



## Cleveland Police and Crime Panel Annual Report 2023/24

### Chair's foreword

I am extremely pleased to present the sixth Annual Report of the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel (the Panel) which covers its activities during 2023-24.

Elections took place on Thursday 2 May 2024 for the Police and Crime Commissioner in the Cleveland Police area. The election used first-past-the-post voting system and Matt Storey was duly elected as the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) for the next four years.

On behalf of the panel, I would like to congratulate Matt on his election victory, and I look forward to supporting him in his new role.

I would also like to pay tribute to the outgoing PCC Steve Turner, who worked tirelessly during his tenure in providing direction and support to the Chief Constable Mark Webster in the improvements achieved by the force and wish him well for the future.

The aims and objectives of the Panel are to support and scrutinise the performance of PCC against their Police & Crime Plan. I look forward to Matt publishing his Police and Crime Plan (which is presently out for public consultation) setting out the strategic direction he wants the force to follow.

The Panel plays a vital role on behalf of our communities in holding the PCC to account and supporting him in the effective exercise of his duties.

I would like to thank all Panel Members for their dedication and commitment in conducting the Panel's statutory functions which, in turn, help to deliver an effective and efficient policing service for the people of Cleveland.

The work of the Panel would not run smoothly without the support of the democratic, and legal service staff of the Local Authorities. Redcar and Cleveland Council presently support the panel and I would like to thank the officers who have conducted their role with professionalism, candour, and dedication.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Riordan'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tony Riordan  
Chair, Cleveland Police and Crime Panel

## Police and Crime Commissioners

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 brought in new arrangements for national policing, including the introduction of elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs).

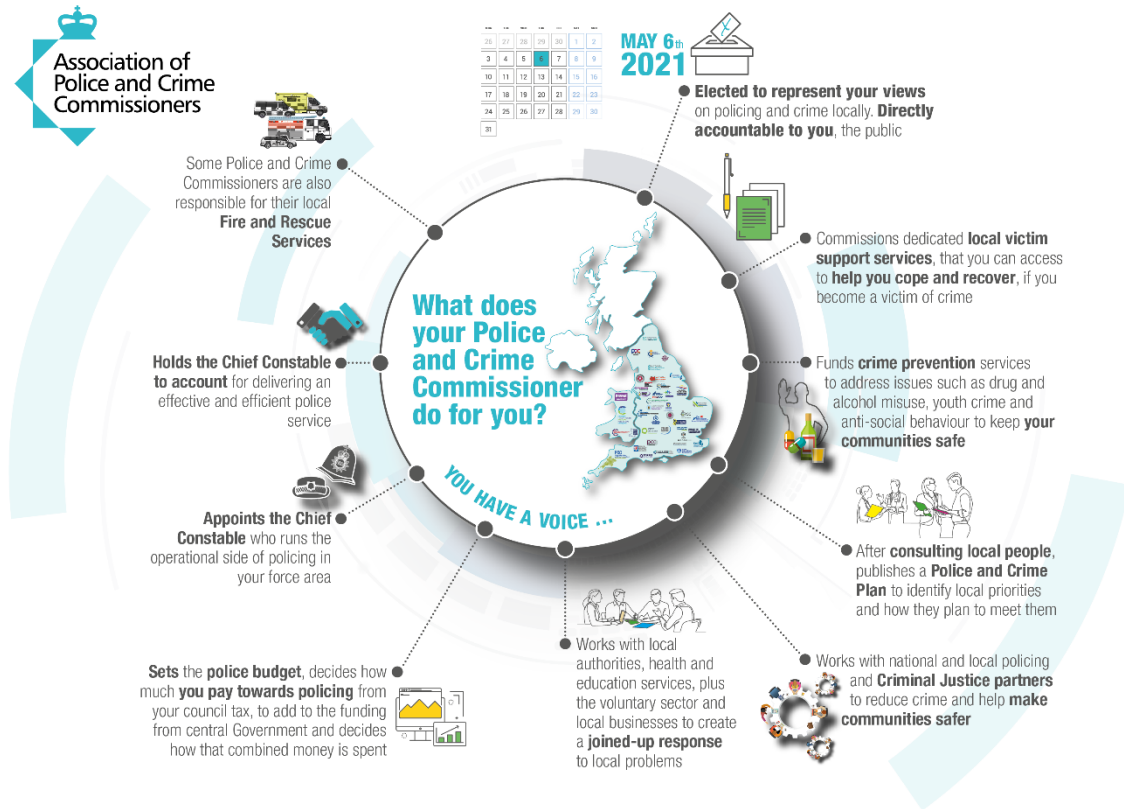
The role of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is to be the voice of the people and hold the police to account. They are responsible for the totality of policing.

