

Background to the post

The Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel (PCP) is part of the governance and accountability arrangements for policing in Kent and Medway through their role in maintaining a regular check and balance on the performance of the directly elected Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent (PCC). (Matthew Scott, elected May 2021).

PCPs have three types of member:

- Local authority members – Councillor who are appointed by their councils to sit on the Panel,
- Local authority co-opted members – Councillors who are appointed by their local parties to enable to Panel to better meet the political proportionality of Kent objective, And....
- Independent co-opted members – local people, who are not councillors, who are chosen through an open recruitment process and co-opted onto the Panel.

More information about the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel, including its membership can be found here: [Kent and Medway PCP](#)

The Panel requires two energetic people to serve as independent panel members from November 2021 for a four-year term.

The role of a Panel member is an important and demanding one. You will be expected to attend and participate in public meetings of the PCP and meetings of any working groups that you may be appointed to. You will need to be prepared to read papers, reports and background information in advance of meetings and keep up to date with national and local crime and disorder issues and maintain a good working knowledge of the PCC's role and responsibilities.

Meetings will generally be held during normal office hours at varying locations throughout Kent. The commitment required from a co-opted independent Panel Member will depend on the work programme approved by the Panel, but typically might average one day a month, including preparation time.

The two independent panel members will receive an allowance which is currently £500 per annum. All Panel members will be able to claim reasonable travelling expenses. All Panel members will receive induction and other appropriate training.

Eligibility criteria for independent panel members:

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

- anyone under 18 years old,
- the Police Crime Commissioner or a member of their staff
- a member of the civilian staff of the police force for that police area
- Members of Parliament (MPs)
- Local Authority Councillors
- Members of the Scottish Parliament or the Welsh Parliament
- A police officer¹
- Persons who do not live or work in the police force area
- Civil Servants engaged in political activity

¹ Police officers are not covered by the restrictions on membership of the panel in Section 22 in Schedule 6 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. Also, police officers do not fall within Section 22 (a) as members of staff of the PCC as this category covers people appointed under Section 6 of Schedule 1. However, under section 1(2)(a) of Schedule 1 to the Police Regulations 2003 (S.I. 2003/527) a member of a police force may not "take any active part in politics". The Home Office would regard co-option to a panel, for the purpose of scrutinising an elected PCC, as taking an active part in politics, and accordingly as being prohibited for police officers.

Person Specification for Panel Members

For the appointment of panel members, including independent and councillor co-optees. (On interview the assessors will consider potential candidates against the following criteria)

Abilities/Skills

As well as being of good character, candidates will need to possess most, if not all, of the following competencies:

- **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 Police and Crime Commissioner 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 Police and Crime Commissioner and the public.

Other Requirements and Considerations

- Candidates must be able to attend meetings during normal office hours (Monday to Friday 9 am to 5 pm) at varying locations throughout the Kent and Medway area at least four 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 they would need to allocate a minimum of one day per month to devote to this role.
- Candidates should have a willingness to learn
- **Note:** Candidates must be eligible for the role (*see eligibility criteria separately listed at the start of this job information pack*).

The following personal skills and qualities are also very important:

- **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

It is also important for you to:

Be able to:

- Consider your own biases and prejudices.
- Work with people from all areas of the 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, bisexual or transgender.

It would also be useful if you:

Have experience of:

- Working with other people on issues of mutual interest over a period of time (e.g., voluntary work).
- Situations where you needed to compromise.
- Interacting or working with people of all ages.
- Interacting or working with people who have different political view and/or religious beliefs.
- Interacting or working with people who are physically and/or mentally impaired.

Have an interest in:

- Policing issues and current affairs, specifically in respect of the ways in which they affect the people of your area.
- Challenging and combating institutional discrimination.
- The issues associated with recruiting, promoting and retaining staff from under-represented groups.
- Engaging with and representing local people and / or specialists within your field of expertise.

Roles and Responsibilities of independent co-optees on the panel

Note: independent co-optees will be treated equally as other elected members on the Panel and therefore have the same responsibilities and duties.

All co-optees 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 co-optees on the panel is to:

- Scrutinise the work of the Police Crime Commissioner to ensure that the Police Crime Commissioner 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 Police Crime Commissioner and that this challenge is constructive to support the Police Crime Commissioner in carrying out their role.
- Act as a non-party-political voice for those who live and/or work in the Kent and Medway area.
- Bring specialist knowledge, skills, experience, and expertise to the scrutiny work of the Panel.

Responsibilities of co-optees

A co-opted member of the Police and Crime Panel is expected to:

- Attend all formal meetings of the Panel (at least 4 per year)
- Establish good relations with other members, officers and co-optees.
- 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.
- At the meetings you will need to listen carefully, ask questions in a way which is non-judgmental, respect confidentiality and help 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 the Kent and Medway area.
- 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 the Kent area.

Note: all panel members would also be expected to adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life which are listed below:

Nolan Principles²

Selflessness: Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity: Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity: Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability: Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness: Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty: Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership: Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

² Current wording as of July 2021, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2>