

AVON & SOMERSET OFFICE OF POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Job Description

JOB TITLE: Independent Panel Member for Misconduct Hearings

In January 2023, the then Home Secretary launched a review into the process of police officer dismissals, designed to ensure that the system is fair and effective at removing those officers who are not fit to serve. Following completion of this, the Government announced a series of reforms to strengthen the disciplinary system on 31 August 2023 and published the [final report on 18 September](#).

Recruitment to this role supports Tranche 1 of these reforms, which changes the panel composition for Misconduct Hearings from the end of April 2024. Whilst the changes are definitive and any potential changes are anticipated to be minor amends, it is important to note that this role profile could be subject to amendment in accordance with any national direction under the reforms.

Main Purpose of the role:

To be a member of police misconduct panels and assist those panels in coming to fair and evidence-based decisions about a particular officer's conduct and appropriate outcomes arising from those decisions.

To provide an independent and impartial voice on such panels and to provide assurance to the community that conduct matters are treated seriously and that misconduct proceedings are being properly investigated and adjudicated.

To consider the impact of officer misconduct on public confidence in policing at all times, with specific attention to maintaining the public's trust in the police service's ability to keep them safe.

Main responsibilities:

- To attend and participate effectively as a panel member in misconduct hearings as required.
- To prepare for such hearings by considering in advance relevant papers, reports and background information.
- To carefully consider all the evidence before the panel and draw appropriate conclusions from that evidence.
- To question those giving evidence and challenge constructively in these hearings where appropriate.
- To utilise training offered that is relevant to the role, and to take a proactive approach to considering what additional personal development would be appropriate.
- To keep abreast of general developments affecting policing, both locally and nationally, that may have an impact on the role of independent member of a misconduct panel.

- To maintain the highest standards of professional conduct and ethics.

Independence:

As an independent person of the hearing panel, you will contribute to a culture that supports:

- The highest level of integrity accountability and honesty in the actions of the Panel and of the PCC, Chief Constable and the other officers of the OPCC/Constabulary.
- Respect and dignity among the members and officers.
- Acceptance by all members of the panel of the right of every member to hold and express a dissenting opinion.
- A commitment to best governance practices.

Location:

Misconduct Panels may be convened at locations throughout the Avon and Somerset Policing area but predominantly held at Police HQ, Portishead. In addition, people appointed for panels in the Avon and Somerset police area may be requested, optionally, to sit on panels in other Constabulary areas throughout the South West.

Person Specification:

The Police & Crime Commissioner is looking for a person who can evidence that they have the following competencies:

	Competencies, skills & experience	Essential or Desirable
1	Strong communicator with the confidence to voice your own opinions in a constructive and considered way.	Essential
2	The ability to absorb and analyse a large amount of complex information quickly and reach objective decisions.	Essential
3	The ability to participate in decision making as part of a group, while retaining objective perspective.	Essential
4	Have the ability to command the respect and trust of others at all levels.	Essential
5	Have a good understanding of the diverse and complex nature of Avon and Somerset and its communities.	Essential
6	Be committed to the public service principles of accountability, probity, openness and equality of opportunity.	Essential
7	Must be conversant with IT, able to communicate via email and to receive documentation electronically via secure email and device. All panel papers will be provided electronically only.	Essential
8	Independent panel members must reside in Avon and Somerset.	Desirable

9	Previous experience of setting organisational standards and conduct expectations or participating in organisational disciplinary panels private, public or voluntary sector organisation.	Desirable
10	Previous experience of HR practices and operations within a private, public or voluntary sector organisation including an understanding of employment law.	Desirable
11	Proven leadership experience within a private, public or voluntary sector organisation.	Desirable

Applicants will be assessed against the following qualities and abilities:

Analytical skills: The ability to absorb, interpret, understand and draw conclusions from large volumes of case material.

Judgement: The ability to take a balanced, open minded and objective approach to issues in a case and assist the panel in reaching evidence-based decisions that are robust and will withstand challenge.

Communication: The ability to articulate views clearly whilst being receptive to the opinions of others.

Influencing skills: The ability to persuade other panel members to an alternative viewpoint whilst maintaining respect and integrity; the ability to reach a consensus in circumstances where this might be challenging.

Time management: An appropriate level of commitment to the process, ensuring that sufficient time is set aside to both attend and prepare for hearings.

Integrity: An understanding of what is meant by high standards of conduct and ethics and a commitment to demonstrating that in your own behaviour.

Diversity: A commitment to equality and diversity and in particular an understanding of this in the context of policing and employment.

Eligibility:

Applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria (see Disqualifications) as well as the following:

Availability – The majority of misconduct hearings are provisionally scheduled for 3-5 days. You will be expected to be available to act in this capacity approximately 10-15 days per year. To prepare for hearings by considering, in advance, relevant papers, reports and background information.

Willing to adhere to 7 principles of public life - Willing to undertake the role with selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

It is expected that the PCC as a public authority supports the 7 Principles of Standards in Public Life (called the Nolan Principles). As such, the seven principles of conduct underpin the work of the PCC and are used as the basis for working practices.

The principles are:

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.

Vetting - Successful candidates will need to be security vetted prior to sitting on a misconduct panel.

Term

The term period for this appointment is an initial period of 5 years. The appointment can be mutually agreed to be extended for a second term additional period of 5 years. At this point the PCC can extend annually by mutual agreement. Any extension may require a reapplication process.