

# POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS

## PCC BULLETIN

### No 17 – 18 March 2013

This seventeenth bulletin is the latest in a series of regular updates to keep partners and the office of the PCC informed about issues of interest in the police reform landscape following the election of police and crime commissioners. This edition includes:

- Victims' Services Commissioning
- Integrated Offender Management and Social Enterprise
- Community Action Against Crime: Innovation Fund
- Safer Future Communities – Local Commissioning and Local Partnerships
- Police-led Prosecutions
- National Crime Agency
- Definition of Domestic Violence
- Police and Crime Plans

### Victims' Services Commissioning

#### PCC Reference Group

Last month the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) invited PCCs or a member of their team to join the Police and Crime Commissioners Reference Group, set up by the MoJ, to assist with the development of the victims' services commissioning framework and broader policy issues of local and national commissioning of support services for victims of crime. The group is well supported with 23 areas represented and the MoJ would encourage those PCCs not yet represented to join. Those wishing to be a part of the group should contact Yvonne Murray at [Yvonne.murray@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Yvonne.murray@justice.gsi.gov.uk)

#### Referral Mechanism

The EU Victims' Directive, adopted in October 2012, established minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime.

**Article 8** of the EU Victims' Directive concerning the right to access victim support services, requires that "*Member States shall facilitate the referral of victims, by the competent authority that received the complaint and by other relevant entities, to victim support services*"

The referral process is currently provided and supported as part of existing arrangements with Victim Support. In order to ensure that the requirements of the Directive are met in the best way as we move to a national-local split in commissioning of services for victims, the MoJ want to engage with Police and Crime Commissioners via the Reference Group for their views and thinking on the referral process. One of the main issues will be the balance between the move to commissioning the majority of services for victims locally by PCCs, and

any emerging views on whether, for example for consistency or economies of scale, there may be a national role to play in any part of the process.

### Evidence and Practice Review

The MoJ published an Evidence and Practice Review in December. The review looked at current practice and existing evidence on victims' support needs, outcome measurement and quality assurance in the victim support sector. The review links to the development of the commissioning framework, particularly with its emphasis on measuring outcomes and quality assurance of services. The review can be accessed here:

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/research-and-analysis/moj/evidence-and-practice-review-of-support-for-victims-and-outcome-measurement>

### **Integrated Offender Management and Social Enterprise**

The Home Office, in partnership with Clinks and Social Firms UK is undertaking a short piece of work to explore the role of social enterprises and community interest companies in providing training and employment opportunities for offenders (both adult and young offenders).

The aim is to capture and share some of the current key learning and effective practice through the development of a set of resources. The work will also benefit and help local Integrated Offender Management partnerships learn from the wider experience of social enterprises working within the criminal justice system.

As part of the project, Clinks and Social Firms UK have also organised an event in London on 20 March. The purpose of the event is to look at how we can work together to build sustainable social enterprises which support offenders into training and employment. We are keen to ensure that a wide range of Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSE) organisations, statutory partners (national and local), private sector and local businesses attend and share their experience and learning. Further information about the event is available on Clinks' website <http://www.clinks.org/training/events/soc-ent-ete>

### **Case Studies of the Community Action against Crime: Innovation Fund**

The Community Action Against Crime: Innovation fund, owned by the Home Office, is led by the [Community Development Foundation](#) (CDF). It seeks to encourage new ways of tackling crime issues which matter most to local communities. The two year fund was intended to show the potential of the VCSE sector in designing innovative solutions in fighting crime alongside the police and other partners. A series of case studies have been produced to showcase the contribution that the sector can make to reducing crime and these are now available on the CDF website. Projects tackled issues across the community safety and crime prevention agenda including, for example, human trafficking, disability hate crime, reducing reoffending, anti-social behavior and irresponsible dog ownership. The case studies are available at:

<http://www.cdf.org.uk/content/funding-programmes/crime-innovation-fund>

## **Safer Future Communities - Local Commissioning, Local Partnerships: Are we ready?**

Safer Future Communities hosted a national event on 20th February, chaired by Michael O'Toole, Crown Representative for the VCSE Sector at the Cabinet Office, which explored the opportunities and challenges of local commissioning and local partnerships. The aim of the event was to see how national stakeholders from all sectors could support local organisations to work together to deliver innovative, effective and good value services. Colleagues from the Safer Future Communities team will be coming along to a future PCC event to provide a further update on the work of Safer Future Communities. In addition, Michael O'Toole will also attend a future PCC event to talk more widely about commissioning the VCSE to deliver public services.

A full summary of the event is available at the following link:

<http://www.clinks.org/services/sfc/sfc-events>

## **Police-led Prosecutions**

In a move to cut inefficiency and deliver swifter justice for victims, the Home Office has extended police prosecution powers to cover over half of all cases heard in magistrates' courts.

Following legislation introduced last year, the police can now take over the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) role in prosecuting proof in absence cases, and those where exceptional hardship representations are made. In addition, officers are now able to follow several low-level crime offences from the point of arrest right through to completion, including some alcohol and public order offences, driving without due care and attention and criminal damage under the value of £5,000. The CPS still prosecute cases where a defendant pleads not guilty, is under the age of 16, or if the case starts by charge, as opposed to summons.

The changes are being tested in nine police force areas to find the best delivery model. The pathfinders are Essex, Hampshire, Kent, Lincolnshire, Metropolitan, Nottinghamshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and West Yorkshire. To implement the changes, pathfinders have established police court presentation officers to prosecute these cases through a self-funded model based on recovered court costs. The legislation enables any police force to prosecute these offences, providing they have the agreement of the local courts and CPS. Support is available from the Home Office to any non-pathfinder area wishing to implement these new processes. For more detailed information, please refer to the Home Office website at the following link: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/reducing-reoffending/plp/>

## **National Crime Agency Update**

There are now just six months to go until the National Crime Agency (NCA) becomes operational in October, and the 'build' phase is gathering pace.

February has seen the delivery of Version 2 of the Blueprint which sets out the high level

operating model for the NCA and outlines the capabilities the NCA will have to lead the UK response to serious, organised and complex crime. Version 2 of the shadow National Coordination and Tasking, which means that UK Border Agency, Border Force and Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre can now request resources from its precursor agencies, has also been delivered. Shadow operations with partners continue to produce real results and test how the NCA will work, so it is ready to hit the ground running on day one.

The Crime and Courts Bill - which will provide the legal basis for the NCA, including its functions, powers, tasking and assistance, information sharing, governance and scrutiny arrangements – has completed Committee stage in the House of Commons and, subject to a successful passage through Parliament, will be on track to receive Royal Assent in Spring 2013.

For more information on the NCA and the Bill visit the [Home Office website](#).

### **Change in Definition of Domestic Violence**

On 19 September 2012, following a public consultation, the Deputy Prime Minister announced that the Government would be extending the definition of domestic violence so that young people aged 16 and 17 would be included. The change is being introduced to increase awareness that young people from this age group do experience domestic violence and abuse. The Government also announced that wording to capture coercive control would be introduced.

*The new definition will be implemented from 31 March 2013.*

Whilst this is not a legislative change, the definition will send a clear message to victims about what constitutes domestic violence and abuse.

Partners are encouraged to review their guidance and policies on domestic violence to ensure they reflect the change in definition

If you have any queries please contact [Hannah.Buckley@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Hannah.Buckley@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

To view the definition, please refer to the Home Office website at the following link: <http://homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/violence-against-women-girls/domestic-violence/>

### **Police and Crime Plans**

All PCCs have now published their draft police and crime plans. Public consultations are underway and the draft plans are being scrutinised by the police and crime panels, with some panels already having approved the PCC's proposals. Emerging themes include a focus on community safety, restorative justice and other community payback measures, supporting victims, and road safety. Many PCCs have also set out plans to make greater use of special constables and volunteers.

31st March is the deadline for PCCs to issue their final plans. Further information on this will be included in the next bulletin.

We're sending out regular bulletins for partners and the office of police and crime commissioners. Contact us at [PCCPartnersEnquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:PCCPartnersEnquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk) to keep you informed of what we are doing, what we plan to do and the opportunities for you to get involved. We will also field any enquiries or questions you have.

Please also send ideas and proposals for content of future bulletins to this address.