

STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 23 April 2018

Proposed Establishment of a National Police and Crime Panel Special Interest Group (of the Local Government Association) - Update

Report of the Secretary

Purpose of the Report

1. To update members on the outcome of the Police and Crime Panel Special Interest Group meeting held on 19 April 2018.

Recommendation

2. Members consider whether the Staffordshire Police, (Fire) and Crime Panel should become a member of the National Association of Police (Fire) and Crime Panels.

Background

3. As indicated in the report circulated as part of today's agenda, your Support Officer attended a meeting on 19 April 2018 at the Local Government Association's offices on the proposed formation of a national Body for Police and Crime Panels in the form of a Special Interest Group (SIG) under the auspices of the LGA. She attended in an observer capacity as your Chairman and Vice-Chairman had other commitments. The majority of attendees were member representatives who participated in formal votes as and when required.

4. Approval to the formation of a national body had already been given in principle at earlier PCP conferences/seminars. A survey of Panels had identified the formation of a SIG as the most practical option and a group of volunteer members were requested to explore and report back on what the formation of a SIG entailed. The meeting received feedback and made decisions on the issues raised:

(a) *Level of formal commitment to a SIG*

An application for the formation of a SIG has to be submitted to the LGA Board and must include commitment from a minimum of ten Local Authorities. At least 15 Panels represented at the meeting were willing to give that commitment. Due to the unique nature of PCPs in that they each comprise of representatives from a number of local authorities, the LGA had indicated that commitment from Host Authorities would meet their requirement. Approval was given to progressing an application.

(b) ***The name of the Group***

Options discussed were:

- National Association of Police(Fire) and Crime Panels
- Police and Crime Panels Special Interest Group

Given the limited awareness of the terminology 'SIG' the meeting approved the name 'National Association of Police (Fire) and Crime Panels'

(c) ***Terms of Reference***

The aim of forming a National Association is to provide a united, representative voice for PCPs in dialogue with other organisations in addition to providing a means for sharing information and best practice. Accordingly the following Terms of Reference were adopted:

- To provide a Forum for collaborative discussion of issues relating to and impacting on Police and Crime Panels
- To share ideas and experience in response to the expanding role of PCCs and thereby PCPs
- To create a mechanism for direct liaison between PCPs and the Home Office
- 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
- To support the development of joint PCP responses to relevant consultations
- To promote professional standards
- To share good practice and create guidance and other supporting materials for PCPs
- To ensure stability and collective memory in a landscape where PCPs can have significant changes in membership
- To provide capacity for horizon scanning across all PCPs
- To promote better understanding of the role of PCPs

(d). ***Subscription costs***

A proposed annual subscription fee of £500 per Panel was considered an acceptable initial amount, giving a modest budget to fund early work on establishing the Association. It was acknowledged that as the Associations Work Plan develops the level of subscription may need to be revisited.

(e) ***Office holders***

Chairman – The only nominee –John Gili-Ross, Independent member/Chairman of Essex PFCP– was appointed as chairman

Vice- Chairman – Both nominees – Alison Lowe of West Yorkshire PCP and John Adams of Dorset PCP were appointed Vice -Chairmen, to give support to the Chairman during the formation of the Association and to provide continuity.

In addition, volunteers came forward for the role of Treasurer and to lead on developing a Constitution for the Association.

(f). *Support Officer/Resource*

As a SIG, the Association would enjoy limited support from the LGA in the form of a meeting venue, agenda distribution and minute taking for up to three meetings each year. Support over and above that would need to be provided/funded independently.

The Chairman reported on the willingness of his Panels Host Authority to provide him with a reasonable level of support during the formation of the Association. In due course a Work Plan would be drawn up and costed. The source and funding of support would need to be considered at that time

(g). *Work Plan*

At previous meetings an outline Work Plan had been suggested. This meeting firmed up those proposals and agreed the following priorities:

- Production of a Constitution for the Association
- Promoting and raising awareness of the Association particularly amongst those PCPs not actively involved in discussions to date
- Securing meetings with relevant partner organisations and the Home Office
- The development of guidance for PCPs on handling complaints
- Raising understanding of the role of PCPs amongst the public
- Identifying and sharing best practice (particularly by the use digital technology and social media).

5. Other projects suggested for the longer term included examining the possibility of joint scrutiny of cross boundary issues.

NB In making the above decisions the meeting was mindful that the PCP Annual Conference on 12 November 2018 would provide a timely opportunity for review.

6. Representatives at the meeting were optimistic about what could be achieved through membership of a National Association and were committed to supporting work on its establishment, with various members volunteering their skills (eg Lawyers).

7. If members are mindful to join the Association approval will be needed to the payment of £500 annual subscription fee and the appointment of a representative to attend Association meetings.

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Secretary to the Panel

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