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Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Tuesday 10 October 2023

14:30

Oak Room, County Buildings, Stafford

The meeting will be webcast live and archived for 12 months. It can be viewed at the following link: <https://staffordshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

John Tradewell
Secretary to the Panel
2 October 2023

Agenda

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of interest**
3. **Minutes of the two meetings held on 3 July 2023** (Pages 1 - 8)
4. **Decisions published by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC)**

The following decisions have been published on the Commissioners web site since the last meeting of the Panel:

- A, Police and Crime 005 – OPST Training facility
- B, Police and Crime 004 – Doxey Police Post
- C, Police and Crime 003 – Commissioning of Employment support service for offenders
- D, Police and Crime 002 – Force Contract Centre growth
- E, Police and Crime 001 – Site acquisition – Sutherland Road, Stoke on Trent

[Decisions - Staffordshire Commissioner \(staffordshire-pfcc.gov.uk\)](https://staffordshire-pfcc.gov.uk)

5. **Questions to the PFCC from Members of the Public** (Pages 9 - 12)

Questions to the Commissioner are invited from members of the public who live or work in Staffordshire. Notice of questions must be received by no later than three clear working days before the Panel meeting. More information on where and how to submit a question can be found at <https://bit.ly/34arVDw>

6. **Police and Crime Plan - Update** (Pages 13 - 26)

7. **Fire and Rescue Service Safety Plan - Update** (Pages 27 - 38)

8. **Questions to the PFCC by Panel Members**

9. **Dates of Future Meetings and Work Programme** (Pages 39 - 40)

10. **Exclusion of the Public**

The Chairman to move:

“That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of Local Government Act 1972 indicated below”.

Part Two

(All reports in this section are exempt)

Membership	
Charlotte Atkins	Staffordshire Moorlands
Adrian Bowen	Co-optee
Richard Cox (Vice-Chair)	Lichfield District Council
Jo Elson	Cannock Chase District Council
Michael Fitzpatrick	East Staffordshire
Gill Heesom	Newcastle-under-Lyme District Council

Angela Loughran	Stafford Borough Council
Daniel Maycock	Tamworth Borough Council
Vince Merrick	South Staffordshire
Bernard Peters (Chair)	Staffordshire County Council
Keith Walker	Co-Optee
David Williams	Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Notes for Members of the Press and Public

Filming of Meetings

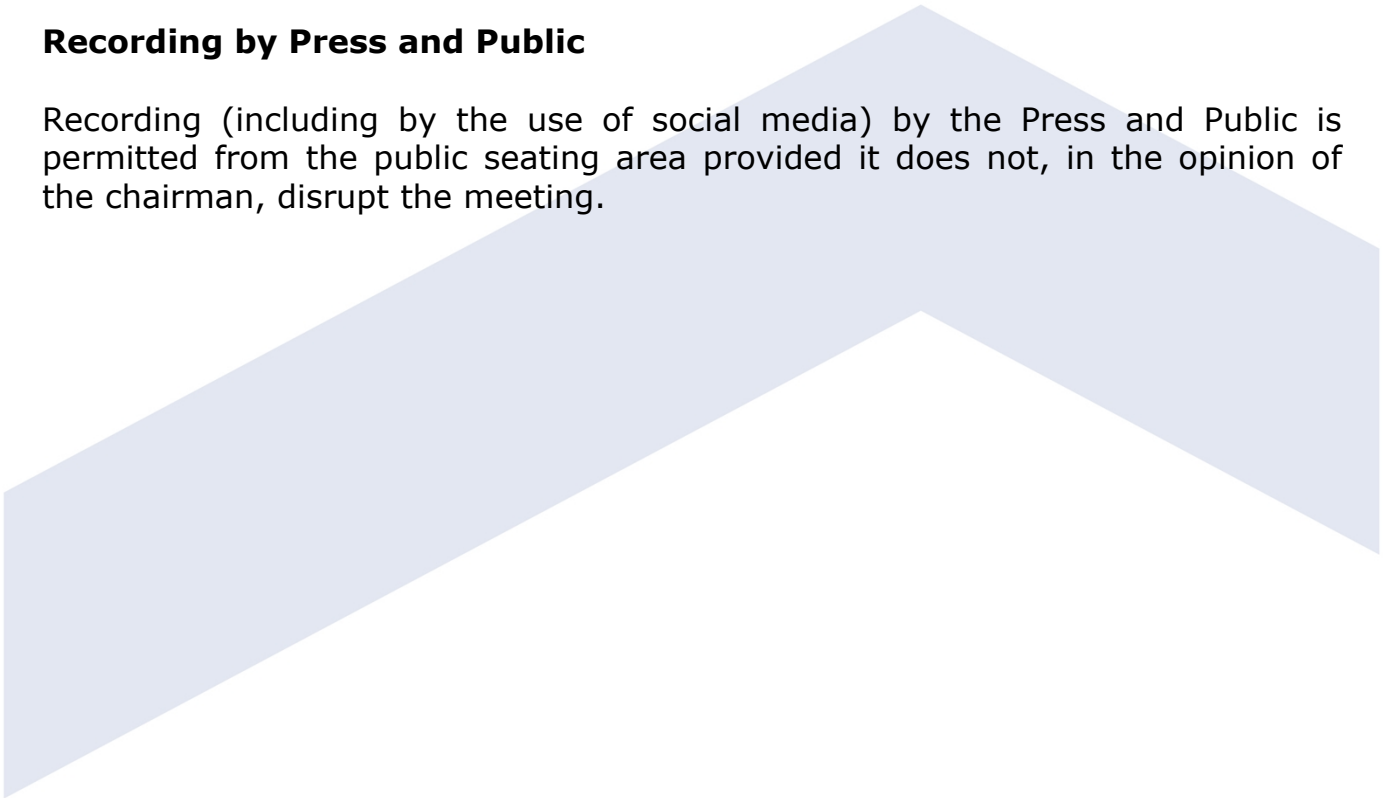
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The webcast will be live on the County Council's website and recorded for subsequent play-back for 12 months. The recording will also be uploaded to YouTube. By entering the meeting room and using the seats around the meeting tables you are deemed to be consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for the purpose of webcasting.

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Recording by Press and Public

Recording (including by the use of social media) by the Press and Public is permitted from the public seating area provided it does not, in the opinion of the chairman, disrupt the meeting.



Minutes of the Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel Meeting held on 3 July 2023

Present: Bernard Peters (Chair)

Attendance	
Charlotte Atkins	Gill Heesom
Adrian Bowen	Angela Loughran
Richard Cox (Vice-Chair)	Dan Maycock
Jo Elson	Keith Walker

Also in attendance: Ben Adams, Helen Fisher, Chief Constable Chris Nobel, David Greensmith, Victoria Farrar and Emily Blandon Selsby.

Apologies: Michael Fitzpatrick and Roger Lees

Part One

1. Appointment of Chairman

Resolved: That Councillor Bernard Peters be appointed Chairman of the Panel for the ensuring year.

2. Appointment of Vice Chairman

Resolved: That Councillor Richard Cox be appointed Vice Chairman of the Panel for the ensuring year.

3. Declarations of interest

Councillor Williams declared an interest in Commissioners annual report item as his employer had provided services to the SPACE scheme in the past.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2023, 13 February 2023 and 21 February 2023.

Resolved: That the minutes of the Panel meeting held on 6, 13, and 21 February 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

5. Decisions published by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC)

Details were submitted of decisions published by the Commissioner since the last Panel meeting.

Resolved: That the decisions be noted.

6. Questions to the PFCC from Members of the Public

The Panel considered the questions ask by a member of the public and the Commissioners written response.

Resolved: That the questions asked, and the Commissioners written response be noted.

7. Consideration of the Commissioners Annual Report 2023/24

The Annual report was presented by the Commissioner who explained the progress made against his strategic plans.

The Commissioner highlighted the following from his report:

- Commitment to the SPACE programme had been made for a further two years.
- Road safety, including safe vehicles, ANPR Cameras, speeding and vehicle crime remained a priority.
- New leadership in both the Police and Fire Service was leading to improved confidence in local services.
- Financial forecasts and resources, as highlighted in the annual report, were promising.
- The recruitment of additional police officers was on track to increase by 250 by the end of May 2024.

The Commissioner thanked the Fire and Rescue and the Police Services; all their staff; volunteers; his Deputy; and the Commissioners team for their support over the past months and helping to provide services in challenging and demanding times.

Following the Commissioners presentation and questioning from the Panel, the following summary of information was shared. This was in addition to that provided in the written report:

- Demand for Police services had been managed locally based on knowledge of the area, its challenges and work force capacity.
- Work was taking place with partners to ensure that the right and most appropriate services attended incidents. The Commissioner assured the Panel that emergency services would continue to respond to call outs but it was hoped that specialist services would be able to assist in a more timely way. When more detail was available all partners, including local authorities would be consulted.
- It was felt that to mention the behaviour of other forces in the Commissioner's foreword, was inappropriate as there were also

issues locally which needed addressing. The Commissioner agreed to revisit the wording in the annual report as it was not the intention to downplay any problems which Staffordshire services may have. There was a need to reassure the community that these issues were being addressed.

