

CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL	Agenda Item No. 7
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Report of Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner

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POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER’S APPROACH

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Police and Crime Panel (the “Panel”) with an overview of the Police and Crime Commissioner’s (the “Commissioner”) role, how he intends to take forward his role, and how his Police and Crime Plan (the “Plan”) will be developed.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the report.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 3.1 Item 6 – To review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, by the Police and Crime Commissioner in connection with the discharge of the Commissioner’s functions.

Item 8 – To support the effective exercise of the functions of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (the “Act”) sets out the statutory duties, role and responsibilities of Commissioners. Primarily, the Commissioner has a statutory duty and electoral mandate to hold Cambridgeshire Constabulary (the “Constabulary”) to account on behalf of the public.

- 4.2 In addition, the Commissioner, amongst other duties, has the legal power to:

- set the strategic direction and objectives of the force through the Plan;
- scrutinise, support and challenge the overall performance of the Constabulary including against the priorities agreed within the Plan;
- maintain an efficient and effective police force for the police area;
- provide the local link between the police and communities, working to translate the legitimate desires and aspirations of the public into action;
- enter into collaboration agreements with other Commissioners, other policing bodies and partners that improve the efficiency or effectiveness of policing for one or more policing bodies or police forces.

4.3 The Policing Protocol Order 2011 (the “Protocol”) sets out the way in which various bodies involved in policing governance will exercise their functions in relation to each other. This includes Commissioners, Chief Constables and Police and Crime Panels. The Protocol is clear that an effective and constructive working relationship between these bodies is likely to be achieved where communication and clarity of understanding are at their highest, one which will enhance policing.

5. HOW THE COMMISSIONER PROPOSES TO TAKE FORWARD HIS ROLE

5.1 Challenges bring opportunities but foremost potential benefits to improve policing and to ensure Cambridgeshire is a safe place. The Commissioner is clear that local policing starts with understanding of local concerns being listened to. Communication and engagement with public, communities and partners, is key to understanding the challenges, seizing opportunities and creating solutions.

5.2 The Commissioner is clear that communication and public engagement is essential. As such, the Commissioner wishes to be as visible as possible to make sure the needs and concerns of the people of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are listened to, enhancing the link between the public and the police. This is central to police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy and helps build trust and confidence in the police, which in turns leads to building stronger and resilient communities, so to prevent crime and reassure the public.

5.3 The Commissioner has already carried out a number of engagement activities across the county with the public, partners, volunteers and Constabulary officers and staff. The Commissioner is aware from public feedback that delays in answering 101 remains a concern to some people. Whilst there has been investment in the system over the past year and the service is better now than it was, it is the Commissioner’s intention to make sure that improvement to the service will continue.

5.4 Equally communication and engagement by both the Commissioner and the Constabulary is essential in managing the challenges and expectations of how threat, risk and harm is balanced against demand and resources. Concerns over careless parking or anti-social behaviour which effects individuals and local communities have to be balanced against resources required to deal with child abuse cases, serious sexual offences, domestic violence and counter terrorism. The ability to build capacity which is responsive to the changing nature of crimes and threats faced nationally and internationally, whilst at the same time focussing on delivering priorities that reflect the concerns of local people, will inevitably be challenging for the police service as a whole. Nonetheless, the Commissioner is committed to protecting frontline policing, delivering an appropriate and proportionate policing response, and importantly putting the vulnerable and victims of crime first.

5.5 The Commissioner is clear about the need to drive down crime, maintaining public confidence, and giving victims support and satisfaction in the service they receive. The Crime Survey for England and Wales shows that people’s experiences of crime are down nationally. As at March 2016, public confidence in Cambridgeshire Constabulary had significantly improved when compared to March 2015, with 74.3% of respondents agreeing that the Constabulary are dealing with the things that matter to people in the local area. For the 12 months to March 2016, victim satisfaction with the overall service received from the Constabulary was 86.4%, which is comparable to the previous year.

5.6 Policing in Cambridgeshire has seen some joint initiatives and efficiencies that have delivered millions in savings and benefits to Cambridgeshire. Efficiency is crucial at all times, especially when there is less money to deliver a service. The Commissioner believes innovation plays a key part in how service levels are maintained. The implementation of new technologies are a good example in how improvements effectiveness and efficiencies can be achieved, however implementing any new systems or process also requires cultural change to embrace different ways of working.

5.7 Funding opportunities are a lever to deliver innovative and joined up working to further enhance effective and efficient policing. Crucial to achieving this is partnership working with others across police forces and organisational boundaries. The challenge is to ensure there is both the appetite for change and collaborative partnership working to drive these forward into sustained efficient and effective business as usual. Further powers and responsibility devolved from central Government to Commissioners over the next four years, such as collaboration with the fire service, youth offending, and the wider criminal justice system will further enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

6. COMMISSIONER'S POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

6.1 Key to ensuring Cambridgeshire is a safe place is the Commissioner's Plan. The Commissioner has a statutory duty to issue a Plan as soon as practicable after taking office - specifically before the end of the financial year which they are elected (i.e 31st March 2017). The Plan must determine, direct and communicate the Commissioner's priorities during their period in office and set out for the period of issue.

6.2 The statutory requirements for the Plan's development can be grouped into three areas of work: a police led, partner-led and public-led evidence base.

- **Police-led evidence base** - will be led by the Constabulary's strategic planning process. This looks at current and future demands, using a risk based approach, to inform prioritisation and resourcing decisions.
- **Partner-led evidence base** - includes the relevant joint strategic needs assessments and priorities of responsible authorities and the criminal justice bodies along with the local proposals submitted to government for a devolution deal.
- **Public-led evidence base** - includes making arrangements to obtain the views of the community, including victims of crime, on policing.

6.3 The Commissioner has committed to produce an overarching strategic three-year Plan to tackle crime and disorder which takes into account the police, partner and public evidence bases. In order to gather this evidence the Commissioner intends to start a three-month period of engagement and consultation. This will involve ongoing engagement and dialogue with the Chief Constable and members of the Constabulary. It will also include opportunities for partner agencies and stakeholders to share the current and emerging local priorities from their locality or area of business and their views on how the Plan could enable them to reduce crime and disorder. A series of events will also be planned to enable local people to have their 'voice' reflected within the Plan. Feedback received will build upon the Commissioner's election manifesto.

6.4 The Commissioner is also keen to engage with members of the Panel throughout the process and will be inviting the Panel's views on how to facilitate this. It is proposed that the draft Plan will be taken to the Panel in September 2016 for formal comment.

7. FUTURE APPROACH

7.1 It is envisaged that the Commissioner's approach to matters will also be shaped through the development of the Plan

7.2 The Commissioner is fully aware of the need to be transparent and accountable, thus enabling scrutiny by the public. The Commissioner wishes to work within the spirit of, and akin to, certain aspects of local government access to information provisions. This includes publishing the agenda and reports of governance meetings in advance.

7.3 The Commissioner welcomes having an informed and closer working relationship with the Panel. It is envisaged this relationship is twofold: both to enhance the challenge and support the Panel provides to the Commissioner in the exercise of his statutory functions and also to enable the Panel to have more of an insight into the Commissioner's role. The Panel's Working

Group, as provided for in their Rules of Procedure, would facilitate this approach.

8. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/13/contents>

The Policing Protocol Order 2011

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/2744/made>