PCCs aim to cut crime and deliver an effective and efficient police service within their police force area. They are elected by the public to hold Chief Constables and the force to account, making the police answerable to the communities they serve.

PCCs ensure community needs are met as effectively as possible and aim to improve local relationships through building confidence and restoring trust. They work in partnership across a range of agencies at local and national level to ensure there is a unified approach to preventing and reducing crime.

Under the terms of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, PCCs must:

- secure efficient and effective police for their area.
- appoint the Chief Constable, hold them to account for running the force, and if necessary, dismiss them.
- set the police and crime objectives for their area through a police and crime plan;
- set the force budget and determine the precept;
- contribute to the national and international policing capabilities set out by the Home Secretary; and
- bring together community safety and criminal justice partners, to make sure local priorities are joined up.



## What is the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel?

Police and Crime Commissioners are held to account by Police and Crime Panels which are composed of locally elected Councillors and some lay members.

Cleveland Police and Crime Panel is the scrutiny body which exists to scrutinise the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland to promote openness in the transaction of police business and to support the PCC in the effective exercise of his functions.

The police force, however, is accountable through the Chief Constable to the Police and Crime Commissioner, not to the Panel.

## Panel membership 2023/24

The Panel consists of 14 members: 12 Councillors with membership drawn from the four unitary Councils within the Cleveland Force Area and two non-political independent members.

<b>Chair</b> Councillor Tony Riordan (Stockton-on-Tees) 		<b>Vice Chair</b> Councillor Norma Stephenson OBE (Stockton-on-Tees) 	
<b>Councillor Jonny Neal</b> (Redcar and Cleveland) 	<b>Councillor John Coulson</b> (Stockton-on-Tees) 	<b>Councillor Debbie Powlay</b> (Redcar and Cleveland) 	
<b>Councillor Chris Jones</b> (Redcar and Cleveland) 	<b>Councillor Janet Thompson</b> (Middlesbrough) 	<b>Paul McGrath</b> (Independent Member) 	
<b>Councillor Mike Young</b> (Hartlepool) 	<b>Councillor Pauline Beall</b> (Stockton-on-Tees) 	<b>Mayor Chris Cooke</b> (Middlesbrough) 	
<b>Councillor Carole Thompson</b> (Hartlepool) 	<b>Luigi Salvati</b> (Independent Member) 	<b>Councillor Jim Platt</b> (Middlesbrough) 	

The composition of the Panel is in accordance with legislative provisions and is politically proportionate with the total number of Councillors in the Force area.

## CLEVELAND POLICE AND CRIME PANEL ATTENDANCE - 2023-24

First Name	Last Name	Representing	11.7.23	12.9.23	14.11.23	12.12.23 training	6.2.24	Total Meetings Attended
Carole	Thompson	Councillor - HBC	Apols	RA	Apols	Apols	Apols	0/5
Mike	Young	Councillor - HBC	Apols	✓	Apols	Apols	✓	2/5
Chris	Jones	Councillor - R&CBC	✓	✓	✓	Apols	Apols	3/5
Jonny	Neal	Councillor R&CBC	✓	✓	Apols	Apols	Apols	2/5
Stuart	Smith	Councillor R&CBC	✓	RA	n/a	n/a	n/a	1/2
Debbie	Powlay	Councillor R&CBC	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	✓	3/3
Chris	Cooke	Councillor MBC	Apols	✓	Apols	Apols	✓	2/5
Jim	Platt	Councillor MBC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5
Janet	Thompson	Councillor - MBC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5
Pauline	Beall	Councillor - SBC	✓	✓	✓	✓	Apols	4/5
John	Coulson	Councillor - SBC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5
Norma	Stephenson	Councillor - SBC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5
Tony	Riordan	Councillor - SBC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5
Paul	McGrath	Independent Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5
Luigi	Salvati	Independent Member	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5/5

### Substitutes

Debbie	Powlay	Councillor R&CBC		✓				
Melanie	Morley	Councillor - HBC		✓				
Ceri	Cawley	Councillor R&CBC			✓			

Key	
✓	Attended
RA	Apologies Submitted (replacement attended)
Apols	Apologies Submitted (no replacement)
✗	Did Not Attend (no apologies received)
C	Cancelled Meeting
n/a	Not a Member

## Panel role and responsibilities

The Police and Crime Panel's role is to scrutinise the actions and decisions of the Police and Crime Commissioner, providing both support and challenge and acting as a critical friend.

