

Independent Panel Member – Police and Crime Panel

Background to the post

The Police and Crime Panel (PCP) is part of the governance and accountability arrangements for policing in Warwickshire. The panel's role is to challenge, scrutinise and support the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in the performance of his role.

The panel requires an energetic person to serve as a panel member from January 2021 for up to a four-year term. This is an exciting opportunity to be involved in the governance arrangements for policing in Warwickshire.

The role of a panel member is an important and demanding one. In considering your application you should be aware that the typical commitment required from a member of the panel is on average at least one day a month, including preparation time. Formal panel meetings are held at least once a quarter during normal office hours at Shire Hall, Warwick. On occasion the Panel has to hold additional meetings if the Police and Crime Commissioner proposes the appointment of a Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, a new Chief Constable, Chief Executive or Chief Finance Officer. The Panel is required to hold confirmation hearings to consider these appointments. Participation in any of the panel working groups will increase the time commitment required.

Independent panel members are able to claim reasonable expenses currently up to £920 per annum. All panel members receive induction and other appropriate training.

The Police and Crime Commissioner is expected to work with the police force, local authorities, community safety partnerships, local criminal justice boards and other relevant organisations in Warwickshire. The Commissioner's responsibilities include:

- Setting the budget for policing in Warwickshire and the amount of council tax local people will pay towards policing;
- Setting policing priorities for Warwickshire;
- Appointing/dismissing the Chief Constable and holding him/her to account for performance;
- Publishing an annual report to show results;
- Preparing the police and crime plan.

The Chief Constable works closely with the Commissioner but retains responsibility for day-to-day control over operational policing. The Chief Constable's responsibilities include:

- Day to day responsibility for the financial management of the force;
- Direction and control over the force's officers and staff;
- Tackling national threats such as terrorism, public disorder and organised crime; and

- Supporting the Commissioner in the delivery of the police and crime plan.

The Police and Crime Panel exists to scrutinise the Police and Crime Commissioner (not the Chief Constable), promote openness in the transaction of police business and to support the Commissioner in the effective exercise of his/her functions. The Panel's responsibilities include:

- Reviewing the police and crime plan and annual report prepared by the Commissioner
- Reviewing senior appointments made by the Commissioner
- Reviewing the Commissioner's proposal for the level of council tax to be paid; and
- Informal resolution of complaints about the conduct of the Commissioner or the Deputy Commissioner (if appointed)

The Panel is a joint committee of the Warwickshire County Council and the five district/borough councils in Warwickshire.

The composition of the Panel is set out in legislation. It consists of ten elected councillors and two independent members. The panel has to reflect the overall political balance in the county as well as represent all parts of the police force area. Five of the elected members are appointed by the county council and each of the five district/borough councils in Warwickshire appoints one member.

Roles and responsibilities of independent panel members

Independent members are full voting members and will have access to the same level of support and information as elected members on the panel.

The core role of both elected members and independent members on the panel is to:

- scrutinise the work of the PCC to ensure that the PCC is discharging its functions effectively
- bring any specialist knowledge, skills, experience and expertise they may have to the scrutiny work of the panel
- ensure that there is an effective independent challenge to the PCC and that this challenge is constructive and supports the PCC in carrying out their role
- act as a non-party-political voice for those who live and/or work in Warwickshire.

An independent member of the police and crime panel is expected to:

- attend all formal meetings of the panel (approximately 4-6 per year)
- establish good relations with other members and officers
- attend additional meetings e.g. working groups or evidence gathering sessions, as required
- prepare for each meeting by reading the agenda, papers and additional information to familiarise yourself with the issues to be covered during the

meeting. Prior to the meeting consider the questions you may wish to put to the police and crime commissioner and other expert witnesses

- listen carefully at the meetings, ask questions in a way which is non-judgmental, respects confidentiality and helps the panel to make practical suggestions for improvements in services
- assist in the preparation of reports and the formulation of recommendations; this may involve volunteering to participate in a task group to conduct a scrutiny review
- attend training and development events as needed
- abide by the panel arrangements and rules of procedure which set out how the police and crime panel will operate in Warwickshire
- keep abreast of the key issues in relation to the responsibilities of the police and crime commissioner and the priorities within the police and crime plan
- contribute to achieving an open, accountable and transparent decision making process in relation to policing and community safety issues in Warwickshire.

