



HOME OFFICE MONITORING REPORT

1ST April 2022 to 31st March 2023

1. **KEY REQUIREMENTS**

- 1.1 To provide the South Wales Police and Crime Panel (SWPCP) 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 01/04/22 – 31/03/23.
- 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 2023.
- 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 SWPCP. 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 2022/23, the PCP has an overspend on administration costs of £10,131 due in part to the additional work (to include training) involved in the reconstituting of the Panel following on from nominations of 9 new Panel members made by the Panel's constituent Councils post local council elections in 2022. This over spend has been compensated by underspends on expenses (£4,416) 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 01/04/22 – 31/03/23 is as follows:

a) Number of meetings:

In line with statutory requirements, the Panel usually holds at least 5 formal meetings a year. Four Ordinary meetings and one AGM. However, this year the Panel was presented with obstacles which prevented us from achieving that number of meetings.

Local elections took place in May 2022 and as a consequence, 9 new members were appointed to the Panel by the respective Councils making up the South Wales Panel area. Those new members had to be approved by the Home office before they could formally sit on the Panel and conduct Panel business. Home Office approval was outstanding by the time the scheduled Panel AGM on the **29th June 2022** took place. Consequently, the meeting was inquorate even though 8 of the new members were in attendance. Formal Panel business was not therefore undertaken, and an informal meeting was held where training for members was given.

Four formal meetings were held during the reporting period. All meetings were in person. They were held on the following dates –

26th April 2022. This meeting was held at the Orbit Business Centre, Rhydyar Business Park, Merthyr Tydfil with the agenda and minutes published on the South Wales Police & Crime Panel page on the host authority's website <https://democracy.merthyr.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=349&MId=4644&Ver=4&LL=0>. This was in effect the last meeting of the "old" Panel.

4th October 2022. This meeting was held at the Orbit Business Centre, Rhydycar Business Park, Merthyr Tydfil with the agenda, reports and minutes published on the South Wales Panel page on the host authority's website.

<https://democracy.merthyr.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=349&MId=4862&Ver=4&LLL=0>. By the time of this meeting Home Office approval had been given for the 9 new Panel members and as such the first meeting of the new Panel was conducted as an AGM where a new chair and vice chair was appointed, and a work programme put in place. This meeting was originally scheduled for the 20th September 2022 but it had to be postponed due to it falling in the period of mourning following the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

6th December 2022. 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-

<https://democracy.merthyr.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=349&MId=4782&Ver=4&LL=0>

7th February 2023. 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-

<https://democracy.merthyr.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=349&MId=4783&Ver=4&LL=0>

In addition, there were numerous unrecorded meetings of the Complaints Subgroup 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).

b) Scrutiny & Publications:

The SWPCP produced four 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 2021 to 2022.
- Oversight of complaints received – 27th April 2021 – 7th February 2023
- Amendment of the Panel's Rules of Procedure.
- Proposal to establish scrutiny sub-groups for the year 2023 onwards.

It was intended to put the SWPCPs Annual Report 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022 to the AGM on the 29th June 2022 but as detailed above that meeting was not quorate with no formal Panel business conducted. The Annual Report 22-23 was therefore presented to the Panel at the next quorate meeting which was on the 4th October 2022.

An oversight of complaints report was put to the Panel meeting on the 7th February 2023 covering the complaints received from the date of the previous report.

Panel Member Expenses & Allowances for 2022/23 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 4th October 2022 the SWPCC's Annual Report for 2021/2022 – 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 the following no recommendations. Link to report [SWPCC Annual Report 21/22](#)
- On the 7th February 2023 the Panel considered a report on the SWPCC's Precept for 2023/24 – the PCP agreed to support the 7.4% precept sought for 2023/24 with the following recommendations and comments –
 - The SWPCP considered the precept proposal to be very high and by approving the same it recognised that this placed further financial pressure on the Council Tax paying public of South Wales.
 - It was however accepted that the increase was needed to ensure the police continue to be adequately funded.
 - The SWPCP expressed its disappointment 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.
 - In coming to its decision, the SWPCP did however recognise the significant funding shortfall in areas such as 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.
 - The SWPCP welcomed the police's commitment to maintaining front line policing in particular neighbourhood policing.
- On the 24th October 2022 the SWPCP wrote to The Rt Hon Jeremy Quin MP Minister of State for Policing, Criminal Justice and Victims supporting the SWPCC's efforts to secure Capital City Funding for South Wales Police.

