

Roles and responsibilities of independent co-optees on the panel

Note: Independent co-optees will be treated equally as other elected members on the panel and therefore have the same responsibilities and duties with equal voting rights.

All co-optees are full voting members and will have access to the same level of support and information as elected members on the panel. The core role of both elected members and independent co-optees on the panel is to:

- Scrutinise the work of the PCC to ensure that the PCC is discharging its functions effectively
- Bring any specialist knowledge, skills, experience and expertise they may have to the scrutiny work of the panel
- Ensure that there is an effective independent challenge to the PCC and that this challenge is constructive to support the PCC in carrying out their role
- Act as a non political voice for those who live and/or work in the Lancashire area.

A co-opted member of the police and crime panel is expected to:

- Attend all formal meetings of the panel (up to 8 per year)
- Establish good relations with other members, officers and co-optees
- Attend additional meetings e.g. working groups, evidence gathering sessions, or training sessions as required
- Prepare for each meeting by reading the agenda, papers and additional information to familiarise yourself with the issues to be covered during the meeting. Prior to the meeting consider the questions you may wish to put to the police and crime commissioner and other expert witnesses
- Listen carefully at the meetings, ask questions in a way which is non-judgmental, respect confidentiality and help the panel to make practical suggestions for improvements in services
- Assist in the preparation of reports and the formulation of recommendations; this may involve volunteering to participate in a task group to conduct a scrutiny review
- Attend training and development events as needed
- Abide by the panel arrangements and rules of procedure which set out how the police and crime panel will operate in the Lancashire area

- Keep abreast of the key issues in relation to the responsibilities of the police and crime commissioner and the priorities within the police and crime plan
- Contribute to achieving an open, accountable and transparent decision making process in relation to policing and community safety issues in the Lancashire area.

Note: All panel members would also be expected to adhere to the ‘seven principles of public life’ which are listed below:

Nolan principles⁴

Selflessness: Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity: Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity: In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability: Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness: Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty: Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership: Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

4 Nolan Committee’s First Report on Standards in Public Life from the First Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life (1995).