

Public Document Pack

Sussex Police and Crime Panel

Members are hereby requested to attend the meeting of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel, to be held at **10.30 am** on **Friday, 13 March 2026** at **County Hall, Lewes**.

Lauren McCann

Clerk to the Police and Crime Panel

5 March 2026

Webcasting Notice

Please note: This meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via East Sussex County Council's website on the internet – at the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm that the meeting is to be filmed. Generally the public gallery is not filmed. However, by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes. The webcast will be available via the link below: <https://eastsussex.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>.

Agenda

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| 10.30 am | 1. | Declarations of Interest (Pages 3 - 4) |
| | | Members and officers must declare any pecuniary or personal interest in any business on the agenda. They should also make declarations at any stage such an interest becomes apparent during the meeting. Consideration should be given to leaving the meeting if the nature of the interest warrants it. If in doubt contact Democratic Services, West Sussex County Council, before the meeting. |
| 10.32 am | 2. | Urgent Matters |
| | | Items not on the agenda which the Chair of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances. |
| 10.33 am | 3. | Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 18) |
| | | To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting on 30 January 2026. |
| 10.38 am | 4. | Panel Correspondence since the last Meeting (Pages 19 - 22) |
| | | For the Panel to note correspondence to and from this Panel since the meeting on 30 January 2026. |
| 10.40 am | 5. | Public and Panel Questions to the Commissioner |
| | | The Panel is asked to raise any strategic issues or queries concerning crime and policing in Sussex with the Commissioner. |

- 11.10 am 6. **The outcomes and organisational learning arising from the Sussex PCC's role as the review body for Schedule 3 complaints** (Pages 23 - 30)
- The Panel is asked to consider a report from the Police and Crime Commissioner on the outcomes and learning arising from her role as the review body for Schedule 3 complaints.
- 11.40 am 7. **Sussex Police's Progress in recruiting to maintain the Home Office's baseline headcount** (Pages 31 - 38)
- The Panel is asked to consider a report from the Police and Crime Commissioner on the progress by Sussex Police in recruitment to maintain the Home Office's baseline headcount for police officers.
- 12.10 pm 8. **Independent Member Term of Office** (Pages 39 - 40)
- The Panel is asked to agree that the requirement in the Constitution to readvertise independent member roles after five years be waived.
- 12.15 pm 9. **Quarterly Report of Complaints** (Pages 41 - 42)
- Report by the Clerk to the Police and Crime Panel.
- The report provides details of the correspondence received and the action taken.
- The Panel is asked to consider the report and raise any issues or concerns.
- 12.25 pm 10. **Date of Next Meeting and Future Meeting Dates**
- The next meeting of the Panel will take place on 2 July 2026 at 10.30 a.m. at County Hall, Lewes.
- Future meeting dates are set out below:
- 9 October 2026
29 January 2027
22 February 2027 (Provisional)
12 March 2027

To all members of the Sussex Police and Crime Panel

Panel Member	Personal Interest
Cllr Ballard	Cabinet Lead for Community Safety at Eastbourne Borough Council.
Cllr Baynham	Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources at Horsham District Council.
Cllr Bangert	Cabinet Member for Communities and Wellbeing at Chichester District Council.
Cllr Birch	Chair of Housing and Wellbeing Committee at Arun District Council.
Cllr Cooke	Cabinet Member for Communities at Mid-Sussex District Council.
Mrs Scholefield	A serving magistrate.
Cllr Sluman	Cabinet Member for Communities and Wellbeing at Adur District Council.
Cllr Whorlow	Vice Chair for Adur and Worthing Community Partnership. Cabinet Member for Safety, Equalities, and Inclusion at Worthing Borough Council.
Cllr Williams	Cabinet Lead for Public Health and Asset Management at Wealden District Council.

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Sussex Police and Crime Panel

30 January 2026 – At a meeting of the Committee held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Lewes.

Present:

Cllr Czolak	Brighton & Hove City Council	Cllr Baynham	Horsham District Council
Cllr Birch	Arun District Council	Cllr Bangert	Chichester District Council
Cllr Ballard	Eastbourne Borough Council	Cllr Ian Hollidge	East Sussex County Council
Cllr Bob Standley	East Sussex County Council	Cllr Keene	Lewes District Council
Cllr Bayliss	Rother District Council	Cllr Williams	Wealden District Council
Cllr Ali	West Sussex County Council	Cllr Warne	Hastings Borough Council
Mrs Scholefield	Independent Co-opted Member	Cllr Jones	Crawley Borough Council

Substitutes:

Cllr M Jones, Crawley Borough Council

Apologies were received from Cllr Khan (Crawley Borough Council), Cllr Whorlow (Worthing Borough Council) and Mr Napthine (Independent Co-opted Member)

Also in attendance: Mrs Katy Bourne, Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, Mr Mark Streater, OSPCC, Mr Iain McCulloch, OSPCC, and Mr Mervin Dadd, OSPCC.

Part I

67. Declarations of Interest

67.1 In accordance with the Code of Conduct, members of the Panel declared the personal interests in the table below.

Panel Member	Personal Interest
Cllr Ballard	Cabinet Lead for Community Safety at Eastbourne Borough Council.
Cllr Baynham	Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources at Horsham District Council.
	Cabinet Member for Communities and Wellbeing at

Cllr Bangert	Chichester District Council.
Cllr Birch	Chair of Housing and Wellbeing Committee at Arun District Council.
Cllr Cooke	Cabinet Member for Communities at Mid-Sussex District Council.
Mrs Scholefield	A serving magistrate.
Cllr Sluman	Cabinet Member for Communities and Wellbeing at Adur District Council.
Cllr Whorlow	Vice Chair for Adur and Worthing Community Partnership. Cabinet Member for Safety, Equalities, and Inclusion at Worthing Borough Council.
Cllr Williams	Cabinet Lead for Public Health and Asset Management at Wealden District Council.

67.2 There were no further declarations of interests expressed.

68. Urgent Matters

68.1 There were no urgent matters raised.

69. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

69.1 The Panel is asked to approve the draft minutes of the previous meeting on 3 October 2025 as an accurate record.

69.2 Resolved – that the Panel approved the minutes of the previous meeting on 3 October 2025 as an accurate record and have been signed by the Chair.

70. Public and Panel Questions to the Commissioner

70.1 The Panel noted a published version of written public and Panel questions with answers from the Commissioner (copy appended to the signed minutes).

70.2 A summary of questions from the Panel to the Commissioner, with accompanying answers, follows:

1. Question: On the topic of the camp at Crowborough, what funding has Sussex Police incurred in policing both the demonstrations and the camp itself, and whether that money will be recouped from the Home Office? And if it is not reimbursed, what activities the Police would normally be doing have been lost due to the presence in Crowborough? And has Sussex Police received any requests for additional police presence outside local schools due to concerns raised?

Answer: The Commissioner explained that there was a Home Office grant available for asylum sites and confirmed that a direct application to the Home Office had been made to fund the extra policing costs for twelve months. She confirmed that her office had now heard back from the Home Office, and they were looking to get a meeting with representatives in the week commencing 9th February, in order to move the process forward. Further, the cost was estimated at £5.62 million over the next twelve-month period. She explained that the costs of policing so far have been borne by current policing budgets. Finally, she explained that, to the best of her knowledge, the OSPCC had not been directly approached by local schools about policing concerns related to Crowborough.

