

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

**REPORT TO THE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
FOR NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

20 AUGUST 2024

Report Title	Review of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire's Annual Report for 2023/24
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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The report is intended to set out the results of the review by the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire's Annual Report for 2023/24.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire is required to publish an Annual Report on activity and progress with the delivery of key strategic outcomes in the previous year. The Annual Report must be reviewed by the Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel, resulting in the production of a report to the Commissioner. The Panel reviewed the Commissioner's Annual Report for 2023/24 at a public meeting held on 12 July 2024.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire:
- a) Considers this report by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel arising from its review of her Annual Report for 2023/24 carried out in accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 Section 28(4).
 - b) Provides the Panel with a response to this report and its recommendation set out in section 6 in accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 Section 12 Paragraph 4(a).

- 3.2 Reasons for Recommendation(s) – The recommendations are required to complete the Panel’s review of the Annual Report for 2023/24 published by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, in accordance with the Panel’s statutory responsibilities.

4. Report Background

- 4.1 Sections 12 and 28 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 state that a Police and Crime Commissioner must produce an “annual report”.
- 4.2 The annual report must report on:
- a) the exercise of the Police and Crime Commissioner’s functions in the financial year, and
 - b) the progress which has been made in the financial year in meeting the police and crime objectives in the police and crime plan.
- 4.3 The annual report must be sent to the relevant Police and Crime Panel as soon as practicable following its publication by the Commissioner.
- 4.4 The Panel must arrange for a public meeting of the Panel to be held as soon as practicable after it receives the annual report.
- 4.5 The Commissioner must attend the relevant meeting of the Panel to present the report and to answer such questions from the Panel about the report as the Panel members think appropriate.
- 4.6 The Panel must then review the annual report and make a report outlining any recommendations to the Commissioner. The report or recommendations of the Panel must also be published.
- 4.7 The Commissioner must provide a response to the Panel and must also publish that response.

5. Review of the Annual Report

- 5.1 The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire has produced an Annual Report for 2023/24. In this case the Annual Report relates to the final year in office of the previous Commissioner. The Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel met in public on 12 July 2024 to review the Annual Report. The meeting was webcast live and a recording is available to view at: [West Northamptonshire Council - YouTube](#).
- 5.2 In presenting the Annual Report, the Commissioner noted that Northamptonshire Police and Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) had been through a difficult year, which included dealing with issues that had been subject to national media attention. After taking office she had therefore been impressed to see how committed, hardworking and productive staff members remained despite this situation. As Commissioner she wished to build on previous good work in the county, which included examples of ground-breaking activity. However, she aimed to set a different Police, Fire and Crime Plan, which would put more emphasis on joint working and would hopefully secure the commitment of more partners.

5.3 The Panel then questioned the Commissioner about the position presented in the Annual Report, with regard to the activity and outcomes it outlined and how this would inform the Commissioner's plans for the future. Panel members made the following points during the course of discussion:

- The Commissioner's positive impression of Northamptonshire Police and NFRS staff members was welcome to hear.
- Ground-breaking work had been done in Northamptonshire on early intervention with young people at risk from crime, which should be publicised more.
- The Annual Report showed a range of positive actions.
- The Commissioner was urged to continue previous efforts to obtain government funding to benefit the county, such as the funding secured from the Home Office Safer Streets Fund.
- NFRS was now in a much better position than when responsibility for it had been transferred from Northamptonshire County Council to the Commissioner. The Annual Report referred to investment in staffing and in equipment. Local taxpayers received good value from the Fire and Rescue precept.
- The Commissioner's future plans should take into account the need for services to be provided in different ways across different areas in Northamptonshire. At the same time, they needed to ensure an effective response on key issues such as domestic violence.
- Confirmation was sought as to how the Commissioner would judge her success in the role.
- The Commissioner was urged to seek a better funding settlement for Northamptonshire.
- The Annual Report showed that Northamptonshire could deliver successful outcomes, which was what national government prioritised.
- The Commissioner was encouraged to link up effectively with adult safeguarding services on relevant areas of activity. Human trafficking was now a significant issue in society.

The Commissioner made the following points during the course of discussion:

- There had been a deficit in leadership over the past two years, which she wanted to address. She wanted to see effective collective leadership that also listened.
- She would seek a three-year funding settlement from national government.
- As Commissioner she would give a high priority to reducing domestic violence, violence against women and girls and child sexual exploitation.
- Success would be measured in terms of a reduction in incidents and people in Northamptonshire feeling safer. Partnership working would be essential to achieving these outcomes.
- The successes outlined in the Annual Report relating to complaints handling, use of Safer Streets Funding and early intervention support for young people at risk of becoming a victim of crime or of involvement in criminal behaviour all represented areas of work led by the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.
- Northamptonshire Police already had a specific team focussed on dealing with modern slavery.

6. Outcomes of the Review

- 6.1 The Panel considered any conclusions or recommendations that it wished to make on the Annual Report, reflecting that it related to the previous Commissioner's tenure. It was resolved that:

The Panel recommends that the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner recognises the opportunity to build on previous good work in Northamptonshire set out in the Annual Report for 2023/24.

7. Background Papers

Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel Terms of Reference