

AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

31 OCTOBER 2012

Title: Issues raised by Members

RECOMMENDATION

That the Police and Crime Panel considers the proposals set out below.

Summary

Section 9 of the Panel's procedure rules provides that members of the Panel may place items on the agenda for Panel meetings which are relevant to the Panel's functions.

At the previous meeting, Councillor Brett asked that several matters be considered by the Panel. The notes below which have been provided by Councillor Brett, flesh out her proposals in more detail.

The significant issues in the report are:

Set out in the sections below.

Issues

Proposal A :

Promotion of a Joint CSP Strategic Partnership Board

Background

1. The PCC has the ability to make grants for the reduction of crime and disorder to any person/organisation they see fit and will inherit various grants from government without obligation to pass funding on to CSPs.
2. The community safety fund, which was reduced by 60 per cent from April 2012, will be paid to PCCs from April 2013, alongside funding such as the Home Office elements of drug intervention programme money and funding for Victim Support.

Rationale in favour of a Joint CSP Strategic Partnership Board

3. Clearly the changes are significant for the community safety sector. The PCC will have a major impact on community safety, and partnerships need to put themselves into the best possible position to ensure this new relationship delivers continued reductions in crime and disorder for the communities they serve.
4. The PCC's freedom to commission services from any person or organisation has essentially created a free market in community safety. If CSPs – or any of their constituent responsible authorities – wish to be commissioned, ahead of other providers, to continue to deliver the services they have been developing, then they will need to evidence to a PCC exactly what they can offer in terms of outcomes.
5. There is no point duplicating activity. CSPs need to prioritize the key activities they believe they are best placed to deliver.

Joint commissioning frameworks

6. Bringing CSPs together across force areas in a Joint CSP Strategic Partnership Board will enable them to establish their own joint commissioning framework for community safety.
7. When a PCC inherits the staff of the existing police authority, they are unlikely to include individuals with comprehensive experience of commissioning and procurement. Likewise, police forces rarely do much of this themselves. Councils, however, are highly experienced, and have whole teams established to ensure services are adequately commissioned, procured and contracts monitored.
8. By establishing a framework by which activity is commissioned jointly and procured where necessary through a single portal, partnerships can make significant savings themselves. This could also provide a commissioning service for the PCC across the force area.
9. Provided formal agreements are in place between partnerships in advance of offering services, this should be attractive to a PCC; it excuses them the task of recruiting and providing for their own commissioning and procurement unit, and also brings the PCC closer to the partnerships when it comes to decision making about commissioned services.
10. When this is linked to the duty to have regard to each other's priorities, this presents a compelling picture of a unified approach to commissioning crime and disorder services.

11. Of course, creating something like a joint commissioning framework is challenging, Partnerships will need to show a PCC that they are capable of radical change in order to achieve better outcomes more efficiently.

Action Required by PCP:

12. Members of the PCP can promote the development of a Joint CSP Strategic Partnership Board through their links with their local government area and CSP as well as the PCC.

Costs

13. The cost of forming a Joint CSP Strategic Partnership Board is minimal and should easily be recoverable by significant savings made by joint commissioning. However CPS Officer attendance at meetings should ideally be covered by their individual authorities, while the cost hosting these meetings should be covered by the PCC.

Proposal B:

The PCP to encourage the newly elected PCC to engage with the Local Government Association (LGA) and Police and Crime Commissioners Association

Background:

14. The Local Government Association (LGA) consists of 422 member authorities and has established a national representative body for Police and Crime Commissioners – the Police and Crime Commissioners Association (PaCCA).

Rationale:

15. PCCs will need a strong national voice and access to high quality support, development and information if they are to achieve their objectives and respond to the priorities of their local areas. The elected PCC will need to work with, and commission services from, a wide range of partners.
16. The LGA is uniquely well placed to help PCCs connect with key agencies and officials, both locally and throughout Whitehall. Like the PCP, it is a consensus membership body, striving to agree a common cross-party position
17. As a member of PaCCA, the PCC will have immediate access to the LGA's networks and infrastructure, including up to the minute news and

briefings, advice on lobbying, guidance on complex legal issues and access to our extensive contact database which includes all lead Councillor and police contacts.

18. The LGA provides the Employers' Side of the Police Negotiating Board (PNB) and will support PCCs as employers in negotiations on police pay and conditions, based on the current Home Office funded model.
19. As a member of PaCCA, the PCC will be entitled to policy and administrative support, for those appointed to other tripartite policing bodies and transition forums, as well as specialist groups/outside bodies and other member meetings.
20. Meeting rooms in Local Government House range from small quiet rooms for two to three people, to the Westminster Suite which can seat up to 100 people. All are available free of charge to LGA member organisations
21. The local.gov.uk website is an invaluable source of information on the latest news and policy developments, research reports, best practice and events. Members of PaCCA will have access to member-only content, such as special briefings, media releases and reports.

Benefits to the PCP membership

22. As Councillors we know that in straitened times; the joining up of services and sharing knowledge and expertise are more important than ever. The LGA will provide services that benefit PCCs, connect Councils and ultimately improve policing in local communities.

Action:

23. The PCP Chair should write as well as meet with the PCC shortly after election to highlight the points detailed above.

Proposal C:

Function Champions

Background :

24. When implementing a Policing strategy one of the greatest challenges is to evolve ownership away from the executive and into police operational areas.
25. One of the most effective ways we can assist the PCC to measure their impact is to select PCP members who will specialize in, and Champion,

specific PCC responsibilities.

26. Within their area of specialization, the Champion will;
 - Have an overview of related services across Avon and Somerset
 - Identify best practice nationally and locally
 - Keep abreast of relevant legislation, directives and lobby groups.
 - Provide a point of consultation for the PCC
 - Be an appropriate PCP spokesperson if required for media interviews
 - Make proposals to the PCC with the approval of the PCP.
27. The role of the Champion has to be more than acting as a conduit for information. They have to ensure that the PCP makes recommendations to the PCC that are meaningful, have impact and are sustainable.
28. Champions should be responsible for converting research and feedback into actionable data, ensuring the PCC can allocate appropriate resources and that actions are effectively deployed.
29. If Champions are not a useful resource to the PCC, they quickly become just background noise. The Champion must have to have backing of the PCP to work across Avon & Somerset

Potential benefits of this approach

30. The potential benefits of a Functional Champions to the PCC include;
 - Greater understanding will lead to better decision making and more effective solutions
 - Reduces the need of PCP members to have to deliver the same message several times
 - Supports the PCC in being focused on public perception and not internal functions
 - If external agencies feel engaged and listened to then greater opportunities for partnership working will form.
31. The role of an effective Champion will ultimately lead to an improved public experience which will increase trust and confidence in policing.

Suggested areas for Championing

32. These would be :
 - Victims (other than DV or Sexual Violence)

- DV and sexual violence
- Combating anti-social behaviour
- Re-offending
- Substance misuse
- The Police Estate

The potential benefits of a Functional Champion to PCP members include;

33. Councillor's on the PCP will be aware of issues on their own patch and, by identifying and sharing best practice, the Function Champion should be a useful source of information to Councillor's.
34. By providing brief reports at each PCP meeting, the Function Champion will be fulfilling the PCP requirement to scrutinize the engagement and consultation activity of the PCC and ensure that the interests of local groups are taken into account.
35. While the Function Champions may wish to hold regular meetings with relevant related service providers, they would not represent a PCP Sub-committee. Sub-committees present a number of potential threats to the PCP, not least being that there would need to be regular checks that any areas dealt with by Sub-committees are not beyond the scope of the Panel as specified in the Crime and Disorder Act,

Required Action:

36. That the PCP establishes Function Champions .

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
Background Papers:

None