

Cheshire Police and Crime Panel

Date of Meeting: 18 November 2016

Report of: Mr Eric Hodgson and Mr Bob Fousert.

Subject/Title: Feedback from the Fifth National Conference for Police and Crime Panels

1. Report Summary

To receive feedback from the Conference for Police & Crime Panels, held in Birmingham on 20th Oct 2016, attended on behalf of the Panel by Mr Eric Hodgson and Mr Bob Fousert.

2. Recommendation

That the report be received and noted.

3. Background information

Mr Eric Hodgson and Mr Bob Fousert attended the fifth National Conference for Police and Crime Panels, on behalf of the Panel and have provided the following report on the Conference:-

Key note speakers:

- Professor Stephen Shute, University of Sussex (Member of the Advisory Boards for both HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and HM Inspectorate of Probation)
- Professor Rod Morgan, University of Bristol Emeritus Professor of Criminal Justice (former chair of the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales, 2004-7 and HM Chief Inspector of Probation, 2001-4).

Main points and issues for consideration that were raised by the Keynote speakers regarding PCP role:

- Panels have a statutory right to information in order to carry out their job.
- There is a need for Panels to have more expertise among Panel members on the function of policing.
- The need for PCC's to work with other Criminal Justice organisations such as Criminal Justice Boards, Community Safety Partnerships, etc.
- That there is still a long way to go regarding good partnership working - particularly PCC co-operation with others central to their role.

- The political climate will see continued financial pressure and the imposition of additional PCC responsibilities which will see the responsibility for policing pushed 'downwards and outwards' i.e to PCP's.
- What effect will boundary changes have on policing and blue light collaboration, etc?
- What types of collaboration should there be and which are the most suitable e.g Police/Fire; Police/ Ambulance; Ambulance/Fire or an amalgamation of all three?
- Would there be a need for a joint Police & Fire Panel and who would be responsible for carrying out scrutiny?
- Why should the public care about PCPs?

Following the Keynote speakers there were a series of Workshop sessions held in the morning and repeated in the afternoon of which Delegates were able to attend two.

Workshops:

Regional Collaboration (Nottinghamshire PCP)

This workshop focussed on the existing and planned collaboration between the five Forces and PCCs in the East Midlands and the ways in which the five Panels are seeking to scrutinise this issue (both individually and through joint working)

Issues discussed included the initial steps taken to progress this on a regional basis; the wider governance context; the way in which Nottingham PCP sought to scrutinise this issue; obstacles to progress and the complications faced, plus the next steps.

Suggested Key success factors:

- Understanding cultural similarities and differences
- Setting the tone from the top
- Fostering a culture that puts the service user first
- Identifying up front what the key success factors are (and performance against delivering those factors)
- Exploring how technology can improve services - e.g better sharing of information.

Strategic Alliances (Hertfordshire PCP)

Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire police forces are working together as part of a strategic alliance aimed at delivering efficiency savings to enable a phased reduction in spending levels. The programme covers the areas of protective services (roads policing, major crime), operational support (public contact, criminal justice, custody and firearms licensing) and organisational support HR, ICT, finance, legal services, procurement and estates).

Wider issues identified include:

- Value for money - the ability to deliver savings and implementation costs
- Benefits for Hertfordshire - whether the taxpayers are benefiting
- Negative impacts - e.g. time taken to investigate road accidents on major roads

- Differences in policing culture
- Governance and accountability

The PCP's role includes challenge to and scrutiny of the PCC in terms of whether the strategic alliance is delivering and contributing towards the priorities listed in the Police & Crime Plan. For the Panel the challenge includes the question of how they get to know whether the strategic alliance is beneficial and delivering positive outcomes.

In its early stages the Panel's work on strategic alliances has included the setting up of a working group to monitor progress; engagement with the PCC on the topic and liaison with Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire PCPs.

Working with a new PCC (Kent/Humberside PCPs)

General discussion re two extreme examples of PCCs i.e the former Kent PCC Anne Barnes who had no prior knowledge of policing and publicly brought the position of PCC into disrepute and the new Humberside PCC, a former Chief Superintendent with strong insider knowledge, a publicly stated expectation that the Force quickly improves performance and the intention to only attend Panel meetings when he believes it necessary, not as a matter of course.

Emergency Service Collaboration (Lincolnshire PCP)

A discussion centred around the Government's commitment to providing funding for transformation projects to encourage emergency service collaboration and a number of blue light collaborations within Lincolnshire including a tri-service initiative. The workshop looked at a number of short, medium and long term potential options for co-location. The project will be funded by a £7.5m investment from the Government's Police Innovation Fund and match funding from local services.

Power Check (Frontline Consulting)

Insights from the survey of PCPs, PCCs and Chief Constables. This document was circulated to all Cheshire PCP members in early October.

The PCC's role in the wider criminal justice system (West Midlands PCP)

This workshop was aimed at sharing experiences of incorporating scrutiny of the PCC's role in the wider criminal justice system.

Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 there is a reciprocal duty for the PCC and certain criminal justice agencies to co-operate in ensuring an efficient and effective criminal justice system. Those agencies are the police, the Courts and Tribunal Service, CPS, the Probation Service and prison providers. In many areas, these bodies work together through Local Criminal Justice Partnerships - though a recent inspection report questioned the effectiveness of these.

West Midlands PCP were keen to expand the Panel's role and through the regular meetings between the Chair and PCC, topics were identified where the PCP would be able to influence policy development. One such area was FGM and the focus for the coming year is to turn the spotlight on youth justice outcomes and youth offending.

Complaints Handling (Hampshire PCP)

This workshop looked at the process and governance arrangements for complaints; successes achieved through the current process; challenges (locally and nationally) for PCC conduct complaint handling, and the future. Hampshire PCP has a Complaints Sub-Committee that meets on an ad-hoc basis in response to any complaints activity through both 'electronic' and 'in person' meetings.

Topics for discussion included:

- What work had Panels undertaken to refine its complaints process
- What has worked well and any lessons learned
- Panel approaches to 'Historical' complaints; unreasonable complainants; complaints which, in part, pertain to operational policing.
- What is the key change/addition that you would like to see within the updated legislation that would deliver the greatest value to your Panel's complaints process?

The event organisers have promised that Key points raised in all Workshops will be circulated to delegates at some time in the near future.

4. Financial Implications

There are minimal financial implications, in the cost of attending the conference and travelling expenses.

5. Equality Implications

No direct equalities implications would appear to arise from the recommendations of this report.

6. Contact Information

Contact details for this report are as follows:-

Name: Julie North

Designation: Senior Democratic Services Officer

Local Authority Cheshire East Council

Tel. No.: 01270 686460

Email: Julie.north@cheshireeast.gov.uk