

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS

PCC BULLETIN

No 3 – 29 NOVEMBER 2011

This Bulletin is one in a series of regular updates keeping you informed about developments for the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners in 2012.

In this edition:

- Early output from the PCC 'Deep Dives', a series of four events that explored some of the key issues arising from the introduction of PCCs for local areas and for the Home Office;
- Introduction to the Strategic Policing Requirement, which sets out the collective capabilities that police forces across England and Wales would have in place to protect the public;
- 'One Year to Go';
- Update on the Safer Future Communities fund, providing £1.1m for the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector to prepare for PCCs; and
- Partner events planned for the New Year.

PCC Transition Programme - Deep Dives

A series of four-day events were carried out across England and Wales in Leicestershire, West Yorkshire, South Wales and the West Midlands police force areas. Each event included sessions to explore issues such as partnership working with PCCs, how the PCC will fit into local strategic leadership of areas, and the formation of police and crime panels. There were also discussions around key issues and challenges areas are managing in relation to the introduction of PCCs. A number of themes emerged from the sessions including:

Police and Crime Panels

A range of issues were raised around Police and Crime Panels. Inevitably these included some misunderstandings and myths – the most common of which, including Home Office responses, are shown below.

- ***Panels will scrutinise the performance of the force.***
Panels will not scrutinise the performance of the force – this is the role of the PCC. Panels will scrutinise the performance of the PCC who is in turn responsible for holding the Chief Constable to account for the performance of the force.
- ***Panels are taking over from police authorities.***
Police and Crime Commissioners are replacing police authorities from November 2012. Panels will have a specific number of functions relating to the scrutiny of Commissioners.
- ***Panels will provide an opportunity for local authorities to individually influence the Commissioners' priorities.***
Local authorities will be important partners for PCCs who will, in turn, need to ensure that these relationships are successfully established. However, the main business between local authorities and PCCs will not take place through the panel. The panel will have a specific scrutiny role with other discrete functions which panel members will need to work collectively to achieve.
- ***Panels and PCCs will work in partnership to make key decisions in relation to funding***

and priorities.

PCCs will be directly elected by the public and it will be the public who hold them to account for their actions and decisions. The panel will have an important role as a critical friend both supporting and scrutinising the performance of the PCC and ensuring transparency. However it is vital that the public are clear who they can hold to account for policing in their force area – this must be the PCC.

The recently launched PCC website <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/police/police-crime-commissioners/> contains a dedicated section on Police and Crime Panels with Frequently Asked Questions on the key issues relating to this important part of the reform programme.

Funding

Partnership concerns exist around continuity of funding and the impact on existing programmes. Areas requested early communications to partnerships as soon as more detail is available. The Home Office can now confirm that Community Safety and DIP funding will go to existing grant recipients in 2012-13. Areas also requested greater information around the continuity and routing of the community safety funding for 2013-14 and further detail will follow very shortly.

Local PCC Transition Programmes

Many areas have established a Transition Board to bring together senior partners to discuss key issues on a regular basis. Preparations are at an early stage and the next steps in most areas will be to involve a wider range of partners at all levels within organisations. Some local transition boards are exploring the opportunity to prepare briefing / induction packs for candidates and PCCs providing information about local priorities and successful local projects.

Partnership working and messages from ‘the centre’

A number of areas have asked us for guidance on what action they need to take to develop co-operative arrangements locally. As you are aware, statutory co-operative duties have been placed on the PCC and their criminal justice and community safety partners but we are not intending to provide detailed, prescriptive guidance on how these duties should be enacted. In keeping with the Government's localism agenda, we believe local areas and their partners are best placed to agree and put in place arrangements that work best for them. Therefore, local determination and collective leadership will be critically important. Nationally, we are working with colleagues across Government to answer specific national questions where these exist, including considering the need to provide information about boundaries that cannot be crossed – such as, in relation to criminal justice, upholding the independence of prosecutors and the judiciary.

An update will be provided in future bulletins.

Information and communications

There was a huge appetite expressed for more communication and information on all issues relating to PCCs and a concern that information was fragmented across a number of sources.

We recognise that establishing a co-ordinated and coherent programme is an essential support for all partners preparing for the introduction of PCCs. To that end we have launched a dedicated section on the Home Office website for members of the public and those interested in finding out more about the role of PCCs. The new pages on Police and Crime Commissioners on the Home Office website include the links to all the key documents and further information on key themes, including frequently asked questions - <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/police/police-crime-commissioners>

We have also launched a new information booklet for potential candidates: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/police/pcc/got-what-it-takes>. Candidates could have

experience in the private, voluntary or public sector. We want people from all backgrounds, who can bring new perspectives to a service that hasn't always represented the communities it polices. Women, people from ethnic minorities and disabled people are under-represented in elected office.

