

## AGENDA ITEM 5

Essex Police and Crime Panel	<b>EPCP/04/13</b>
Date: 26 March 2013	

### **A Guide to Scrutiny and the Draft Work Programme 2013/14**

Report by Secretary to the Panel

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#### **Purpose of report**

To consider guidance on how the Panel might develop its Scrutiny role and arising out of that the beginnings of a draft work programme for the Panel.

#### **Guidance on Scrutiny**

The Local Government Association and the Centre for Public Scrutiny have produced some very helpful guidance on the Scrutiny Functions of the Panel. It sets out how the panel might go beyond the set piece functions laid down in the legislation to scrutinise how the Commissioner exercises his statutory function of providing strategic direction in local policing. The Guidance suggests that additional work, complementing the set piece events being carried out to deliver the statutory functions, will be necessary to help the panel support the work of the Commissioner. The Panel should be acting as a critical friend, a supportive but independent voice seeking to investigate the Commissioner in the interests of recommending – not directing or seeking to co-ordinate – changes and improvements.

The Panel is asked to consider the Guidance and the outline of its work programme and think about how it wants to carry out its role and what information it might request from the Commissioner on a regular basis to achieve this. This is a relationship which will develop over time but the Panel needs to make a start. For instance the Panel might want to see quarterly reports on the budget and how the resource provided by the addition to the precept has been used; it might also want a half-yearly report on performance against the policing plan. The Panel might wish to understand how the Commissioner carries out his role of holding the Chief Constable to account and receive quarterly updates.