Eligibility criteria

The following cannot be considered for a position on the panel, namely:

- anyone under 18 years old
- the Police and Crime Commissioner or a member of their staff
- members of Parliament (Commons and Lords)
- members of the National Assembly for Wales the Scottish Parliament
- members of the European Parliament
- police officers
- persons who do not live or work in Warwickshire
- civil servants engaged in political activity
- Warwickshire county councillors or district /borough councillors
- employees of the county council or district/borough councils
- anyone who is politically active

What do we mean by ‘politically active’

Anyone who speaks on a regular basis to the media, journalists or broadcasters or general public on behalf of a political party, stands for election for a political party, acts as an election agent for a candidate for a political party, holds any office or employment with a political party or canvasses or promotes a particular political party.

Candidates should be of good character. All panel members would also be expected to adhere to the ‘seven principles of public life’ which are listed below:

Nolan Principles

Selflessness: Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity: Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity: In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability: Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness: Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

The successful applicant will be required to comply with the Warwickshire County Council member code of conduct. This includes a requirement to register certain financial interests held by you or your partner in a public register.

Candidates **should be able to demonstrate that they have experience of:**

- working with other people on issues of mutual interest over a period of time, for example through voluntary work
- situations where they needed to compromise
- interacting or working with people of all ages
- interacting or working with people who have different political views and/or religious beliefs
- interacting or working with people who are physically and or mentally impaired.

It is also important for candidates to **be able to:**

- consider their own biases and prejudices
- work with people from all areas within the police force area
- work with people from diverse backgrounds
- work with people with and without disabilities
- work with people from a variety of faiths and cultures
- work with people who may be gay, lesbian, transgender

Candidates **should be able to demonstrate they have an interest in:**

- policing issues and current affairs, specifically in respect of the ways in which they affect people locally
- challenging and combating institutional discrimination
- the issues associated with recruiting, promoting and retaining staff from underrepresented groups

- engaging with and representing local people and/or specialists within their field of expertise.

Person specification for panel members

Candidates will need to demonstrate they can meet the following requirements:

Experience	Able to demonstrate they have relevant interests and experience.
Availability	Able to attend meetings in the daytime Monday to Friday at locations within Warwickshire at least six times a year, as well as attend any appropriate training sessions.
	Candidates should have the time, energy and commitment to prepare for and attend regular meetings. We suggest that a minimum of one day per month would be required to be devoted to this role.
Computer literate	The ability to use standard IT packages such as Microsoft word, adobe acrobat, email, websites etc. Panel papers will be circulated electronically.
The ability to think strategically	To have breadth of vision, to rise above detail, and to see problems and issues from a wider, forward-looking perspective and to make appropriate linkages.
The ability to make good judgements:	To take a balanced, open-minded and objective approach, for example, in evaluating the priorities of the police and crime commissioner, assessing candidates for top-level appointments or considering complaints against the police and crime commissioner.
The ability to be supportive:	To be able to support the PCC and the other members of the panel in delivering their duties.
The ability to scrutinise and challenge	To be able to rigorously scrutinise and challenge constructively without becoming confrontational, using appropriate data, evidence and resources.
The ability to be analytical:	To interpret and question complex written material, including financial and statistical information and other data such as performance measures and identify the salient points.
The ability to communicate effectively:	To be able to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing – and to interact positively with other members of the panel, the PCC and the public.
Team working:	The ability to play an effective role in meetings through listening, persuading and showing respect for the views of others.
Self-confidence:	The skill to challenge accepted views constructively without becoming confrontational.
Enthusiasm and drive:	The ability to be proactive in seeking out learning and developmental opportunities to enhance knowledge and understanding (for example, on financial matters and statutory requirements).
Respect for others:	The capacity to treat all people fairly and with respect, to value diversity and respond sensitively to difference.
Integrity:	The necessity to embrace high standards of conduct and ethics and be committed to upholding human rights and equality of opportunity for all.
Decisiveness:	The ability to show resilience even in challenging circumstances, remaining calm and confident and able to make difficult decisions.