- The recruitment of officers was reflecting the community in terms of ethnicity and gender, and it was essential that people feel comfortable in their workplace.
- Anti-social behaviour was a priority and full access to CCTV and surveillance equipment was critical. There were many operating systems and managing the amount and type of information coming into the system was challenging. The project this year would be to understand and develop ways of working together to establish what was available and how it could be used. It was felt that Community Safety Partnerships were in an ideal place to understand local issues and through working together could focus on local solutions.
- Technology and consistency within the Fire service was highlighted as a particular issue by the Panel, with some local teams having to print out information before they could respond to incidents as they didn't have smart technology. The Commissioner explained that different information storage systems meant that it might be some time before all information was available electronically, but it was confirmed that all front-line services now had smart phones and the service was working its way through the other issues raised in the inspection report.
- Fire crews of three were being piloted in South Staffordshire, for on call crews. These were normally used as a backup response and wouldn't normally be expected to be working alone. The results of the pilot would come to the panel in due course.
- Public perception and the need to address incorrect social media was raised.
- The Commissioner felt that the service had improved but was not yet where he wanted it to be. The 'Engage' process and support offered was welcomed but the speed of change was frustrating for all concerned, this was despite all the hard work and effort from all involved. Economic factors also had an impact of delivery.
- The need to build public confidence in the 101 system was discussed. The Commissioner reported that a web site was being developed to enable non urgent issues to be reported on line. Work was continuing on the answering of calls withing a responsible time.
- The need for the public to see base line data, so that they could see improvement, was raised. Members were reminded that the Commissioner held regular meetings with the Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer to hold them to account. There were also public performance meetings held with the Chief Constable which

could be viewed or watched via [Public Meetings - Staffordshire Commissioner \(staffordshire-pfcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.staffordshire-pfcc.gov.uk)

Resolved:

- a) That the report be received.
- b) That the Panel respond formally to the Annual report including the feedback provided during the meeting, particularly relating to the public perception, performance and fire service pilots and technology.
- c) That information on the pilot scheme in South Staffordshire (three member crew) be reported back to the panel at an appropriate time.

8. Home Office Grant 2022/23

The Panel received the annual report which provided information on the Home Office grant allocated to the Host authority which was intended to meet the costs of the administrative support and management services of the panel and Panel member expenses. The Grant allocation for 2023/24 had not yet been received.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

9. Annual Report on the Management of Complaints and Conduct Matters against the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

The Panel received the annual report which provided information on the number of complaints referred to the panel which relate to the personal conduct of the Commissioner and/or his Deputy.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

10. Questions to the PFCC by Panel Members

None asked at this point in the meeting.

11. Dates of Future Meetings and Work Programme

The Panels work programme was considered. It was suggested that the panel training dates should be added to the work programme to ensure transparency.

Resolved: That the work programme be noted.

Chair

Minutes of the Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel Meeting held on 3 July 2023

Present: Bernard Peters (Chair)

Attendance	
Charlotte Atkins	Gill Heesom
Adrian Bowen	Angela Loughran
Richard Cox (Vice-Chair)	Dan Maycock
Jo Elson	Keith Walker

Also in attendance: Ben Adams, Helen Fisher, Katharine Ross, David Greensmith, Victoria Farrar and Emily Blandon Selsby.

Apologies: Michael Fitzpatrick and Roger Lees

Part One

1. Declarations of interest

None were made at the meeting.

2. Consideration of proposed appointment to the post of Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer)

The Secretary to the Panel's report explained that the Panel was required to hold a Confirmation Hearing following receipt of formal notification by the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner of his wish to appoint his preferred candidate for the post of Director of Finance Section 151 Officer.

The report explained that guidance on the role of the Panel, recommended that through questioning of the candidate they should consider the 'professional competence' and 'personal independence' of the individual. To assist, the Panel had been provided with the preferred candidates CV in advance of the meeting and a job description/person specification was attached to the agenda.

Presentation by the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner

The Commissioner reported on the detailed and lengthy process followed by him to recruit a new Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer for the Commissioners Office.

The Commissioner reported that Katharine Ross was his preferred candidate.

Presentation by and questions to Ms Ross:

Ms Ross briefly summarised her career, work experience and achievements to date.

The Panel questioned her on various issues including her experience of managing change, delivering results, working with partners, agencies and the public and measuring performance.

The Panel adjourned at 12:55 pm to consider their decision.

The Panel reconvened at 13:00 pm. The Commissioner and Ms Ross were re-admitted to the meeting and informed of the Panel's unanimous decision.

RESOLVED – That the Staffordshire Police Fire and Crime Commissioner be informed that this Panel recommends that he proceed with the appointment of Ms Ross as the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer.

Chair

STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

NOTE: The following action or information was requested at a previous meeting(s). When an item has been completed it will be taken off the list.

Meeting / Agenda Item	Action Required	By Whom	Information requested/action taken	Completed or Target date
6 Feb 2023 Questions raised by the Panel Page 7	When would the incompatibility of technology be rectified? Reference was made to CCTV data from the District Councils which could not be downloaded by the police.	PFCC to respond	This matter is being considered by the Police. Ongoing	
3 July 2023 Annual report	Formal report to PFCC with panels comments	PFCP	Report emailed 10 July and published on panels web page.	July 2023
3 July 2023 Annual report	Information on the pilot scheme in South Staffordshire (three member fire crew) be reported back to the panel at an appropriate time.	PFCC	Update on crewing in threes is included in the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Safety Plan 2020 – 2024 update (para 4.1.3)	October 2023
3 July 2023 Work programme	Add Training events to the work programme	PFCP	Added	10 July 2023

3 July 2023 Confirmation Hearing	Formal report to PFCC confirming appointment of Section 151 officer	PFCCP	Report emailed 10 July and published on panels web page	July 2023
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**STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL –
10 october 2023**

**QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC TO THE POLICE, FIRE AND
CRIME COMMISSIONER**

Report of the Secretary

The Panel's Constitution provides for questions to the Commissioner from members of the public. Questioners can choose to either attend the meeting and ask the question themselves or have the question dealt with in written form and the reply forwarded to them.

The following question has been received (questions are listed in order of receipt):

Mr Riley – Received September 2023

1. What are the crime statistics in Staffordshire for the last three years Oct 2020 - Sept 2021, Oct 2021 - Sept 2022 and Oct 2022 to Sept 2023 broken down under appropriate offence types (including minor offences), within areas in the county, please include what percentage are committed by our own and foreign nationals within the information?
2. What crimes have been downgraded from main offence types into minor offences in the last three years and are not being investigated by Staffordshire Police if they do not meet a threshold in terms of cost or severity?

The Commissioner has been asked to provide a response at the meeting.

A copy of the reply will be forwarded to any questioner not in attendance at the meeting.

J Tradewell
Secretary to the Panel

Contact Officers: Mandy Pattinson
Mandy.pattinson@staffordshire.gov.uk

Police, Fire & Crime Panel – Public Question

Questions Posed:

Question 1

What are the crime statistics in Staffordshire for the last three years Oct 2020 - Sept 2021, Oct 2021 - Sept 2022 and Oct 2022 to Sept 2023 broken down under appropriate offence types (including minor offences), within areas in the county, please include what percentage are committed by our own and foreign nationals within the information?

Question 2

What crimes have been downgraded from main offence types into minor offences in the last three years and are not being investigated by Staffordshire Police if they do not meet a threshold in terms of cost or severity?

Panel Member: Public Question

Question Date: 20.09.2023

Commissioner Response:

Question1

These operational statistics would be better serviced through an FOI request to Staffordshire Police, advice on how to do this is in the following link:

[Request information about the police | Staffordshire Police](#)

However, although not matching the exact timeframes as requested by Mr Riley, there is validated annual data made publicly available, which can be sourced from ONS Crime Statistics on the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1170938/prc-csp-mar16-mar23-tables-200723.ods

This data details the areas in the county, covers all offence types as requested, and stretches back several years. Caution is to be applied comparing year on year data as there are occasional changes to crime recording principles that forces are legally required to implement.

The recorded crime detail in the link above does not record the outcome of the crime, this is a different data set and is available publicly at Force Level only, available on the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1170941/prc-outcomes-open-data-mar2023-tables-200723.xlsx

Police are only required to record offender ethnicity, this information does not therefore answer Mr Riley in terms of nationality of offenders. Detail on ethnicity of those at different stages of the Criminal Justice process can be found on the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/ethnicity-and-the-criminal-justice-system-statistics-2020>

Question 2

Crime classification and validation can be extremely complex with a requirement for significant operational expertise in this area. This operational data and the complex context that may need to be provided would be better serviced through an FOI request to Staffordshire Police, advice on how to do this is in the following link:

[Request information about the police | Staffordshire Police](#)

Contact Officer

Author:	Louise Clayton
Position:	Chief Executive
Date:	25.09.23



Police, Fire and Crime Panel – 10 October 2023

Police and Crime Plan Update

Report of the Staffordshire Commissioner

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report is to update the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Panel note the update on the delivery of the plan and make comment as appropriate.

