

# **REPORT OF THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 24 JANUARY 2018**

## **POLICING AND CRIME ACT 2017**

### **REQUEST FROM POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR NORTHUMBRIA**

#### **Report of the Monitoring Officer**

##### **Cabinet Member: Councillor John Riddle - Planning Housing and Resilience**

Council, at its meeting on 1 November 2017, referred a request from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria to be co-opted as a member of the authority for the purposes stated in the attached report under statutory amendments brought into effect last year by the provisions of the Policing and Crime Act 2017, to the Communities and Place OSC for consideration. The Committee considered that request at their meeting on 24 January 2018.

Mr Henry, Legal Services Manager presented the report to the Committee and advised members that, in addition to seeking co-option to the Council, the Commissioner had further expressed her wish to be a member of all decision making bodies that Northumberland Council have in relation to Fire and Rescue Service issues, including the Cabinet, the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS) Local Pension Board, and the Disputes Panel - Fire and Rescue Service.

Mr Henry confirmed to members that co-option onto the Council and other committees would include voting rights. Although a member expressed the view that any contribution the commissioner could make to the decision-making process should be welcomed, the Committee felt that the collaborative working that already existed between the Council's Chief Fire Officer and the Chief Constable already provided the high level partnership working that was required.

Following a vote of:

For - 6

Against - 2

Abstention - 1

the Committee **RESOLVED** to agree the following recommendations:

***"The Committee agrees to recommend***

***(a) to Council, in respect of the Police and Crime Commissioner ("the Commissioner") for Northumbria's request to attend, speak and vote at***

***meetings of Council and all decision making bodies that Northumberland County Council have in relation to Fire and Rescue Service issues, including the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS) Local Pension Board, and the Disputes Panel - Fire and Rescue Service, in relation to business which relates to the functions of the Council as a fire and rescue authority should be refused for the reasons set out in (i) - (ii) below:***

- (i) the Council have not received from the Commissioner a satisfactory explanation as to how she believes her ability to attend, speak and vote at meetings of the Council will achieve the objectives of the provisions of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 in relation to greater collaborative working between the emergency services and the enhancement of the democratic accountability of Northumbria Police and Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service and, that, in any event***
  
- (ii) the Council considers that greater collaborative working between Northumbria Police and Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service can be achieved by more effective and meaningful strategic and operational partnership working between the two services without the need for the Commissioner's formal involvement as a co-opted member of the authority which would add little or nothing, it is felt, to the democratic accountability of either service"***

**JEFF REID  
CHAIRMAN**