

Essex Police and Crime Panel	<b>EPCP/16/13</b>
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**Training**

Report by the Secretary to the Panel

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**Purpose of report and background**

To consider what might be available by way of training for the Panel to help it carry out its role.

At the last meeting the Panel asked for information on what might be available by way of training to be financed by the provision made available by the Home Office for member allowances.

Contact has been made with a Consultancy that has done or is doing learning and development sessions with panels where the Panels, like the Essex Panel, have completed a round of carrying out the statutory functions and are now thinking about how to add value when scrutinising the Commissioner.

These sessions are tailored to the needs of the panels concerned, but essentially they give time to allow the panel members to reflect on the past year and think about what went well, what could have gone better and what challenges have been thrown up in the course of their work, before going on to have conversations about how to tackle those challenges and develop their work. The Consultancy provides examples of what other panels are doing to assist thinking, while of course recognising the strengths that the panel has that can be built on. A final session captures learning points and provides a basis for action planning by the panel.

The Consultancy has run such sessions in Avon & Somerset and Nottinghamshire and facilitated similar sessions in Lincolnshire, Hampshire and Devon & Cornwall. Panels seem to be taking different approaches to scrutinising the Commissioner. Some are monitoring performance information while others are focusing on looking at the delivery plans that the Commissioner has for achieving the strategic objectives in the Police and Crime Plan, as a basis for deeper work and conversations about the budget and precept for 2014/5.

Taking a slightly different approach the County Council has been doing some work with the Development Director of South East Employers to deliver training with the aim of increasing members' understanding of the role of scrutiny in supporting and enabling transformation and improvement activity by

- providing Members with an overview of the potential of scrutiny including the structure and objectives
- supporting Members with the development of focused in-depth reviews, investigations and how to effectively evaluate evidence.
- assisting members in developing effective and interdependent relationship between the executive and scrutiny.
- ensuring members are aware of the potential and benefits of Task Group working
- further developing Members' skills in respect of questioning tools and influencing skills.

This is something that could easily be adapted to meet the needs of the panel and its relationship with the Commissioner.

The Panel is asked to indicate whether it wishes the Secretary to develop either option further.

It makes sense to maximize the benefit of the training by organising events for all members. However, there are conferences specifically aimed at panel members that may be of benefit. The Panel might want to agree a process for authorising members to attend such conferences.

As a for instance, the LGA is holding a Police and Crime Panel Conference on 12 November, free of charge, which will provide an opportunity for panel members and officers to reflect on the role of panels, learn about emerging good practice and consider the future direction of Police and Crime Commissioners' scrutiny.