3. Background

- 3.1. In December 2021, the Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire and Rescue, and Crime (Staffordshire Commissioner) published his Police and Crime Plan for 2021-2024. The plan provides the strategic direction for how policing should be delivered during the Commissioner's term of office. It details how the Commissioner's Office (SCO) will work with Staffordshire Police, health, councils, the wider criminal justice system and community groups to reduce the number of victims of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB), reduce casualties on our roads and prevent people suffering due to the actions of others.
- 3.2. The plan sets out the Commissioner's priorities, designed to 'Keep Staffordshire Safe':
 - **A local and responsive service:** Understand and deal with what matters to communities, respond promptly to incidents and work with partners to solve problems and prevent them from getting worse. This will mean that crime and ASB reduces, our roads are safer and confidence in Staffordshire Police increases.
 - **Prevent harm and protect people:** Prevent harm and protect people (particularly children and those that are vulnerable) by ensuring they are safeguarded and receive the help and support they need.
 - **Support victims and witnesses:** Ensure victims and witnesses are provided with exceptional specialist support services so they feel able to cope and recover from the impact of crime and ASB.
 - **Reduce offending and reoffending:** Ensure people are challenged and supported to make life choices that will prevent them from offending and perpetrators don't reoffend. Doing so will mean fewer victims of crime.
 - **A more effective criminal justice system:** Ensure Staffordshire Police, the Crown Prosecution Service, Courts, the Probation Service and HM

Prison Service all work seamlessly so that effective justice is delivered more quickly.

- 3.3. How effectively the Service performs against these priorities is a key part of how the Commissioner holds the Chief Constable to account on behalf of the public. To this end, the Chief Constable must have regard to the Police and Crime Plan in producing his Policing Plan for the force. Both the Police and Crime Plan and the Policing Plan will be kept under review and potentially refreshed during the Commissioner's term of office to take account of finances, changes in national policy or major events.
- 3.4. The [2022/23 Annual Report](#) was received by the panel on 3 July 2023. This report highlights progress since April 2023.

4. Progress to Date

4.1. A local and responsive service

- 4.1.1. The Police Operating Model established in June 2022 is providing more capacity to respond, investigate crime, give victims the attention they need and more time for proactive policing. Most importantly, by placing teams locally and aligning them with district boundaries, they are now more closely connected to local issues and working with partners to problem solve the recurring issues that matter most to communities. Response times to the most serious incidents remain stable but more incidents are being attended by response officers first, meaning that neighbourhood officers are free to focus on proactive work and community engagement.
- 4.1.2. The Police Uplift Programme has now finished and the force met its target officer number. Additionally, with local investment through increased council tax, I agreed a target with the Chief Constable of **2,000 officers by the end of March 2024**. The force is set to exceed this target, with the current strength sitting at 1,962. At the same time, sickness levels have reduced by 15% for officers and 16% for PCSOs and police staff compared to the previous year.
- 4.1.3. Productivity of local teams is increasing, with arrest rates up by 16%, stop searches up by 16%, vehicle searches up by 22% on the previous year and positive criminal justice outcomes slightly improving. Performance is expected to improve further as the model becomes fully staffed and officers complete training to become ready for independent patrol.
- 4.1.4. The most recent public perception survey, carried out in July 2023, demonstrates positive impact:
 - 77% of people feel they could rely on their local policing team if they needed them, compared with 72% in June 2022;
 - 65% agree that the force is responding effectively to emergencies (increased from 51%);

- 67% have confidence in Staffordshire Police (increased from 63%).
- 4.1.5. The force has recently developed a **Neighbourhood Policing Strategy** which aims to further increase the accessibility and visibility of local policing teams, develop engagement approaches, enhance capabilities in prevention, early intervention and problem solving, improve analytical proficiency and target hotspots.
- 4.1.6. The Commissioner's Office has successfully applied for Home Office funding for additional **ASB hotspot patrols**. £2m has been awarded over the next two years as part of a national pilot and will be used to fund patrols at peak times for ASB, initially by police officers and PCSOs and subsequently by Community Wardens. In addition to providing an enhanced uniformed presence, the patrols will be supported by outreach workers to engage with people they identify as committing ASB and make referrals into existing support services, for example for drug and alcohol support, diversionary interventions, mediation. The patrol areas selected are Etruria & Hanley, Fenton West & Mount Pleasant, Stafford town centre, Newcastle-under-Lyme town centre and Burton Urban.
- 4.1.7. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) identified the **effectiveness of investigations** and appropriate support for victims as a cause of concern. The force has a wide-ranging improvement programme in place with the support of the College of Policing Investigation Standards Team and Performance Support Unit, plus peer support from other forces. This includes reality testing and support panels to critique interventions. The force has commenced the first phase of the development of a new Crime and Victim Bureau. Additional staff and process changes will improve crime recording standards and timeliness, and release capacity for supervisors in local policing to focus on improving investigation quality. A framework has been developed to assist supervisors to do this, with quality checkpoints in place to ensure compliance with standards and further oversight by senior managers. There has been further investment in staff to audit and quality assure investigation standards and officers continue to attend investigation 'masterclasses' to increase their capability.
- 4.1.8. Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of both **999 and 101 call handling** is crucial to public confidence and an absolute priority in the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan. Shortcomings were identified as a cause of concern by HMICFRS and progress against an improvement plan is a major element of the Commissioner's scrutiny and accountability process with the force.
- 4.1.9. An additional 30 staff have been recruited into the Force Contact Centre to meet a sustained increase in demand. 236,000 calls were made to 999 in the past 12 months which is an increase of 28% on pre-pandemic levels. Despite these challenges, average answer times for 999 calls has improved significantly compared to this time last year; 85% of 999 calls are answered in 10 seconds, placing Staffordshire as sixth best performing of 43 forces.
- 101 demand also continues to increase. The triage function introduced

in June 2022 continues to be effective in managing demand and the Contact Centre uplift has enabled it to be expanded. Experienced officers can signpost people to partner agencies, transfer calls to local officers already dealing with an incident and can also offer a call back service for non-emergencies. The team services around 60% of incoming calls and deal with 50% of calls at the very first point of contact, reducing the number that would previously have gone through to 101 and therefore reducing waiting times for those that do.

Many of the calls received by the force relate to concern for people's safety, incidents involving people with mental ill-health and missing persons rather than crime. This is not unique to Staffordshire; other forces are observing similar changes in demand. The force is working with partner agencies towards implementing the **Right Care Right Person** approach from February 2024. This is a national programme that aims to ensure that health-related calls into police forces are responded to by the most appropriate agency, rather than the police, who in many cases are not the best organisation to respond. This particularly relates to calls made to police forces around concerns for welfare, be that mental health, medical or social care-related.

The force is working with relevant partner agencies to ensure that the necessary protocols, commitments and training are in place ahead of implementation. The new approach will mean police stop attending many health incidents, unless there is a significant safety risk or crime being committed. Instead, contact staff will refer these to an appropriate partner agency, for example mental health services.

Panel members are reminded that video recording of and reports for the Public Performance Meeting which I hold regularly with the Chief Constable can be found [here](#). The reports contain comprehensive information on force performance and resourcing.

4.2. Prevent harm and protect people

4.2.1. HMICFRS re-inspected the force in March 2023 following an initial inspection in 2021 which found systemic failings and made 15 recommendations for improvement in its services to children. The **National Child Protection Re-inspection** report, received in August 2023, acknowledged the progress the force has made in improving delivery structures and leadership, information management and IT, its response to online child sexual abuse, management of registered sex offenders and its contribution to multi-agency child protection arrangements. HMICFRS highlighted, however, a number of areas that the force continues to address, including the quality of child protection investigations, responses to children reported missing from home, accuracy in data recording and processes to assess and share information with other organisations to help protect children. Further realignment of resources is taking place to help address these challenges and additional investment in Public Protection work is under

active consideration.