2. Question: On the issue of intimidation and far-right demonstration marches around Crowborough, do you think that it is the responsible position for the Police and Crime Commissioner to be getting involved with these demonstrations or do you feel the responsible position would be to be leading on calming the situation down?

Answer: The Commissioner assured members that she could empathise with the intimidation and harassment of local politicians, both in person and on social media and that it was not acceptable or pleasant to go through. Further, she stressed to the Panel that as Commissioner, it was her job to represent the voice of the public in policing and to understand their concerns, citing misinformation around her stance and actions in relation to Crowborough. She explained her actions during the first protest march in November 2025, stressing that her sole motive was to speak to Crowborough residents to understand their concerns and feedback to Sussex Police, and that she had not stood on any platform aligned with left- or right-wing politics. Further, she explained that she had attended a public meeting of Crowborough Town Council, to once again hear residents' concerns and the representations made by delegates from the Home Office as the sum total of her involvement with the demonstrations.

3. Question: The Government has set new targets for police call answering times and officer attendance as part of a comprehensive overhaul in policing. The new targets require police forces to respond to emergency calls within 15 minutes in urban areas and 20 minutes in rural areas. Additionally, the Government has stated that police forces must answer 999 calls within 10 seconds. This is to address issues such as crime going unpunished and to restore

neighbourhood policing. Do you feel that this is a step too far or an achievable target for Sussex Police?

Answer: The Commissioner acknowledged the Government's announcement of wide-ranging police reforms. She then explained to the Panel that it was her understanding that the new local policing guarantee would replace the national policing guarantee and stressed that the referenced targets had not yet been formally set by the government. The Commissioner then emphasised to the Panel that Sussex Police was already in the top three performing forces nationally, for consistency in its response times to emergency calls across the county. She reiterated her satisfaction with Sussex Police's performance in responding to emergency and non-emergency calls.

4. Question: It has been stated in the media that the government is proposing a new national police force and to reduce the number of regional forces. Considering government proposals to address recent issues with the Met Police, what are the Commissioner's views on the Government's change of attitude to larger police forces?

Answer: The Commissioner cautioned that they currently don't know what these proposed mergers will look like but acknowledged the significance of the reforms and that they were currently only proposals to be discussed as a white paper. She then explained that the proposals referenced merges into twelve police forces and cited the quarterly collaborations between local forces and the regional crime unit. She stressed that they did not have any detail about how the mergers would work, or with whom, but estimated that the total population that a merged regional police force would cover would be comparable to the total population of London. She then acknowledged the issues the Met Police had experienced when changing from a 32-borough policing model to a 12-borough model and her concerns around a similar model of policing in Sussex.

5. Question: On the Government's introduction of the Road Safety Strategy, there is an aim to reduce collisions and KSIs (number of people killed or seriously injured) by 65%. However the Sussex Police Data Portal has not made available any data on collisions in Sussex since February 2025. The Portal states that the data will be rectified and included from March 2026. Can the Commissioner give assurances that this data will be made available?

Answer: The Commissioner explained that, after Sussex Police left the Safer Roads Sussex Partnership, management of the portal changed hands to the Sussex Police Road Safety Team and was in the process of being redeveloped last year, however there have been delays as a result of an unfortunate specialist staffing issue, which has now been rectified and the work will hopefully be completed by Spring 2026. She also shared with the Panel that the Fatal Five Unit had been formally launched.

6. Question: What is the Commissioner's opinion on the use of facial recognition technologies and how it is going to be rolled out, moving forward?

Answer: The Commissioner shared that she was pleased that Sussex was chosen as one of the pilot areas, acknowledging the concerns raised around profiling and surveillance. She explained to members that Sussex Police had been very clear about how and why they are using the technology and shared her experiences when accompanying the facial recognition vans and how the technology works. She assured members that all steps were taken to safeguard the public's personal information and that the police's approach when using the technology was always calm and measured. Finally, she reassured the Panel that she had seen no disproportionality or bias in the technology or its usage.

7. Question: In respect to the proposed national police service, will that involve the physical transfer of any Sussex expertise, whether policing or non-policing, to that service or will any future national police service experts be allocated alongside Sussex Police?

Answer: The Commissioner explained that she didn't have any detail about how the proposals would work beyond the white paper and expressed her surprise and discomfort that she had not been consulted, as the public would need to be consulted over these proposals.

8. Question: On the issue of Midhurst Police Station's front desk closure since 2024, could the Commissioner update on the future of this critical station, considering local support for its reopening?

Answer: The Commissioner said she was aware of the local campaign but had not been directly approached or corresponded with as yet. She explained that Midhurst Police Station hosted the rural crime team and some of the local neighbourhood policing team but was not a front desk counter station.

9. Question: As a supplementary, the Commissioner was quoted as having said that Midhurst residents could use a yellow phone on the outside of the police station if they needed to contact the police and it did have a front counter.

Answer: The Commissioner acknowledged that the station may have had a front counter at some point, but it no longer did. She acknowledged that the yellow phones had been installed under the old police authority before her tenure as Commissioner and added that most traffic came through the phones rather than front desk counters.

10. Question: On the topic of the Sarah Everard Inquiry, with the second report stating that more focus was needed on predatory men rather than better street lighting or safety advice to women, is the Commissioner satisfied with the progress in implementing the recommendations from the first and second report?

Answer: The Commissioner assured members that she had been raising these issues in her monthly performance and accountability meetings with the Chief Constable and would be looking at the second report's recommendations at the coming meeting, and she would be seeking assurances from the Chief Constable that they were making progress against the recommendations outlined in the report.

11. Question: In reference to the questions submitted by members of the public on the Commissioner's decisions in relation to Crowborough, and the rise of far-right rhetoric and racism, what is the Commissioner's position on these marches and rhetoric?

Answer: The Commissioner stated that we live in a democracy where sometimes, opinions are expressed that are not agreed with, but she would defend their right to be expressed, but acknowledged the distress and alarm caused by the actions of some activists who have engaged in hostile behaviour. She reiterated her previous comments around misinformation about her words and actions while attending the march last year and the importance of looking at facts when debating these issues in a sensible way.

12. Question: What are the Commissioner's views on the protests occurring outside and on considering the petition calling for her resignation?

Answer: The Commissioner reiterated the public's right to express their opinions, whether she likes the opinion or not, and she would defend that right but that shouldn't encroach into intimidation and mob tactics.

71. Final Report of the Budget and Precept Working Group

- 71.1 The Panel considered a report by the Chair of the Budget and Precept Working Group, Mrs Susan Scholefield. The Group met remotely twice, first on 21 November 2025, and then again on 13 January 2026.

- 71.2 Working Group members expressed concerns around present dangers that the public are unaware of and needing to fund the police response to those dangers, outweighing the possibility of relieving some of the burden on taxpayers' shoulders in raising precept from £14 to £15.

