

# Suffolk Police and Crime Panel Annual Report 2016

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## ***Foreword from the Chairman***

*“This has been a year of significant change, with a new Chief Constable appointed at the start of the year, a new policing model that affects the size of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams and a reduction in the number of Police Community Support Officers. The Panel has played a full role in highlighting areas of community concerns, engaging with the PCC and maintaining the focus on addressing ‘hidden harm’ crimes, partnership working and communication. I look forward to the Panel continuing effectively to support and challenge the PCC in the coming year.”*

**PATRICIA O'BRIEN**

*Chairman of the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel*

## ***Introduction and Background***

This is the third annual report of the [Suffolk Police and Crime Panel](#) (PCP), which was established in 2012 in compliance with the Police Reform & Social Responsibility Act 2011. The Panel's annual report covers its activities during the past calendar year.

The [Police and Crime Commissioner](#) (PCC) for Suffolk, Tim Passmore, has responsibility for setting the direction, objectives and budget of the Suffolk police force, and for holding the Chief Constable to account. The Police and Crime Panel's role is to scrutinise and support the performance of the PCC over a range of policy areas, including the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan. The Panel also has a role in the handling of complaints against the PCC and the confirmation of key staff posts within the Office of the PCC.

The Panel comprises eleven elected members of local authorities across Suffolk working alongside two independent co-opted members. Together the Panel members reflect the breadth of communities in Suffolk. Further information is available on the Panel's website at: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/your-community/working-in-partnership/police-and-crime-panel>.

## ***Other Public Scrutiny of the PCC***

Ultimately, the PCCs are held to account by the electorate, with elections every 4 years, the most recent being in May 2016. In addition, the Suffolk PCC has held

various meetings in public, such as his meetings with the Chief Constable every two months, and a series of public forums in each district / borough across the county. There is also ad-hoc direct engagement of public, community groups, councillors, etc. with the PCC or the Panel, and there has been public scrutiny via national Select Committees, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), internal and external auditors and also in the local and national news media.

## ***Who's Who***

The membership and cross-Suffolk political mix of the Panel changed slightly during 2016, following the Ipswich Borough Council local elections and a number of Suffolk County Council by-elections.

Members of the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel during the first part of 2016 were:

Cllr Patricia O'Brien	(County Council, Conservative) [Chairman]
Rev. Canon Paul Daltry	(Co-opted) [Vice Chairman]
Mr. Manwar Ali	(Co-opted)
Cllr Mark Bee	(Waveney District, Conservative)
Cllr Mary Evans	(County Council, Conservative)
Cllr Albert Grant	(Ipswich Borough, Labour)
Cllr Peter Gardiner	(County Council, Labour)
Cllr Brian Harvey	(Forest Heath District, Conservative)
Cllr Colin Hedgeley	(Suffolk Coastal District, Conservative)
Cllr Diana Kearsley	(Mid Suffolk District, Conservative)
Cllr Patricia Warby	(St Edmundsbury Borough, Conservative)
Cllr David Rose	(Babergh District, Independent)
Cllr David Wood	(County Council, Liberal Democrat)

The members of the Panel during 2016 after May 2016, were:

Cllr Patricia O'Brien	(County Council, Conservative) [Chairman]
Rev. Canon Paul Daltry	(Co-opted) [Vice Chairman]
Mr. Manwar Ali	(Co-opted)
Cllr Mark Bee	(Waveney District, Conservative)
Cllr Derek Hackett	<i>[Cllr John Burns from Dec 2016]</i> (County Council, UKIP)
Cllr Peter Gardiner	(Ipswich Borough, Labour)
Cllr Len Jacklin	(County Council, Labour)
Cllr Brian Harvey	(Forest Heath District, Conservative)
Cllr Colin Hedgeley	(Suffolk Coastal District, Conservative)
Cllr Diana Kearsley	(Mid Suffolk District, Conservative)
Cllr Patricia Warby	(St Edmundsbury Borough, Conservative)
Cllr David Rose	(Babergh District, Independent)
Cllr David Wood	(County Council, Liberal Democrat)

*[Each of the councillor members also has a named substitute member]*

Some part-time officer support to the Panel is provided by the host authority, Suffolk County Council, on behalf of all the Suffolk Local Authorities. The additional costs incurred in supporting the Police and Crime Panel are funded from a specific Home Office grant made available for this purpose. A summary of costs incurred by the Panel during 2016 is shown further below.

### ***Panel Activities and Achievements in 2016***

During 2016 the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel has held five formal Panel meetings, on 6 January, 29 January, 18 March, 19 July and 7 October. There was the continuing desire to ensure that these public meetings offered county wide opportunity for participation, and as such the March and July meetings were held in Bury St Edmunds and Lowestoft, respectively, with the other meetings being held in Ipswich.

