

## Sussex Police and Crime Panel

27 June 2014

### Annual Review of Membership and Proportionality

#### Report by The Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

##### Recommendations

That the Panel:

1. Renews the appointment of the two independent co-opted members, to take effect immediately;
2. Agrees whether either or both of East and West Sussex County Councils should be invited to appoint an additional local authority member, for a one-year period of office; and
3. Agrees the political party affiliation of any additional local authority members from the County Councils, to take effect immediately.

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 The Constitution of Sussex Police and Crime Panel requires it to review its political make-up and size once a year, at its annual meeting.
- 1.2 To inform this consideration, following May's local authority (LA) elections, officers in each of the 15 local authorities in Sussex provided the host authority with details of the political make-up of their authority, summarised in appendix 1.
- 1.3 For comparison, appendix 2 gives the equivalent data for 2013/14.

#### 2. Discussion

- 2.1 The Panel is required to consider the political composition of borough, county, district and unitary authorities across Sussex to ensure that the political proportionality of the Panel mirrors (as closely as is practical) the political make-up of Sussex as a whole. During the review of the membership the Panel must agree: if it approves the reappointment of the independent co-opted members; if the County Councils in Sussex should provide a second representative; and the political affiliation of any additional County Council members.
- 2.2 The two independent co-opted members have one-year terms, which can be re-appointed annually for up to five years before the position must be re-advertised. The renewal of the appointment should be considered in the light of experience of the Panel's previous year of operation.

- 2.3 Schedule 6, paragraph 31 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 requires the Panel to consider (“from time to time”) whether available seats could be assigned to additional LA members to enable the balanced appointment objective to be met, or more effectively met. If so, the Act requires the Panel to exercise this option. The balanced appointment objective is that the LA members of the Panel (when taken together) represent the political make-up of the relevant local authorities (when taken together).
- 2.4 The Panel is required to have a minimum of two independent co-opted members, and no more than 20 members in total, allowing a maximum of 18 LA Panel members.
- 2.5 Subject to the agreement of the Home Secretary, the Constitution grants Brighton and Hove City Council (B&HCC) an additional seat, to address geographical imbalance. The additional seat needs to be re-appointed by B&HCC annually, and must be used, as far as possible, to redress any political imbalance.
- 2.6 It is expected that each local authority appoints a representative to the Panel from its majority party. Following the elections in May 2014, the total number of Labour-controlled councils in Sussex has risen to two, which approximates to the number of PCP Labour seats a politically proportionate Panel should have.
- 2.7 As B&HCC have no Liberal Democrat or United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) councillors, the allocation of the second B&HCC seat to a Conservative councillor for 2014/15 is the most effective means of contributing towards the balanced appointment objective.
- 2.8 For clarity, (including an additional Conservative member from B&HCC) the core Panel membership of 16 local authority (LA) members for 2014/15 will be:
- |                   |    |
|-------------------|----|
| Conservative:     | 12 |
| Green             | 1  |
| Liberal Democrat: | 1  |
| Labour            | 2  |
- Total core LA members                      16
- 2.9 The Constitution states that an additional local authority member may be appointed from each of the county councils on the agreement of the Panel, to address any perceived imbalance in political proportionality. Such members will have a one-year period of office. The Panel should review its proportionality against the political make-up of Sussex and determine the arrangement it wishes to operate for 2014/15.
- 2.10 In 2013/14 East and West Sussex County Councils were each invited to appoint an additional Liberal Democrat councillor. Considering the data in

appendix 1, and assuming the additional member from B&HCC is Conservative, the most politically proportionate Panel would arise if one county council appointed a Liberal Democrat councillor, and the other appointed a UKIP councillor.

- 2.11 Since the Liberal Democrats are the largest minority group in East Sussex County Council, and UKIP the largest minority group in West Sussex County Council, appointments along these lines are suggested.

### 3. **Resource Implications and Value for Money**

- 3.1 For 2014/15, the Home Office will provide £920 per Panel Member for travelling expenses.

### 4. **Risk Management Implications**

- 4.1 The Panel must strive to be politically and geographically proportionate.

### 5. **Other Considerations – Equality – Crime Reduction – Human Rights**

- 5.1 Not applicable.

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#### **Appendices**

[Appendix 1](#) – Political Make-up of Sussex Local Authorities (14/15)

[Appendix 2](#) - Political Make-up of Sussex Local Authorities (13/14)