- 71.3 Group Members urged the Commissioner to lobby the policing minister to avoid assuming that the maximum increase would be approved every year in their funding decisions.

- 71.4 Resolved – that the Panel notes the recommendations of the Budget and Precept Working Group.

72. Proposed Precept 2026/27

73. Covering report by the Clerk to the Police and Crime Panel

- 73.1 The Panel noted the arrangements set out under Item 6a and agreed they were satisfied with the arrangements.

- 73.2 The Chair outlined the process for this item to the viewing public.

74. Report by the Police and Crime Commissioner

74.1 The Panel considered a report and supporting appendices provided by the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner.

74.2 Mrs Schofield outlined the Budget and Precept Working Group's recommendations. The primary recommendation was for the Panel to support the Proposed Precept for 2026/2027, with a majority of the Working Group supporting the proposed increase but it was not a unanimous result. Further, they noted that the public was showing less acceptance for increases in the precept than in previous years. The minority recommendation was for a 5% increase, rather the maximum allowed.

74.3 The Chair invited the Panel's questions under this item. A summary of the main questions and responses were as follows:

74.4 Members asked if the data gathered from the public was analysed for differences between support in rural and urban areas or across different demographics and expressed interest in seeing a more detailed breakdown.

74.5 Question: On p. 110 of the agenda pack, the vacancy rate for police officers is 1% and for PCSOs, 5%, is this affected by PCSOs transferring to become full police officers? And does it affect the work of the contact centre, with a 10% vacancy rate?

Answer: The Commissioner clarified that the 10% figure for the contact centre is not a flat figure but varies across different teams. She further explained that for PCSOs, there is no career progression and a flat salary range for them, which has led to that vacancy rate however, she stressed that it was one of the lowest they had seen in some time, as well as a waiting list for people waiting to become full police officers.

74.6 Members raised concerns over the clarity of the plans for the precept and how the increase will help facilitate the Police and Crime Plan.

74.7 Question: In reference to the increases in police officer headcounts and the contributions from the taxpayer, how have these contributed to making Sussex safer? And what reassurances can the Commissioner give on continued funding for the community safety partnerships (CSPs)?

Answer: The Commissioner emphasised the positive improvements and outcomes made by Sussex Police across both counties. She also referenced the various schemes that have been set up and supported by the OSPCC, such as the Crawley Business Partnership, to collaborate with Sussex Police in tackling various business crime-related issues. She confirmed that, under local government reform, the community safety

partnerships would no longer exist by 2028 and stressed her commitment to engaging with community safety partnerships on funding during a time of economic difficulty for Sussex Police where savings are expected while maintaining frontline services.

74.8 Members stated their disappointment that the Commissioner couldn't give more reassurances about the funding of CSPs as they would be integral to continuing work to tackle crime in Sussex communities while local government reform was ongoing.

74.9 The Commissioner stated that she was uncomfortable discussing this further while many of the members were, or represented, the chairs of various CSPs as it was a conflict of interest. She reiterated that she was not cutting CSP funding at this time and she was in consultation with them to support the partnerships through the local government reform period.

74.10 The Chair asked the Panel members to propose a motion to either support, oppose, or veto the proposed precept, and to second the motion.

74.11 The Panel proposed a motion to support the proposed precept and the motion was seconded.

74.12 The motion to support the proposed precept increase was passed by a majority vote.

75. The role of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner in holding Sussex Police to account for the effectiveness of the response provided to county lines and cuckooing

75.1 The Panel considered a report by the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, presented by Mr Mark Streater, Chief Executive Officer, Office of the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner.

75.2 A summary of the Panel's questions and answers is as follows:

1. Question: Could you more clearly define what would amount to "a disruption" with regards to performance information related to county lines?

Answer: Mr Streater explained that the way the force is classified is quite detailed and technical, and they would be happy to provide that detail, and further, that was how the business model of county lines was taken down to disrupt further criminal activity, such as through disrupting the quantity of drugs being sold, arrests made, etc.

2. Question: In 5.4, subsection 4, of the report on the figures presented, since 2023 there has been a decrease in the

arrests made and the disruption of county lines. What is the reason for this?

Answer: Mr Streater explained that the impact of an arrest or a seizure can vary across areas according to the threat and harm impact level of the groups involved and cautioned that the figures presented were headlines in comparison with the more detailed figures presented at the regional meetings attended by the Commissioner.

3. Question: Why have the number of custodial sentences decreased? Clarification was also requested over the issue of children's safeguarding figures and how these may have affected the nature of county lines over time.

Answer: Mr Streater assured members that Sussex Police, with Crown Prosecution Service support, were doing everything they could to achieve custodial sentences for those criminal elements at the top of the food chain, while those involved at a lower level, such as possession or running the county lines, were more likely to be vulnerable and as such, this was taken into account by authorities when determining sentencing.

4. Question: Where incidences of grooming are detected early, how are young people going to be supported moving forward to ensure they are not potentially lured back into involvement with gang violence and county lines?

Answer: Mr Streater acknowledged that, while there was a resourcing issue with pressures on local authority budgets, there are good, strong safeguarding networks in place between partners to highlight those children most at risk and intervene early, with the exchange of good information and intelligence between partners alongside the wider resourcing to support those affected.

5. Question: In reference to the large amounts of money spent by this country on policing and fighting the drugs trade, how does the Commissioner feel about the prospect of legalisation as a means to further combat the drugs trade?

Answer: The Commissioner affirmed that she was comfortable with the law as it currently sits on drugs and their legality and she would argue that the legalisation of drugs elsewhere had not proven particularly effective.

76. Feedback on Panel Visit to Kingstanding

76.1 The Panel received feedback from members who attended a visit to the Sussex Police Training Centre at Kingstanding in October 2025.

76.2 A summary of members' feedback follows:

76.3 Members reported that they were very impressed with their visit and the professionalism of the staff trainers in Sussex Police, both at home and abroad.

76.4 Members found the visit to be very informative and welcomed the chance to engage with individual trainers to talk about the infrastructure and the experience of police training. Members also expressed their wish that the standards they saw at Kingstanding be visible for the general public to see and engage with, in order to restore public trust in policing.

76.5 The Commissioner expressed her delight that the visit had been so successful. She also cited her pride in the 80th anniversary of the Aspidistra transmitter and its use during World War Two at Kingstanding, where the building was still standing.

77. Feedback on Panel Visit to Victim Services Team, OSPCC, November 2025

77.1 The Panel received feedback from members who attended a presentation by Victim Services, OSPCC at Sackville House in November 2025.

77.2 A summary of members' feedback follows:

77.3 Members said that the visit was really interesting, with welcoming staff, and cited it as a good opportunity to learn more about the various areas covered by the OSPCC and to discuss the various issues encountered by Victim Services in their work.

77.4 Members expressed some concern over the future of victim support under local government reform.

77.5 The Commissioner confirmed that she didn't have any detail on that at the moment and reassured members that she would keep them abreast of developments.

77.6 The Commissioner further expressed her pleasure that the visit had gone so well.

78. Quarterly Report of Complaints

78.1 The Panel reviewed a report by the Clerk to the Panel on complaints against the Commissioner received since the last report to the Panel and considered any action that it might take in respect of these.