The Panel has statutory duties or special functions which form the core elements of its work. It is responsible for:

- Holding the Police and Crime Commissioner to account
- Reviewing the Commissioner's proposed appointments and holding confirmation hearings
- Reviewing the proposed annual police precept
- Contributing to the development of the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan
- Reviewing the Commissioner's Annual Report
- Reviewing and scrutinising decisions made by the Commissioner.
- Making reports and recommendations on matters relating to the Police and Crime Commissioner
- Handling complaints against the Commissioner

Panels meet publicly, wherever possible, to ensure transparency and that information is available to the electorate, enabling the public to hold their PCC to account.

## Key Activities and Achievements

### The Panel's Core Programme

During 2023/24, the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel held four formal Panel meetings: 11 July 2023, 12 September 2023, 14 November 2023, and 6 February 2024.

The Panel meeting on 11 July 2023 was the first of the municipal year and, following a vote, Councillor Tony Riordan was reappointed as the Panel's Chair. A further vote saw Councillor Norma Stephenson OBE appointed as the Panel's new Vice Chair.

Core business for each ordinary meeting of the Panel includes:

- Members' questions to the Commissioner
- Updates on relevant matters from the Commissioner including his own scrutiny programme of the Force's work.
- Reports on progress and performance against the Police and Crime Plan
- Updates on the Commissioners Consultation and Engagement programme

- Review of decisions of the Commissioner
- Public questions
- The Panel's forward plan

## **Review of the Annual Report of the Cleveland Police and Crime Commissioner**

The Commissioner presented his draft Annual Report 2022/23 to the Panel at its meeting on 11 July 2023. The report was a key document to inform residents and stakeholders of the achievements of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner in the preceding financial year, the most notable of which included:

- Exceeding national targets having recruited 267 additional officers up to March 2023;
- The successful launch and implementation of the COPA app, Cleveland's first policing app;
- Securing funding for the continuation of CURV (Cleveland Unit for the Reduction of Violence) with a particular focus on preventing vulnerable children from becoming involved in violent offences;
- Securing investment of more than £1.12m into services to combat violence against women and girls and support victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence;
- The noticeable improvement in the performance of Cleveland Police since the appointment of the new Chief Constable, acknowledged in the report published by HMICFRS in March 2023;
- An increase in the use of technology to fight crime with drone deployments having risen by more than 40% and the number of drone pilots by 44%.

The report set out clearly the actions that had been taken to achieve each of the Commissioner's pledges. The Commissioner recognised the huge effort of OPCC team to deliver against the objectives of the Police and Crime Plan and stated his pride that this report reflected a full year of delivery under his leadership.

The Panel welcomed the report and the progress and achievements it described. A summary of the Panel's reflections in discussing the Annual report is set out below:

### **Resources**

- There was a view that, nationally, routes into policing could be improved to maintain/increase the number of police officers and ensure robust vetting procedures.
- The role of special constables was valuable, and the Panel welcomed the fact that there was now a volunteer co-ordinator in post.

### **Crime statistics**

- Statistics showed there was a 24% reduction in anti-social behaviour although it did not necessarily feel that way. Off road bikes remained the biggest issue.

- Violent crime appeared to be increasing and becoming a significant problem in the Cleveland area. In part, this might be attributed an increase in reporting as some violent offences that might previously have gone unreported were now being reported, such as violence against young men.

