

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 19 February 2026 08:00  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Use of Neighbourhood Link for PCC Communications

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email and for confirming that you will share my original correspondence with the Panel's Chair and the Monitoring Officer, Fiona McMillan.

To ensure the core focus of my concern is prioritised in those discussions, I should clarify that I am not merely raising the *circulation* of newsletters from the PCC's office. My concern centres on **the promotional and political tone of the content** being distributed and **the lack of transparency regarding the source of a "report"**—both communicated via a safety-critical platform.

Specifically, the newsletter titled "***Rupert Matthews puts taxpayers first in budget surprise***" is an example of promotional messaging that is not aligned with the crime and safety purpose for which residents subscribe to Neighbourhood Link. Furthermore, the content refers to "*A report published today*" in a manner that **conveys the impression of independent verification, rather than disclosing that it is an internal document from the PCC's own office**. This lack of transparency is particularly concerning in these official public-facing communications.

This is a matter of **governance and the appropriate use of public resources for political narrative**, and therefore I would like my correspondence to be treated as **(a) general correspondence for scrutiny by the Panel**.

I would be grateful if you could confirm that this point, regarding the promotional nature and lack of transparency of the content, will be specifically highlighted when you brief the Chair and the Monitoring Officer. I look forward to hearing from you regarding the Chair's view and whether this is likely to be considered as part of the Panel's business at the April meeting.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

On Wed, 18 Feb 2026 at 11:15, [REDACTED] wrote:

Good morning [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email and please accept my apologies for the delay in coming back to you regarding your correspondence about the use of Neighbourhood Link to circulate newsletters from Rupert Matthews.

The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel exists to support and challenge the Police and Crime Commissioner and to hold the Commissioner to account in the exercise of his functions. In terms of how your concerns can be considered by the Panel, there are two potential routes:

1. Correspondence for the Panel’s consideration – I will ensure your email is brought to the attention of the Panel’s Chair (and Monitoring Officer). The Chair will decide the most appropriate way for the issue to be taken forward, for example whether to seek a response from the PCC and/or whether it is best addressed through questions or written clarification.
2. If you wish this to be treated as a complaint about the conduct of the PCC/DPCC, the Panel has a Complaints Subcommittee process which is handled by way of informal resolution (this is not a formal investigation or disciplinary process). Depending on the circumstances, informal resolution may involve seeking an explanation, requesting information, or agreeing an appropriate way to address the concern.

I would be grateful if you could confirm with me whether you want your email treated as (a) general correspondence for scrutiny by the Panel, or (b) a complaint under the Complaints Subcommittee procedure as this will help us route it correctly.

Finally, please be assured that if your correspondence is referenced in any public paperwork, personal contact details would not be published.

Once the Chair has considered the appropriate route, I will update you on the next steps and likely timing (the next scheduled meeting of the Police and Crime Panel is in April 2026).

Kind regards,

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Democratic Services Officer

Department of Public Health, Law and Governance

Leicestershire County Council

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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**From:** [Redacted]

**Sent:** 17 February 2026 17:48

**To:** [Redacted]

**Subject:** Re: Use of Neighbourhood Link for PCC Communications

Hi [Redacted],

I’m following up on my email from 28th January and your note from a couple of weeks ago.

It’s now been 20 days since I first reached out. I appreciate these things take time to look into, but as the 12th February Panel meeting has now passed, I’m becoming concerned that this might have fallen through the cracks.

Just to clarify—and to make sure it's being directed to the right person—my concern isn't actually about the budget itself, but rather the governance and neutrality of using the Neighbourhood Link platform for promotional messaging. As I manage a community group of 21,000 people, I’m quite protective of the "trusted" status of the alerts I share with them.

Could you let me know:

- If you have been able to pass this to the Panel members for their awareness?
- Or, if there is a specific process I should follow to get a formal view on the "appropriate use" points I raised?

I'd be grateful for a quick update by the end of the week so I know where we stand.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

On Thu, 5 Feb 2026 at 17:01, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email. Thank you for providing the information as requested. This is being looked into and we will be in touch in due course.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Democratic Services Officer

Chief Executive's Department

Leicestershire County Council

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 05 February 2026 14:49

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Fwd: Use of Neighbourhood Link for PCC Communications

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear [REDACTED],

I hope you are well.

I'm just following up on the correspondence I sent on 29 January regarding the use of Neighbourhood Link. As we discussed on the phone, you kindly agreed to consider whether it should be forwarded to the Police and Crime Panel.

I haven't yet received an acknowledgement, so I just wanted to check that my email reached you successfully and to ask whether you require anything further from me at this stage.

Many thanks, [REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]  
 Date: Thu, 29 Jan 2026 at 15:43  
 Subject: Use of Neighbourhood Link for PCC Communications  
 To: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

As discussed, please find my correspondence below regarding the use of Neighbourhood Link. I would be grateful if you could consider whether this is appropriate to forward to the Police and Crime Panel.

Many thanks, [REDACTED]

Dear Members of the Police and Crime Panel,

I am writing as a resident who subscribes to Neighbourhood Link specifically to receive crime alerts, witness appeals, scam warnings and operational policing updates, as described on the service's own website.

The most recent message circulated through the platform was a newsletter from the Police and Crime Commissioner presenting his 2026–27 budget decisions. The newsletter was headed "Rupert Matthews puts taxpayers first in budget surprise", which is promotional in tone and not aligned with the crime and safety-related purpose for which residents subscribe to Neighbourhood Link.

I should add that this is not the first time I have received PCC newsletters of this nature through Neighbourhood Link. While I do not retain copies of earlier messages, the pattern has been noticeable over recent months. This reinforces my concern that the platform is increasingly being used for promotional communications rather than the crime and safety alerts it is advertised to provide.

I also help to administer a large local community Facebook group of around 21,000 members, where I routinely share Neighbourhood Link crime alerts and safety information because residents find them genuinely useful. In contrast, there is very little interest in the PCC newsletters circulated through the same platform. This reinforces my concern that mixing promotional communications with safety alerts risks reducing engagement with the messages that genuinely help keep people safe.

I fully recognise that the PCC has a duty to communicate with the public about his decisions. My concern is about the **appropriateness of the channel**. Neighbourhood Link is marketed as a trusted source of safety-critical information, and many residents rely on it for timely alerts. Using the same platform for political-style communications risks blurring the line between operational policing information and the PCC's own messaging. It may also undermine public confidence in the service if residents begin to perceive it as a vehicle for political promotion rather than safety alerts.

I would be grateful if the Panel could consider the following:

- Whether the use of Neighbourhood Link for PCC newsletters of this nature is consistent with the platform's stated purpose

- Whether residents should be able to opt out of PCC communications while still receiving crime and safety alerts
- Whether clearer guidance or separation of communication channels is needed to maintain public trust

This is not a complaint about the budget itself, but about governance, transparency and the appropriate use of a public safety communication system.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to the Panel's view.

Yours sincerely,



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