78.2 Complaints had been received regarding the PCC's actions in relation to the Home Office decision to house

asylum seekers at a former military barracks in Crowborough, East Sussex. These were deemed non-serious and were furthermore not upheld by the Clerk to the Panel.

78.3 Concerns were raised by Panel members regarding this matter. It was suggested that the actions of the Commissioner in attending a demonstration in Crowborough and her comments on the media had demonstrated a lack of impartiality and objectivity that was inappropriate for the role of a PCC. Some Panel members disagreed and felt that the Commissioner had not acted inappropriately in taking an interest in matters relating to Crowborough.

78.4 Cllr Keene notified the Panel that he wished to bring forward a notice of motion censuring the Commissioner with regard to her actions.

78.5 Mark Streater raised a point of order in his capacity as Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer for the PCC that the Panel does not have the powers to formally discipline in this manner. Under Section 28(6) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act (PRSA), the primary duty of the Panel is to scrutinise, support and make recommendations with respect to the discharge of the PCC's functions,. Any concerns about the PCC's conduct should be raised through the established disciplinary and complaints process, instead of being discussed at the meeting.

78.6 Advice from the Officer of the Clerk to the Panel confirmed that it was within the remit of the Panel to vote on any motions which had been proposed and seconded, although any recommendation made by the Panel would not be binding and that the PCC would have a right to respond.

78.7 The Commissioner was given the opportunity to respond to members' comments. She expressed concern that there was no advance notice of the motion and felt that the Panel was not behaving as a critical friend. She suggested that her interactions with social media on this matter had been in a personal capacity and that some of her comments had been misrepresented; that her motivations had purely been to engage with local residents and hear their concerns, that she had only attended one march, and that it was her role to be the voice of the public in policing and to understand their views. She stated that she herself felt harassed for simply doing her job.

78.8 The Chair called for the motion to be proposed.

78.9 At approximately 13.10pm, the Commissioner and Cllr Hollidge left the meeting.

78.10 The motion was formally proposed by Cllr Keene, and seconded by Cllr Bangert, with the wording as follows:
'This Panel has lost confidence in the Commissioner and in the Commissioner's conduct after her actions in attending a protest march on 8 November 2025 in Crowborough and her comments on Radio Sussex 30 December calling for asylum seekers to be fitted with electronic tags, and other actions on social media. Her lack of impartiality has brought the office of commissioner and policing into disrepute. We therefore censure her for her actions.'

78.11 A recorded vote was held in accordance with the Panel's constitution and with numbers as follows: Cllrs Ballard, Bangert, Bayliss, Baynham, Cooke, Czolak, Jones, Keene, Warne, Williams (Yes). Cllrs Ali, Mitchell, Standley and Mrs Scholefield (No). Cllr Birch (Abstain). As Cllr Hollidge left before the vote, his vote was not counted. The motion was passed with a majority vote in favour.

78.12 Mr Streater asked for it to be put on record that he did not recognise this motion as a formal duty or response of the Panel and stated that he believed it was contrary to the Act, the duties of the Panel and was ultra vires. Mr Streater stated that he would await a report from the Monitoring Officer and/or Clerk of the Panel to justify the decision to bring about the motion of censure and how this correlated to the provisions in the Act, alongside the proposed actions the Panel plans to take. Mr Streater concluded by asking for the reasons why the Panel did not either pursue the processes in place to deal with formal complaints against the PCC or notify and inform him of this planned approach prior to the meeting.

79. Date of Next Meeting and Future Meeting Dates

79.1 The Chair noted the next meeting of the Panel will take place on Friday 30 January 2026, at 10:30am at County Hall, Lewes.

Future meeting dates have been proposed as:

- 13 March 2026
- 2 July 2026
- 9 October 2026

The meeting ended at 1.30 pm

Chairman

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Councillor Andrei Czolak
Chair of Sussex Police and Crime
Panel

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**Scrutiny of Proposed Policing
Precept for 2026/27**

Via email

Date: 2 February 2026

Dear Commissioner Bourne,

The proposed policing precept for 2026/27 was considered at a meeting of Sussex Police and Crime Panel on 30 January 2026.

I am writing to confirm that the Panel supported the proposed increased precept of £281.91 (on a Band D property), an increase of £15 (equivalent to a 5.6% increase).

However, citing the concern raised by the Working Group, the Panel wishes to again flag that the precept continues to be raised by the maximum amount permissible, and urges you to continue lobbying the policing minister and government, to request a fairer and more transparent solution for how funding for police forces is determined.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank OSPCC and Sussex Police staff for their support for the work of the Working Group again this year.

We look forward to receiving your response in due course.

Councillor Andrei Czolak
Chair of Sussex Police and Crime Panel

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Katy Bourne OBE
Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner

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**Sussex
Police & Crime
Commissioner**

Councillor Andrei Czolak
Chair of the Sussex Police & Crime Panel
County Hall
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11 February 2026

Proposed Precept 2026/27

Thank you for your letter dated 2 February 2026.

I am grateful to those members of the Sussex Police & Crime Panel who supported my proposed £15 increase to the police precept [£281.91] for 2026/27 at the meeting last month, including the majority support received from the Budget and Precept Working Group.

The support of the Panel will enable Sussex Police to maintain the investment made to date in respect of police officers, staff and police community support officers (PCSOs), alongside the improvements delivered to operational policing systems and capabilities. There simply is no appetite to go backwards in Sussex.

It is also worth emphasising that this increase is equivalent to an additional 29p a week / £1.25 a month per [Band D] household and that Sussex remains within the lowest quartile for all police precepts in England, despite this increase.

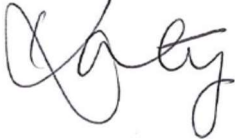
As highlighted at the Panel meeting, Sussex are being disproportionately penalised by the Government decision to consolidate previously ring-fenced grants into one core policing grant. The final police funding settlement for 2026/27 was less than originally expected for Sussex Police because of the change to the funding allocation formula and even with the support of the Panel members to increase the precept by the maximum £15 permitted, the Force still has a significant budget deficit for the financial year when the existing discrepancy [carried over from previous financial pressures] is added to the settlement shortfall. This gap will be bridged by the Chief Constable and I through the prioritisation of further budget reductions and efficiency savings across 2026/27, as appropriate.

I also share your concerns about the existing Police Allocation Formula (PAF) and recognise that this needs to be updated and adjusted to reflect the actual costs of policing locally. The existing 30-year-old mathematical model and formula used to allocate central Government funding to the 43 police force areas in England and Wales is widely acknowledged to be complex, opaque and out-of-date by police leaders and Government officials. This position has been further compounded by the decision to consolidate all police funding into one grant which has had a significant and damaging impact on Sussex Police in particular.



Ahead of the Panel meeting, I wrote to the Minister of State for Policing and Crime to set out my serious concerns regarding the police grant settlement 2026/27. With the grant now finalised, I will continue to lobby the Government for a fairer funding formula that is not contingent on local precepts being continually raised by the maximum amount permissible.

