

# **LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND**

## **POLICE AND CRIME PANEL – 4<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

### **IN-YEAR MONITORING INFORMATION REGARDING HOME OFFICE GRANT**

#### **FUNDING FOR THE PERIOD 01 APRIL 2021 TO 31 MARCH 2022**

##### **Report of the Panel's Secretariat**

###### **Purpose of Report**

1. To provide a summary of the activity of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel to show use of Home Office Grant funding for the financial year 2021-22.

###### **Background**

2. The maintenance of a Police and Crime Panel is in accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Regulations made under it.
3. The functions and responsibilities of Police and Crime Panels (PCPs) in England and Wales are set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. PCPs were introduced to scrutinise the actions and decisions of police and crime commissioners and provide support and challenge to the commissioner in the exercise of their functions.
4. In exercise of the power conferred upon the Secretary of State for the Home Department under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 to provide financial support to a local authority in England or Wales, a Grant is paid to the host authority (Leicester City Council) for the provision of a Police and Crime Panel, subject to the requirements of a Grant Agreement which sets out the legally binding terms and conditions which apply. For the financial year 2021/22 the host authority received an offer of a grant of up to £67,100.
5. Grant funding is paid retrospectively to reimburse the host authority as a contribution towards its eligible expenditure in administering the Police and Crime Panel. Eligible expenditure is expenditure incurred by the host authority in managing, administering, and delivering the "Purpose" which is defined in the Grant Agreement and provides a broad well defined framework describing the outcomes and impacts that the Funding is intended to achieve.
6. Key deliverables in the Purpose are that (i) there is a Police and Crime Panel for the police area able to carry out its scrutiny functions and responsibilities as set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011; (ii) Panels continue to fulfil their statutory responsibilities, meeting in public and making necessary reports on PCCs' decisions and actions; (iii) Panels continue to provide effective local scrutiny of the PCCs and ensure transparency to the public.
7. In accordance with best practice for scrutiny and transparency as noted in Schedule 3 – In Year Monitoring Information requirements of the Home Office Grant Agreement, an annual report by the Police and Crime Panel is an important Key Performance Indicator (KPI) and the Annual report will usually be presented to the June/July meeting of the Panel.

###### **In-Year Monitoring Information**

###### **Critical success factors**

- a) **The number of public meetings held**

The Police and Crime Panel meets in public to scrutinise the actions and decisions of the Police and Crime Commissioner (the PCC).

Due to the legislation that permitted virtual meetings to take place during the Covid 19 pandemic ceasing on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021 the Panel resumed physical meetings and continued to use technology to hold panel pre-meetings using virtual meeting platforms e.g., MS Teams.

During this period the Panel held 8 public meetings as follows:

- 24 June 2021 - AGM at which new Chair and Vice-Chair were appointed
- 29 July 2021 – Summer Panel meeting
- 13 September 2021 - Extraordinary meeting to consider the draft Police and Crime Plan
- 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021- Autumn Panel meeting
- 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021- Winter Panel meeting
- 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021 - Confirmation Hearing for role of Chief Executive Officer OPCC
- 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022 - Pre-cept/Budget meeting
- 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022 - Extraordinary meeting to consider and approve the final draft Police and Crime Plan

Details of the agendas and supporting papers for those meetings were published to the host authority's website and can be found at:

<https://cabinet.leicester.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=989&Year=0>

In addition to the public meetings, the Panel also holds briefing sessions, and task group sessions to explore issues in detail, notably as part of the draft Police and Crime Plan process prior to public consultation and as part of a review looking at s106 Funding.

There were 6 member pre-meetings arranged ahead of the public meetings, these were held virtually using MS Teams, and were attended by the Chair, Vice-Chair, support officer to the panel, and various Panel Members as availability permitted.

There were also Chair briefings held with the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Executive of the Office of the PCC prior to each public meeting.

## **b) Panel's Budget**

In establishing Police and Crime Panels, the Home Office agreed that a limited grant would be provided to each local authority acting as the host authority in providing the administrative support and management and maintaining the Police and Crime Panel.

The host authority for the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel is Leicester City Council.

The panel's arrangements agreed with the Home Office in 2013, stated that:

*The annual costs associated with the operation, organisation and administration for the Panel shall be offset by the Home Office grant to be managed by the host authority. All of the relevant costs incurred by the host authority in connection with the work of the panel shall be met from the funding allocated by the Home Office unless the authorities agree otherwise. The host authority shall monitor all expenditure incurred and make provision for an annual report.*

The Panel previously agreed that elected Members would not use the Home Office grant to draw allowances for Members of the Panel other than as provided for by paragraph 26 of the Panel's Constitution. At its meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021 the Panel agreed to a change to its Constitution to amend paragraph 26 in the interests of certainty and transparency as follows:

*Payment of expenses and allowances, if applicable, for Elected Members will be a matter for the nominating Authority. The scheme of expenses and allowances for the two Independent Co-opted Members will mirror the provisions for such allowances that are contained within the host Authority's published Member Allowances Scheme.*

#### HOME OFFICE GRANT 2021 MID-YEAR CLAIM: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021

In accordance with Schedule 3 In-Year Monitoring Information Requirements of the Home Office Grant Agreement, a mid-year claim was produced, this was required to be returned to the Home Office by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021 to remain eligible for the payment covering the second half of the financial year.