- 4.2.2. The Commissioner has established a Staffordshire-wide **Community Safety Forum** to improve collaboration between agencies, align their strategic direction and ensure prompt joint action to tackle community safety issues. A major focus area for the forum is ASB. The Commissioner's Office supported ASB Awareness Week from 3-9 July, which aimed to encourage communities to take a stand against ASB and highlight the actions those experiencing it can take. This year's theme was 'Know your Rights', with a particular focus on the **ASB Case Review** (previously known as the Community Trigger) – a powerful tool allowing victims to request action if they have reported multiple incidences of ASB but are unhappy with the response they received. In Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, a new approach has now been agreed which will bring consistency to how Reviews are managed and align to national good practice.
- 4.2.3. The Commissioner has made available a range of **community funds** to support innovative projects which focus on ASB and other local community safety priorities. This funding will give a boost to local initiatives by supporting community or voluntary groups to address priorities in their area, helping local people to build on the great work they are already doing in keeping their communities safe. Each Community Safety Partnership (CSP) receives a share of the £724,750 Locality Deal Fund to address community safety-related concerns. Additionally, each CSP receives £10,000 to tackle ASB, funded from money seized under the Proceeds of Crime Act. A further £100,000 is made available to new or existing community groups, through small grants of up to £5,000, to build community resilience, designing and implementing community safety projects to address locally identified concerns.
- 4.2.4. Following the successful completion of projects under the first three rounds of Home Office **Safer Streets Fund** initiative, the SCO was successful in its bid for funding under Round 4 which completed in September 2023. £750,000 has been invested in tackling ASB and violence against women and girls (VAWG) in Stafford, Burton, Newcastle and areas of Stoke-on-Trent. This funding is in addition to over £2 million already secured by the SCO through Safer Streets and £300,000 through the related Home Office Safety of Women at Night (SWAN) initiative.
- 4.2.5. Round 4 has enabled a range of partnership interventions including physical crime prevention improvements, community awareness campaigns and engagement work, personal development programmes, diversionary activities and street pastor schemes. Education resources have been developed for Key Stage 2 (9-11 years old) and Key Stage 3 (11-14 years old) around ASB. In addition, a targeted personal development programme is being delivered to support 28 young people to change their behaviours and perceptions at school and within the community. Another awareness campaign on VAWG will run from 'freshers week' through to Christmas.
- 4.2.6. Two funding proposals have recently been submitted to the Home Office

under Round 5 of the Fund, and a decision is awaited. If successful, these will provide a further £1m to fund a range of interventions over the next 18 months to tackle ASB in locations not previously targeted.

- 4.2.7. Two **Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) Coordinator** posts continue to support schools and the quality of PSHE curriculum delivery. The PSHE Coordinators have launched a website providing guidance and resources for young people, education providers, parents and carers. More specifically and additionally, a national approach to delivering PSHE has been tailored for local use and a training package developed which has been delivered to 38 PCSOs so far. This aims to ensure a consistent PSHE offer to all schools across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent by Staffordshire Police. The programme has clear learning outcomes, mapped to curriculum outcomes, appropriate resources and an evaluation process to monitor feedback and learning for local policing teams.
- 4.2.8. Since the publication of the Serious Violence Strategy in 2018, the Government announced a set of programmes to tackle serious violence across England and Wales. To reinforce this as a national priority, the new Serious Violence Duty has been introduced through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) Act 2022. It places a legal obligation on specific organisations to plan and collaborate to prevent and reduce serious violence. The [Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Violence Reduction Alliance](#) (VRA) continues to prepare the local response to the Duty. A strategic needs assessment has been produced and research carried out by the Staffordshire Centre for Data Analytics, both of which will inform a refresh of the local Violence Reduction Strategy. Consultation is key to understanding serious violence locally and informing the strategy. 1,600 young people have been surveyed online by Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS), parents and carers have also been surveyed and a second conference held with 110 attendees. The VRA has now been assessed as 'ready' to deliver the Serious Violence Duty by the Home Office.
- 4.2.9. The VRA and the Commissioner's Office have placed particular emphasis on **knife crime** in recent months through a number of initiatives. Following the successful visit of the Knife Angel to Stoke-on-Trent, there has been a further visit to Lichfield which is important in promoting discussion about the impact knife crime has on communities. Knife bins were also stationed in Lichfield and Burntwood as part of the campaign. Virtual reality resources have been designed to help interact with young people on issues around knife crime and gangs. This approach is led by the PHSE Coordinators and uses hardware purchased through the Safer Streets Fund. A Responsible Retailer scheme has been developed for retailers selling knives which could be used as weapons.
- 4.2.10. Two hundred police cars now have **bleed control kits** on board as part of a jointly funded project between the Commissioner and the force. The specialist kits complement existing first aid supplies and are designed to control bleeding from trauma injuries caused by stabbings or serious road traffic collisions before the ambulance or paramedics arrive. These

build upon the static kits introduced in Burton-on-Trent by Rob Freckleton in memory of his son, Oliver, and in Stoke-on-Trent by Chit Chat 4U, a group created by mums with lived experience to support victims of or involved in gangs, youth violence and knife crime.

- 4.2.11. The VRA has continued to develop campaigns and education initiatives to tackle **VAWG**, and Safer Streets funding has enabled a broader approach to be taken. Vulnerability awareness training continues to be rolled out and a training programme on 'Signs of Spiking' has been developed for implementation from October. Safe places for women have now been implemented in Hanley and Stafford and Newcastle-under-Lyme town centres. A media partner pack has also been developed to raise awareness of the Hollie Guard app.
- 4.2.12. The **Child Criminal Exploitation/Child Sexual Exploitation/ Missing Service** continues to be delivered by Catch22. The service carries out return home interviews with children and young people who go missing to try and identify the reasons why they have gone missing, signpost support and prevent any future missing episodes. The CCE and CSE Services support children and young people who are at risk of exploitation, aims to prevent them from committing violent crime and seeks to address the risks faced by young people. Between April and June 2023, 1,122 missing incidents were reported for 497 individual children, the service completed 942 return home interviews, 151 children were supported for CSE and 123 children were supported for CCE. Staffordshire Police has developed the 'Are you listening?' campaign to improve awareness of the behavioural signs that children and young people that are victims of potential exploitation by serious organised criminals might exhibit.
- 4.2.13. The **Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP)** is a collaboration between public sector organisations within Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire, who work together to make our roads safer. The SSRP is currently co-chaired by the Commissioner and his Deputy Helen Fisher and aims to achieve a long-term, sustained reduction in road traffic collisions through joint work by partners including Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent councils, Police, Fire & Rescue Service and National Highways. Significant investment has been made by the partnership to upgrade safety cameras in the area, including more average speed cameras, continued migration to digital technology and units that are more effective at night. Similar investment has taken place to upgrade the partnership's fleet of safety camera vehicles.
- 4.2.14. The Commissioner earmarked £0.5m capital funding in 2023/24, to increase the number of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. This investment will greatly increase pro-active opportunities to target offenders who utilise road networks across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to commit crime.
- 4.2.15. The number of volunteers taking part in Community Speed Watch schemes continues to increase and a new initiative has been launched to support communities to nominate locations for enforcement activity where speeding is a concern. The **Neighbourhood Speed Check** facility has

been funded by the SSRP and enables a mobile app to be used to check traffic speeds without the need for a full roadside traffic survey. This then allows community groups, led by local councillors, to evidence that a location meets the criteria for mobile enforcement or, if not, to reassure people with speeding concerns.

4.2.16. The SCO continues to lead the local implementation of the Government's new National Drugs Strategy through the new pan-**Staffordshire Drug and Alcohol Partnership (DAP)**. The Partnership is governed by a multi-agency Board, chaired by the Commissioner. It has three delivery priorities;

- Break Supply Chains – rid neighbourhoods of drugs; making them safe and secure places and enabling all areas to prosper and grow by cutting off the drug supply that is causing the most harm;
- Deliver a world-class treatment and recovery system – delivered via a highly trained and motivated workforce offering a full range of evidence-based interventions and available to anyone experiencing substance addiction, from entrenched heroin users and people struggling with cocaine, cannabis, and alcohol, to young people using psychoactive substances;
- Achieve a generational shift in the demand for drugs – raising awareness and targeting interventions so that fewer people take drugs or feel drawn toward taking drugs, and today's children and young people grow up in a safer and healthier environment.

The DAP has three comprehensive delivery plans outlining a range of partner actions to deliver against priority areas.

4.2.17. The Commissioner's **SPACE programme** brings together public, voluntary and private sector organisations to provide fun, positive activities for potentially vulnerable young people to help increase their skills, improve their health and wellbeing and create opportunities with an additional aim of reducing levels of ASB. Since being relaunched, SPACE has gone from strength to strength, with a 75% reduction in youth ASB during the summer period since 2016. 1,395 reports of youth-related ASB were recorded during the school summer holidays in 2016 compared to 353 in 2023. Over 2,400 activities took place including DJ sessions, canoeing, wildlife sessions, sports, swimming, trips out and arts and crafts

4.2.18. The **Prince's Trust Targeted Prevention Programme** supports and engages young people who are at risk of offending and victims of crime to improve their lifestyles and employment prospects. Between April and June 2023, 34 young people were supported to achieve improvements in social and personal skills as well as training and employment outcomes. The Prince's Trust has also supported the Commissioner in developing a **Peer Mentoring Programme** for vulnerable children moving from primary to secondary school. It provides mentoring and guidance to help children settle into the new

education setting, whilst offering an avenue for support. This programme was piloted in a number of schools and is currently being evaluated with a view to roll out.

- 4.2.19. A series of hard-hitting videos have been launched to encourage Staffordshire businesses to take advantage of the free **Staffordshire Business Crime Helpline** to help reduce the risk of business crime. The videos showcase examples of crimes that are affecting Staffordshire businesses, the wide-ranging impacts they can have and how preventative measures could have stopped them being a victim. The videos encourage businesses to contact the helpline to get free support. Operated by Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce and funded by the Commissioner's Office, the helpline offers expert advice to help local businesses combat various forms of criminal activities.