(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.

- 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.
- On the 30th September 2022 an invite was given to the Panel Independent members to attend the formal opening of our new Police Learning Centre. The elected members had not been approved by the Home Office when the invite was received.

(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.
- The WLGA organised an All-Wales PCP lead officers group meeting which took place remotely on the 11th July 2022 where amongst many things the following was discussed and guidance given- Joint Scrutiny, the PCC Review Part 2 and Regional Model Proposals, the setting up of an All Wales Training/Member Event. These meetings are bi-annual with the aim of sharing good practice.
- On the 27th September 2022 members attended a Home Office webinar on such matters as updates around the second phase of their review of Police and Crime Commissioners and upcoming priorities.
- Also, on the 27th September 2022, the Home Office Police Strategy and Reform Unit met virtually with support officers for the 4 Welsh Panels to gain an insight into the experiences of Panels in the recruitment and retention of

Panel Independent Members. A survey was also completed and submitted to the Home Office setting out the experiences of the SWPCP.

- On the 24th January 2023 a Special Meeting of the WLGA PCP members and support officers group met to consider such matters as Hybrid Meetings, the Home Office Process for Elected Member Approvals, a Panels' Role and Oversight of Complaints to OPCCs, the Apprenticeship Levy, the Emergency Services Network and a proposal to establish an annual meeting of Finance Sub-Groups.
- On the 30th January 2023, the Panel's solicitor support officer attended a virtual workshop meeting run once again by the Home Office to conduct a feasibility exercise to consider the viability of a range of options for improving the quality, consistency and professionalism of executive support provided by local authorities to PCPs. The workshop on this date concentrated on the views of Welsh panels.

(e) Engagement with the public:

- Prior to meetings returning to in person meetings, Panel meetings during the covid pandemic had been held remotely via TEAMS with the meetings recorded and published on the Panel's website page. The recording of meetings had to stop as the venue used for the in-person meetings did not initially have facilities to record or webcast meetings. This was disappointing as there had been increased public engagement with the meetings when they were recorded and broadcast. The position has now changed with video and sound recording equipment having been installed at the venue. Going forward all Panel meetings held at the Orbit Centre venue will be recorded and published on the panel's website. The first recorded meeting took place on the 25th April 2023.
- 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.
- A considerable amount of work was carried out in 2022 – 23 to appoint new elected members following on from the Welsh Local Government elections in May 2023. The elections resulted in 9 new members being nominated to the Panel. Those new members needed to be as far as was reasonably practicable "politically balanced" taking into account the political make-up of the South Wales PCP member Councils. Work was undertaken with those Councils

toward this goal and in doing so the profile of the PCP and its role was raised to a greater extent at Councils than it would otherwise have been.

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

3. EXPENDITURE

3.1 A considerable amount of extra work took place last year in relation to the changes in membership following the Welsh Local Government elections in May 2022 and the nominations of 9 new members. All the new members needed training. There was also additional work carried to deal with the effect of the official period of mourning following the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

3.2 Since the approval of the new panel Members, it is noted that attendance at Panel meetings is improved with the only absentees being members suffering from ill health. As such member allowance claims have increased per meeting although we were only able to hold 4 formal meetings. During the pandemic meetings were virtual and then held in the Host Authority's Council Chamber whilst the Orbit Centre venue remained closed. There were significantly lower costs involved in hosting meetings in these ways. The previous meeting venue, the Orbit Centre is now back in operation and all meetings will be held there save for any meetings scheduled to take place at Police Headquarters. 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 claim is provided at Appendix 1. In addition Annex A of the Home Office Claim detailed in Appendix 1 provides details of the grant claim and the outturn statement for the period April 2022 to March 2023.

3.4 Expenditure for the reporting period 01/04/22 – 31/03/23 is as follow:

- Administration Costs: £63,431
- Member Costs: £6,624

Please see link to published member expenses

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

The PCP has held four 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 meeting of the Panel or of any 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.