

# National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels

## Inaugural meeting – Thursday 19 April 2018

Local Government Association, London

### Present

• Bedfordshire PCP	Paul Cain (Chair) PC
• Cleveland PCP	Cllr Norma Stephenson (Chair) NS
• Cleveland PCP	Margaret Waggott (Support officer) MW
• Derbyshire PCP	Vicky Newbury (Vice Chair) VN
• Dorset PCP	Cllr John Adams (Vice Chair) JA
• Essex PCP	John Gili-Ross (Independent member) JGR
• Hertfordshire PCP	Cllr Tim Hutchings (Chair) TH
• Hertfordshire PCP	Cllr Isy Irmami (Vice Chair) II
• Kent and Medway PCP	Mike Campbell (Support officer) MC
• Lancashire PCP	Sian Roxborough (Support officer) SR
• Leicestershire PCP	Cllr Joe Orson (Chair) JO
• Leicestershire PCP	Euan Walters (Support officer) EW
• Merseyside PCP	Cllr Carla Thomas (Chair) CT
• Norfolk PCP	Cllr Dr Christopher Kemp (Vice Chair) CK
• North Wales PCP	Cllr Julie Fallon (Chair) JF
• Northamptonshire PCP	Cllr Gill Mercer (Chair) GM
• Northumbria PCP	Cllr Joyce Welsh (Member) JW
• Nottinghamshire PCP	Cllr Debbie Mason (Vice Chair) DW
• South Yorkshire PCP	Cllr Stuart Sansome (Vice Chair) SS
• Staffordshire PCP	Julie Plant (Support officer) JP
• Sussex PCP Chair	Cllr Bill Bentley (Chair) BB
• Warwickshire PCP	Cllr Derek Poole (Vice Chair) DP
• West Midland PCP	Cllr John O'Shea (Lead, City of Birmingham) JOS
• West Yorkshire PCP	Mrs Jo Sykes (Independent member) JS
• LGA	Ellie Greenwood EG
• Frontline Consulting	Dave Burn DB
• Frontline Consulting	Ann Reeder AR

### Minutes

#### 1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1. TH welcomed the group to the meeting, and those present introduced themselves.
- 1.2. It was agreed that the meeting should operate on a one panel, one vote basis. There was a discussion about whether it was appropriate for support officers to vote on behalf of their panels; the group agreed that anyone asked to represent their panel at a meeting was entitled to vote on its behalf, but that this was a matter for individual panels and officers to determine.
- 1.3. Panel members from Warwickshire and Leicestershire, as well as support officers from Staffordshire and Lancashire, noted that they would not be voting at the

meeting but were in attendance to observe and provide a report to their full panels to reach a view on.

## 2. Agreement to form a Special Interest Group and requirements for LGA SIGs

2.1. TH invited the group to reach agreement on establishing an LGA special interest group (SIG) for police and crime panels (PCPs), noting that ten LGA members are required to do so.

2.2. The following PCPs confirmed their commitment to establishing a PCP SIG:

- 2.2.1. Dorset
- 2.2.2. Kent and Medway
- 2.2.3. Northumbria
- 2.2.4. Derbyshire
- 2.2.5. Essex
- 2.2.6. West Midlands
- 2.2.7. Nottinghamshire
- 2.2.8. Hertfordshire
- 2.2.9. Sussex
- 2.2.10. Norfolk
- 2.2.11. Bedfordshire
- 2.2.12. Northamptonshire
- 2.2.13. Cleveland
- 2.2.14. South Yorkshire
- 2.2.15. West Yorkshire
- 2.2.16. Merseyside

2.3. The meeting discussed a name for the new group, with a general preference for the 'National Association of Police and Crime Panels.' It was suggested that the title should also incorporate fire, given that several Police and Crime Commissioners, and therefore panels, will include this in their remit. The group therefore agreed the name **National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels.**

2.4. For the purposes of the application to the LGA to become a SIG, the group agreed the 'nature of the common feature or interest' proposed at paragraph 12.1 of the supporting paper for the meeting (attached as an appendix to these minutes), that is: *'the National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels will represent the views and interests of police and crime panels / police, fire and crime panels, which are hosted by local authorities and on which all English and Welsh authorities outside London are represented.'*

2.5. The group also agreed that the local authority which hosts the police and crime panel should normally become the formal member of the SIG, except where local circumstances dictate a different approach.

## 3. Terms of reference

3.1. The group discussed the proposed terms of reference provided at paragraph 15 of the background paper. TH emphasised the need to avoid any suggestion of lobbying the Home Office, which would contravene the terms of the grant provided to PCPs.

