

**LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND POLICE AND  
CRIME PANEL – 12 DECEMBER 2018**

**THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME  
PANELS**

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT**

**Purpose of this Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to update Members on the development of the Special Interest Group (SIG) entitled 'The National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels' and particularly the Home Office decision on whether the Home Office Grant can be used for the subscription fee.

**Background**

2. Since the establishment of Police and Crime Panels, concerns have been raised that unlike Police and Crime Commissioners who have established a National Association, the effectiveness and development of Police and Crime Panels has been restricted by the lack of a collective voice through which representation to Government and the sharing of best practice can be channelled.
3. It is open to any 10 or more full Local Government Association Members with common features, interests or concerns to form a SIG subject to approval of an application by the LGA's leadership Board. SIG's are able to make representations direct to government and elsewhere on matters arising directly from their special interest. All SIGs are required to submit a full report at the end of April each year to the Leadership Board, covering such matters as their dealings with Government departments.
4. On 19 April 2018 a Steering Group meeting was held at the Local Government Association offices in Westminster attended by representatives of 21 different Police and Crime Panels. A decision was made to form a Special Interest Group entitled 'The National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels' and Terms of Reference were drafted (paragraph 8 below). It was agreed that membership of the SIG would be restricted to those Panels as constituted under Schedule 6 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 including those that have subsequently taken on fire service matters as part of their remit. Mr John Gili-Ross, independent member of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel, was elected as interim Chairman of the SIG until the Annual General Meeting in November 2018. Alison Lowe (West Yorkshire PCP) and John Adams (Dorset PCP) were elected as Deputy Chairmen. The subscription fee for Panels to join the Special Interest Group was set at £500 per annum. During the Steering Group meeting it was queried whether the subscription fee could be paid out of the Home Office Grant or whether Panels would have to find an alternative funding source to pay the subscription if they wished to join. It was agreed that written confirmation from the Home Office would be sought on this point.

5. At its meeting on 8 June 2018 the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel deferred making a decision on whether the Panel should join The National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels, in order to allow the Home Office time to provide clarification on what the Home Office Grant can be used for.

### **Recent developments**

6. On 15 October 2018 the Home Office provided written confirmation that the use of the Home Office Grant to pay subscription to the National Association was **not** within the scope of the Grant (**Appendix A**).
7. On 5 November 2018 the Chairman of the National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels wrote to Police and Crime Panel Chairmen asking them to write to the Policing Minister Nick Hurd requesting a change to the current Home Office grant conditions to allow greater flexibility in the use of the grant for Police and Crime Panel related purposes. (**Appendix B**).
8. On 12 November 2018 the Annual General Meeting for the National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels was held. It was reported that 26 Panels had so far joined the Association. At the AGM the existing Chairman and Deputy Chairman were re-appointed for a further year along with an Executive Committee. All meetings of the Executive Committee had so far taken place via teleconferencing and it was proposed to continue this approach in future. A constitution for the National Association was also approved at the AGM. During the AGM it was explained that a focus of the National Association would be revision of the guidance documents for Police and Crime Panels and development of a website for the Association, with a public area and a members' area, which would cost approximately £700 and be funded out of subscription fees.

### **National Association Terms of Reference**

9. The agreed Terms of Reference for the Special Interest Group are as follows:
  - To provide a forum for collaborative discussion of issues relating to and impacting on Police and Crime Panels (PCPs);
  - 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.

### **Options for the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel**

10. In light of the recent developments, particularly with regards to the Home Office Grant, the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel has a decision to make with regards to membership of the National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels. The possible options for the Panel are as follows:
  - (a) Write to the Policing Minister Nick Hurd requesting a change to the current Home Office grant conditions, (as per the request from the Chairman of the National Association for Police, Fire and Crime Panels), and defer joining the National Association until the Home Office Grant conditions have been changed to allow the Grant to be used for the subscription fee.
  - (b) Agree to join the National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels on the basis that each authority that has representation on the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel contributes £50 towards the annual subscription for the National Association.
  - (c) Have no further involvement with the National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels, until the Panel resolves otherwise.

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