

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

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REALISING THE OPPORTUNITIES FROM THE POLICING AND CRIME BILL

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report is being presented to the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel (the “Panel”) to provide an update on progress being made between the Police and Crime Commissioner (the “Commissioner”), Cambridgeshire Constabulary (the “Constabulary”), the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service, the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Authority (the “Fire Authority”) and East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust on realising the opportunities of the Policing and Crime Bill (the “Bill”).

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Panel is asked 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 Bill, which is currently making its way through Parliament, promotes closer working between police and fire. There is every expectation that the Bill will gain Royal Assent shortly.
- 4.2 The Bill introduces measures which not only allow, but in some aspects require, collaboration between the emergency services to go further and faster. These are locally enabling and recognise that local leaders are best placed to determine the sort of collaboration that is in the best interests of their communities. The Bill requires the police, fire and rescue, and ambulance services to collaborate with one another, where it would be in the interests of their efficiency or effectiveness to do so.
- 4.3 The legislation will allow Commissioners to be represented on the relevant Fire Authority (or its committees) with full voting rights, subject to the consent of the Fire Authority. Alternatively, Commissioners have the option of putting forward a business case which may include arrangements to take on responsibility for the governance of fire and rescue; or to become the single employer for fire and police, to deliver greater improvements through the integration of back office functions and maximise the benefits of workforce flexibility.
- 4.4 The Commissioner’s draft Police and Crime Plan (the “Plan”) sets out the desire to work with the Fire Authority to explore the best way for the Constabulary and the Fire and Rescue Service can work together to take forward the opportunities from the Bill via adoption of the governance model of collaboration.

4.5 The Commissioner has shared with the Panel that he is committed to the development of a local business case as set out in the Bill, and alongside this to continue to support the ongoing front line collaboration between police and fire.

5. PROGRESS AND NEXT STEPS

5.1 While the Bill is passing through Parliament an early dialogue has been initiated between the Commissioner, the Fire Authority, and the Fire and Rescue Service senior officers to explore the best way to take forward the opportunities arising from the Bill. This represents a continuation of a collaboration journey that has been seeing front line co-operation and joint working for some time.

5.2 The Fire Authority has also identified the urgent need to rationalise the fire estate within Huntingdon to improve training facilities and ensure operational resilience.

5.3 In recognition of the impending enactment of the Bill, the Commissioner's Business Co-ordination Board meeting on the 21 September 2016, agreed that the Commissioner should seek to initiate joint work with the Fire Authority, and the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust, to develop business cases to determine the:

- most appropriate future governance model for police and fire; and
- best use of the emergency service land and buildings in Huntingdon.

5.4 The first meeting of the Huntingdon Accommodation Review Board took place on 3 November 2016 and agreed the terms of reference of the group and considered the status of existing Blue Light estates in Huntingdon and the vicinity, and commissioned further work. The second meeting, held on 6 December 2016, agreed that an options paper would be prepared for presentation to the Huntingdon Accommodation Review Governance Board to consider:

- what to focus on in terms of accommodation options;
- what functions are already held;
- remove sharing options that have been ruled out;
- any opportunities still possible with Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

5.5 In developing a local business case, the current requirements within the Bill are that the Commissioner must:

- develop and submit a business case to the Home Secretary, setting out why the proposed changes (governance or single employer) would be in the interests of economy, efficiency, effectiveness and public safety;
- consult top tier local authorities;
- seek the views of local people.

5.6 The Fire Authority will be under a duty to co-operate with the Commissioner in the development of a local business case.

5.7 If not all parties are in agreement, the Commissioner will still be able to submit the business case to the Home Secretary, who will be required to seek an independent assessment of the proposal and make a final decision.

6. TAKING FORWARD THE LOCAL BUSINESS CASE IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH

- 6.1 Support has been sought for the Commissioner and Fire Authority to jointly commission a consultancy firm to support the development of a local business case. This will be completed after an open tender exercise which it is proposed is supported by the Commissioner's office, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), the Constabulary, the Fire Authority and the Fire and Rescue Service.
- 6.2 It was agreed at the Fire Authority meeting on 8 December 2016 that a Police and Fire Business Case Strategic Governance Group be established to launch joint work to complete a business case to identify the opportunities presented by the Bill. The first meeting of this Group was held on 20 December 2016 and the Invitation To Tender was issued on 22 December 2016.
- 6.3 The consultancy firm will commence work immediately upon appointment. They will begin by meeting with key partners to discuss the business case and options, including engagement with the Chair of the Panel.
- 6.4 The outline business case will be prepared and presented to the Fire Authority and the Commissioner's Business Co-ordination Board for discussion. It will then be submitted to the Home Office with the target date for a decision being spring 2017.

7. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

- 7.1 By law the Commissioner is required to have a Chief Finance Officer. Due to the resignation of the incumbent Director of Finance (a role that encompasses the roles and responsibilities of a Chief Finance Officer), the Commissioner made the decision, following discussion with the Commissioner's governance board (the Business Co-ordination Board) on the 17 January 2017 and the Fire and Rescue Authority, that the role of Chief Finance Officer is shared between his office and the Fire Authority.
- 7.2 Therefore, the current Deputy Chief Executive of the Fire Authority would become the Commissioner's Acting Chief Finance Officer (and Acting Section 151 Officer under the Local Government Act 1972) for an initial period to 31 December 2017. It is anticipated that the time commitment will be flexible and subject to business needs. To support the Chief Finance Officer in the Commissioner's office, the Commissioner has appointed an Interim Head of Finance who will work for three days per week for an initial period to 31 October 2017. This arrangement is cost-neutral to the OPCC.
- 7.3 Once the Commissioner is in a position to make a decision on the substantive arrangements for the Chief Finance Officer post, the Panel will be formally notified in accordance with the legislation so that arrangements can be made for a Confirmation Hearing.
- 7.4 The arrangement for the Acting Chief Finance Officer is in the spirit of collaboration and co-operative working and realises the opportunities being presented in the forthcoming Bill.

8. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

- 8.1 It is anticipated that the Panel will become the Police, Crime and Fire Panel with a role to support and scrutinise the exercise of the fire and rescue functions of the Commissioner as well as the police and crime functions.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

9.1 Policing and Crime Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2015-16/policingandcrime.html>

'Realising the Opportunities From The Policing And Crime Bill', Agenda Item 6, Business Co-ordination Board, 21st September 2016; Police and Crime Panel, 9th November 2016

<http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/work/business-coordination-board/2016-2/bcb-september-21st-2016/>

<http://democracy.peterborough.gov.uk/ielistDocuments.aspx?CId=543&MId=3672&Ver=4>

'Realising the Opportunities from the Policing and Crime Bill – Update', Agenda Item 6.0, Business Co-ordination Board, 17th January 2017

<http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/work/business-coordination-board/2016-2/bcb-january-17th-2017/>