EG clarified that the Home Office had not approved the proposed terms of reference, but that they had been developed with their concerns in mind. It was suggested that if the group did want to actively lobby the government, it would need to find alternative sources of funding to support this.

- 3.2. One panel raised a query regarding whether raising the public profile of PCPs was appropriate. Others felt that this was relevant, although the difficulty in doing so locally was noted. It was suggested that 'To promote better understanding of the role of PCPs' was a better description of this objective, reflecting the need to ensure PCPs have adequate recognition to enable them to fulfil their role effectively.

3.3. The following terms of reference were therefore agreed:

1. To provide a forum for collaborative discussion of issues relating to and impacting on Police and Crime Panels and Police, Fire and Crime Panels (PCPs / PFCPs)
2. To share ideas and experience in response to the expanding role of PCCs and PFCCs and thereby PCPs / PFCPs
3. To create a mechanism for direct liaison between PCPs / PFCPs and the Home Office
4. To provide an opportunity for dialogue with relevant bodies such as the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, Association of Police and Crime Chief Executives and others
5. To support the development of joint PCP /PFCP responses to relevant consultations
6. To promote professional standards
7. To share good practice and create guidance and other supporting materials for PCPs /PFCPs
8. To ensure stability and collective memory in a landscape where PCPs / PFCPs can have significant changes in membership
9. To provide capacity for horizon scanning across all PCPs / PFCPs.
10. To promote better understanding of the role of PCPs / PFCPs.

#### **4. Management / support structure and subscriptions**

- 4.1. The group discussed the level of subscription required to join and support the NAPFCP. TH noted that two proposals had been put forward, £200 and £500. He suggested that it would be preferable to start off at a higher level and reduce future subscriptions if appropriate, rather than risk setting up the group without sufficient funding, but the group recognised that a sum above £500 may deter some PCPs and PFCPs from participating. TH stated that subject to the discussion about the terms of reference and lobbying, it was felt that it would be possible to support the work of the group in promoting best practice and collaboration.
- 4.2. It was suggested that understanding what the subscription income would be used for would help to clarify what was required. EG clarified that there was limited LGA support available to host and minute meetings (subject to meeting room availability, for which early booking would be required). AR confirmed that Frontline Consulting would be willing to support the NAPFCP, but the cost of this would depend on what the group wanted to do.
- 4.3. While it was recognised that the £500 sum had not been based on specific costings, the group agreed that this was an appropriate starting point, subject to the

development of a costed workplan. The meeting noted that it was a matter for PCPs and PFCPs, rather than host authorities, to determine whether this was an appropriate use of the budget, and agreed on the importance of panel members being sighted on how the overall budget is spent.

- 4.4. It was agreed that the membership subscription should be set at £500 initially, and that this should be banked by the host authority for the Chair of the NAPFCP, which would also be responsible for invoicing panels which are members of the SIG.

## **5. Election of interim Chair and Vice Chair**

- 5.1. TH noted that there had been one nomination to be interim Chair of the NAPFCP, and two proposals to be interim Vice Chair. Given the work that would be required to establish the Association, he proposed making these three appointments to run up to the Annual Frontline Consulting Conference for PCPs and PFCPs in November, when a full vote could be taken.
- 5.2. The meeting accepted this recommendation. John Gili-Ross (Independent member, Essex PCP), John Adams (Vice Chair, Dorset PCP) and Alison Lowe (Chair, West Yorkshire PCP) were agreed as Chair and Vice Chairs respectively. Cllr Joyce Welsh of the Northumbria PCP noted that her panel had submitted a late nomination for her to be Vice-Chair, but that she was content to defer at this stage.
- 5.3. JGR took over the chairmanship of the meeting, thanking TH for his work in getting the Association to this stage, and the group for accepting his nomination.

## **6. Suggestions for initial work plan and next steps**

- 6.1. JGR sought suggestions for an initial work plan for the NAPFCP, suggesting that he felt that it would be important to develop a constitution to govern the workings of the group. CK volunteered to lead this process in order to present something at the November Frontline Consulting Conference for PCPs and PFCPs, which CT offered to support.
- 6.2. A number of attendees suggested that the proposals put forward in paragraphs 30 and 31 of the background paper provided a comprehensive basis on which to move forward, with two additions 6.3.6 and 6.3.7 (highlighted in italics below).
- 6.3. Issues to focus on in the first year:
  - 6.3.1. Meetings with relevant partner organisations and the Home Office.
  - 6.3.2. The development of guidance for PCPs on handling complaints.
  - 6.3.3. Updating the existing suite of LGA / Centre for Public Scrutiny guidance for PCPs.
  - 6.3.4. Exploring the impact of changes to FRA governance and the enhanced role for PCCs, and therefore PCPs, in this area.
  - 6.3.5. A review of panel resourcing.