4.3. Support victims and witnesses

- 4.3.1. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) will be consulting on the new **Code of Practice for Victims of Crime** to be introduced under the Victim Bill. This will update and strengthen the existing Code to ensure it reflects the latest legislation and guidance. The Commissioner's Office is working with the MoJ with regard to new Code compliance which will consist of new performance metrics, victim feedback mechanisms and process narratives.
- 4.3.2. A local feedback group has been formed with representatives from Staffordshire Police, CPS and HMCTS to review victims' experiences of engaging with the criminal justice system and instigate improvements. The new end-to-end victim survey is being piloted, and results are yet to be analysed. A video production company has been commissioned to produce two police training videos on quality of service to victims.
- 4.3.3. The MoJ will quadruple its funding for **victim and witness support services** by 2025, up from £41m in 2009/10, enabling Commissioners to build resilience into services, safeguard consistent delivery and ensure support is available to victims when they need it. For Staffordshire, this includes additional funding for a further 3.5 Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) or Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs). The office is working with local providers to introduce this additional support.
- 4.3.4. The SCO is working with NHS England and regional PCCs/police forces to recommission the provision of West Midlands region **Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)** services. The successful bidder will be announced in September and there will be a six-month mobilisation period with the adult service commencing 1 April 2024. This service provides access to prompt, very specialised support for the victims of rape and sexual assault and abuse.
- 4.3.5. The **Staffordshire Victims and Restorative Justice Gateway** received 18,288 referrals between 1 April and 30 June 2023, of which 12,196 received advice, guidance and signposting. 5,397 were triaged for

enhanced support, with 3,367 signposted to other services including specialist services such as New Era, Survive, Uniting Staffordshire Against Hate (USAH) and ASB Harmony. 160 victims remained with the Gateway for 1:1 support. The Restorative Justice (RJ) service received 18 referrals during the same period, 24 people are currently pursuing an offer of RJ and 10 people completed an intervention.

4.3.6. Services commissioned by the SCO continued to provide **specialist support to victims**. From 1 April to 30 June:

- Survive (sexual assault and abuse) – 160 referrals received. Of those 63 accepted 1:1 support and 42 accepted counselling.
- USAH (Hate Crime) – 269 referrals received, of those 43 received advice, information and guidance. 54 requested 1:1 support.
- ASB Harmony – 124 referrals received, of those 106 accepted 1:1 support.
- Business Crime Support Service – 1169 business crimes dealt with by the service. Of those, 626 accepted support. Businesses were contacted within 1.5 days from the point of the crime being reported.

4.3.7. Access to support from the Gateway is dependent on prompt transfer of victims' details by Staffordshire Police. As a result of changes to the force Crime and Victims Bureau, almost all victims' details are now being transferred to the Gateway within the 48-hour limit set in the Victims Code of Practice.

4.3.8. New contracts have recently been put in place by the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office, as the lead commissioner, working with Staffordshire County and Stoke-on-Trent City Councils for the continued provision of New Era's **Domestic Abuse (DA) service** from 1 October 2023. The contracts are now worth £3.3m per year for the next three years, compared to £1.9m a year when launched in 2018. These new arrangements will see the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office funding contribution for these vital services, increase by more than £0.7m over the three year contract period; an overall investment from the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office of circa £4.5m. The DA Victim Service will continue to be delivered by Victim Support, who will now also deliver perpetrator services. The service offers help and support to all those affected by DA across the area, providing free and confidential support for victims, perpetrators and their families.

4.3.9. In terms of the existing services, between October 2018 - March 2023 the victim service received almost 30,000 referrals and provided support to 19,000 adults and 3,300 children; and the perpetrator service received almost 2,000 referrals and provided interventions to 682 adults and 168 children. In the first quarter of this year alone, the victim service received 1,884 referrals and provided support to 1,276 victims, and the perpetrator service received 155 referrals and provided interventions to 153 perpetrators.

4.3.10. A **DA in the workplace** programme, delivered in conjunction with Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce, has achieved CPD (Continuing

Professional Development) Accreditation. New Era deliver the programme which has trained almost 400 people since October 2018 to recognise the signs of DA, and signpost those who might want help to specialist services. Supporting DA victims in the workplace is an investment in the health and wellbeing of employees. It is available to local businesses and partner organisations across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent free of charge.

4.3.11. **Sexual Assault and Abuse Services** are currently being recommissioned by the Office. The service will cover Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire and will provide support to any victim aged over four years as well as the victim's family members. The service will commence 1 April 2024.

4.3.12. NHS England have provided funding to the Staffordshire Commissioner to undertake a **mental health needs assessment** specifically for victims and survivors of sexual assault and abuse. A proposal submitted to NHS England for £50,000 per year for three years to address the recommendations outlined in the assessment has been successful and the project is now underway with local service providers. Elements of the project include:

- Training in alternative therapies,
- Upscaling wellbeing workshops,
- Training in mental health interventions with proven positive outcomes for this cohort of victim.

4.3.13. Staffordshire University has undertaken an assessment of our local response to the needs of **sexual offence victims/survivors from ethnically diverse communities**, and its recommendations are now being addressed, including:

- Introduction of the 'Recite-Me' tool for those accessing support from the 'Survive' website who need the text translated in to a different language.
- Inclusivity training for staff and volunteers from 'by and for' organisations to ensure a greater understanding of needs of people from ethnically diverse backgrounds.

4.3.14. The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board (ICB) successfully applied for £1.2m **NHS England Pathfinder funding** in conjunction with the Commissioner's Office and locally commissioned sexual assault and abuse service providers. The Pathfinder service will augment (but not duplicate) existing mental health service provision and improve services for people accessing care by improving coordination between NHS services and specialist sexual violence and abuse voluntary sector organisations.

4.4. Reduce offending and reoffending

4.4.1. Since the last report to the Panel, work has been focused on the launch of the new countywide **Reducing Reoffending Strategy** and Action

Plan 2022-25 and taking forward priorities for 2023-24. Building on the previous strategy, the new strategy has two key aims:

- Promoting timely interventions across agencies in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to reduce the risk of people becoming involved in offending behaviour; and
- Ensuring that, where people do offend, they are brought to account for their actions whilst being given the appropriate support and encouragement to move on and to avoid reoffending in the future.

4.4.2. Actions under the strategy are grouped under four themes:

- Early Intervention / Prevention,
- Diversion,
- Offender Management,
- Rehabilitation and Resettlement.

4.4.3. The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Reducing Reoffending Board continues to meet regularly to provide effective governance / oversight of the delivery of the strategy, with progress reports on implementation being provided to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel, Local Criminal Justice Board, Strategic Community Safety Forum and other partnership boards as appropriate.

4.4.4. The SCO continues to work with local authorities and other partners to ensure an appropriate focus on offending behaviour within local prevention and early intervention strategies and to support specific measures aimed at addressing the root causes and preventing the onset of offending behaviour.

4.4.5. Work is underway to increase the range of existing rehabilitation courses offered as part of an **Out of Court Disposal** (O OCD) for different types of offence. A streamlined assessment and referral process is being developed to ensure that these options are used appropriately and effectively.

4.4.6. The Partnership is strengthening the current **Integrated Offender Management** (IOM) operating model, in place to ensure effective oversight of offenders considered to be at highest risk of reoffending. The model ensures offenders are brought to account for their actions through appropriate punishment and effective disposals while being given the appropriate support and encouragement to move on and avoid reoffending. The SCO continues to provide support for the implementation of criminal justice (Youth Offending, Probation) delivery plans in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, with a focus on planned improvements in the delivery of offender management arrangements. This include the introduction of a new IOM Quality Assurance tool and measures to increase the number of appointments offered / attended with the aim of improving offenders' compliance with Court Orders. The SCO has maintained funding for two dedicated mental health nurse posts to provide specific input to offenders managed by the IOM team.

4.4.7. The SCO continues to support the multi-agency pilot scheme aiming to increase the use of Community Orders with **Mental Health Treatment**

Requirements by local courts. Over the past 12 months the scheme has been effective in delivering an improvement in the uptake of Orders, with recent monitoring indicating a 15% increase in the use of Orders for people with mental health needs.

- 4.4.8. Improving the availability and effectiveness of housing, employment and other **rehabilitation support services** (e.g. drugs and alcohol and mental health) is important in helping people in prison or in the community reintegrate successfully and achieve stable lifestyles away from crime.
- 4.4.9. A new cross-agency forum – the Staffordshire Forum for Offender Accommodation – has recently been established to provide a focus for information sharing on housing need and an improved basis for joint service planning to help address gaps in accommodation provision for offenders and their families.
- 4.4.10. A new employment support service has recently been commissioned, focused on the IOM cohort, aiming to support more offenders to successfully take up and retain training and employment opportunities. Since the commencement of the contract at the beginning of the year, there have been 54 referrals to the service with 21 going on to take up full-time training (13) or employment (8).
- 4.4.11. As part of the local **Drugs Strategy**, the SCO has worked with public health leads in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to prepare local substance misuse delivery plans with the aim of securing improvements in the availability and delivery of treatment services and interventions for offenders at different points of the criminal justice system. Additional one-off grant allocations have recently been awarded to each authority to support delivery.
- 4.4.12. The SCO continues to work with NHS England in support of the delivery of the new Integrated Contract for Health and Justice services which includes provision for the introduction of an enhanced **resettlement support service** (Reconnect) for prisoners with mental health needs returning to Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent following release from custody. The new service is being introduced on a phased basis during 2023/24 and will be fully operational by the end of the year.