I would like to conclude by highlighting that it remains essential to take advantage of the maximum permitted precept increase to sustain policing services in Sussex without embedding a financial disadvantage into the budget for years to come. It is also strategically imperative to ensure long-term financial resilience and to deliver a stable organisation to the directly elected Mayor ahead of the transfer to the Mayoral Combined County Authority in May 2028.

Yours sincerely


Katy Bourne OBE

Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner



SUSSEX POLICE & CRIME PANEL

Sussex Police and Crime Panel

13 March 2026

The Outcomes and Organisational Learning Arising from the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner's role as the Review Body for Schedule 3 Complaints

Report by The Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

Focus for Scrutiny:

The Panel is asked to scrutinise the Commissioner's work as the review body for Schedule 3 complaints

1. Background

1.1 The item has been added to the agenda at the request of the Panel.

1.2 The matter was last considered by the Panel at its meeting in March 2024. Reports for the meeting can be found from page 19 here: <https://tinyurl.com/4j47uzfp>

Lauren McCann

Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

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Appendices

Appendix A - The outcomes and organisational learning arising from the Sussex PCC's role as the review body for Schedule 3 complaints

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To:	The Sussex Police & Crime Panel.
From:	The Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner.
Subject:	The outcomes and organisational learning arising from the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner's role as the review body for Schedule 3 complaints.
Date:	13 March 2026.
Recommendation:	That the Police & Crime Panel note the report.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides the Sussex Police & Crime Panel with a further update about the outcomes, recommendations and organisational learning arising from the police complaint reforms and the oversight and monitoring arrangements in place for reviewing police complaints.
- 1.2 This report seeks to build on the three previous reports provided to the Panel about the planned reforms to police complaints [5 October 2018] and an update on the outcomes, recommendations and organisational learning arising from the police complaint reforms [21 March 2021 and 22 March 2024]. Each of these reports is available to view on the Panel website through the following link:
<https://sussexpcp.gov.uk/meetings/previous-meetings/>

2.0 Policing and Crime Act 2017

- 2.1 The Policing and Crime Act 2017 was introduced to build capability, improve efficiency, increase public confidence in policing and further enhance local accountability.
- 2.2 The Act introduced a notable change to the police complaints system, building on the previous reforms to both the complaint and conduct systems, and expanding the role of Police & Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in this process to become the review body.
- 2.3 The police complaint reforms only provide the PCC with a responsibility to review complaint outcomes that are assessed and categorised as Schedule 3 complaints by Sussex Police under the Police Reform Act 2002.
- 2.4 These complaints are assessed as 'low-level' because the police officer and/or member of staff involved would not be subject to criminal and/or misconduct proceedings if proven. However, there is a need to determine whether the service provided by Sussex Police was acceptable or not and, as such, a formal response is required. At the conclusion of the complaint, members of the public have a right to review the outcome via the PCC.
- 2.5 The Office of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner (OSPCC) undertake these complaint reviews – on behalf of the PCC – in accordance with the Statutory Guidance issued by the Independent Office for Police Conduct. The complaint reviews consider whether the outcome of the handling of the initial complaint by Sussex Police was reasonable and proportionate.

3.0 Summary Statistics

- 3.1 Between 1 March 2025 and 28 February 2026, the OSPCC received 260 reviews following complaints made about Sussex Police, with 224 of these reviews assessed as valid [86.2%].

Total Reviews Received	Valid Reviews	Invalid Reviews	Reviews Not Upheld	Reviews Upheld	Reviews yet to be completed
260	224	36	158	29	37

- 3.2 Each of the reviews received by the OSPCC during the reporting period was acknowledged and progressed with 187 of these reviews completed and the remaining 37 reviews underway. Of the reviews completed, 158 reviews were not upheld by the OSPCC [84.5%] and 29 reviews were upheld [15.5%].

4.0 Upheld Reviews – Outcomes and Recommendations

- 4.1 The legislation permits the PCC to make recommendations to Sussex Police to remedy any dissatisfaction experienced through the complaints review process. This can include one or more of the following examples:

- ✓ a written or oral apology.
- ✓ an explanation about the circumstances and/or operational policing decisions taken/not taken.
- ✓ returning of seized and/or confiscated property.
- ✓ reviewing and removing information held on police records/databases.
- ✓ providing mediation to the complainant.
- ✓ sharing evidence of learning and/or service improvement.
- ✓ holding service improvement meetings between Sussex Police, the complainant, and any other interested parties.
- ✓ reviewing Force policies and procedures to ensure that these remain current, up to date and fit for purpose.

- 4.2 The PCC upheld 29 reviews in the rolling year period to 28 February 2026, with the following actions taken in respect of those reviews:

- Five apologies were offered to complainants on behalf of Sussex Police.
- 11 complaints were returned to Sussex Police because they had not been addressed in their entirety and/or required further explanation.
- 11 complaints were returned to the Professional Standards Department (PSD) for reconsideration and/or reinvestigation.
- Four recommendations were made for further training and learning to be undertaken by officers.
- One complainant was contacted by a senior police officer to discuss the outcome of the complaint.
- One recommendation related to concerns about health and safety within police custody and was shared with Sussex Police to progress.

[N.B. Multiple recommendations can be made within each case].

- 4.3 Each of the recommendations made by the PCC to Sussex Police to date has been accepted in full by PSD and implemented by the Force.

5.0 Oversight, Monitoring and Organisational Learning

5.1 The OSPCC has overall responsibility for overseeing and monitoring the complaint review process. This includes recording any organisational learning and/or development identified throughout the complaint handling process and reporting this back to PSD on a regular basis.

5.2 The following themes and trends of organisational learning and development have been identified in Sussex across 2025/26 to date:

5.2.1 General Administration

- additional information could be provided to complainants within the outcome letters, including 'quality of service' decisions for each of the allegations.
- Sussex Police to provide a formal letter of response to all complaints, rather than sending a response by e-mail.
- swifter recording once it is decided that the matter cannot be resolved 'informally'.
- to ensure that letters of dissatisfaction are sent to the PCC following the outcome being shared with the complainant(s).
- for consideration to be given about the individual workloads for complaint handlers, especially if these individuals are deployed 'out of force' for periods of time.

5.2.2 Investigating Officers

- to contact complainants at start of the process to ensure that they are clear about the allegations being made and the outcomes sought.
- to answer all the complaint points.
- to provide a thorough review of the accounts received from all police officers, staff and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and to ensure that any ambiguity is addressed before the outcome letter is finalised.
- to ensure that an appropriate level of detail and accuracy exists in respect of the outcome letters.
- to ensure that an appropriate level of empathy is demonstrated throughout the process and communicated within the outcome letter.
- to share details of any learning identified during the complaint handling process with complainants.
- to avoid being defensive in terms of the tone and language used within outcome letters.

5.2.3 Operational Policing

- police officers to deploy body worn video (BWV) technology during all relevant incidents and interactions with members of the public.
- call handlers to consider asking about any care plans in place whilst conducting the initial risk assessments and to share these with attending officers.
- any organisational learning and/or development identified as part of the complaint review process to be shared with the wider policing team.
- police officers to save video footage to the digital investigation and evidence management platform [NiCE] when they are first notified of a complaint.

