



## **HOME OFFICE MONITORING REPORT**

1<sup>ST</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

### **1. KEY REQUIREMENTS**

- 1.1 To provide the South Wales Police and Crime Panel (PCP) and the Home Office with the end of year monitoring report on the use of the PCP grant and the expenses incurred during the period 01/04/23 – 31/03/24.
- 1.2 To allow public scrutiny of PCP spending, a transparency requirement has been attached as a condition of the single grant payment and the PCP must publish as a minimum on their website, details of all their expenditure.
- 1.3 As part of in-year monitoring information requirements, the PCP is required to report progress against critical success factors in achieving outcomes and targets, and highlight how value for money (e.g., benefits, savings, efficiencies, etc) is being achieved. A report must be sent to the Home Office annually, together with the end of year claim request form and completed outturn statement by 31 July 2024.
- 1.4 The Critical Success Factors to be reported on are as follows:
  - The number of public meetings held.
  - Scrutiny documents and publications produced, including the Panel's Annual Report.
  - Engagement with the work of the Panel by members of the public and the South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner (SWPCC).

### **2. PROGRESS AGAINST THE CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS**

- 2.1 The Home Office provides a grant allocation of £70,055 to Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council who are the Host Authority for the PCP. The grant allocation is for the maintenance of a Police and Crime Panel to enable it to carry out the functions and responsibilities, in accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

2.2 The grant is allocated under three headings:

- Administration Costs, which includes Officer re-charge costs, and costs associated with the general management of the PCP, training and registration.
- Member Costs
- Translation Costs

The grant funding is not hypothecated, which means the Host Authority may transfer any underspend in one heading to cover additional costs in another as long as the total grant amount is not exceeded. For 2023/24, the PCP has an overspend on administration costs of £11,051 due in part to the additional work spend on complaints and hosting 13 informal panel sub-group meetings. This overspend has been compensated by underspends on expenses (£5336) and translation costs (£5,715).

2.3 Claims are submitted to the Home Office every six months, which includes actual spend against predicted expenditure. The Host Authority holds the relevant evidence to support the claims.

2.4 Progress in respect of the Critical Success Factors between 01/04/23 – 31/03/24 is as follows:

**a) Number of meetings:**

In line with statutory requirements, the Panel held 5 formal meetings in the last year. Four Ordinary meetings and one AGM.

All meetings were in person. They were held on the following dates –

**25<sup>th</sup> April 2023.** This meeting was held at the Orbit Business Centre, Rhydycar Business Park, Merthyr Tydfil with the agenda and minutes published on the South Wales Police & Crime Panel page on the host authority's website.

[SWPCP meeting 25th April 2023- Agenda & Reports pack.](#)

[SWPCP meeting 25th April 2023 - minutes](#)

**6<sup>th</sup> June 2023.** This meeting was held at the Orbit Business Centre, Rhydycar Business Park, Merthyr Tydfil with the agenda and minutes published on the South Wales Police & Crime Panel page on the host authority's website.

[SWPCP meeting 6th June 2023- Agenda & Reports pack.](#)

[SWPCP meeting 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023 - minutes](#)

**19<sup>th</sup> September 2023.** This meeting was held at the South Wales Police Headquarters in Bridgend with the agenda, reports and minutes published on the South Wales Panel page on the host authority's website. The meeting in part was

also as a “Confirmation Hearing” following the Commissioner’s proposed appointment of a new Chief Finance Officer. The Panel heard submissions from the Commissioner and the proposed candidate and confirmed the appointment of Mr Holloway-Young. The meeting was also video recorded with a link to the recording available on the Panel’s website.

[SWPCP meeting 19th September 2023- Agenda & Reports pack.](#)

[SWPCP meeting 19th September 2023- Minutes](#)

<https://vimeo.com/873993509?share=copy>

**5<sup>th</sup> December 2023.** This meeting was held at the Orbit Business Centre, Rhydycar Business Park, Merthyr Tydfil. The reports considered at this meeting and the minutes of the meeting are published on the Panel page on the host authority’s website.

[SWPCP meeting 5th December 2023 - Agenda & Reports pack.](#)

[SWPCP meeting 5th December 2023 - Minutes](#)

**6<sup>th</sup> February 2024.** This meeting was held at the Orbit Business Centre, Rhydycar Business Park, Merthyr Tydfil. The reports considered at this meeting and the meeting minutes are published on the Panel page on the host authority’s website. This meeting was video recorded with a link to the recording available on the host authority’s website.