The Home Office grant available for the 2021 mid-year claim was £67,100 since no funding had been received for this financial year at that point. The actual expenditure for the mid-year claim was: £34,305.40

A summary of expenditure is published to the host authority website as required by the Home Office grant agreement and can be found at: <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/decisions-meetings-and-minutes/leicester-leicestershire-and-rutland-police-and-crime-panel/>

#### OUTTURN FORECAST: 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

In accordance with Schedule 4 Outturn Forecast of the Home Office Grant Agreement an outturn forecast was produced and returned to the Home Office by 5<sup>th</sup> March 2022 to remain eligible for the payment covering the second half of the financial year.

The Home Office grant available for the outturn forecast is £32,794.60 (remaining from the total £67,100)

The outturn forecast was as set out below:

	Mid-year payment claimed (if applicable)	Spend forecast from mid-year to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022	Total spend forecast in FY 2021/22
Administration costs	<b>£33,305.40</b>	<b>£24,902.13</b>	<b>£58,207.53</b>
Members expenses	<b>£1,000</b>	<b>£777.00</b>	<b>£1,777.00</b>
Total	<b>£34,305.40</b>	<b>£25,679.13</b>	<b>£59,984.53</b>

#### HOME OFFICE GRANT 2021-2022 END-YEAR CLAIM: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

The final expenditure claim is to be returned to the Home Office by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2022 to remain eligible for the payment covering the second half of the financial year.

Any underspend at the end of financial year must be returned to the Home Office and any overpayment of grant will be recovered.

Final details of the Outturn Forecast and End Year Claim will be included in the Annual Report.

**c) Scrutiny**

The Panel's primary means of supporting and holding the PCC to account remains the formal public meetings, with the detailed minutes of those meetings providing evidence of both roles.

The confirmed minutes of the meetings held during this period can be found via the following links: <https://cabinet.leicester.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=989&Year=0>

The Panel were able to undertake ad hoc, task and finish type scrutiny of the draft Police and Crime Plan prior to public consultation in September as well as scheduling a Review of s106 Funding which is ongoing.

Following discussions around the Work Programme, the Panel produced an Annual Report for the first time covering the period 2020-21 which went to the July 2021 meeting.

In line with statutory requirements, the Panel also continues to write to the PCC in response to his proposals regarding the Police and Crime Plan, the Precept and the PCC Annual Report and where appropriate, the Panel's responses have been published on the host authority's website.

The Panel has monitored complaints against the PCC and received a report on how non-criminal complaints are being handled by the Monitoring Officer.

Topics of particular interest to the Panel have been recruitment and retention of police officers/staff; domestic violence and sexual abuse as well as regular reports providing updates on performance for the OPCC and the Force which have included analysing data and mitigations to address concerns.

**d) Visits**

The ongoing Covid 19 pandemic has meant there were no Panel visits over the past year. When remaining restrictions and risk of transmission of the latest variants ease potential visits will include:

- A Panel familiarisation visit to Force HQ
- The Child Exploitation Hub based in Wigston.(deferred during 1<sup>st</sup> phase of pandemic)
- The Dear Albert Project (deferred during 1<sup>st</sup> phase of pandemic).

**e) Events**

The Chair and panel support officer continue to play an active part in regional and national networks and have attended virtual meetings of the East Midlands Regional Network throughout the year.

The Panel continues to subscribe to Frontline Consulting's Regional Network for the East Midlands and the Network meetings continue to be a useful means of sharing best practice and development.

**f) Training**

Full Panel training was delivered by the panel support officer and Monitoring Officer in May 2021 providing an induction to the Panel's responsibilities and scrutiny work going forward. A training session was also held in January 2022 providing an induction for the two new Independent Members to the Panel's responsibilities.

Opportunities for further training and networking continue to be explored.

**g) Engagement with the work of the Panel by Members of the Public and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire Police**

The Panel Members regularly review the work programme, and the panel support officer continues to look at ways in which the Panel could improve upon its work programme and raise its profile. The Panel continues to include as a standing item on its agenda's an opportunity for public questions.

All meetings of the Panel are webcast live, and a recording saved to the host authority's webcast library. The recording of the meeting can be accessed for a period of time before being archived at the following link: <https://leicester.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Whilst the Panel met virtually during the Covid 19 pandemic there was some increase in the number of public viewings of the streamed meetings and this has continued to some extent with the number of public viewings for the live stream of physical meetings. Panel meetings have on occasion gained more attention with the public and in the local media, but this has tended to be when specific highly topical issues occurred in the media beforehand.

There is dedicated information in relation to the Police and Crime Panel on the host authority's website. This webpage content can be found at: <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/decisions-meetings-and-minutes/leicester-leicestershire-and-rutland-police-and-crime-panel/> and is regularly maintained with updated membership details as well as details of future meetings. Provision has also been made on the website for publication of expenditure information.

In the past the Panel has rotated the venue of meetings between the City and County in an effort to increase public attendance. A report to consider the location of meetings was presented to the panel for consideration at its June 2021 meeting and it was agreed to resume rotation of meetings between the City and County subject to room capacity to ensure social distancing.

Regarding the engagement of the PCC, working relations with the Panel continue to be positive as do the links with the Office of the PCC, such as through the pre-agenda process. The PCC continues to attend all meetings of the Panel and has also engaged in wider activities which he often reports upon to the Panel.

A good recent example of the PCC using the Panel for support and challenge concerned a review of the Medium Term financial plan and also involvement of Panel Members in consideration of the draft Police and Crime Plan prior to public consultation.

Members also welcomed this approach as an improvement on previous practice and evidence of improved engagement.

**Recommendation**

The Panel is asked to note the contents of this report.

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