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- 5.3 The themes and trends from the complaint reviews are considered at the quarterly Governance and Integrity meetings attended by the PCC, Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer, Head of Professional Standards Department and People Services Lead.
- 5.4 The OSPCC also holds regular liaison and oversight meetings with representatives from both PSD and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) where these themes and trends are considered further, and additional monitoring activity is undertaken.
- 5.5 An internal audit into the complaints and review system used in Sussex was undertaken by the Southern Internal Audit Partnership in March 2021. The scope of the audit was to consider whether the handling of complaints by Sussex Police and the reviews of the complaint outcomes by the OSPCC, where requested, were dealt with in line with the statutory guidance issued by the IOPC.
- 5.6 The independent auditor issued a substantial assurance opinion and found all areas of the complaint review process – within both the Force and the OSPCC – to be working well with effective control measures in place.

6.0 Accountability

- 6.1 It is a statutory responsibility for the PCC to hold the Chief Constable to account for delivering efficient and effective policing in Sussex that is responsive to the needs of the public. The PCC has continued to use her monthly webcast Performance & Accountability Meetings (PAMs) to provide oversight and to challenge the Chief Constable about the Sussex Police response to police complaints on behalf of members of the public.
- 6.2 As highlighted in 5.3, the PCC uses the Governance & Integrity meetings to consider the complaint types, outcomes and recommendations, timeliness of complaint handling processes and the emergence of any themes and trends to identify whether any further remedial action is required.
- 6.3 Any complaint and/or conduct matter that remains ongoing for more than 12 months is reported to the PCC and IOPC by PSD for information. This includes a detailed explanation about the reason(s) for the delayed response and the plans in place to monitor and address the matter as appropriate. This process is also monitored through the Governance & Integrity meetings.
- 6.4 There is no direct measure of complainant satisfaction, other than the right to submit a review. The number of review requests received by the OSPCC provides the PCC with an indication as to how many complainants are not satisfied with the outcome of their complaints.
- 6.5 According to IOPC data, Sussex Police finalised 623 complaint cases under Schedule 3 between 1 April 2025 and 31 December 2025, with the OSPCC having received 161 reviews across the same period – this means that 26% of all complainants to Sussex Police subsequently requested a review. This figure also remains consistent with the 25% of complainants who requested a review of their complaints to Sussex Police across 2024/25. The latest data for Sussex Police can be viewed through the following link:
<https://www.policeconduct.gov.uk/police-force/sussex-police>

- 6.6 Alongside the complaint review process, the OSPCC undertakes quarterly 'dip checks' of complaint outcomes, focusing on thematic complaints around the use of force, discrimination and violence against women and girls. The OSPCC has also dip checked police complaints handled outside of Schedule 3 because these complaints do not receive a right of review. This proactive approach ensures that a robust system of 'check and balance' exists across all categories of police complaints.
- 6.7 The recent inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services '*An inspection of vetting, misconduct, and misogyny in the police service*' contained several recommendations around the vetting process. This included the specific recommendation that "*Chief Constables should introduce an effective quality assurance process to review vetting decisions, including routine dip sampling of rejections and clearances, where the vetting process revealed concerning adverse information.*"
- 6.8 The OSPCC has agreed to support Sussex Police with this quality assurance process by dip-sampling and reviewing circa. 10% of all vetting decisions categorised as either 'rejected' or 'with a trace'. As part of this review of vetting decisions, the OSPCC will also consider whether any disproportionality exists regarding ethnicity and/or any other protected characteristics. The results of these vetting reviews will be discussed at the quarterly Governance and Integrity meetings before the outcomes are made available on the OSPCC website for further transparency.
- 6.9 The OSPCC is also represented on the Sussex Police Vetting Appeals Panel. The panel exists to review complex police officer and staff vetting cases by bringing together knowledge and experience from individuals across the organisation to discuss vetting outcomes as a collective and ensure that these decisions are reached in a fair, balanced and proportionate manner.

Mark Streater
Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer
Office of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner

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Sussex Police and Crime Panel

13 March 2026

The Progress made by Sussex Police to Recruit to and Maintain the Baseline Headcount of Police Officers through the Police Officer Maintenance Grant.

Report by The Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

Focus for Scrutiny:

The Panel is asked to consider the work of Sussex Police, and scrutinise the role of the Commissioner in holding the Chief Constable to account for Sussex Police's performance in this area.

1. Background

- 1.1 The item has been added to the agenda at the request of the Panel.
- 1.2 The matter was last considered by the Panel at its meeting in September 2022. Reports for the meeting can be found from page 25 here:
<https://tinyurl.com/mv89r434>

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Appendices

Appendix A - The Progress made by Sussex Police to Recruit to and Maintain the Baseline Headcount of Police Officers through the Police Officer Maintenance Grant

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To:	The Sussex Police & Crime Panel.
From:	The Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner.
Subject:	The progress made by Sussex Police to recruit to and maintain the baseline headcount of police officers through the Police Officer Maintenance Grant.
Date:	13 March 2026.
Recommendation:	That the Police & Crime Panel note the report.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides the Sussex Police & Crime Panel with an update about the progress made by Sussex Police to recruit to and maintain the baseline headcount of police officers through the Police Officer Maintenance Grant.
- 1.2 The report also sets out further information about the conditions of the maintenance grant and the checkpoints used to monitor the progress made by each police force area in England and Wales against their respective baseline headcount figure targets.
- 1.3 The role of the Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) in terms of holding the Chief Constable to account for the performance of Sussex Police in this area is set out in the report too.

2.0 Police Officer Maintenance Grant

- 2.1 In July 2019, the Government launched the Police Uplift Programme (PUP) with the aim of recruiting 20,000 additional officers in England and Wales by 31 March 2023. This funding was initially provided to police forces as a ring-fenced grant to "kick-start" recruitment.
- 2.2 In 2023/24, the Home Office introduced a Police Officer Maintenance Grant worth £275 million to support individual police force areas to maintain police officer numbers throughout the year.
- 2.3 The grant was issued to all police forces on a bi-annual basis according to police officer headcount at two separate checkpoints and was distributed according to existing shares through the Police Allocation Formula (PAF).
- 2.4 The maintenance grant for Sussex Police in 2023/24 was £5.9 million. To qualify for the full amount, the Force had to be at [or above] its maintenance level at two points within the year – 30 September 2023 and 31 March 2024. If the Force was below its allocation at either point, then the Home Office would withhold £40,000 per officer below maintenance at that point up to a threshold of 20 officers or 1% officer headcount below maintenance [baseline plus uplift allocation], whichever was highest.
- 2.5 Sussex Police was originally asked to maintain a baseline headcount figure of 3,166 officers in 2023/24. The Home Office, subsequently, asked police forces if they would consider increasing their police officer numbers further and, following a successful bidding process, the Force was allocated an additional 39 officers which increased the headcount target to 3,205.