[SWPCP meeting 6th February 2024 - Agenda & Reports pack.](#)

[Video link SWPCP meeting 6th February 2024.](#)

In addition, there were unrecorded meetings of the Complaints Subgroup which is comprised of the (1) Host Authority’s Senior Solicitor who is the Panel’s principal support officer, (2) Host Authority’s Monitoring Officer and (3) the Chair of the Panel to consider complaints against the South Wales Police & Crime Commissioner (SWPCC).

In 2022 after the most recent local council elections, the Panel re-established three sub-groups. These sub-groups are tasked with looking into the Commissioner’s priorities and partner concerns.

**Sub-Group 1** are responsible for -

Priority 1- Reducing and preventing crime and anti-social behaviour to keep people safe and confident in their homes and communities.

Priority 2 -Involving and empowering communities, working with partners in Local Government, Health, Fire and Welsh Government to deliver services that people need.

Partner concerns 1 to 4 namely Substance misuse, Supporting young people, Protecting vulnerable people and Domestic abuse.

**Sub-Group 2** are responsible for –

Priority 3 - Working to protect the most vulnerable in our communities, understanding causes and taking prompt positive action as issues arise.

Priority 4 - Working to make the local Criminal Justice System efficient and effective to meet the needs of victims and reduce re-offending.

Partner concerns 5 to 8 namely Mental Health, Anti-social behaviour, Reducing re-offending and Terrorism.

**Sub-Group 3** are responsible for –

Priority 5 - Ensuring that SWP continues to be a high performing force in terms of the operational response to crime, threats, harm and the detection of offenders.

Priority 6 - Ensuring money is spent wisely and that people are supported to provide the best possible policing in our communities.

Partner concerns 9 to 13 namely Violent Crime, Child sexual exploitation, Victims, Acquisitive crime and Public Perception.

The sub-groups meet informally four times a year in on-line meetings.

Sub-group meetings were held on the following dates –

- 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023
- 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023
- 15<sup>th</sup> September 2023
- 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023

On the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023 all three sub-groups met online to hear a presentation from the Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner on the subject of Violence against Women and Girls. A formal report on the subject had previously been published at a Panel meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023. A recording of this meeting was made and can be accessed via the host authority's web page.

[https://youtu.be/5hZjYf\\_MxZo?feature=shared](https://youtu.be/5hZjYf_MxZo?feature=shared)

On the 4th August 2023 bespoke training was given by the Panel's Support Officer to the Panel's new member following approval being given to his membership of the Panel by the Home Office.

In addition, a considerable amount of work has been carried by the Host Authority in its efforts to record Panel meetings and to publish the recordings on the Panel's website. Although there have been "teething" problems it is envisaged that all future formal meetings will be recorded and published.

## **b) Scrutiny & Publications:**

The SWPCP produced two reports all published on the SWPCP web page found on the host authority's website <https://www.merthyr.gov.uk/council/councillors-and-committees/south-wales-police-and-crime-panel/> during and following the reporting period. Those reports relate to:

- The Panel's Annual Report 2022 to 2023.
- Oversight of complaints received – 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023 – 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024 covering the complaints received from the date of the previous report.

Panel Member Expenses & Allowances for 2023/24 are published on the SWPCP web page found on the host authority's website.

In addition to the above the SWPCP has also scrutinised and published reports relating to the following:

- On the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023 the SWPCC's Annual Report for 2022/2023 – was presented to the Panel. This was considered, and a report issued by the Panel and published on the Panel's web page agreeing the content with recommendations that (1) the current priorities be maintained, (2) that assurances be given that robust data security systems are in place and are being maintained to ensure compliance with legal requirements and to protect unlawful dissemination of data.
- On the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023, the Panel issued a report on the proposed appointment of the Chief Finance Officer (Treasurer) for the Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales.
- On the 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024 the Panel considered a report on the SWPCC's Precept for 2024/25 – the PCP agreed to support the 8.69% precept sought for 2024/25 with the following recommendations and comments –
  - In the first instance the SWPCP expressed its disappointed that the financial burden of paying for an effective police force is being gradually transferred from central government to the public generally via the Precept and the Panel feels strongly that this should not continue.
  - The SWPCP considered the precept proposal to be high and by approving the same it recognised that once again this placed further financial pressure on the Council Tax paying public of South Wales at a time when the finances of the public are stretched. It was however made clear from the SWPCP Precept report (see link above) and in the Commissioner's presentation that the increase was needed and necessary to ensure the police continue to be adequately funded allowing trust and confidence in the police to not only be maintained but to be increased.

- In coming to its decision, the SWPCP recognised the significant funding shortfall affecting the Police in areas such as the police pay rise, the Police Funding Formula, Capital City Funding and the application of the Apprenticeship Levy and to that end the SWPCP confirmed its commitment to support the Commissioner in addressing these shortfalls which even with the agreed precept will require the Police to find savings of £9 million.
- Had the Precept been vetoed, it was likely that any funding shortfall resulting from this may have had to come from neighbourhood policing and this is something the SWPCP was not prepared to risk.

