

## **Sussex Police and Crime Panel**

**9 October 2015**

### **Working Group on Police Complaints**

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

##### **Recommendations**

That the Panel agrees:

1. To establish a Working Group to work with the Commissioner on implementing the provisions pertaining to policing complaints within the Police and Criminal Justice Bill, once enacted.
2. The terms of reference of the Working Group outlined in Appendix A; and
3. Appointments to the membership of the Working Group.

##### **1. Background**

- 1.1 In the Queen's Speech 2015, the Government set out legislative plans to bring forward a Policing and Criminal Justice Bill, which will include plans to overhaul the police complaints system.
- 1.2 Complaints about operational policing matters are currently the responsibility of Sussex Police to investigate and resolve, with an ultimate right of appeal to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC). The Bill will likely propose changes to the current arrangements, although it is expected that the provisions which are ultimately enacted will not be overly prescriptive, allowing some degree of local variation.
- 1.3 Given that the Panel meets roughly quarterly, it is proposed to create and appoint a Working Group now, so that it is properly constituted and available to meet at relatively short notice once the law is between completion and implementation.

##### **2. Proposal**

- 2.1 It is proposed to appoint a time-limited Working Group to inform the adoption of any new arrangements for the handling of operational policing complaints in Sussex.
- 2.2 It is intended that the Group will meet with the Commissioner and officers of Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner once, to consider and scrutinise the

manner in which relevant provisions of the new law are implemented in Sussex.

- 2.3 The Group will produce a report to the Panel, which will outline its findings and recommendations to the Commissioner. However, given the Panel's schedule of meetings, it is possible that the Panel will not have an opportunity to formally agree the Group's recommendations before these have to take effect. Therefore, the Group will likely deliver its recommendations and advice directly to the Commissioner, but report these to the Panel at its first subsequent formal meeting, for information and transparency.
- 2.4 The draft terms of reference contained in the appendix to this report provide for a membership of six Panel members. It is proposed that a broad cross-section of the local authorities on the Panel is represented on the final agreed membership. The first meeting of the Working Group will agree the appointment of a Chairman.

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

- 3.1 The cost of establishing and administrating the Working Group will be met from the funding provided by the Home Office.

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

- 4.1 Scrutinising the actions and decisions of the Commissioner is the Panel's statutory duty, and a failure to adequately do so risks creating arrangements which do not reflect the needs of Sussex's residents, and risks causing a loss of public confidence in policing.

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

- 5.1 Not applicable

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