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- 2.6 Another opportunity to increase police officer numbers further still was made available to all forces by the Home Office in 2024/25. Sussex Police was allocated an additional 21 officers following another successful bid which increased the headcount target to 3,226.
- 2.7 A supplementary financial reward was received by the Force for each of the additional officers recruited over and above the original baseline target to address the shortfall created by other police force areas in England and Wales having been unable to fulfil their individual quotas.
- 2.8 The Home Office extended the maintenance grant further still in 2024/25 and made £425 million available to support police forces to maintain police officer numbers across the financial year.
- 2.9 Sussex Police were allocated a share of £9.1 million from the maintenance grant to maintain a baseline police officer headcount figure of 3,226 at both formal checkpoints. The Force met and exceeded the target headcount figure required by the Home Office at each formal checkpoint with 3,286 officers in post as of 31 March 2025 – this represented an additional 60 officers [headcount] compared to the enhanced target.
- 2.10 The maintenance grant was extended to all police force areas again in England and Wales in 2025/26, with £377 million made available to maintain police officer numbers across the year.
- 2.11 Sussex Police were allocated a maintenance grant share of £10.7 million in 2025/26, which comprised a PUP performance grant of £7.5 million and a recruitment 'top up' grant of £3.2 million towards the cost of the additional recruitment.
- 2.12 The Force had 3,316 officers [headcount] on 30 September 2025 which represented an additional 90 officers above the target at the first formal checkpoint. Sussex Police is set to maintain these police officer numbers across the remainder of 2025/26 to ensure that the officer headcount figure is delivered at the second checkpoint [31 March 2026] and that no financial penalties are incurred.
- 2.13 A summary of the recruitment delivered by Sussex Police against the Police Officer Maintenance Grant targets at the two formal checkpoints in 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 [to date] can be viewed in the table below:

Financial year	Baseline headcount target	Police officers [headcount] at first checkpoint – 30 September	Difference	Baseline headcount target	Police officers [headcount] at second checkpoint – 31 March	Difference
2023/24	3,205	3,236	+ 31	3,205	3,264	+ 59
2024/25	3,226	3,263	+ 37	3,226	3,286	+ 60
2025/26	3,226	3,316	+ 90	3,226	TBC	TBC

3.0 Sussex Police Recruitment

- 3.1 Sussex Police have developed robust workforce plans to deliver the requisite police officer intakes to meet [and exceed] the baseline headcount targets at each of the two formal checkpoints since the Police Officer Maintenance Grant was first introduced in 2023/24.
- 3.2 The comprehensive work to manage, advance and progress these end-to-end recruitment processes within the prescribed timelines has been delivered by the Attraction and Recruitment Team within the Human Resources Department, overseen by the Director of People Services.
- 3.3 This recruitment has included the continued and sustained use of all police officer entry routes available to Sussex Police through the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA), Police Constable Entry Programme (PCEP) and Detective Constable Entry Programme (DCEP), alongside the promotion and acceptance of transferees and rejoiners from other police force areas.
- 3.4 Sussex Police also recognise the importance of maintaining high standards in terms of the applicants accepted to become police officers within the county and have remained steadfast on this position to achieve the quantity of officers required without compromising on the quality of the successful candidates recruited through these enhanced processes.
- 3.5 The Force is also continuing to undertake regular recruitment campaigns at colleges, universities, job centres, career fairs and armed forces events throughout Sussex to try and target and attract under-represented groups, demographics and diverse communities. This approach is being supported through the delivery of an Attraction Strategy to highlight the potential opportunities available to all individuals within the police service.
- 3.6 The PCC has continued to work with the Chief Constable to try and improve workforce diversity and ensure that the individuals recruited by Sussex Police better reflect the local demographics within the county.
- 3.7 The final police grant settlement for 2026/27 [published in January 2026] consolidated specific, ring-fenced grants into a single core police funding grant, including the PUP grant, which was allocated using the PAF.
- 3.8 The Chief Constable is currently looking at whether the Force has sufficient funding available to maintain a police officer headcount figure of 3,226 across 2026/27, without the need to use any reserves. Sussex Police will continue to remain prudent in its recruitment and planned officer intakes moving forward whilst further details about the settlement and consolidated the police funding grant are published by the Home Office.

4.0 Neighbourhood Policing Grant

- 4.1 In 2025/26, the Government made a commitment to provide all police forces in England and Wales with an additional 13,000 neighbourhood police officers, police community support officers (PCSOs) and special constables by 8 July 2029 [the end of this Parliament].

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- 4.2 This initiative was introduced to support the delivery of the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee which aims to increase public confidence in policing and enhance the capability and capacity of the neighbourhood policing workforce to address anti-social behaviour and focus on crime prevention.
- 4.3 A Neighbourhood Policing Grant worth £200 million was introduced to support all police forces to recruit an additional 2,972 full time equivalent (FTE)¹ police officers, PCSOs and special constables assigned to neighbourhood policing roles across the year.

¹ FTE is a more specific way of counting a workforce because instead of individual people it counts the number of people based on hours worked. For example, one individual working full-time [1.00 FTE] and one individual working part-time [0.5 FTE] would count as 1.5 FTE. The FTE will always be lower than the headcount because it takes into consideration the hours of the police workforce rather than just the number of individuals.

- 4.4 Sussex Police was allocated a share of £4.3 million in 2025/26. This enabled the planned recruitment of 43 police officers assigned to neighbourhood policing roles across the year, comprising 37.0 FTE police constables and 6.0 FTE police sergeants, alongside the recruitment of another 21 special constables. The Force is on track to deliver these additional neighbourhood policing officers before the 31 March 2026 deadline.
- 4.5 As part of the final police funding settlement in 2026/27, the Home Office confirmed that it would prioritise funding to boost visible policing and ensure that police forces in England and Wales can better shape their workforces to meet modern crime demands.
- 4.6 Through its consultation with forces, conclusions were drawn by the Home Office that the Police Officer Maintenance Grant had become a barrier to, rather than an enabler of, more visible policing. To recognise the changing nature of the police workforce and the role of police staff in critical crime fighting roles, the latest funding settlement has replaced the previous maintenance grant with a revised Neighbourhood Policing Grant.
- 4.7 This amended approach also means that the baseline police officer headcount figure of 3,226 established for Sussex Police to maintain now no longer exists, alongside the two formal checkpoints that were used to measure the progress made by the Force against this target previously.
- 4.8 In 2026/27, the Home Office has ring-fenced £363 million from the core grant funding made available to all police force areas in England and Wales to increase the number of police officers and PCSOs assigned to neighbourhood policing roles by 1,750 FTE posts across the year through the Neighbourhood Policing Grant. This approach seeks to build on the circa 3,000 FTE neighbourhood policing officers recruited in 2025/26 and is set to deliver a cumulative growth of circa. 4,750 FTE officers against the Government target of 13,000 officers.

- 4.9 Police forces will be eligible to receive their share of this ring-fenced funding if the number of officers and PCSOs assigned to neighbourhood policing [as measured by CIPFA 1a²] is increased by 31 March 2027, or in instances where these individuals are in training and destined for neighbourhood policing roles once completed. This includes an expectation that forces will prioritise the redeployment of police officers from back-office functions and/or areas where warranted officers are not required.

