

**HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT POLICE AND CRIME PANEL
COMPLAINTS SUB-COMMITTEE**

Report

Date:	19 May 2023
Title:	Complaints and additional comments
Report From:	Democratic Services Officer to the Panel

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Purpose of this Report

1. This report was prepared to inform Members of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Police and Crime Panel Complaints Sub-Committee (the Sub-Committee) three complaints received against the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Recommendation(s)

That the Complaints Sub-Committee:

2. Notes the content of this report and its appendices.
3. Considers and agrees the appropriate course of action in response to the complaint and additional comments presented.

Executive Summary

4. This report was prepared to inform the Sub-Committee of three complaints received against the PCC.
5. The report also details the additional comments received from the complainants in support of their complaints, and the comments received from the PCC in relation to the complaints.
6. The report requests that the Complaints Sub-Committee come to an agreement on the action to be taken in response to the complaints.

Contextual information

7. The complaints were received from complainants the on 11 April 2023.
8. All three complainants requested that their identity be kept anonymous. Within this report they are referred to as complainant A, B and C.
9. Any text or material provided to the Sub-Committee which the complainants or complained against have requested be redacted have been reflected within this report.
10. In accordance with the 'Protocol for the Informal Resolution Procedure Regarding Complaints made Against the PCC', the Democratic Support Officer has convened a meeting of the Complaints Sub-Committee.
11. The Democratic Services Officer wrote to the complainants and complained against, on 24 April 2023, setting out the timescales and informal resolution procedure, and giving all parties the opportunity to comment upon the complaints. All parties were given at least 14 calendar days to provide this information.
12. Within their meeting the Sub-Committee will first consider whether the informal process should be applied, whether the complaints have been satisfactorily dealt with and, subject to any representations made may decide to treat the complaints as having been resolved. In such case, the Complaints Sub-Committee's reasons will be recorded and notified to the complainants and the PCC. If, on considering the complaints, the Complaints Sub-Committee feel that the matter needs to be formally resolved, it will decide its course of action and set this out in writing.

Complaints

13. The complaints to be considered by the Sub-Committee are worded below:

Complaint A:

14. I am writing to complain over social media posts that include party political support by the Police & Crime Commissioner over the Easter weekend. This appears to be a breach of the Code of Conduct and Oath of Impartiality entered into by Donna Jones in 2021.

The following links refer to the complaint being raised;

<https://www.facebook.com/100089582612143/videos/553818873551402>

<https://www.facebook.com/HartConservatives/videos/592020576190888>



<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=531144179206773&set=a.236698278651366>

I am not aware the Police & Crime Commissioner is permitted to actively support one party in this way? The Oath of Impartiality states that although Police & Crime Commissioners may stand for a political party, the public will expect them to represent all the people in their area impartially, without fear or favour. The enclosed demonstrates this is not being adhered to by Donna Jones.

I also believe the Police & Crime Commissioner is equally not permitted to actively support elected or non-elected local councillors during a Pre-Election Period (Purdah)? The evidence above relates to clear support for 2 local councillors who are asking to be elected at the forthcoming May elections.

Complaint B:

15. Our PCC (Donna Jones) recently met up with our local elected and unelected candidates in Fleet and is now posting and commenting on their social media posts to support their campaign.

A request was made by our ruling council at Hart to meet with Donna some weeks ago and she was unable to attend even for a virtual meeting but she did send her deputy. The meeting was received well but the deputy promised to come back with some follow-up actions that are still pending.

In the interim, the PCC meets up with only Conservatives councilors and candidates and records a number of election videos making firm commitments e.g " You will receive a new police station or building which I will buy". This was not shared by the deputy in the previous meeting with the

opposition. Furthermore, Donna openly asks for support for her conservative councilors up for election "Please support Annette on 4th May".

I understand our PCC is aligned to a party but our police and police representatives should be impartial and assist all of our constituents not just the one aligned to the party she is a member of. I am truly outraged that this is allowed to happen and deepens the perception that the police are heavily influenced by politics for their own game. The PCC role should not be a political one. In my opinion this is in breach of the code of conduct

Complaint C:

16. Openly campaigning for Conservative candidates in Hart.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/499689254263734> see video at 1:27 <https://fb.watch/jRCdxXc7EQ/> where she openly endorses a candidate. Not a visit to the council but a visit to Conservative party members whilst in the role of PCC actively campaigning.

