

DERBYSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**10 September 2020****Report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services of Derbyshire
County Council****PROPOSED SUPPORT FOR THE PANEL AND ALLOWANCES FOR
MEMBERS****1. Purpose of the Report**

To notify the Panel of the progress of proposals to maximise the use of available grant funding to support the Panel.

2. Information and Analysis

In establishing Police and Crime Panels, the Home Office agreed that funding would be available to ensure that 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. A limited grant is provided on application to each Local Authority acting as the Host Authority for the provision of administrative and management support to facilitate the Panel.

As the Panel was advised at the meeting in June, the grant available for the financial year 2020-21 is £67,100 to cover all aspects of administrative and management support which the Panel identifies as being required.

Officer support

Costs claimed under the grant include officer time in supporting and advising the Panel. In order to assist the Panel fulfil its functions, it is recognised that dedicated Scrutiny Officer support would be appropriate. Consideration is currently being given to the extent and nature of the support needed and how that can best be provided. Once it has been established what the main objectives, profile and time required for the role would be, it is proposed that an officer be recruited on a one-year fixed-term basis so that the appointment can be reviewed and adjustments can be made as necessary.

Website

It is also recognised that the development of the information available on the website/webpage regarding the Panel could be improved. Officer time in developing the website/page would also be covered by the grant. Therefore, it is proposed that further consideration be given to

development of the information published by the Panel, but balanced with the funds available under the terms of the grant.

Training/Induction

Training and induction of new members has been identified as being fundamental to develop the knowledge and experience of the Panel and the costs of this can be met from the terms of the grant. Therefore, further consideration will be given to training requirements to ensure that Panel members can benefit from effective training.

Allowances

The terms of the grant enable it to be used to cover member expenses and allowances. However, the Panel Arrangements for the Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel stipulate at paragraph 9.1 that:

“Each council has the discretion to pay its representatives(s) on the Panel special responsibility allowances and to reimburse reasonable expenses incurred. No allowance or expenses payments will be made by the Panel itself to councillor members. Any allowances or expenses which may be made to councillor members arising out of Panel membership shall be determined and borne by the appointing council for each Panel Member individually.”

It further stipulates at 9.2 that:

“The host authority, on behalf of the Panel will reimburse reasonable expenses to independent members provided that this is agreed as part of the annual budget approved by the Panel.”

The grant envisages a maximum sum of £920 being payable to Panel members to cover expenses. The grant does not envisage that that money would be paid as a lump sum, but only on the incurring of expenses. The current Panel Arrangements are in accordance with this position.

Should Panel members wish for an additional allowance to be paid, then for councillor members, this would need to be agreed through the Members' Allowances Scheme for the authority for each individual representatives. It would be a matter for the host Authority, that is Derbyshire County Council, to consider payment of any allowance to independent (non-councillor members).

3. Financial Considerations

As detailed within the report.

4. Legal Considerations

The grant is paid 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.

5. Other Considerations

In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health and transport considerations.

6. Background Papers

The file currently held by the Director of Legal and Democratic Services for Derbyshire County Council.

7. Officer's Recommendation

That the Police and Crime Panel notes the considerations and progress relating to the proposals to maximise the grant funding available to support the Panel.

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