

**AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME
PANEL**

13th October 2020

Host Authority Arrangements 2021-2025

RECOMMENDATION

The Panel notes the need for Host Authority arrangements for 2021-2025 to be agreed and in place by April 2021 and requests that the Monitoring Officer to the Panel reports back in due course.

1. Summary

The initial set up arrangements for the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel were overseen by a Joint Selection Committee of all Avon and Somerset Council Leaders (LJSC). Following various discussions between the component authorities leading up to the Panel's establishment, the LJSC confirmed Bristol City Council as the Host Authority in April 2012. This arrangement included the provision of administrative and other specialist support to the Panel, and the related Home Office funding was drawn down and administered by Bristol City Council during this period.

From the outset there was general agreement between the authorities that the direct costs of the Panel would be contained within the Home Office funding allocation (initially £53,000). However, if at any time Panel costs exceeded the funding available, it was also agreed that the shortfall would be met by the 9 councils through an indemnity arrangement. This was subsequently incorporated in the Panel Arrangements document and agreed by the Panel on 31st October 2012.

From 2017 till present, Somerset County Council has been providing the Host Authority services, support to the Panel and a coordination role with the OPCC.

Host Authority services include:

- Governance advice
- Policy development
- Complaints coordination
- Meetings and administrative support
- Monitoring Officer support
- Human Resources support (if necessary)
- Legal Services support (if necessary)
- Financial support for Home Office grant administration

2. Host Authority - arrangements for the future

It is usual practice to ensure there are effective Host Authority arrangements in place for the same term as the election of the Police and Crime Commissioner (four years). It is therefore prudent for the Panel and current Host Authority to review support arrangements and plan for the appointment of Host Authority for 2021-2025 from 1 April 2021.

Planning and review will include liaison with constituent authorities to establish from the constituent councils the interest in providing the Host Authority services for the Panel.

In order to allow for adequate planning and the potential for a change in Host Authority it is recommended that this liaison is completed ahead of the next Panel meeting and a further report on Host Authority appointment be brought to that meeting for consideration by the Panel. This should allow for adequate arrangements to be in place for Spring 2021.

Subject to the appointment of the Host Authority for 2021-2025 then all partners and the Home Office will be advised of the support arrangements.

In parallel with the necessary work to appoint the Host Authority, work will be undertaken to review the Panel Operating Arrangements, Rules of Procedure and Complaints Protocol to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

3. Police and Crime Panel Funding

The Home Office provide annual grant funding for the Panel which is used to finance meeting and administrative support costs, its work programme and member expenses. Home Office funding goes to the Host Authority which is responsible for submitting grant claims.

Any special responsibility allowances for membership or specific roles have remained a matter for the constituent authorities to consider for funding.

Constituent authorities are free to decide whether to provide additional funding to support the Panel. To date, the Panel's support costs and funding has been met by Home Office grant funding without the need for additional resources from constituent authorities.

4. Implications

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 established Police and Crime Panels within each force area in England and Wales. The Police and Crime Panels (Application of Local Authority Enactments) Regulations 2012 define a Host Authority as the relevant local authority which receives financial resources in connection with the exercise of functions by or in relation to the Panel and its members.

In accordance with legislation, the Panel Operating Arrangements and Rules of Procedure set out the functions of a Host Authority and the support services provided to the Panel to deliver its responsibilities. The Host Authority maintains the Panel meeting arrangements and provides administrative, secretarial and professional support as necessary.

It should be highlighted that if constituent authorities do not put in place appropriate arrangements for the Panel then the Secretary of State can impose arrangements. Like other Panels, the constituent councils have put in place arrangements and 'rotated' the Host Authority role since its inception in 2012.

Any transfer of the Host Authority role will require advance work between constituent authorities to ensure appropriate preparations and handover is undertaken in order to continue the effectiveness of the Panel's functions and arrangements.

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