Whilst the PCC oath of office for Hampshire may have dropped impartiality but that other force's PPC use, and it is acknowledged that the person in the role of PCC may themselves stand for a political party, the public still expects them to represent all the people in their area "impartially, without fear or favour". I refer you to the APCC guidance "Whether or not Police and Crime Commissioners have a particular allegiance to a political party, it is recognised that this is a political role, but in seeking re-election themselves, or supporting other individuals seeking election, Police and Crime Commissioners are acting in a personal capacity and should not use their public office to influence the outcome of the PCC Elections. Deputy Police and Crime Commissioners are in much the same position, since they are also in a political role, and they should follow the advice for Police and Crime Commissioners, except where there is some difference as set out below, rather than the advice relevant to the other staff of the OPCC, which is more restrictive." Whilst that specifically applies to the PPC elections it is expected that they should not use their public office to influence the outcome of any Elections.

Additional Comments

17. The original comments sent from the complainant A are attached as Appendix 1.
18. The original comments sent from the complainant B are attached as Appendix 2 and 3, along with additional comments which were received from complainant B within the window for submissions.

19. The original comments sent from the complainant C are attached as Appendix 4.
20. The PCC has provided commentary on the complaints. This has been attached as Appendix 5.
21. Verbatim transcripts of the videos provided to the complaints have been attached as Appendix 6.

Appendix 1

Details of the alleged incident: I am writing to complain over social media posts that include party political support by the Police & Crime Commissioner over the Easter weekend. This appears to be a breach of the Code of Conduct and Oath of Impartiality entered into by Donna Jones in 2021.

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I am not aware the Police & Crime Commissioner is permitted to actively support one party in this way? The Oath of Impartiality states that although Police & Crime Commissioners may stand for a political party, the public will expect them to represent all the people in their area impartially, without fear or favour. The enclosed demonstrates this is not being adhered to by Donna Jones.

I also believe the Police & Crime Commissioner is equally not permitted to actively support elected or non-elected local councillors during a Pre-Election Period (Purdah)? The evidence above relates to clear support for 2 local councillors who are asking to be elected at the forthcoming May elections.

Date of the alleged incident: 2023-04-08

What outcome you would like to see from this complaint: Removal of social media posts due to a violation of the code of conduct and breach of the Oath of Impartiality by Police Crime Commissioner Donna Jones over the Easter weekend. Removal of these posts and message issued by all parties acknowledging this was a breach of conduct.

Appendix 2

Details of the alleged incident: Our PCC (Donna Jones) recently met up with our local elected and unelected candidates in Fleet and is now posting and commenting on their social media posts to support their campaign.

A request was made by our ruling council at Hart to meet with Donna some weeks ago and she was unable to attend even for a virtual meeting but she did send her deputy. The meeting was received well but the deputy promised to come back with some follow-up actions that are still pending.

In the interim, the PCC meets up with only Conservatives councilors and candidates and records a number of election videos making firm commitments e.g " You will receive a new police station or building which I will buy". This was not shared by the deputy in the previous meeting with the opposition. Furthermore, Donna openly asks for support for her conservative councilors up for election "Please support Annette on 4th May".

I understand our PCC is aligned to a party but our police and police representatives should be impartial and assist all of our constituents not just the one aligned to the party she is a member of. I am truly outraged that this is allowed to happen and deepens the perception that the police are heavily influenced by politics for their own game. The PCC role should not be a political one. In my opinion this is in breach of the code of conduct

Date of the alleged incident: 2023-04-08

What outcome you would like to see from this complaint: The PCC apologies and requests the removal of all the political propaganda posted with her Conservative party Councillors in Hart district.

Attachment to support my claim – three videos as transcribed in Appendix 6

Attachment to support my accusation of a breach of conduct - attached as Appendix 3

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1140374/May2023_Local_Elections_guidance_conduct_civil_ser_vants.pdf

One video - as transcribed in Appendix 6

Another example of electioneering from our PCC to support a Conservative candidate standing for election. The PCC claims CCTV will make our community safer and she has been working with Conservatives across Hart on this initiative for the last 2 years. The statement that most Councils has done this needs is in dispute as that is not the case in our neighbouring boroughs. The PCC wants Hart to get better CCTV to give us safer streets and more prosecutions. Will she deliver against this pledge is her proposed candidates do not get control? I am outraged that our wonderful police force is used as a back drop for her videos and politicised by the PCC.