One Year to Go

The Minister for Policing and Criminal Justice Nick Herbert marked the One Year To Go anniversary with a speech on "A new era in policing" -

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/speeches/a-new-era-for-policing>

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act already requires PCCs to consult with victims in setting policing priorities in their local area. For the first time, victims of crime will have a statutory role in determining what the police should focus on, and how they focus on the priorities. Nick Herbert announced on 21 Nov that in December the government will publish a consultation setting out proposals for improving support for victims and witnesses. Proposals include the requirement that victim support services should be locally funded and locally determined and that PCCs should act as commissioners for victim support services, ensuring through local, democratic accountability that services meet local need, represent value for money, and deliver real outcomes for victims.

The Minister's speech also called for candidates to stand as PCC to help ensure that the public get the PCCs they deserve when they go to the polls on November 2012.

Strategic Policing Requirement

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act requires the Home Secretary to issue a Strategic Policing Requirement. The Strategic Policing Requirement describes the collective capabilities that police forces across England and Wales would have in place in order to protect the public from serious harm, and maintain national security; and will focus exclusively on those policing functions that aggregate to the national level - such as protecting the public from terrorism, public disorder and civil unrest, organised crime and the management of civil contingencies and critical incidents.

The Home Secretary worked closely with ACPO, APA and other policing partners to develop the Strategic Policing Requirement, and published a non statutory "shadow" Strategic Policing Requirement on 21 November which will inform the 2012/13 police force and authority planning arrangements.

Policing partners are strongly encouraged to support implementation and make use of the shadow document. They can use this as an opportunity to test the Strategic Policing Requirement and learn from it before the statutory Strategic Policing Requirement is issued next summer. Both Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables will be required to have regard to the Strategic Policing Requirement from November 2012 in their planning and resource allocation. <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/police/pcc/shadow-spr>.

Protocol

The Home Secretary laid for the approval of Parliament on 21 November a Protocol that sets out how the new policing governance arrangements will work. It clarifies the role and responsibilities of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), the mayor's office for policing and crime (MOPC), Chief Constables, police and crime panels and the London Assembly police and crime panel. It outlines what these bodies are expected to do and how they are expected to work together to fight crime and improve policing. The Protocol will therefore fundamentally underpin the key working relationships within the new policing landscape.

How the elected policing bodies work with, and interact with, Chief Constables and police and crime

panels will be crucial to achieving success.

It is the intention of the Home Secretary to issue the protocol to all Chief Constables, police authority chairs, their chief executives, the chief executives of all local authorities within England and Wales and the Welsh Government in order to assist in transition planning. The protocol will also be made available to all potential candidates for the Mayor of London elections in May 2012. It will then be made available to potential candidates for the office of PCC within each force area in England and Wales ahead of the first elections in November 2012.

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/police/pcc/policing-protocol>

Safer Future Communities programme

The Home Office has awarded a total of £1.1 million over this and next financial year to support frontline voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations in preparation for the arrival of Police and Crime Commissioners. The Safer Future Communities project will be delivered through a strategic partnership led by Clinks, the infrastructure charity supporting organisations working with offenders. The project aims to secure more effective working between the VCSE, Community Safety Partnerships, PCCs and other statutory agencies that impact upon community safety.

More information: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/partnerships/support-modernisation-fund/>

Contacts: Sara Featherstone, Community Safety Unit at sara.featherstone@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk or Linda Pizani-Williams, the Clinks project manager at Lindapizani.williams@clinks.org

PCC Information Events

From January 2012, the Home Office is arranging a series of seventeen events across England and Wales to help key local partners prepare for the arrival of PCCs next November. The events will be open to a range of strategic level partners (chief executive level) and will include dedicated sessions on police and crime panels and partnership working.

Events are being carefully targeted to ensure broad coverage with partners from up to three police force areas invited to each event which will take place over January and February.

January

Lancaster, Crewe, Colwyn, Birmingham.

February

Leicester, Derby, Portsmouth, Reading, London, Ipswich, Cambridge, Exeter, Swindon.

March

Cardiff, Newcastle, Leeds, Manchester.

We're sending out regular bulletins throughout the roll-out of Police and Crime Commissioners to keep you informed. We will also field any enquiries or questions you have. Contact us at PCCPartnersEnquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

We welcome your comments and questions throughout the development and implementation process.