**(c) Engaging with the SWPCC:**

- The Panel via its members and its support officers continue to liaise regularly with the Commissioner and his office especially in relation to complaints and setting SWPCP agenda items. There is also a standing offer for panel members to liaise informally with the Commissioner or his office on matters that concern them or the Panel generally. Since the SWPCP set up sub-groups to look into the SWPCC's priorities and partner concerns, this offer to liaise directly with the SWPCC's staff has been extended.
- On the 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023, following an invitation from the Commissioner the Panel met at South Wales Police Headquarters. Whilst there, Panel members were provided with demonstrations on some of the innovative work being done by South Wales Police to include a Facial Recognition demonstration, IR3 Telematics and Force build mobile phone applications.
- The Commissioner attends every formal Panel meeting where formal and informal engagement occurs. The Commissioner will also meet leaders of all South Wales Councils prior to the issuing of the Precept and some members will engage with the Commissioner in this context.
- Some members also have involvement in other South Wales organisations for example <http://www.saferwales.com/> who are involved in initiatives and projects that touch upon the work of the Commissioner. These members will liaise with the Commissioner on this basis.
- Now that scrutiny sub-groups have been re-established with new members, it is allowing deeper scrutiny and engagement with the Commissioner and his office on the topics they consider. The Commissioner has confirmed that he would welcome this type of additional engagement. The remit and scope of the sub-groups is developing as new members become more familiar with the role of the Panel and their roles as members.

**(d) Other engagement:**

- The PCP joined the National Association of Police, Fire and Crime Panels in 2020 and as a consequence it continues to receive support and guidance from this organisation if needed.
- Discussions have taken place between the four Welsh Police & Crime Panel and the WLGA to set up organised networking between the members of the 4 Panels similar to the All-Wales PCP lead officers group meetings. It is likely that this will be remote networking where members can discuss matters such as emerging topics and best practice.
- On the 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023 lead officers of the 4 Welsh Panels met with the WLGA to discuss complaint handling and to share good practice.

**(e) Engagement with the public:**

- All meetings of the Panel when held in the Orbit Centre or South Wales Police Headquarters are recorded and published on the Council's website and on the dedicated PCP page accessed via the Council's website. If meetings are held in venues other than these, then recordings will take place if recording equipment is available.
- The PCP has a dedicated section on the Host Authority's website which gives full details of the Panel to include links to meetings and agenda items, reports, videos, Panel Arrangements, Rules of Procedure, Complaints etc. This page is updated regularly and allows members of the public full access to the work of the Panel and of the work of the Commissioner.
- The Panel's Rules of Procedure permit questions and statements from the public and this facility is regularly used with public questions being presented to the Panel at either the beginning or the end of the Panel meeting. Whenever possible any question from the public that relates to the work of the SWPCC is sent to his office prior to the meeting date in order that the question can be addressed at that meeting. If a response is not possible within time limits, then the SWPCC will respond to the question at a future meeting.

2.5 The above arrangements fulfil the role of support and scrutiny of the PCC.

**3. EXPENDITURE**

3.1 Additional work took place last year in relation to complex complaints, hosting 13 informal panel sub-groups and changes in membership of one of the Swansea members with the new members requiring induction and training before being able to sit as a member of the Panel.

- 3.2 Member attendance at Panel meetings continues to be good with the only absentees being members suffering from ill health. As such member allowance claims remain high for each meeting. There are additional costs associated with the holding the meetings at the Orbit Centre e.g. room rental costs.
- 3.3 A breakdown of the Home Office claim providing details of the grant claim and the outturn statement for the period April 2023 to March 2024 will be sent to the Home office in due course.
- 3.4 Expenditure for the reporting period 01/04/23 – 31/03/24 is as follow:
- Administration Costs: £64,351
  - Member Costs: £5,704

Please see link to published member expenses

<https://www.merthyr.gov.uk/media/9029/swpcp-2022-2023-expenses.pdf>

The PCP has held five formal meetings of the full Panel and one informal Panel meeting.

In line with the Panel Arrangements, Members of the SWPCP are paid an allowance for attendance at a formal meeting of the Panel or formal sub-committee of the Panel, and attendance at any training or developmental event approved by the Panel.

- Translation Costs: nil

Total £70.055

- 3.5 All expenses incurred by Panel Members have to be authorised by the Lead Officer/Host Authority to ensure it provides value for money and benefits the PCP as a whole.
- 3.6 Any spend incurred by Support Officers has to be authorised by the Host Authority to ensure value for money.