Appendix 4

Details of the alleged incident: Openly campaigning for Conservative candidates in Hart.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/499689254263734> see video at 1:27
<https://fb.watch/jRCdxXc7EQ/> where she openly endorses a candidate. Not a visit to the council but a visit to Conservative party members whilst in the role of PCC actively campaigning. Whilst the PCC oath of office for Hampshire may have dropped impartiality bit that other force's PPC use, and it is acknowledged that the person in the role of PCC may themselves stand for a political party, the public still expects them to represent all the people in their area "impartially, without fear or favour". I refer you to the APPC guidance "Whether or not Police and Crime Commissioners have a particular allegiance to a political party, it is recognised that this is a political role, but in seeking re-election themselves, or supporting other individuals seeking election, Police and Crime Commissioners are acting in a personal capacity and should not use their public office to influence the outcome of the PCC Elections. Deputy Police and Crime Commissioners are in much the same position, since they are also in a political role, and they should follow the advice for Police and Crime Commissioners, except where there is some difference as set out below, rather than the advice relevant to the other staff of the OPCC, which is more restrictive." Whilst that specifically applies to the PPC elections it is expected that they should not use their public office to influence the outcome of any Elections.

Date of the alleged incident: 2023-04-01

What outcome you would like to see from this complaint: For the PCC to acknowledge and abide by the APPC guidance. To stop using her office to campaign for candidates. And to distance herself and her office from any candidate or party that attempts to use her office / name for their own promotion. The PCC should inform the Hart conservatives and any other campaigns in Hampshire that she has colluded with to remove all such promotion and certainly any endorsements.

Verbatim transcripts of the videos provided to the complaints

Video Posted on Facebook by Annette Whibley (A) Crookham East Candidate on 11 April 2022

<https://www.facebook.com/100089582612143/videos/553818873551402/>

Verbatim transcript:

A: Hello, I'm Annette Whibley. I'm the Conservative candidate for Crookham East and I'm with Donna Jones, the Police and Crime Commissioner who's very kindly given up her Easter Saturday to come and talk to us about issues in Church Crookham.

Donna, one of the things that I'd like to talk to you about particularly because it's something that residents have raised with me is these illegal car meets that have been happening in Church Crookham. Now, I understand that you've got a particular unit dealing with these. Could you perhaps tell our residents a little bit about that?

Donna: Yes, absolutely. Thank you very much Annette. It's been really good to be out with you today as well. Speaking to local residents and business owners. Now, with these car meets, they've grown in their frequency particularly over the last six to eight months. The police have a specialist operation called Op Cromium and this is where we have trained officers and we are sourcing intelligence constantly about these unauthorized car meets. We have had a number of young people who've been seriously injured, cars are seized, people are fined, no tax, no insurance. If you have any information, please report it to Hampshire and IOW Constabulary online or through 101.

Secondly, I'd like to talk to you about the Police the PCSOs, Police Community Support Officers and also the importance of Councils having high quality community wardens to support the police. Some Councils across the County have got brilliant community wardens. And what we're able to do is to tackle ASB quickly, nip it in the bud and to bring people either on to some kind of reparation course, or where we need to. a criminal conviction.

Please please do support Annette on May the 4th in the local elections.

A: Thank you very much Donna.

Text posted with video by Annette Whibley Crookham East Candidate:

Talking to [Donna Jones - Police Commissioner Hampshire & IOW](#) about illegal car meets and antisocial behaviour. The increased focus on tackling car meets in Hampshire is very welcome, but we definitely need Community Wardens in Hart. We would make that happen!

Video Posted on Facebook by Hart Conservatives on 10 April 2022, featuring Spencer Farmer Hartley Wintney Candidate (S)

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=592020576190888>

Verbatim transcript:

S: Hello I am Spencer Farmer and I am your Conservative Candidate for Hartley Wintney, and I am here today with Donna Jones, our Police and Crime Commissioner to talk about our plans to tackle anti-social behaviour and the importance of CCTV in dealing with that issue.

Donna: Its been really good to have a walk around today, Spencer, with you along the High Street and to talk to local residents and business owners about what's going on.

So, as Police and Crime Commissioner, over the last 2 years, I've recruited 600 more police officers. We've now recruited the 600th at the beginning of March. I've just pledged another 50. Importantly, I am also committed to making sure that we have more police front desks and more police stations and that every district in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight has a Police HQ. A head office police station with a front counter. So here in Hart, you will be getting a new police station or a building, which I will buy, which will make sure that we have front counter access for you, the people of this local area.

Secondly to that, I have been working with Spencer and the Councillors, the Conservative team here, for over two years. I really understand the importance of decent quality CCTV. The only way we can tackle catalytic converter thefts, Op. Chromium – the big car meets, or anti-social behaviour, or kids taking drugs in parks, is if we've got high quality, high resolution CCTV.

Some Councils across the County have got brilliant CCTV and they are seeing many more arrests and convictions as a consequence. Secondly to that, Community Wardens. I cannot stress the importance of Councils investing in a really comprehensive Community Warden scheme to complement the neighbourhood policing teams. And I am really pleased, Spencer, that your plans include everything I've just said and more. If you need help, please get in contact with either Spencer or myself.

S: Thank you very much Donna.