6.3.6. *Promoting and sharing best practice.*

6.3.7. *Increasing the public's understanding of the role of panels.*

6.4. Next steps for the newly elected Chair:

6.4.1. *Encourage other panels to get involved in the NAPFCP.*

6.4.2. Submit an application to the LGA Leadership Board formally to establish a SIG.

6.4.3. Commit to working with group members further to develop the work plan.

6.4.4. Further develop proposals for how the SIG could operate, in terms of the involvement of panel support officers as well as panel members [*the constitution*].

6.4.5. Develop a comprehensive set of proposals in each area, for consideration at the AGM of the group to be held at the Frontline Consulting Conference for PCPs and PFCPs on Monday 12 November. The LGA's annual PCP workshop, to be held on Wednesday 11 July, provides an opportunity for a group meeting and update on progress, if required.

6.5. JP sought confirmation of the queries at paragraphs 22 and 23 of the background paper, on who would be providing support to the Chair and wider NAPFCP. JGR felt that there were advantages to both options; TH suggested that the Chair would need to justify how money had been spent but at this stage it would be better not to be too prescriptive about how it was spent. JGR confirmed that Essex has agreed that they will be able to provide some support to this work.

6.6. Attendees put forward a range of other areas of possible work for the NAPFCP and issues for it to consider:

6.6.1. Whether it would be appropriate for the SIG to become a designated body for the purpose of dealing with 'super complaints', by putting forward an application in the next round of this process. It was noted that the issue of complaints is confusing and that as per the suggested work plan it would be useful to provide a briefing on this.

6.6.2. How PCPs and PFCPs can hold PCCs and PFCCs to account on the issue of reoffending, and sharing good practice on this.

6.6.3. How PCPs could undertake joint scrutiny on the use of shared police resources (eg helicopters, armed response). It was noted that there already has been some work on regional collaboration and joint scrutiny by PCPs.

6.6.4. The role of metro mayors as PCCs, as some areas move to this model, and other regional challenges (eg, police force areas merging in different footprints to local fire services).

- 6.6.5. Undertaking a survey of PCPs and PFCPs to identify and share common factors on how PCPs and PFCPs are funded and operate, to help share best practice. AR noted that a meeting has been set up for support officers of the new PFCPs to learn from Essex's experience of incorporating fire into the work of the PCP.
- 6.6.6. How the NAPFCP constitution can link into the regional networks of PCPs and PFCPs, and how the networks can act as advocates for it.
- 6.6.7. The need to invite the views of other PCPs and PFCPs on what issues they would find useful for the NAPFCP to consider (including issues they had previously raised with the Home Office) and whether they would be willing to join.
- 6.6.8. Whether it would be possible to develop a website for the NAPFCP to promote understanding of PCPs and PFCPs, including a members only area that could be used to share best practice. It was recognised that this could be prohibitively expensive, and that the LGA knowledge hub could provide an information sharing forum, and the Frontline Consulting PCP website a publically accessible resource.
- 6.6.9. The meeting recognised there would be a need to prioritise this list given the resources available.

## **7. Other PCP and PFCP business**

- 7.1. NS suggested that the letter to other PCPs and PFCPs inviting them to join the NAPFCP should include a list of those that have already signed up, to help encourage more to join. JGR agreed, adding that he would write to other PCPs and PFCPs with the outline work plan, and invite them to put forward other items and join the NAPFCP. He also agreed that introductory letters to other bodies, such as the APCC, would be useful. TH offered to facilitate a meeting with his local PCC, David Lloyd, the Chair of the APCC.
- 7.2. CK sought a steer on the constitution, suggesting an executive committee would be required to work with the Chair and Vice Chairs, as well as a Treasurer to be responsible for the NAPFCP's funding. PC put himself forward and was agreed as the Treasurer.
- 7.3. CT proposed setting up a NAPFCP WhatsApp group and agreed to take contact details to set this up: [cllrcarlathomas@gmail.com](mailto:cllrcarlathomas@gmail.com)

## **8. Any other business**

- 8.1. EG clarified that the LGA PCP workshop would now be held on Wednesday 11 July.
- 8.2. EG suggested that the support function for the NAPFCP should maintain lists of PCP support officers and Chairs. She noted occasional issues with ensuring that communications reached panel officers, and suggested that liaising with both groups or a wider distribution list, should address this issue.