4.5. **A more effective criminal justice system**

- 4.5.1. In the role as Chair of the **Local Criminal Justice Partnership Board**, the Commissioner has refreshed and refocused its work to focus on key deliverables including the level of early guilty pleas and reducing the time taken to compile cases. Significant backlogs in the Crown Court system remain and the work of the Board to address this is increasingly challenging as Staffordshire is the worst affected area for court space and judiciary availability within the Midlands CJS.
- 4.5.2. Improvements have been seen in the timeliness of investigations from police recorded crime to charge. A recorded high of 109 days in Q4 2022/2023 to the most recent figure of 74 days for Q1 2023/2024. This

is encouraging and there are several police improvements in place to maintain and improve on this reduction including introduction of a crime bureau and improved supervisor training and monitoring.

- 4.5.3. Improving the quality of investigations is a current priority for Staffordshire Police and the increase of early guilty pleas in the last quarter suggests that the victim focus is reaping benefits. Guilty pleas at the first hearing (year to date) at Magistrates Court is just above the national average 75% and in Crown court is well above the national average of 34.3% at 43.1%.
- 4.5.4. Within the wider CJS, reduction of backlogs of criminal cases within the Magistrates and Crown Courts is the priority for the LCJPB and a cross agency task and finish group has been convened to focus on specific deliverables to assist in this and should demonstrate additional progress in the coming months.
- 4.5.5. Part 2 of the Government's review of the role of PCC and the Victims' Bill contain complementary proposals to strengthen the role of PCCs in relation to the oversight of victims' experiences in the criminal justice system and commissioning support services. It is expected that this will provide a statutory framework to assist PCCs in leveraging their support in improving the system for the benefit of victims and witnesses.
- 4.5.6. This will be supported by proposals to improve PCCs' access to criminal justice data. Sharing relevant data in a timely way is essential to understanding how effective the system is but the process is often constrained by technical difficulty and a risk-averse culture. The [Home Office Delivery Data Dashboard](#), alongside Staffordshire Police, HMCTS, CPS, Probation, Prisons and Health data, is being used to populate the **CJS Performance Framework** and highlight areas for improvement. Whilst Staffordshire is in a relatively good position, national guidance and examples of good practice will support the work of the Local Criminal Justice Board in delivering improvements.
- 4.5.7. Work continues to develop an end-to-end victim satisfaction survey which seeks victims of crime's experiences from the point of reporting a crime through to exiting the criminal justice system. In addition to helping to understand the emotional impact this might have, it will provide crucial insight into where problems with processes, communication and delays occur, enabling agencies across the system to make informed improvements.

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Police, Fire and Crime Panel – 10 October 2023

Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service

Safety Plan 2020-2024 Update

Report of the Staffordshire Commissioner

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report is to update the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on the delivery of the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service Safety Plan (SP – Integrated Risk Management Plan – IRMP). The publication of the Safety Plan fulfils the legislative obligations as defined within the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework for England 2018.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Panel note the update on the delivery of the plan and make comment as appropriate.

3. Background

- 3.1. The IRMP is a document that each Fire and Rescue Authority in England is required to produce. Whilst there is no specific template that the Authority is required to follow, there is guidance detailed within the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework for England 2018 on the content of the plan. Each plan must:
 - reflect up-to-date risk analyses including an assessment of all foreseeable fire and rescue-related risks that could affect the area of the authority;
 - demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities will best be used to prevent fires and other incidents and mitigate the impact of identified risks on its communities, through authorities working either individually or collectively, in a way that makes best use of available resources;
 - outline required service delivery outcomes including the allocation of resources for the mitigation of risks;
 - set out its management strategy and risk-based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in accordance with the principles of better regulation set out in the Statutory Code of Compliance for Regulators, and the Enforcement Concordat;
 - cover at least a three-year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as it is necessary to ensure that the authority is able to deliver the requirements set out in this Framework;

- reflect effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies and partners; and
 - be easily accessible and publicly available.
- 3.2 Following the transfer of governance from the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority to the Staffordshire Commissioner, a new Safety Plan 2020-2024 was developed which was published in August 2020.
- 3.3 The four priorities outlined in the current Commissioner’s Fire and Rescue Plan are:
- A flexible and responsive Service
 - Protect people and places
 - Help people most at risk stay safe
 - A fire and rescue service for tomorrow

4. Progress to Date

4.1. A flexible and responsive service

- 4.1.1. The Service has launched a review into **on-call crew availability**. Whilst there have been peaks and troughs in availability in previous years, it now remains at a low level throughout the year and is currently around 50%. It is particularly low during weekends which is proving to be a challenge for our current response model; one that is not unique to Staffordshire and is being seen nationally. We continue to invest and support our on-call teams to be able to provide better levels of fire cover. The commitment required and provided by our staff is clear, with some stations providing more availability than they are contracted to through goodwill. However, it is clear that more needs to be done.
- 4.1.2. The review will examine the fundamentals of the on-call system, and identify blockages and opportunities to improve processes. This will require all departments to think differently; processes which work for whole-time crewing will not always be suitable for on-call. The review will be conducted through the following work streams with clear leadership and governance, support and direction through monthly meetings. All decisions will be through the relevant boards, including staff engagement and consultation.
- **Recruitment:** Time to recruit is currently 120 days. This is far too long and contributes to staff dropping out of the system prior to starting. The aim is to reduce this to 40 days.
 - **Retention:** The first element of this work to understand why people are leaving and the second is to review training structures, schedule and content. The focus for this work is to introduce a system which is relevant and works for on-call staff.
 - **Availability targets:** On-call provision varies, with some crews operating secondary appliances at whole-time stations in urban

areas, however availability targets are the same as for rural bases which are on-call only. This work will introduce a system which reflects our structure.

- **Turn-in time:** This will examine the current policy for firefighters to reside within a five-minute journey to the station. This is an historical position. Increasing this limit may extend the scope of the available population that can be targeted for recruitment, balanced against attendance times.
- **Skills:** Crew availability is often impacted by driver and Officer in Charge (OIC) availability. This strand will look at roles and skill requirements and ensure they are fit for purpose.
- **Competency recording / admin:** This will examine processes for recording operational competencies to remove and reduce work which doesn't add value.
- **Recognition:** This will look at reward and recognition systems.
- **Contracted hours:** This will introduce more flexible systems to support individuals and increase availability.
- **Equipment:** On-call appliances are similarly equipped, irrespective of demand levels, which impacts on training time needed. This will challenge current provision and ensure crews are provided with what is needed.
- **Fire Control:** This will consider how the service interacts with Fire Control, including awareness / training and review of systems to simplify mobilisation.
- **Productivity:** This will look at current practical training and drill sessions to ensure core elements are covered and use innovative ways to deliver training.

4.1.3. Alongside this work, the service is currently undertaking two trials. One is the **three-person crewing** trial which means crews of on-call staff who would not normally be mobilised to incidents under traditional operating models can be deployed when they are naturally on a crew of three. The six-month trial commenced service-wide on 1 June 2023. The approach breaks away from the tradition that only a crew with four or more will be mobilised to an incident. The trial mobilises a crew from on-call stations to pre-determined types of incidents and provides additional resources to other fire crews when they are naturally limited to three riders. The trial has been misinterpreted through reports to the media as "Reduced crewing". The Service is not reducing crewing levels but utilising resources when they are naturally limited to give better fire cover and services to our communities. There is a clear choice for the Service to make: either to deploy the limited crews of three or decide not to deploy them at all and wait until the next nearest fully crewed appliance arrives.

4.1.4. The Service is capturing feedback and outcomes to inform the evaluation of the trial. During the first three months:

- 172 incidents were attended in this way (not including stand-bys).
- No safety concerns were reported.
- Some stations saw availability for incidents increase by 30% - others much less so because they already have better crewing levels.

