

**INDEPENDENT CO-OPTees**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To agree a process for appointing independent co-optees to the Panel.

**Information and Advice**

**Background**

2. The Police and Social Responsibility Act 2011 requires each Police and Crime Panel to co-opt at least two independent members.
3. This issue was considered at the Nottinghamshire Leaders Group meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> June 2012 during discussions about the membership of the Panel (see Local Authority Membership report earlier on this agenda).
4. The Leaders Group felt that this recruitment process should seek to appoint two independent members and should specifically target the Probation Board Trust and Nottinghamshire Magistrates so that the Panel would gain particular skills and areas of experience which would help meet the balanced appointment objective overall.
5. The Panel Arrangements subsequently agreed state that the Panel will appoint two independent members for a term of two years (with no restriction on the overall period served).
6. Following their nomination to the Panel in July 2012, Members were consulted by e-mail about the approach proposed by the Leaders Group (in light of the timing of this first meeting of the Panel). It was also proposed that any such nominations be sought initially for a temporary period of six months, to give the Panel an opportunity to review its membership overall in terms of skills and experience. Going forward, any subsequent independent co-optee appointments will be for a term of two years, in line with the Panel Arrangements.
7. Requests for relevant nominations have been made to the Chair of Nottinghamshire Probation Trust Board and the Justices' Clerk at Nottingham Magistrates Court. These requests underlined that nominations would be particularly welcome from women and members of black and minority ethnic communities, in order for the Panel's membership to better reflect the population of Nottinghamshire.
8. To date, eleven applications have been received from local magistrates and a single application has been received from the Probation Trust Board. One unsolicited application from a voluntary and community sector representative has also been received.

## Appointment Process

9. Any independent co-optee appointments will need to be approved by the full Panel.
10. In order to progress the process in an efficient and timely manner, it is proposed that a three member sub-group of the Panel be established, to make recommendations for the Panel to ultimately consider.
11. Members of the sub-group will subsequently agree and undertake any process for shortlisting and interviewing applicants. It is hoped that the outcomes of this appointment process can be reported to the next meeting of the Panel in for approval.
12. Three members are needed to join the sub-group. In doing so, Members should be aware that, in light of the relatively tight timescales for making these appointments, they will need to ensure that they have some degree of diary flexibility over the next few weeks.
13. If the process can be completed in time for the appointments to be approved at the next meeting of the Panel then the independent members will be able to attend that meeting, which is expected to include some induction elements. If this is not possible then a separate induction process will be arranged. An alternative option may be for all applicants to be invited to the next meeting of the Panel, as a preliminary stage in the recruitment process.

## **Other Options Considered**

14. The process of targeted recruitment proposed by the Leaders Group will enable the Panel to initially address existing gaps in skills and experience. The temporary appointments will give the Panel greater flexibility in reviewing the balance of its membership at its first annual meeting in June 2013. Possible options at that stage could include:-
  - confirming the initial temporary appointments for a further full two year term;
  - appointing other co-optees through a wider recruitment process; or
  - increasing the number of independent co-optees in total (subject to approval by the Secretary of State).

## **Reasons for Recommendation/s**

15. To enable the appointment process to be progressed at the earliest possibility.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That a three Member sub-group of the Panel be established to agree and undertake the process for nominating two independent members, subject to approval by the full Panel.

## Background Papers and Published Documents

- 1) Notes of Leaders Meeting – 20 June 2012.
- 2) Correspondence from Keith Ford to Nottinghamshire Probation Trust Board and Nottinghamshire Magistrates.
- 3) E-mail correspondence from Keith Ford to Panel members about the proposed approach.
- 4) Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (published)
- 5) The Police and Crime Panel (Nominations, Appointments and Notifications) Regulations 2012 (published)
- 6) 'Police and crime panels – Guidance on role and composition' – Local Government Association – 2011 (published)
- 7) 'Police and crime panels – Guidance on appointing independent co-opted members' – Local Government Association – 2012 (published)

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