Details of the formal meetings and the agendas and papers for them are available online: <http://committeeminutes.suffolkcc.gov.uk/index.aspx>. *[On that web page, select the link to: 'Police and Crime Panel (Joint Committee)']*

In addition to the five formal Panel meetings there was continuation of the regular pattern of holding informal workshops, with available main and substitute members of the Panel, to plan and scope the forthcoming formal meetings.

There have also been several other meetings at various points in the year involving one or more Panel members, such as planning and briefing meetings with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, informal meetings of the Chairman and Vice Chairman with the PCC, Constabulary/PCC briefing events regarding the new local policing model, and occasional attendance by some of the Panel members as observers at the PCC's two-monthly 'Accountability and Performance' public meetings with the Chief Constable. At the start of the year four of the Panel members formed a small 'Task & Finish' group to look at Community Safety Partnerships and the 'Strong and Safe Communities Group for Suffolk' (of which the PCC is a member), in order to have better clarity of their inter-relationships and funding arrangements.

The Panel's work and achievements in 2016 are summarised as follows:

#### **In January 2016:**

- The Panel held a Confirmation Hearing to consider the PCC's recommendation regarding the proposed appointment of the new Chief Constable, and agreed unanimously to recommend to the PCC that Gareth Wilson should be appointed to the role of Chief Constable of Suffolk

Constabulary. The Chairman said that it had been a productive meeting exploring all concerns, thanked the Candidate and the PCC for their responses to the Panel, and congratulated the Candidate on his appointment as Chief Constable. The Panel's formal report is available on the [Suffolk County Council website](#).

- The Panel considered the PCC's proposed Policing Precept for 2016/17, and agreed unanimously to approve the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposal to increase the precept by 1.958% in 2016-17. Further detail is in the Panel's formal report, available on the [Suffolk County Council website](#).
- In consideration of the PCC's strategic objective on 'Caring for Victims and Vulnerable People', the Panel heard that a significant amount of grant funding has been directed by the PCC towards tackling sexual and domestic abuse and supporting victims, and that further resources had been put into the Constabulary's Protecting Vulnerable People Directorate; there would be a time lag before seeing the effect of this investment, however the national rankings of public confidence in the Suffolk Constabulary are very good.
- In consideration of what the PCC is doing to improve the Constabulary's Serious Sexual Offences solved rate performance, it was noted that there was increased reporting as people are more confident in coming forward, and there had been increased investment in the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). There was a relatively small number of rape cases charged and referred to the Crown Prosecution Service, however for those charged there was a high conviction rate. There was strong focus on the needs of the victims, whether for historic or more recent cases. The Panel noted the extensive Report, and recommended to the PCC that there be a further breakdown and greater clarity of the figures for Serious Sexual Offences, including data on (i) self-referrals to the SARC that do not get reported to the Police, and (ii) cases of forced marriage.

**In March 2016:**

- In consideration of the PCC's strategic objective on 'Solving Crime' the discussion covered: recent years' additional investment in resources to tackle 'hidden harm' and protect vulnerable people, whether the level of resource is sufficient given that it is proportionately lower than in many other police forces, when the full benefits of this resource would show in the performance statistics, and the absence of any 'solving crime' performance statistics since October whilst the new ATHENA data recording system is being deployed. The Panel requested information about the roles and staffing levels in the Protecting Vulnerable People Directorate, and also requested that at the October meeting there should be an item scrutinising the PCC's performance monitoring methodology.
- The Panel considered the report of the Task & Finish Group that looked at Community Safety Partnerships (CSP), the new Safe & Stronger

Communities Group (SSCG) and their relationship to the PCC. The discussion covered: how local views are being represented across the county, the different models of engagement in West, East and Ipswich CSPs, the opportunity to review and better-align the CSP and policing boundaries, the need for the SSCG to have buy-in from the very top of the participating organisations, the suggested need for external commissioned resource to quantify the Domestic Abuse problem, the Home Office guidance from 2015 that sets out how the CSPs and the PCC should inter-relate, the responsibility of the County Council regarding victims of Domestic Abuse, the PCC being made aware of the concerns regarding Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in central Ipswich, and the PCC's Safer Suffolk fund grant awards.

- The Panel agreed:
  - o to write to the CSPs, noting their important role, sharing the findings of the Task Group, and suggesting that CSPs examine their current configurations and seek to operate in line with the Home Office Policy guidance of May 2015.
  - o to recommend to the PCC that he seeks to work with the CSPs in line with the Home Office Policy guidance, so that the local need is reflected in the PCC's Police and Crime Plan.
  - o to write to the SSCG, sharing the findings of the Task Group, and the opportunity for the SSCG to give further clarity about its relationship with statutory bodies such as the PCC, the CSPs and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).
  - o to recommend to the PCC, and to suggest to the SSCG, that consideration be given to commissioning an external organisation (such as University Campus Suffolk) to undertake research to quantify the domestic abuse problems in Suffolk.
  - o to schedule on its Forward Work Plan a further review of this topic in approximately 1 year.