- On-call appliance availability increased by an average of 12.5%.
 - Feedback from crews is that they feel safe whilst dealing with these incidents.
 - Crews have also provided examples of how they have arrived earlier and dealt with incidents more quickly, removing the need for other appliances to attend.
- 4.1.5. The Service consulted widely with the workforce ahead of the commencement of the trial. Following recent objections from the FBU, whose national position is against three-person crewing and claim that on-call staff do not support it, the Service asked staff if they wished to continue with the trial through a vote. The Service agreed to abide by a majority decision. The results were:
- 67% in favour
 - 23% against
 - 10% split 50/50
- 4.1.6. The second trial is the **Roving Appliance Project in South Staffordshire**. This project concluded its three-month trial in 2022 and was scrutinised by the Service Delivery Board in December 2022. The results appeared to be positive, with the costs of funding on-call crews for 24 hours every weekend appearing to outweigh the costs of cross-border mobilisations into the area from neighbouring FRSs. However, the data was limited due to the restrictions of the trial and did not consider all factors such as management time and logistical support. The Board therefore agreed to commence a further six-month trial in 2023 with 48 hours available each weekend. This will conclude by September 2023 and provide more robust data to assess.
- 4.1.7. In addition to the trials, longer-term investment continues into the on-call system following previous work with Keele University and the National Fire Chief's Council to see how the Service can improve the availability for its on-call staff. As a result, an extra £300,000 per year has been invested in additional training to improve skills and six staff members (on-call Support officers) have been recruited to support our on-call teams with training and management, whilst at the same time bolstering their crewing on a flexible fire basis. There have also been changes to improve recruitment, better training processes and an investment into a transfer process into the whole-time service which has given a better career progression pathway for our on-call staff.
- 4.1.8. As previously reported, through collaborative working with the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board (SSOTICB) our **Falls Response Team** went live on 7 December for a six-month pilot period. This initiative initially involved SFRS personnel attending and resolving falls calls in the Eastern Service Delivery Group area, but was subsequently extended throughout Staffordshire. The team are dispatched by the NHS-led Unscheduled Care Coordination Centre (UCCC), who draw calls from the West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) 'Stack'. The UCCC will dispatch SFRS to what are termed 'Green' calls, i.e. where there are no known injuries to the patient and

they just require assistance getting up, and SFRS are to attend within two hours of dispatch.

- 4.1.9. As at 31 August 2023 the Team had responded to 548 calls. This initiative has been recognised nationally, with the Service winning an Organisational RISK Award. The University of Chester is carrying out an evaluation of the project. The Integrated Care Board are developing a Reactive Falls Plan, which could mean our teams are further upskilled to provide blood pressure checks with patients.

4.2. Protect people and places

- 4.2.1. The most recent HMICFRS Inspection report rated the Service as 'Good' at identifying people in our communities who are most at risk from fire and working with partners to reduce this risk. The inspection noted how the Service has responded positively and proactively to learnings from the Grenfell Tower tragedy and improved the safety of residents in Staffordshire who live in high-rise buildings through its sprinkler scheme.

- 4.2.2. **Building regulation consultations** (along with Licensing and Planning consultations) are business as usual and represent an incoming demand over which the Service has no control. The time remaining once these have been completed is then used to carry out **fire safety audits**. An increase in buildings regulations consultations will therefore correspond with a decrease in completed fire safety audits. Around 213 fire safety audits were completed between February and August 2023, of which 27 were deemed unsatisfactory and required further input from Fire Safety Teams. 400 Building Regulations consultations were received in the same period, 95% of which were responded to within 15 days. During the same time period, 10 Enforcement Notices and 5 Prohibition Notices were issued.

- 4.2.3. Introduced under the Building Safety Act 2022, the **Building Safety Regulator** will have a major impact on this aspect of the Service's responsibilities. The BSR will be located within the Health and Safety Executive and will have the following roles:

- Oversee the safety and performance of all buildings.
- Promote the competence of professionals, tradespeople and building control professionals working on all buildings.

This has two elements:

- Working with industry to promote competence of professionals working on buildings.
- Improving the competence of building control inspectors, who assess, inspect, monitor and enforce building regulations across the vast majority of buildings. This includes a registration regime.

- 4.2.4. The BSR will work with local authorities and fire and rescue authorities in delivering its role as the regulator and building control authority for in

scope buildings. In scope buildings are defined as 'higher risk', meaning:
(a) at least 18 meters in height or having at least seven storeys, and
(b) of a description specified in regulations made by the Secretary of State.

- 4.2.5. Staffordshire will be part of a regional approach being run by West Midlands Fire Service. Staffordshire have recruited one person to be in that team who will start work with them shortly.

4.3. Help people most at risk stay safe

- 4.3.1. **Home fire safety visits** are undertaken by operational crews, safe and well technicians and prevent staff, and delivered using newly-developed risk profiles designed to target delivery to the most vulnerable people. The risk profiles are currently targeting people over 80 living alone or living with another. Referrals are also received through partner referral networks and managed through the contact centre. The Service is also working with partners on extended safe and well visits using prevent teams. These cases involve a range of complex needs and require significant support to help with matters such as hoarding, mobility, mental health, drug and housing issues. Between February and August 2023, 7,533 visits were completed, which is in line with our operational demand for the same timeframe. Referrals to other agencies are made as part of this process to ensure people get the support they need. During the same period, 82 safeguarding concerns were raised. Neglect and self-neglect remain the top safeguarding concerns recognised and reported. Work is also taking place with local hospital trusts to encourage staff to refer people leaving hospital for a Home Fire Safety Visit.
- 4.3.2. Such visits are a major part of community contact and the Service is ensuring they take place with all necessary safeguarding measures in place and that staff are highly aware of safeguarding issues. **SFRS Safeguarding Board** are working on implementing new guidance following amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions). This will place additional requirements for DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks to be carried out on staff and arrangements to be put on pace to manage any allegations made. Widespread training for staff in safeguarding issues has also been provided. 95% of staff have completed Adult and Children Safeguarding Awareness courses, 97% have completed Counter Terrorism training and 90% have completed Prevent training.
- 4.3.3. As a result of recent fire fatalities, we have held a number of case conferences to identify the causes leading up to the fire. This learning is then shared with partners and used to prevent further fires occurring. The case conferences involve representatives from a range of organisations, such as Fire and Rescue, Housing and Social Care and Health.
- 4.3.4. Prevent and operational staff have been involved in a number of activities relating to **Road Safety** across the county. These have included integrating education into events at community fire stations, linking in

with local colleges and retail outlets and undertaking training provided by Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership.

- 4.3.5. Prevent teams also supported many events around the county, taking the opportunity to discuss **fire safety** with members of the community and partner agencies. These included Dementia Awareness Week, the County Show, PRIDE events, Joint Operations Groups, local hub and strategic meetings, post fire activity, resident coffee mornings, Olive Branch training sessions, supporting warmer spaces initiative, hoarding intervention training, water safety events at local marina and mooring areas, static home initiatives, young fire setter intervention, fire safety on Cannock Chase and other identified woodland / grassland areas.
- 4.3.6. Online delivery of the **Safe+Sound** programme continues to support communities to make informed and positive lifestyle choices, improving their health, safety and wellbeing. The third full academic year of weekly programmes for Key Stage 2 children also saw the first full year of national delivery. To summarise:
- Total views – 336,844 devices
 - Weekly average – 9,104 devices
 - Maximum viewers on 12 July 2023 - 12,425 devices
 - Staffordshire schools – 125,698 devices – 37% of total
 - National (schools outside Staffordshire) – 211,146 devices – 63% of total
 - Cost per programme - £345, funded by SFRS
- 4.3.7. This pilot return of face-to-face Safe+Sound delivery took place at Sandyford fire station to gauge the appetite for a full return to delivery in September 2023. 481 children and 42 adults attended from nine schools. The response was positive, although schools did express concerns about transport costs and some were unable to attend because of this. A Safe+Sound **Young Driver Event**, requested by Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership, was delivered in March 2023 to 40 Uniformed Public Services students at the Newcastle and Stafford College Group (NSCG).
- 4.3.8. 2023 marks five years since Ryan Evans drowned at Westport Lake. 120 children and eight staff attended a **Water Safety Event** held in July 2023 at the Bescura Family Hub at Port Vale FC and organised by Red Watch at Newcastle, who were on duty when Ryan drowned. Specialist group International delivered a workshop and also donated 16 life jackets/buoyancy aids to the attending schools. Ryan's Dad also attended and Radio Stoke reported on the event.
- 4.3.9. On Wednesday 9 August an event took place for families with children with disabilities at the Caudwell International Children's Centre. Over 60 people attended the day.

4.4. A fire and rescue service for tomorrow

- 4.4.1. Two HMICFRS inspections are scheduled. The Service has been

selected to take part in a thematic inspection, commissioned by the Home Secretary, into the **handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services**, which will take place over three weeks in November. The inspection will focus on:

- The extent to which services are identifying and investigating misconduct;
- The effectiveness of misconduct processes and how consistently they are applied;
- How confident fire and rescue service staff are in misconduct processes and in raising concerns;
- The role of fire and rescue authorities and other organisations in handling misconduct.

The inspection will be a mix of remote and on-site engagement and will include a desktop review of a sample of complaint, grievance, discipline, and whistleblowing files; interviews; focus groups and reality testing. Ahead of this, a staff survey has been published which we are encouraging all staff to complete. This survey will not only feed into this inspection but also our full inspection which will now take place early 2024.

