

PCSP Reconstitution Frequently Asked Questions

How much time will I need to give?

PCSP members are expected to attend approximately 20 meetings per year although this may vary depending on local need. Attendance at meetings is crucial to the effectiveness of the PCSP. Meetings are generally held in the evening although occasionally meetings are held at other times during the day to maximise opportunities for all people in the community to attend.

Furthermore, PCSP members are expected to engage with the local community as part of consultation processes and attend training, events and briefings organised by the PCSP, the Policing Board and the Department of Justice.

Will I get paid?

This appointment does not attract any allowance, however, all members of the PCSP would be eligible to claim a general expense payment of £60 per meeting limited to a maximum of 20 meetings per year (up to a maximum of 30 meetings per year for Chairs and Vice Chairs) to cover reasonable out-of-pocket expenses such as childcare.

Can my appointment be terminated?

Yes. The Policing Board (or the Council with our approval) may remove you from your role as an Independent Member of a PCSP if we are satisfied that you:

- failed to tell us that you were convicted for a criminal offence in Northern Ireland or elsewhere;
- have been convicted of a criminal offence in Northern Ireland ,or elsewhere, after the date you were appointed;
- have been made bankrupt or have made a composition or arrangement with your creditors;
- have not kept to the conditions of your appointment; including adherence to the PCSP Members' Code of Conduct;;
- are not fit (or not able) to carry out your role as a member of the PCSP; or
- have broken the conditions of the declaration against terrorism.

Do I need to tell you about conflicts of interest?

Yes.

We will ask you to tell us about any conflicts of interest, and any information or connections which may cause a conflict of interest to arise. You should also tell us about any activities you do while you are a member of the PCSP which could be seen by members of the public as influencing your judgement.

Conflicts of interest can be defined as any situation in which an individual is in a position to exploit a professional or official capacity in some way for their personal or corporate benefit.

Possible conflicts of interest would be:

- direct or indirect financial interests which members of the public might reasonably think could influence your judgement as a PCSP member; or
- a close family relationship with a police officer serving in the district where you are applying to serve.

Declaring a conflict of interest will not automatically rule you out for appointment. The Policing Board panel will assess each case individually, whether or not the applicant would be restricted, if appointed, from carrying out the requirements of the post impartially.

What is a declaration against terrorism?

You cannot apply to become an independent member of a PCSP unless you sign a declaration against terrorism.

A declaration against terrorism requires a person to declare that, if appointed to the PCSP, they will not by word or deed express support for or approval of

(a) any organisation that is for the time being a proscribed organisation specified in Schedule 2 to the Terrorism Act 2000; or

(b) acts of terrorism (that is to say, violence for political reasons) connected with Northern Ireland.

For how long will an Independent Member be appointed to a PCSP?

Independent members are appointed to a PCSP until the day before the reconstitution of the new PCSP following the next local government election.

Where and when will PCSP meetings be held?

It is expected that PCSPs will meet at least 20 times throughout the year and some of these meetings will be in public for the purpose of providing local accountability of policing. PCSP meetings can be held anywhere in the council district.

Will Members of the PCSP only be required to attend meetings?

PCSP members will be required to attend PCSP meetings and may also be requested to attend public meetings, events, sub committees/groups and training.

Are appointments to PCSPs publicised in the press?

The Policing Board will issue a news release detailing the make-up of each PCSP this will be available on Policing Board and Council websites.

The information published about you may include a summary of your experience, political activity or other public appointments you have held. This information will be agreed with you in advance of publication.

Will PCSP Members receive training?

The Policing Board and Department of Justice will provide initial induction training for all PCSP Members. Another local induction session will be arranged by Council support staff. Further training opportunities will also be made available through the PCSP to develop Members' skills, qualities and experience to carry out their duties effectively. Members will also be required to attend briefings on issues relating to PSNI.