of additional support for young people concerned.

The Director for Early Intervention made the following additional points during the course of discussion:

- The OPFCC was continually looking to expand the EIFS Team and it was already three times larger than when it had been established.
- Safeguarding young people was a collective responsibility not one that sat with a single agency. The approach taken in Northamptonshire should reflect this. There were opportunities to address structural issues to make better use of overall resources, for example by improving the link between children's and adult social care services.
- Information-sharing between partners was another key area for attention. Organisations should not let information-sharing agreements become counterproductive, as there was a very low risk of action being taken in cases when sharing information produced a positive outcome. The Integrated Care System model might provide further opportunities to improve information-sharing and the use of common systems.
- As much as possible should be done to prevent young people entering the criminal justice system for the first time. There was scope to consider what further action might usefully be taken in Northamptonshire. An example of this was a potential piece of work on how young people were affected by legal advice to give 'no comment' answers when interviewed by the police. This approach could require a case to go to court and reduce the opportunity to provide a young person with other types of support.

- Expectations about the level of support that schools could provide to young people needed to be realistic. Schools were only one of the agencies involved in safeguarding young people.

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

- The work of the EIFS Team was generally commended.
- It was questioned how many families had been helped by the EIFS Team in the current year compared to the previous one. This information was needed to judge its success.
- Cases coming to the magistrates courts provided examples of young people who could have been diverted from crime by prevention activity.
- Effective prevention saved money by reducing demand on higher level services. Northamptonshire needed to rise to this challenge.
- The introduction of direct referrals was welcome. Ease of access was very important for services at the tier 2 level.
- The focus on the whole family within the work of the EIFS Team was positive.
- People working in frontline roles were well-placed to spot signs of danger. They needed to be supported to act on these and to have access to good information about relevant services available.

The PFCC made the following points:

- Everyone who got involved in public service did so to make a difference. The EI work being done in Northamptonshire had helped a large number of families.
- It was important that the EIFS Team employed the right people and future growth would be at a pace to support this.
- Partner organisations involved in EI work needed to take a sensible approach to data sharing. He encouraged councillor members of the Panel to take this point back to their respective local authorities.
- He agreed that there was a significant opportunity for local organisations to work together on EI to produce good outcomes. The OPFCC put a lot of effort into trying to demonstrate the benefit of EI work, which was difficult as the effect of not taking action could not be demonstrated. However, as PFCC he believed in the value of EI work.

RESOLVED that:

- a) The Panel requests to be provided with confirmation of the number of families supported by the Early Intervention Family Support Team in 2021/22 compared to 2020/21.**
- b) The Panel congratulates the Early Intervention Family Support Team on its work so far.**

54. **Fire & Rescue Plan Delivery Update**

The PFCC presented the report, highlighting the following points:

- Darren Dovey was due to retire as Chief Fire Officer in October 2022. The PFCC expressed this thanks to Mr Dovey for all his work in the role, noting that Northamptonshire was a safer place because of him.
- A new CRMP for the next three years was currently being developed. This set out three major projects intended to help to meet future pressures, which focussed on the green agenda, digital and technology and a review of emergency cover. The PFCC was confident that NFRS would continue to build on Mr Dovey's legacy into the future.

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

- Mr Dovey had done an outstanding job in difficult times and it was sad to see him leave. NFRS was in a stronger position than when he had taken the role.
- Mr Dovey was commended for his contribution to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic as chair of the Local Resilience Forum and to rebuilding NFRS using the resources made available by the PFCC.
- The PFCC was questioned about whether he was satisfied with the progress being made by NFRS towards having a workforce that reflected the community it served.
- The PFCC was questioned whether it was planned that Mr Dovey and the candidate appointed as the new Chief Fire Officer would work together during a handover period.

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

- Strengthening NFRS had been a team effort and the Chief Finance Officer had been very successful at securing additional resources from the government.
- NFRS was in a relatively good position now but would continue to face challenges. This added to the importance of appointing the right person to lead it into the future.
- He still had some concerns about progress with the development of operational interoperability between the force and NFRS but was more reassured than when this had been discussed at the Fire Accountability Board in February 2022. Significant progress had been made on back-office interoperability. Northamptonshire would learn from good practice elsewhere. He was keen to pilot a community warden project.
- He was interested to see the Fire Reform White Paper but anticipated that it would not affect Northamptonshire as much as other areas, as it was already ahead on some issues.
- Consideration of how representative NFRS's workforce was of the local community needed to take into account that it had not been able to recruit for 10 years prior to the governance transfer. He was committed to making NFRS more

representative but this needed to be balanced with keeping the county safe. The new Chief Fire Officer would need to be in-post for several years to take forward current work and achieve a step change in NFRS' overall position.