- 4.4.2. 20 Areas for Improvement for the Service were detailed in **HMICFRS Effectiveness, Efficiency and People report**, published in July 2022. Six of these have now been fully completed:

Ref	HMICFRS Service Areas for Improvement	Status
1	The Service should make sure that firefighters are confidently and suitably trained in gathering risk information.	Completed and Signed Off
3	The Service should make sure it puts in place measures to catch up on the backlog of Safe and Well visits	Completed and Signed Off
10	The Service should assure itself that its IT systems are resilient, reliable, accurate and accessible.	Completed and Signed Off
12	The Service should assure itself that senior managers are visible and demonstrate service values through their behaviours	Completed and Signed Off
16	The Service should assure itself that staff are confident using its feedback mechanisms.	Completed and Signed Off
17	To identify and tackle barriers to equality of opportunity, and make its workforce more representative, the Service should make sure diversity and inclusion are a priority and become important values of the Service	Completed and Signed Off

- 4.4.3. Following the NFCC's Culture and Inclusion Conference and the Spotlight Report from **HMICFRS 'Values and culture in fire and rescue services'**, in March, the NFCC has developed a Culture Action Plan to improve culture and address discrimination, bullying and harassment across UK fire and rescue services. The NFCC Culture Plan is a commitment to work with fire and rescue services, UK Government and wider fire partners to deliver sustainable improvements and establish an inclusive, safe culture. The plan will do this by continuing to support services in developing effective leadership and behaviours, embedding equality, diversity and inclusion, finding and nurturing diverse talent, and supporting the health and wellbeing of people in fire and rescue services.

Working with partners, the NFCC will monitor and review progress, drawing on feedback and learning to continue to develop and implement the Plan.

4.4.4. The Action Plan also provides all leaders and staff across fire and rescue services with details of how the NFCC will support them to develop and embed a positive organisational culture in their services. 35 Recommendations were made in this report, directed towards National Government, the National Fire Chief’s Council, Local Authorities and all Fire and Rescue Services within Great Britain. Of these, 19 were directed for the attention of Chief Fire Officers, and these have since been adapted by Staffordshire Fire and Rescue into an action plan for the review and reform of culture within the Service. Four have been completed and signed off, and two further recommendations are to be taken to the next Service Delivery Board for overview and decision.

Ref	HMICFRS National Recommendations	Status
1	Recommendation 1 By 1 October 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their services provide a confidential way for staff to raise concerns and that staff are aware of whistleblowing processes.	Completed and Signed Off
3	Recommendation 3 By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review the support available for those who have raised concerns and take any action needed to make sure these provisions are suitable.	Completed and Signed Off
5	Recommendation 5 By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure they provide accessible information for all staff and members of the public on how they can raise concerns and access confidential support (including through external agencies). Chief fire officers should also make sure accessible information is provided on how concerns and allegations will be investigated in a way that ensures confidentiality and is independent of the alleged perpetrator.	Completed and Signed Off
17	Recommendation 17 With immediate effect, chief fire officers should notify HMICFRS of any allegations that have the potential to constitute staff gross misconduct that: involve allegations of a criminal nature that have the potential to affect public confidence in FRSs; are of a serious nature; or relate to assistant chief fire officers or those at equivalent or higher grades.	Completed and Signed Off
18	Recommendation 18 By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that all parties are supported in relation to ongoing investigations.	Completed
34	Recommendation 34 With immediate effect, chief fire officers should review their implementation of the Core Code of Ethics and make sure it is being applied across their services.	Completed

4.4.5. The requirement for **Service Transformation** is to ensure that Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service “is able to provide a modern, efficient and sustainable level of service to the public which does not compromise the safety of our staff or our communities”. Only 4 of the 19

topics are still to be completed:

- Mobilisation of crews of 3 from on-call staff (see update at 4.1.3)
- The Roving Appliance trial in South Staffordshire (see update at 4.1.6)
- The Prevention, Protection and Partnerships review (In Progress)
- The continued sharing of Estates – primarily with Staffordshire Police (On-going)

4.4.6. A full review of **Prevention, Protection and Partnerships** was conducted and separated into five work streams:

- Prevention
- Protection
- Education and Engagement
- Volunteers
- Princes Trust

Options and recommendations were explored through two Service Management Boards in May and July 2023 and decisions in principle have been made by the Board in July. The next stages include consultation with all staff affected through a phased, formal process.

4.4.7. Work is progressing in 2023 on a number of fire stations to become **co-located sites** between the Service and Staffordshire Police at Kidsgrove, Chase Terrace (completed), Uttoxeter and Stone. There may also be Police posts located in Wombourne and Penkridge Fire Stations. Other opportunities for shared estates are being considered which involve the Home Office operating an immigration support team from Sandyford Fire Station.

4.4.8. The combined transformation work is on track to deliver a £1,000,000 recurring saving to the Service by 2025, plus a further saving of £250,000 from the review of prevention, protection and partnerships if agreed following consultation. It must be noted that this recurring saving achievement will not meet the expected £1.4m funding deficit which the Service is facing by 2025/26 and further saving options have been explored with the Staffordshire Commissioner which may have to be introduced in the near future. The Service also needs to invest in future areas of service delivery particularly around staffing levels, information technology and systems, training, equipment, appliances and areas of the Estate.

4.4.9. A number of initiatives are in place to address issues around **recruitment, retention and workforce diversity**. Work took place in April 23, designed to ascertain the appetite for a central event for Uniformed Public Service (UPS) students. A delivery model has now been approved and will commence fully in September 2023. It aims to greatly increase interactions with UPS students at colleges to:

- promote Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service with local colleges, including positive action opportunities;

- highlight the variety of both operational and non-operational opportunities within Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service;
- forge links with local colleges and demonstrate aspects of the firefighter and fire staff roles through UPS events, presentation and station visits across the county.

The offer will consist of;

- An annual UPS event at HQ to which all colleges are invited;
- A presentation delivered at colleges by local Station Manager (SM) (or representative);
- A visit to local fire station by students to undertake a table-top exercise coordinated by local station staff and volunteers;
- Online programme - A compilation of non-operational personnel giving an insight into their roles within SFRS.

4.4.10. A review is being undertaken into our **use of volunteers**. We currently have 44 volunteers and one Volunteer Coordinator. Our time in the last six months been focused on training, particularly on safeguarding, to ensure all our volunteers are fully trained and supported to volunteer for the Service. We have also reduced the total number of volunteers by ensuring everyone is able to play an active volunteering role. Recruitment is on hold while we consolidate and stabilise the volunteer offer in the aftermath of the Volunteer review. Examples of volunteer activity this year include Chaplains supporting local crews, community events such as Pride and the County Show, station open days, charity car washes, and Safe+Sound events. Volunteers are also being trained to deliver workshops to enable them to support when partners are unable to attend – Canal & River Trust have trained three volunteers to deliver their water safety workshop and SSRP are to train four volunteers to deliver their seatbelt safety workshop. Volunteers are more active than ever in their support of crews with station and school visits and are also currently supporting a recruitment campaign for retained firefighters.

4.5. Conclusion

4.5.1. The Police, Fire and Crime Panel will continue to receive updates in line with their proposed work plan for the coming year and as requested.

Ben Adams
Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

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STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

10 October 2023

WORK PROGRAMME PLANNING 2023-24

Report of the Secretary

Recommendation

That the Panel note the dates of future meetings and considers the contents of its future Work Programme.

Background

By Regulation this Panel is required to meet on a *minimum* of 4 occasions each year with the facility to convene additional meetings as and when required.

There are a number of reports/matters which the Panel is required to consider:

Police and Crime Matters: the proposed Policing and Crime Precept each year, the Police and Crime Plan, The Commissioners Annual Report on the delivery of the Plan, Confirmation Hearings for a number of key posts and Reports on the Handling of Complaints.

Fire and Rescue Service Matters: The proposed Fire and Rescue Service Precept each year, the draft Fire and Rescue Plan/Corporate Safety Plan (incorporating the Integrated Risk Management Plan), the Annual Statement of Assurance and Confirmation Hearings for key posts in the Service.

Panel Meeting date	Agenda Items
2023/24	Draft Work Programme
3 July 2023 10am (moved from 26/06/23)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of Chairman • Appointment of Vice-Chairman • Public Questions • Decisions taken by the Commissioner 9P&C 005-007 and F&R 001) • Annual Report on the Management of Complaints and Conduct Matters against the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner • Home Officer Grant 2022/23 • Consideration of the Commissioners Annual Report 2023/24
3 July 2023 12.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation Hearing – Section 151 (Chief Finance Officer)
25 August not a public meeting	Training event on the role of the panel

4 October – not a public meeting	Meet the commissioner – Police HQ
10 October 2023 2.30pm (moved from 25 September 2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police and Crime Plan / Fire and Rescue Plan Update
13 November 2023 10am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTFS/Budget Update – Policing Service • MTFS/Budget Update - Fire and Rescue Service • Fire and Rescue Annual Assurance Statement
5 February 2024 2.30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PFCC’s proposed Police Budget and Precept 2023/24 • Police Misconduct and Complaint Regulations 2020 – annual report • Annual Conference for PFCP’s - report
12 February 2024 10am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of the PFCCs proposed Fire and Rescue Budget and Precept 2024/5 • Fire and Rescue Service Safety Plan 2020-2024 Update Report
19 February 2024 10am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If required, further consideration of proposed Police and/or Fire and Rescue Budget and Precept 2023/24
22 April 2023 10am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC
Items to be scheduled if/when appropriate.	

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