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To: Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel – 8th September 2016

Subject: Panel Communications protocol

1. Introduction

1.1 At its initial meeting in September 2014 the Panel reviewed its Communications protocol. The Protocol sets out the arrangements for the Panel to deal with the press and other media and also set out the arrangements for liaison on press and media comments with the Police and Crime Commissioner's office. The panel agreed that this protocol should be further reviewed in 2 years' time.

2. Review

2.1 Panel officers have reviewed the document agreed by the Panel, and have consulted the Office of the Police and Crime commissioner. The review has not identified any need to change the basic principles or general arrangements set out in the protocol as they remain appropriate. In fact the protocol has only been used on one occasion - the Panel's response to the TV documentary made by the previous Commissioner. The level of media interest in that matter led to requests for various Panel members to make statements or give interviews. It is suggested that, to assist Panel members, paragraph 1.2 be amended to make clear the capacity in which any Panel member, other than the Chairman or Vice-Chairman, makes statements to the media.

2.2 It is good practice to review all policies and protocols at regular intervals. As this review has not identified any significant issues or need for major change it is recommended that this protocol be reviewed again by the Panel in 3 years' time.

Recommendation

3. That the Panel agrees the revised Communications Protocol at Appendix A and asks the officers to undertake a further review in September 2019

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Communications Protocol for the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel

Summary: This protocol has been written as a basis for all public communications between the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel and the media. It also takes into consideration the sharing of information between the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel and the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner.

1. Protocol

- 1.1 The Chairman of the PCP (except in his absence, the Vice Chairman) is the official spokesperson for the panel. This will only change if a specific spokesperson from the panel has been approved in advance by the Chairman.
- 1.2 Other panel members may only present personal views or the views of their own Council on a matter relevant to the Panel and this should be in line with their own authority's protocol for communicating with the media. A copy of any statement should be sent to the Kent County Council press office and the Communications Manager at the Office of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 1.3 As host authority, Kent County Council's press office will respond to day-to-day enquiries from the media by issuing statements and/or arranging interviews with members or officers as appropriate. This will take place following discussions with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Panel and Head of Democratic Services at Kent County Council.
- 1.4 Both the Panel and Commissioner may issue their own statements / comments following panel meetings.

2. Publication of Agenda and Minutes

- 2.1 Panel agendas and minutes will be published on the Panel's page on KCC's website and a link sent to all other local authorities who appoint Members to the Panel and other interested parties, including the Commissioner's office.
- 2.2 Dates of meetings and agenda items will be shared with the Commissioner's Office in advance. This information will then be published on both KCC's website and through other communications channels.
- 2.3 After the meeting any Panel external communication plans will be shared in advance with the Commissioner's Chief of Staff e.g. any planned interviews, announcement of key decisions, and timings to ensure a joined up approach.

3. Ownership of policy

3.1 This policy owned by the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.

Next review date: September 2019