#### **In July 2016:**

- The Panel re-elected its chairman and vice-chairman for a further year of office.
- The Panel questioned the PCC about his broad strategic objectives and strategic collaboration opportunities and plans at the start of a new 4-yr term of office. The Panel recommended that further information be provided by the PCC regarding:
  - o The Constabulary's public communications plan.
  - o The Constabulary's 'visibility' plan, relating to visibility of local police officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSO).
  - o The Constabulary's plans for enforcement of parking offences (outside of Ipswich), during the transition period before the potential transfer of this function to the other Suffolk local authorities.

- The perception that some PCSOs are being asked to volunteer to take on additional uniformed duties.
  - Details of the public engagement meetings that the PCC is planning to hold in each of the 18 Safer Neighbourhood Team areas.
  - The PCC formally expressing support for the 'Suffolk Solidarity Campaign' against Hate Crime.
  - A further look at the incidents of hate crimes in Suffolk, as the numbers quoted in the meeting by the PCC were perceived by Panel members to be very low.
  - Reiteration of the important role played by the Neighbourhood Watch schemes and their co-ordinators
- In consideration of the PCC's strategic objective on 'Responding to Emergencies' the Panel recommended that further information be provided by the PCC regarding:
    - Improvement of the 101 service and response times, including partnership working and new website capability.
    - The feedback that is given by the Constabulary to members of the public who have reported issues.
    - The Contact and Control Room resource review taking place in July / August, including information about staff retention.
    - Publicity regarding whom people should contact (999, 101, 111 or another number?) with concerns about suspicious behaviour by a member of the public, especially if associated with mental health conditions.
  - The Panel also resolved to recommend to the Suffolk Health & Wellbeing Board that it acts as co-ordinator to bring together the various agencies involved in dealing with people with mental health issues.

**In October 2016:**

- The Panel undertook one of its statutory duties and reviewed the PCC's Draft Police and Crime Plan 2017-2021. The legislation requires the PCC to issue a Plan within the financial year in which the election is held (ie. by March 2017). Panel members made comments and asked questions of the PCC in relation to:
  - Communication: (i) The Constabulary 'listening' to communities and, (ii) Responses from the police back to the victims of crime.
  - The ATHENA system; ensuring that data is accurate and complete.
  - Road safety and speeding enforcement.
  - The need for the Constabulary to more proactively address perceptions and anecdotal evidence, eg. regarding unreported hate crime.

- Constabulary action plans to address concerns raised by its volunteers, eg. Neighbourhood Watch and Community Speedwatch.
  - Reflecting 'Prevention' in the Action Points in the Plan, noting the PCC's ring-fencing of £700k for grants, and the need to pool public sector resources.
- The Panel recommended to the PCC that there should be something specific in the Plan, and the performance monitoring framework, that holds the Chief Constable to account for the communication 'listening' process, and for responding to victims of crime. There needs to be a clear Action Point in the Plan that requires the Constabulary to be 'listening' not only to their own data but also to communities, and to address any discrepancies. The Panel's formal report is published on the [www.suffolk.gov.uk](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk) website.
  - The Panel also reviewed the PCC's Performance Monitoring Methodology and Framework and recommended that the draft performance monitoring framework gives further attention, with clear action points to ensure accountability and the means to measure outcomes, in relation to:
    - Clarity regarding specific numbers, eg. staffing levels
    - Cybercrime performance
    - Information fed in from businesses
    - Prevention
    - Armed response capability
    - Recruitment and part-time workers
    - Improving data-sharing across sectors
    - Influencing the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders Group and pooling money / resources across organisations, eg. for joint action on domestic abuse.
  - The Panel reviewed the PCC's Annual Report 2015-16. Panel members commented favourably on the format, style and content of the PCC's Annual Report, and members made comments and asked questions of the PCC in relation to:
    - Solved Crime low rates, and views about victims' feelings, noting however that Home Office recorded crime definitions had changed during the year.
    - Increased measures for Quality of Service and level of public confidence in the police.
    - A review of the Local Policing model, noting that the PCC is expecting a full report from the Constabulary in December 2016.
    - The 101 service performance and whether crimes are being under-reported.
    - The level of resources and resilience in the system, especially for night-time responses.

- The PCC indicated a need for Panel members' assistance, as local councillors, in achieving more joined up working across the system. The Panel's formal report on the PCC's annual report 2015-16 is published on the [www.suffolk.gov.uk](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk) website.