- The process of recruiting the next Chief Fire Officer would start shortly. The PFCC was able to make a good offer but would also have to face challenges, including the situation affecting chief fire officers' pensions following the McCloud judgement.
- The increased rate of short term sickness discussed at the Fire Accountability Board in March 2022 reflected that officers were correctly self-isolating after testing positive for COVID-19. Current recruitment would assist with managing overall capacity once it came on-stream.
- A chief constable could confer Police Community Supporter Officer (PCSO)-type powers on an appropriate individual. This created the opportunity to have an officer who could be a trained firefighter, a paramedic and equipped with PCSO powers. Cornwall was taking this approach. The PCSO was interested in exploring it but would take care about applying it in Northamptonshire.

RESOLVED that: the Panel notes the report.

55. **Police & Crime Plan Delivery Update**

The PFCC presented the report, highlighting the following points:

- The recent visit by the Prime Minister to Northamptonshire represented further recognition at national level of innovative work being done in the county. The PFCC also took the opportunity provided by all ministerial visits to highlight historical underfunding of the force and NFRS.
- The OPFCC had secured over £2m funding from the Home Office in the last 18 months for Safer Streets activity.
- The Knife Angel would be on display in Northamptonshire in the next month.
- He proposed to present a combined Delivery Update report to the Panel in future to reflect the move to a Police, Fire & Crime Plan.

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

- Concern was raised about the continuing backlog of court cases. Reassurance was sought that the PFCC was highlighting this issue at national government level.
- Concern was raised that 134 families who had been the subject of a PPN could not be contacted due to incorrect contact information being recorded.
- The PFCC was challenged whether the higher number of PPNs issued in Northampton compared to other parts of the county reflected that it had a larger population, rather than demonstrating more successful early intervention activity.
- The PFCC was questioned as to how the effectiveness of the Safer Nights Out (SNO) van project was quantified.

- The PFCC was challenged as to how significant resources being put into safety for women and girls, including in relation to the night-time economy, would help to protect a woman in a club experiencing inappropriate behaviour.
- There were examples of good practice regarding women's safety in venues in Northampton, such as The Roadmender.
- It was questioned whether the force was able to deploy female officers to respond to an incident involving violence towards a woman, given that a victim may not be comfortable or able to deal with a male officer in the immediate aftermath.

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

- He and his counterparts had made representations to the Prime Minister concerning the backlog in the courts. Their case had seemed to be well received, but the PFCC remained concerned about this issue.
- He had looked at the use of PPNs and had identified the need to improve recording of contact information, which was why this was highlighted in the report.
- The higher number of PPNs issued in Northampton should in part reflect a more effective neighbourhood policing offer and greater consideration being given in the county to the best way of responding to different issues.
- The SNOvan was still in the trial phase, although North Northamptonshire Council had already asked for one to be deployed in the authority. The PFCC would make an informed assessment of the project and could share this with the Panel. It was difficult to demonstrate that a negative outcome would have occurred in the absence of action taken. Against this, the SNOvan had a relatively modest cost.
- Work on safety for women and girls including training for staff at night-time venues on intervening in situations where someone was behaving inappropriately. The 'It Only Takes One' campaign involved measures including encouraging men to speak about attitudes towards women and call out harassing behaviour. Undercover officers were also deployed in the night-time economy.
- The local authorities in Northamptonshire were responsible for the local trials of e-scooters. He suspected that they would become part of normal life but it would be necessary to ensure that they were used safely. The force engaged with Voi Technology on issues connected with e-scooters, particularly the risk of fatal accidents.
- The force considered the most appropriate response to make to an incident as far as possible. A female officer would be deployed if available in cases involving violence towards women, but the force would not hold back from deploying a male officer to respond otherwise. It was always possible to do more on this issue.
- He sought assurance using both internal and external information about how effectively the force responded to female victims of crime. The Professional Standards Department helped to support effectiveness in this regard both by addressing bad practice by individual officers and ensuring that cases where it was found that officers had acted correctly were resolved promptly.

[Councillors Carr, Pritchard and Smith left the meeting during the preceding discussion].

A Panel member subsequently challenged the PFCC about the overall effectiveness of Northamptonshire Police compared to other forces, in light of the number of 'requires improvement' ratings given by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services in the last PEEL assessment of the force. The PFCC was challenged about whether 'good' ratings would be achieved in the next PEEL assessment to provide real evidence of improvement.

The PFCC made the following points:

- The point that had been made was not based on a complete view of the force's current position. The latest PEEL assessment stated that the force had made significant improvements. It was no longer close to being in the equivalent of special measures and was performing better than in the past. Comparisons with higher rated forces also needed to recognise when they were funded better than Northamptonshire.
- He was not satisfied with the force's current position and held the Chief Constable to account robustly for its performance and development. This was informed by awareness of good practice in other areas as well as support from the College of Policing. There would need to be significant action if the PFCC did not see 'good' ratings in the next PEEL assessment.
- He had consistently said that the force was on an improvement journey and the Panel needed to take a fully contextualised view of its current position. He also thought that the latest PEEL assessment did not reflect some improvements that had already been made. The force was not where it needed to be but was moving in the right direction. The PFCC needed to provide the right environment to support improvement: continually criticising the force's senior leadership would not represent an effective approach.

A Panel member commented that 'requires improvement' ratings meant that the force was in a better position than in the past. All wanted it to achieve outstanding performance and the challenge was to move towards this with the appropriate level of urgency. Panel members emphasised that the Panel should be kept in touch with continuing progress in this regard.

RESOLVED that:

- a) The Panel notes the report.**
- b) The Panel requests that the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner continues to update the Panel in future on progress with performance improvement by Northamptonshire Police.**

56. **Fire & Rescue Authority Budget Update**

The PFCC presented the report, which set out a forecast underspend of £71,000. The budget update reports were shorter than the standard updates as the Panel had requested for the current meeting.

The Panel considered the report. In response to a question the PFCC stated that there were no plans at the current time to close any of the fire stations in the county. NFRS would benefit from moving some stations, such as the one in Kettering. Ultimately, stations needed be located in the best way to meet the needs of a growing county.

RESOLVED that: the Panel notes the report.

57. **Policing Budget Update**

The PFCC presented the report, highlighting the following points:

- The latest forecast position was for an underspend of £1.63m, made up of £1.59m on budgets managed by the PFCC and £35K for budgets managed by the Chief Constable.
- The forecast underspend on budgets managed by the PFCC included underspends relating to the timing of recruitment to posts in the EI & Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) team and to investment in reducing reoffending now being funded by the Ministry of Justice.

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

- The devolved operation budgets managed by the Chief Constable could cover a range of units and costs, including staffing, equipment and overtime. Further information could be provided on this matter if requested.
- The PFCC had asked the Chief Constable for further information on the reasons for overtime costs for the control room being higher than expected. COVID-19 related absences could require overtime cover from additional staff members.
- Reducing re-offending was a new area of work that had been built into the budget for 2021/22. However, it had become clear during the year that the Ministry of Justice would actually fund it.
- Agency staff had been used to cover a vacancy in the OPFCC supporting the Safer Streets initiative to enable projects to continue whilst a permanent staff member was being recruited. This had now been done.

The PFCC subsequently advised in response to a question that the Youth Team was able to respond to issues arising in particular areas within the county. However, prioritisation was based on the needs of the county as a whole.

RESOLVED that:

- a) The Panel requests that the Policing Budget Update report covering the final outturn for 2021/22 includes a breakdown of the devolved operational budgets managed by the Chief Constable.**
- b) The Panel notes the report.**

58. **Police, Fire & Crime Panel Work Programme**

The Democratic Services Assistant Manager presented the report and highlighted the following points:

- The report was intended to enable the Panel both to review its existing work programme and to identify any matters that it wished to highlight for potential inclusion in the outline work programme for 2022/23.
- The OPFCC had identified further possible dates for a Panel members briefing session with the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer and a visit to Darby House. These could be circulated to all Panel members following the meeting.

The Chair thanked all Panel members for their work during 2021/22.

The Panel considered the report and members discussed how further work on early intervention might be incorporated into the Panel's future work programme. It was suggested that the Panel could seek to bring together relevant parties to look at opportunities to make better use of overall resources available to support early intervention in Northamptonshire. Panel members encouraged that this issue be pursued, although it was also recognised that the Panel appointed for 2022/23 would set the final work programme.

RESOLVED that: the Panel identifies task and finish work on early intervention as a suggested topic for inclusion in the Panel's work programme for 2022/23, to have the following focus areas:

- **How well relevant partners work together to support and build on early intervention activity in Northamptonshire**
- **The barriers that can prevent effective partnership working on early intervention and how these can be overcome.**

59. **Complaints and Conduct Matters Update**

The Chair introduced the report, which advised that one new complaint about the PFCC had been recorded during the period September 2021 – March 2022 and was due to be considered by the Complaints Sub Committee in accordance with the Informal Resolution Protocol.

The Panel considered the report. In response to a question the Democratic Services Assistant Manager advised that it was aimed to convene the Complaints Sub Committee in May 2022 before local authorities' annual general meetings. Training on the complaints function would be provided to Sub Committee members.

Panel members commented that a recent Home Office webinar on complaints had highlighted the scope for panels to publish a flow chart setting out how the complaints process operated.

RESOLVED that: the Panel notes the report.

60. **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting closed at 4.45pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____