² CIPFA 1a [Neighbourhood Policing] is a category within the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Police Objective Analysis (POA) framework used by the Home Office and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in England and Wales to classify police expenditure, income and funded posts. CIPFA 1a classifies all resources whose primary role is neighbourhood-based.

- 4.10 Sussex Police has been allocated a share of £7.9 million from the Neighbourhood Policing Grant in 2026/27 to ensure that the original 43 FTE police officers and additional 38 FTE officers are assigned to neighbourhood policing roles throughout Sussex across the financial year.

5.0 Holding the Chief Constable to Account

- 5.1 It is a statutory responsibility for the PCC to hold the Chief Constable to account for delivering efficient and effective policing in Sussex that is responsive to the needs of the public.
- 5.2 The PCC has continued to use monthly webcast Performance & Accountability Meetings (PAMs) to provide oversight and challenge the Chief Constable about the Sussex Police plans to recruit and maintain the baseline headcount of police officers required by the Home Office through the Police Officer Maintenance Grant and the processes in place to support this recruitment.
- 5.3 Police officer recruitment was raised at the PAM on 15 January 2026 [as part of the Provisional Police Grant Settlement 2026/27 agenda item] and will be raised again at the meeting on 19 March 2026 [Police Officer Maintenance Grant 2025/26: Second Checkpoint].
- 5.4 The Police Officer Maintenance Grant was also discussed at the following PAMs in 2023, 2024 and 2025:
- ✓ 15 September 2023 – Police Officer Maintenance Grant 2023/24: First Checkpoint
 - ✓ 15 March 2024 – Police Officer Maintenance Grant 2023/24: Second Checkpoint
 - ✓ 18 October 2024 – Police Officer Maintenance Grant 2024/25: First Checkpoint
 - ✓ 20 March 2025 – Police Officer Maintenance Grant 2024/25: Second Checkpoint
 - ✓ 16 October 2025 – Police Officer Maintenance Grant 2025/26: First Checkpoint
- 5.5 Each of these sessions is archived and, together with the summary notes, can be viewed on the PCC's website through the following link:
<https://www.sussex-pcc.gov.uk/about/how-we-work/watch-live/>

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SUSSEX POLICE & CRIME PANEL

Sussex Police and Crime Panel

13 March 2026

Independent Member Term of Office

Report by The Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

Recommendation

The Panel is asked to agree to:

Waive the requirement in its Constitution to readvertise independent member roles after five years.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Sussex Police and Crime Panel is legally required to have a minimum of two independent members. Of the current incumbents, the five-year term of Mr Napthine is due to expire in July 2026, and the term of Mrs Scholefield is due to expire in July 2027. The requirement to readvertise the roles after five years arises from the Panel's Constitution, the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 having not set any term limits.
- 1.2 According to the Panel's Constitution, an independent member may be re-appointed to the role after their five-year term has expired, should they choose to re-apply for the vacant role, and be successful in the recruitment process.
- 1.3 Ordinarily a recruitment process would be undertaken to simultaneously recruit a new independent member to be appointed in July 2026, and another to act as a substitute independent member until their appointment to the vacancy arising in July 2027.
- 1.4 In November 2025 the Home Office announced that Police and Crime Commissioners, and therefore Police and Crime Panels, would be abolished by May 2028.
- 1.5 In the circumstances, it is possible that potential candidates may be dissuaded by the truncated term (a minimum of 11 months and a maximum of 23 months instead of the usual five-year term). The recruitment and training of new independent members requires significant officer and member resource, and experience suggests it takes some time for those incoming to gain confidence and settle into the role, while continuity in the role has benefits.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Panel is asked to agree to waive the requirement in its Constitution to readvertise independent member roles after five years.

Notes:

2.2 In the event the Panel agrees the recommendation, the Panel will continue to renew the independent member appointments annually, at its annual meeting, per the existing provision in the Constitution.

2.3 In the event an independent member position becomes vacant, it will be advertised and filled following the standard recruitment process.

3. Consultation

4. Mr Napthine and Mrs Scholefield have both indicated their willingness to serve until May 2028, should the Panel agree the recommendation.

4.1 Panel members were consulted, and no objections were raised.

4.2 Democratic Services officers from the 15 Sussex local authorities were consulted, and no objections were raised.

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Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

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Background Paper:

Sussex Police and Crime Panel Constitutional Documents:

<https://tinyurl.com/555vtye4>



Quarterly Report of Complaints

13 March 2026

Report by The Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

Focus for Scrutiny

That the Panel considers any complaints against the Commissioner, and any action that the Panel might take in respect of these.

1. Background

- 1.1 In accordance with the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2011, Sussex Police & Crime Panel (PCP) is responsible for the initial handling of complaints against the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).
- 1.2 At its meeting of 26 November 2012, the Panel decided to delegate its initial handling duties to the Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel, and to consider a report of the complaints received, quarterly.
- 1.3 Complaints deemed to be serious (those alleging criminal conduct) are referred to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC). However, IOPC guidance recommends that a Panel makes an initial assessment of the complaint (before making a referral to the IOPC) to decide whether or not it meets the definition of a "serious complaint".
- 1.4 Regarding non-serious complaints, a sub-committee can meet to consider any of these which in the Panel's view require informal resolution.

2 Correspondence Received up until 3 March 2026

- 2.1 The Panel takes the view that all correspondence raising issues with policing in Sussex should be recorded, whether or not the issues fall within the Panel's statutory remit.
- 2.2 During the subject period, three people contacted the Panel to raise matters. The matters are non-serious in nature.

3 Complaints

Correspondence Recorded, but not Considered by the Clerk to be a Complaint within the Panel's Remit:

- 3.1.1 Two people contacted the Panel to raise issues around Sussex Police's handling of their policing complaints. While not within the Panel's remit, Panel members have been alerted to the strategic points raised, and will have had the opportunity to question the Commissioner on these under item 6 of today's agenda. The complainants were informed of this outcome.

Correspondence Recorded, and Considered by the Clerk to be a Non-Serious Complaint within the Panel's Remit:

- 3.1.2 One person raised issues surrounding the PCC's actions and decisions in respect of the plans to temporarily house male asylum seekers at a former army training camp in Crowborough. The matters raised were those previously considered and reported to the January meeting of the Panel, and likewise no basis could be found for the complaint. The complainant was informed of this determination.

Serious Complaints (allegations of criminal conduct)

- 3.1.3 None received.

Updates from Matters Previously Reported.

- 3.1.4 Per para 3.1.1 of the report considered by the Panel under item 10 at the meeting on 30 January, one complaint had yet to be determined at the time the report was published. Following consideration, the complaint raised matters which were beyond the remit of the Panel, and the complainant has now been informed of this outcome.

4 Resource Implications and Value for Money

- 4.1 The cost of handling complaints is met from the funds provided by the Home Office for the operation and administration of Sussex Police and Crime Panel.

5 Risk Management Implications

- 5.1 It is important that residents can have confidence in the integrity of the system for handling complaints against the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner and their Deputy (where one has been appointed).

6 Other Considerations – Equality – Crime Reduction – Human Rights

- 6.1 Not applicable

Lauren McCann

Clerk to Sussex Police and Crime Panel

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