## ***Panel Development***

New members of the Panel were welcomed during 2016, following the Ipswich Borough Council local elections and a number of Suffolk County Council by-elections, and updated briefing information was circulated summarising the role and work of the Panel. Panel members and substitute members have been apprised regularly about PCC and Panel related developments, including Select Committee and HMIC reports, and the Suffolk PCC's public meetings. A special workshop was held in May, straight after the PCC Election, as an opportunity for some self-reflection and strategic forward planning by Police & Crime Panel Members; the workshop was externally facilitated by Frontline Consulting Associates.

## ***Police and Crime Panel Finances***

For the 2015/16 financial year, the Home Office approved an annual grant of up to £65,260 to Suffolk County Council as the Host Authority for the Police and Crime Panel. Half yearly claims were made to the Home Office. As part of the terms and conditions of the grant, Police and Crime Panels must publish, as a minimum on their (or the Host Authority's) [website](#), details of all their expenditure and include details of all panel administration costs and individual member claims for expenses and allowances.

Administration costs include: dedicated staff support to the Panel, specialist professional advice and support, meeting management, financial management and administration, management and updating of information about the PCP on the website.

Members' expenses include: Chairman's Special Responsibility Allowance, Attendance Allowance for Co-opted Independent Community Members, relevant employers tax and NI contributions, training and development costs for members and related travel and subsistence claims, if any.

For the period 1 October 2015 to 31 March 2016, the administration costs were £26,682. In addition, member expenses, including employer National Insurance and Pension Fund contributions and member training, totalling £5,477 were paid. Claims received for the period were:

- £2,568 in respect of Chairman's Special Responsibility Allowance;
- £1,260 Independent Community Members' attendance allowances and
- £126 Independent Community Members' travel expenses

For the 2016/17 financial year, the Home Office has approved an annual grant of up to £65,260 to Suffolk County Council as the Host Authority for the Police and Crime Panel. Half yearly claims are made to the Home Office.

For the period 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016, the administration costs were £22,332. In addition, member expenses, including employer National Insurance and Pension Fund contributions and member training, totalling £4,171 were paid. Claims for the period were:

- £2,568 in respect of Chairman's Special Responsibility Allowance

### ***The Panel's Forward Work Plan***

At each formal meeting the Panel considers any updates required to its Forward Work Plan, taking into account that:

- the matter comes within its terms of reference;
- there is a significant level of public interest in the matter;
- it is an issue which has been raised by auditors or other inspection regimes, or is the effect of new government guidance or legislation;
- there is an opportunity to identify and promote good practice, have a positive impact and add value to the work of the PCC.

The Suffolk Panel's forward work plan continues to be focussed around:

- Nominally quarterly formal meetings, with considerable informal preparatory work and stakeholder interactions around these, including via member 'Task & Finish' (T&F) Groups where appropriate.
- Regular statutory reviews such as the PCC's annual proposed precept (and any formal variation to the PCC's police and crime plan).
- Some topics for more specific focus arising from previous Panel meetings, or matters arising in between the formal meetings.
- A quarterly schedule of Status Reviews focused on each of the (four) strategic objectives in the PCC's Police and Crime Plan 2013-2017 (updated July 2015).
- An 'Information Bulletin' containing briefing information of potential interest to the Panel (e.g. A summary of PCC Decisions since the last meeting).
- In future, more use of T&F Groups and of meetings focused on major themes (eg. cybercrime, mental health, partnership working, etc.)

## ***The Panel's Forward View***

Panel members were asked to give some short sentences summarising, 'Where they see things going ...', to give an indicative view of what Panel Members feel that the Panel should be focusing its energies on in 2017 (building on the experiences and learning from 2016 and before). Various views were given, as follows:

*"In 2017, I see the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel ....*

*.... focus on partnerships. How the police, councils, health etc are working together to really make efficiencies that save money and channel funds into, perhaps, being able to recruit more PCs. Unless partnerships are serious about co-operation, and that means relinquishing 'power' and long held perceptions, foresee difficult times ahead!"*

*.... continuing to challenge and hold to account on behalf of the residents of Suffolk the PCC & CC with their continued change and development programmes thus maximising Constabulary resources within Suffolk."*

*.... understanding and reemphasising the need for an across the board, at all levels, open and honest understanding of best practice working methods from other forces, both in this country and abroad, and from members of the public, and not just to reinvent the wheel every time just because 'change sometimes hurts'."*

*.... continuing its work holding the PCC to account, I would like the Panel to be given more powers of compulsion."*

## ***Contacts and Further Information***

If you would like further information about the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel please visit the website at <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/your-community/working-in-partnership/police-and-crime-panel>, or contact Suffolk County Council, on Telephone: 01473 265119, email: [committee.services@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:committee.services@suffolk.gov.uk).