Relevant Types of Experience

- the health sector e.g. work with PCTs, or involvement with the local Health and Wellbeing Board or a clinical commissioning group
- voluntary or paid work and experience with victim support groups
- involvement and experience of restorative justice
- work with the police and resultant awareness of policing issues from both a strategic and delivery perspective
- community involvement with, for example, neighbourhood watch or a parish and town council
- work with the criminal justice system
- youth work and youth justice work
- work as a magistrate
- work in management of a business
- working in the area of community safety
- experience with the voluntary and community sector generally
- experience in fire and rescue services
- experience in the education sector
- experience of drug and alcohol issues
- current academic experience in policing and crime and anti-social behaviour issues
- work with the probation service and links to the local probation trust, or other relevant knowledge or experience in this area
- reformed ex-offenders who might offer a valuable perspective on policing and crime and anti-social behaviour issues, and possibly restorative justice
- experience of challenging and scrutinising from other fields

Member Code of Conduct

Warwickshire County Council

I.....of.....

being an Independent Member of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel
hereby declare that I will undertake my duties as follows:

1. I will represent the interests of the whole community and work constructively with our staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.

2. **As a holder of public office** and as required by law I will behave in a manner that is consistent with the following principles to achieve best value for all our residents and maintain public confidence in the Council, any other body to which I am appointed by the Council and the office of councillor:

a. **SELFLESSNESS:** I will act solely in terms of the public interest. I will not act in such a way as to gain financial or other material benefits for myself, my family, or my friends.

b. **INTEGRITY:** I will not place myself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence me in the performance of my official duties.

c. **OBJECTIVITY:** I will make choices on merit, in carrying out public business, including when making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits

d. **ACCOUNTABILITY:** I will be accountable for my decisions and actions to the public and to the Council and must submit myself to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to my office.

e. **OPENNESS:** I will be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions I take. I will give reasons for my decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest or the law clearly demands.

f. **HONESTY:** I will declare any private interests relating to my public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interests.

g. **LEADERSHIP:** I will promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

3. As a Member of the Panel I will act in accordance with the principles in paragraph 2 and, in particular, I will

- a. Champion the needs of the whole community and all my constituents, including those who did not vote for me and put the public interest first.
- b. Deal with representations or enquiries from residents, members of our communities and visitors fairly, appropriately and impartially.
- c. Not allow other pressures, including the financial interests of myself or others connected to me, to deter me from pursuing constituents' casework, the interests of the Council or the good governance of the Council in a proper manner.
- d. Exercise independent judgement and not compromise my position by placing myself under obligations to outside individuals or organisations who might seek to influence the way I perform my duties as an Independent Member of the Council.
- e. Take account of all relevant information, including advice from statutory and other professional officers. I will remain objective and make decisions on merit.
- f. Be accountable for my decisions and cooperate when scrutinised internally and externally, including by local residents.
- g. Contribute to ensuring that decision-making processes are as open and transparent as possible to make sure the community understands the reasoning behind decisions and are informed when holding me and other Members to account.
- h. Behave in accordance with all my legal obligations, alongside any requirements contained within the Council's policies, protocols and procedures, including on the use of the Council's resources.
- i. I will not disclose confidential information (be that confidential by virtue of legislation or otherwise) without express authority and/ or unless the law requires it.
- j. Value my colleagues and staff and engage with them in an appropriate manner and one that underpins the mutual respect between us that is essential to good local government.
- k. Always treat people with respect, including the organisations and public I engage with, fellow members and those I work alongside.
- l. Provide leadership through behaving in accordance with these principles when championing the interests of the community with other organisations as well as within this Council.

4. I will register and disclose those interests that I am required by law to declare. I will complete and submit a signed declaration of my interests to the Monitoring Officer. I will keep the register updated and acknowledge that its contents are open to the public to inspect.
5. I will comply with any code of conduct for members that is properly established by the Council

Signed:.....

Full name:

Date: