

Wiltshire and Swindon Police and Crime Panel

Panel Arrangements

This Agreement is dated the day of 2012.

The Agreement is made between Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council (“the Authorities”)

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (‘the Act’) introduces new structural arrangements for national policing, strategic police decision making, neighbourhood policing and police accountability.
- 1.2 The Act provides for the election of a Police and Crime Commissioner (‘the PCC’) for a police force area, responsible for securing an efficient and effective police force for their area, producing a police and crime plan, recruiting the Chief Constable for an area, and holding him/her to account, publishing certain information including an annual report, setting the force budget and police precept and requiring the Chief Constable to prepare reports on police matters. The PCC must co-operate with local community safety partners and criminal justice bodies.
- 1.3 The Act requires the local authorities in each police force area to establish and maintain a Police and Crime Panel (‘the Panel’) for its police force area. It is the responsibility of the Authorities for the police force area to make arrangements for the Panel (‘Panel Arrangements’).
- 1.4 The Authorities, as the relevant local authorities within the area must agree to the making and modification of the Panel Arrangements. Where an authority has refused to nominate a member to a panel, then the remaining councils in an area can agree the panel arrangements without the need to get the agreement of the council that is refusing to participate.
- 1.5 Each Authority and each Member of the Panel must comply with the Panel Arrangements.
- 1.6 The functions of the Panel must be exercised with a view to supporting the effective exercise of the functions of the PCC for that police force area.
- 1.7 The Panel must have regard to the Policing Protocol issued by the Home Secretary, which sets out the ways in which the Home Secretary, the PCC, the Chief Constable and the Panel should exercise, or refrain from exercising, functions so as to encourage, maintain or improve working relationships (including co-operative working); and limit or prevent the overlapping or conflicting exercise of functions.

1. 8 The Panel is a scrutiny body with responsibility for scrutinising the PCC and promoting openness in the transaction of police business in the police force area.
1. 9 The Panel is a joint committee of the Authorities.

2.0 Lead Authority

2. 1 Wiltshire Council shall be lead authority for the Panel and shall provide such administrative and other support as will be necessary to enable the Panel to undertake its functions.

3.0 Membership

3.1 General

3. 2 Appointments of elected members to the Panel shall be made by each of the Authorities in accordance with their own procedures and with a view to ensuring that the balanced appointment objective of the Act is met so far as is reasonably practicable.

All members of the Authorities are eligible to be members of the Panel.

The Lead Authority shall take steps to coordinate the Authorities with a view to ensuring that the balanced appointment objective is achieved. The balanced appointment objective requires that the local authority Members of the Panel (which includes Members appointed by the Authorities and co-opted Members who are elected Members of any of the Authorities) should:

- a) represent all parts of the police force area;
- b) represent the political make-up of the Authorities; and,
- c) taken together have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for the Panel to discharge its functions effectively.

Where an Authority fails to nominate, or having nominated then fails to appoint, a member to a panel the Lead authority shall notify the Home Office.

3. 3 In appointing co-opted Members who are not elected members of any of the Authorities, the Panel must secure, so far as is reasonably practicable that the appointed and co-opted Members of the Panel, together have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for the Panel to discharge its functions effectively.
3. 4 The Panel shall consist of ten Members appointed by the Authorities in accordance with the requirements of the balanced appointment objective contained within the Act, as follows:

Wiltshire Council = 7 members

Swindon Borough Council = 3 members

3. 5 The Panel shall also include two independent Members co-opted by the Panel.
3. 6 The Panel may also resolve to co-opt further Members with the agreement of the Secretary of State provided that the number of co-opted Members included in the Membership of the Panel shall not exceed 10. A panel cannot co-opt a councillor unless all the panel members agree, and any councillor co-options have to be notified to the Home Office as do any resolutions to co-opt additional members.
3. 7 The current arrangements that exist within the Authorities for the appointment of substitute members/deputies will apply to the Panel.
- 3. 8 Appointed Members**
3. 9 The Authorities shall each nominate elected members to be Members of the Panel. If a nominated Member agrees to the appointment the Authority may appoint the Member as a Member of the Panel.
3. 10 In the event that an Authority does not appoint a Member or Members in accordance with these requirements, the Secretary of State must appoint a Member to the panel from the defaulting authority in accordance with the provisions in the Act.
3. 11 With a view to ensuring continuity of membership as far as possible, an appointed Member shall be a Member of the Panel for four years unless s/he ceases to be an elected Member, or is removed by their Authority.
3. 12 An Authority may decide in accordance with their procedures to remove their appointed Member from the Panel at any point and on doing so shall give notice to the Head of Democratic Services at Wiltshire Council.
- 3.13 Where a Panel member fails to attend meetings of the Panel over a six month period then the Lead authority shall recommend to the relevant authority that due consideration is given to removing the member from the Panel and to the appointment of a replacement member.
3. 14 An appointed Member may resign from the Panel by giving written notice to the Head of Democratic Services at Wiltshire Council and to their Authority.
3. 15 In the event that any appointed Member resigns from the Panel, or is removed from the Panel by an Authority, the Authority shall immediately take steps to nominate and appoint an alternative Member to the Panel.
3. 16 Members appointed to the Panel may be re-appointed to the Panel for a further term of four years provided that the balanced appointment objective is met by that re-appointment.
- 3. 17 Co-opted Members**
3. 18 The following may not be co-opted Members of the Panel:

- a) the PCC for the Police Area.
 - b) a member of staff of the PCC for the area.
 - c) a member of the civilian staff of the Police Force for the area.
 - d) a Member of Parliament.
 - e) a Member of the National Assembly for Wales.
 - f) a Member of the Scottish Parliament.
 - g) a Member of the European Parliament.
3. 19 An elected member of any of the Authorities may not be a co-opted Member of the Panel where the number of co-opted Members is two.
3. 20 If the Panel has three or more co-opted Members an elected member of any of the Authorities may be a co-opted Member of the Panel provided that at least two of the other co-opted Members are not elected members of any of the Authorities.
3. 21 A co-opted Member shall be a Member of the Panel for four years.
3. 22 The Panel shall put in place arrangements to ensure that appointments of co-opted Members are undertaken following public advertisement in accordance with the following principles:
- a) The appointment will be made on merit of candidates whose skills, experience and qualities are considered best to ensure the effective functioning of the Panel;
 - b) The selection process must be fair, objective, impartial and consistently applied to all candidates who will be assessed against the same pre determined criteria; and,
 - c) The selection process will be conducted transparently with information about the requirements for the appointment and the process being publicly advertised and made available with a view to attracting a strong and diverse field of suitable candidates.
3. 23 A co-opted Member of the Panel may resign from the Panel by giving written notice to the Head of Democratic Services at Wiltshire Council.
3. 24 The Panel must from time to time decide whether the Panel should exercise its power to change the number of co-opted Members of the Panel to enable the balanced appointment objective to be met, or be more effectively met, and if so, it must exercise that power accordingly.
3. 25 The Panel may decide to terminate the appointment of a co-opted Member of the Panel if at least two-thirds of the persons, present and voting, who are Members of the Panel at the time when the decision is made vote in favour of making that decision at any time for the reasons set out below and on doing so shall give written notice to the co-opted Member:
- a) if the co-opted Member has been absent from the Panel for more than three months without the consent of the Panel;
 - b) if the co-opted Member has been convicted of a criminal offence but not automatically disqualified;

- c) if the co-opted Member is deemed to be incapacitated by physical or mental illness or is otherwise unable or unfit to discharge his or her functions as a co-opted Member of the Panel; or,
- d) if the co-opted Member's membership of the Panel no longer achieves the meeting of the balanced appointment objective.

3. 26 In the event that a co-opted Member resigns from the Panel or is removed from the Panel following a decision of the Panel, the Panel shall ensure that at least two independent co-opted Members remain appointed to the Panel, and in the absence of two such Members shall make arrangements to ensure that two co-opted Members are appointed.

3. 27 Co-opted Members appointed to the Panel may be re-appointed for a further term of four years provided that the balanced appointment objective is met by that re-appointment.

3.28 Behaviour

3.29 All Panel members, including co-opted members, shall observe the Code of Conduct in force for their respective authorities and for the co-opted members the Lead authority's code of conduct, and any related protocols agreed by the Panel.

4. 0 Budget and Costs of the Panel

4. 1 The annual costs of the Panel shall be contained within the Home Office grant.

5. 0 Rules of Procedure

The Panel shall determine its Rules of Procedure which shall include arrangements in relation to the:

- a) the appointment and removal of the Chairman;
- b) the formation of sub-committees;
- c) the making of decisions;
- d) the arrangements for convening meetings; and,
- e) the circulation of information.

6. 0 Allowances

6. 1 The payment of a responsibility allowance to Panel Members shall be considered and a recommendation sought from the Independent Remuneration Panel of each council as to whether the payment of such an allowance is appropriate.

6.2 Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed by each authority with the lead authority reimbursing the expenses of the co-opted independent members.

7. 0 Promotion of the Panel

7. 1 The role and work of the Panel shall be promoted by:

- a) the establishment and maintenance of a dedicated open-access website including information about the role and work of the Panel, Panel Membership, all non-confidential Panel and sub-committee meeting papers, press releases and other publications;
- b) the issuing of regular press releases about the Panel and its work; and,
- c) the Authorities will each include information about the Panel on their websites, and will also include a link to the Panel website.

7.2 Support and guidance shall be provided to executive and non-executive elected members and officers of the Authorities in relation to the functions of the Panel as follows:

- a) by the provision of initial briefing sessions for elected members and relevant officers of the Authorities before the election of the PCC, and the provision of annual briefing sessions thereafter; and,
- b) by the provision of written briefing notes for elected members and relevant officers of the Authorities at least three times per year.

8.0 Validity of Proceedings

8.1 The validity of the proceedings of the Panel shall not be affected by a vacancy in the Membership of the Panel or a defect in appointment.

8.2 The conduct of the Panel and the content of these arrangements shall be subject to the legislative provisions in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, and any Regulations made in accordance with that Act, and in the event of any conflict between the Act or Regulations, and these arrangements, the requirements of the legislation will prevail.

INSERT SIGNATURE/EXECUTION CLAUSE