Text posted with video by Hart Conservatives:

We've been asked to give details of what we discussed at this week's meeting with [Donna Jones - Police Commissioner Hampshire & IOW](#)

Watch the video to hear Donna Jones talk with Spencer Farmer, one of our Councillors, about our plans to tackle anti-social behaviour, illegal car meets, local crime, and increasing local police presence.

We continue to engage with residents, community groups, and the police, to look at solutions. We've seen incidents of ASB and criminality become more frequent, and in too many instances, more serious. This includes car crime, nitrous oxide and drug taking, as well as vandalism and theft.

- We will invest £160K to fix the broken CCTV network. We will also add extra cameras in problem areas.
- We will recruit Council Community Wardens to complement our neighbourhood PCSOs and the police. This will add to the additional 600 full time police officers Donna has already recruited across Hampshire, plus the 50 extra officers she is now committed to deliver.
- We will relocate the neighbourhood police team from the Hart Council offices to a new central neighbourhood HQ police location in Fleet, with a public accessible staffed front desk. Neighbourhood HQs will typically be a base for local officers including CID, roads police, dog units and other teams. This delivers a policy pledged by Donna Jones and follows the work Hart Conservatives have undertaken with Donna Jones over the past two years.

CCH and the LibDems, who have run Hart for the past 6 years, continue to deny there is a problem with anti-social behaviour and local increases in crime. They have buried their heads in the sand, try to blame others, and attempt to hide behind misleading statistics. They have failed to maintain or upgrade our CCTV network. The ageing cameras are often not working, produce poor quality images, and have not been properly monitored. They have done nothing to deal with these problems and don't take Community Safety seriously.

You get to decide on 4th May who you want to Protect our community. To find out more, follow our page and let us know what else you would like to see the Council do better.

Video provided by complainant B, featuring Roy Fang, Fleet Central Candidate (R)

Verbatim transcript:

R: Hi I'm Roy Fang. I'm standing for Fleet Central this May. I'm here with Police and Crime Commissioner Donna Jones, today and talking about anti-social behaviour.

Donna: Thank you very much Roy. It's really good to have done a walk around today with you in Fleet speaking to local business owners and also to residents.

Just want to give people a quick update on what we're doing together working with the local Conservative team here in Fleet.

So first of all, just under two years ago, I pledged to recruit 600 more police officers across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. That is now done, and achieved. I've now gone on to pledge another 50 police officers that will be recruited over the next year. That means that you will see more police in your area.

Secondly, the new Chief Constable started on 23rd February. He is going to be changing the police operating model, rebuilding local policing. Now local policing means that we need to have good quality CCTV cameras. A lot of the councils across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight have got very high quality CCTV. The only way we can bring about prosecutions for drug taking, and for anti-social behaviour, for car thefts, catalytic converter thefts, is if we've got good quality, high resolution CCTV through the Council, and also you guys registering your ring doorbells.

Please do support Roy in the local elections and if I can help with anything at all, please do get into contact with me. Donna Jones, Police and Crime Commissioner.

Video provided by complainant B, featuring Jennifer Copeland, Hook Candidate (J)

Verbatim transcript:

J: Hi, I'm Jennifer Copeland. I'm a candidate standing here today for Hook. I'm with Donna Jones, the Police and Crime Commissioner. She's going to tell us the importance of CCTV

Donna: Thank you very much. It's been really good to be out with you today Jennifer as well speaking to local residents and local businesses. I am going to start first with the car meets. This has got a policing name called Op Chromium. This has really been picking up in its number over the last six to eight months and we have seen a number of car meets and some very serious injuries, particularly to young people. The Police have now got a dedicated unit, there is a team of people that are really trying to seize cars, you know, fine people for no insurance, no tax and take strong action to try and prevent these car meets, which are unauthorised and as I say, where people are being injured.

Moving on to CCTV, well yes for Hook Village, it is very important. Good quality, high resolution CCTV can be the difference between somebody getting away with an assault or a catalytic converter theft and not.

The Police cannot prosecute if the Crown Prosecution Service and a jury would not be convinced that that individual is the person that stole the car or stole the catalytic converter. Now, most councils across the County have now really improved their CCTV. I've been working with the local Conservatives here, across (ah) the whole of the Hart area for the last two years. I really really want you to have better CCTV to lead to safer community, safer streets and more prosecutions.

REQUIRED LEGAL INFORMATION:

Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Elected Local Policing Bodies (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations 2012	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
Protocol for the Informal Resolution Procedure Regarding Complaints made against the Police and Crime Commissioner	https://documents.hants.gov.uk/partnerships/hampshire-pcp/PCP-ProtocolfortheInformalComplaintsProcedure.pdf