### Communication and Engagement

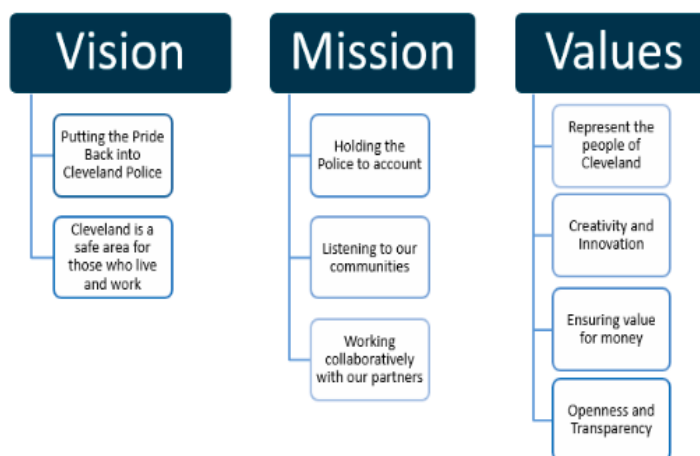
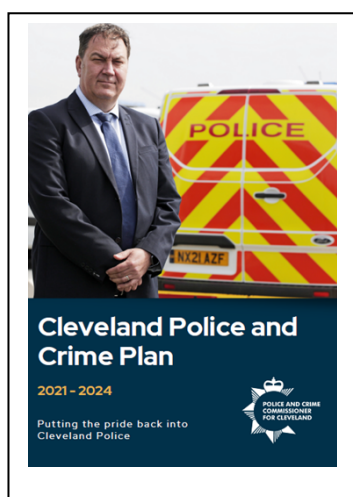
- Although there was some improvement with communication and feedback between police officers and local Councillors or members of the public reporting crimes, this remained an area of challenge and it was felt there was still more that could be done.

### COPA app

- The growing use of the COPA app for reporting crime enabled incidents and evidence to be connected together increasing the chances of criminals being brought to justice.
- There was a role for Panel Members to promote the use of the COPA app within their own communities.

## Delivering the Police and Crime Plan

Throughout the year, the Commissioner provided quarterly updates against his Police and Plan 2021-24. The plan set out a 10-point plan covering the Commissioner's term of office, developed around clear outcomes and objectives which reflected his manifesto commitments.



The Police and Crime Commissioner's 10-point plan:

- Bringing offenders to justice
- Getting tough on drugs and gangs
- Tackling anti-social behaviour head-on



- Helping to provide an effective police and criminal justice system
- Preventing, reducing, and tackling serious violence
- Putting more police on the streets
- Tackling violence against women and girls
- Building confidence in Cleveland's communities
- Providing effective, quality support for victims and witnesses
- Using technology to combat crime.

The Panel provided robust scrutiny and challenge to the Commissioner, requesting further, more detailed data at times to understand the issues and progress being made.

Particular areas of focus and challenge from the Panel related to:

- Communication and feedback from local neighbourhood policing teams to residents and elected members on reported crimes, particularly through the COPA app.
- High levels of knife crime, but relatively low levels of associated hospital admissions as victims often chose not to go.
- Data from national crime surveys indicating there had been a decrease in public confidence in the police.
- The ongoing challenge to fill special constable and PCSO vacancies.
- The importance of housing for people leaving prison and its connection to reoffending and the need to work with social housing providers.

The Panel welcomed the regular updates on how the commissioner undertook his own scrutiny role in relation to holding the Chief Constable and the Force to account and the topics this covered and were appreciative of the Chief Constable's attendance at a Panel meeting to share information on the Force's improvement journey.

### **Scrutiny of the Policing Precept**

One of the key roles of the Panel is to consider the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposed policing budget and precept. As in previous years, a Task and Finish Panel was appointed to undertake more detailed work and make a recommendation to the Panel. The Panel comprised the following Councillors:

Councillor John Coulson (Chair)  
Councillor Jonny Neal  
Councillor Jim Platt  
Councillor Carole Thompson  
Luigi Salvati

Stockton Borough Council  
Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council  
Middlesbrough Borough Council  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Non-Political Independent Member

The Group met on 17 January 2024 to receive information about the Police and Crime Commissioner's overall budget strategy for Cleveland Police and in particular proposals for the precept.

The Group prepared a [report](#) for consideration by the full Panel at its meeting on 6 February 2024 which set out in detail their deliberations. The key findings and conclusions from the report are summarised below:

- The police funding settlement for 2024/25 set out that overall national funding for policing would rise by up to £843 million compared to the 2023/24 funding settlement, bringing the total up to £18.4 billion for the policing system.
- The settlement also confirmed that PCCs would be empowered to raise additional funding through their Band D precept flexibility by up to £13 in 2024/25.
- The future funding and planning assumptions that had been made in determining the budget strategy and LTFP for Cleveland for 2024/25 were:
  - Pay awards budgeted for a 2.5% increase in 2024/25 returning to 2% in subsequent years. If pay awards exceed 2.5% it is hoped that government funds this as it has done so previously. £185 million of the 2024/25 policing settlement had been committed to last year's 7% pay award.
  - A precept increase of £13 (4.47%) in 2024/25.
  - Underlying Tax Base Growth expected to be 1.39% in 2024/25.
  - The plan included a specific grant of £1,680,000 to achieve the Government targets for a further 35 Police Officers in 2024/25. In Cleveland, plans are in place to increase officers within Cleveland to over 1,530, which includes growth of 48 FTE and costs circa £2.1 million.
- It is government policy to increase officer numbers by 20,000 nationally. In Cleveland grant funding had been successfully obtained to increase numbers and planned recruitment of police officers in 2024/25 would put the Force above 1500 FTE police officers for the first time in over a decade.
- The financial plan would balance based on a £13 increase in precept for 2024/25.
- Around 12% of staff posts (120 FTE) within force would need to be held vacant to work within the funding available.
- A consultation exercised was ongoing and due to complete by the end of the week commencing 15 January 2024. Detailed results of the consultation exercise would be presented to the full Police and Crime Panel on 6 February although early indications suggested support from residents for increasing the precept funding for the police at the proposed level of £13.
- The level of reserves was currently set at 4.3 % of the net budget requirement in 2024/25. General Reserves were projected to be £7.2 million in 2024/25 before reducing to £5 million at the end of the plan.

Having considered the information available to it and discussed the funding assumptions, Members of the Task and Finish Panel were supportive of the Police and Crime Commissioner's proposal to set the Band D police element of the Council Tax within Cleveland for 2024/25 at £303.73 representing an increase of £13, or 4.47%, over the 2023/24 level, and made a recommendation to that effect to the full Panel.

In addition to the report of the Task and Finish Panel, the full Panel heard from both the Commissioner and the Chief Constable who elaborated on the Force's improvement journey, the remedial actions after having been placed in special measures in 2019 by HMICFRS and the proposed actions to continue the positive trajectory. This had led to the force being released from special measures in September 2023. Whilst much progress had been made, the importance of maintaining momentum and appropriate resourcing was underlined.

Taking into account all available information, the Panel agreed with the recommendations of the Task and Finish Panel and approved the Commissioner's proposal to set the Band D police element of the Council Tax within Cleveland for 2024/25 at £303.73 representing an increase of £13, or 4.47%, over the 2023/24 level.

## **Panel Training and Development**

To support the Panel in its role, a development session was arranged in December 2023 focusing on developing a shared understanding of the Panel's roles in the broader context of policing accountabilities, delivered by Frontline Consulting.

The Panel was represented by the Chair at the Annual Conference for Police Fire and Crime Panels in November 2023. The theme of the Conference was 'Collaboration and Challenge – Making it Work.' It encompassed an examination of approaches to collaboration between Panels and PCCs, public confidence in policing, and managing change.

A number of Panel Members also took advantage of an invitation to visit the Force Control room.

## **Panel Support arrangements**

Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council continues to provide support for the Panel having taken over the role from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council in October 2021.

## **Funding**

The Home Office provides grant funding for the host authority to provide administrative support to the Panel to cover costs such as meeting, conference, training and printing expenses and officer time.

For the year 2023/24, the sum of £66,180 was awarded by the Home Office.

## Complaints

The Panel has specific duties under the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and misconduct) Regulations 2021 relating to the recording and investigation of complaints about the Police and Crime Commissioner that relate to non-criminal behaviour.

The Panel established a sub-committee to consider complaints against the Commissioner. Complaints are dealt with by an informal resolution process; there are no powers to investigate a complaint. The sub-committee can consider complaints at a meeting which the complainant, the Commissioner and/or others may be invited to attend, or by the submission of written documents.

Between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, 9 complaints were considered under the Panel's complaints procedures.

## Getting Involved

You can find more information about the work of the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel by visiting [Committee details - Cleveland Police and Crime Panel | Redcar and Cleveland \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk/committees/committee-details-cleveland-police-and-crime-panel-redcar-and-cleveland)

All meetings of the Panel are open to the public.

Listening to the views of local residents is an important part of the work of the Panel and anyone who lives or works in the Cleveland Force Area is welcome to submit a question to the Panel.

If you wish to submit a question, contact details are below:

Cleveland Police and Crime Panel  
Democratic Services  
Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council  
Redcar and Cleveland House  
Kirkleatham Street  
Redcar  
TS10 1RT

01642 774774

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