

THE TRANSITION FROM POLICE AUTHORITIES TO POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONERS

Welcome to the second edition of our newsletter to keep partners updated about the transition from police authorities to police and crime commissioner.

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 gained Royal Assent in September 2011. A single Police and Crime Commissioner, or PCC, will replace the existing Police Authority in Cheshire. This individual will be responsible for holding the Chief Constable to account on behalf of the people of Cheshire. The elections will take place on 15 November 2012, with the newly elected Police and Crime Commissioners taking up office on 22 November 2012.



Cheshire Police Authority was opposed to the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners and a number of those concerns still persist. However, following Parliamentary approval of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act, the Authority wishes to ensure a safe and secure transition to the Police and Crime Commissioner model.

Work is now well underway locally to achieve a successful transition to the new governance arrangements and I thought it would be useful to provide you, our partners, with a summary of the current position.

Margaret Ollerenshaw
Chairman

ELECTIONS

The Coalition Government intends to complete secondary legislation on elections by February 2012, with the legislation due to be laid before Parliament early in January.

The elections for Police and Crime Commissioner will take place using the supplementary vote system. Under the supplementary vote system, a voter is asked to indicate first and second preferences, if no candidate has 50 per cent of the first preference votes, the two candidates with the highest number of first preference votes proceed to a second round count. In the second round of counting, ballots indicating a first preference for a candidate that lost the first round are reallocated according to the second preference indicated on the ballot paper.

An information booklet for prospective candidates and details of eligibility requirements for candidates is available on the Home Office website.

POLICE & CRIME PANELS

The Police and Crime Commissioner will be subject to checks and balances which are to be provided by a Police and Crime Panel, made up of Councillors and Independent Persons in each police force area. The role of the Panel is to hold the Commissioner to account. The Panel will not be responsible for holding the Chief Constable or police officers to account.

Secondary legislation on Police and Crime Panels is still awaited and it is anticipated that this will be published in March 2012. This will cover the Panel's power of veto over the Commissioner's proposed precept, the appointment process for a Chief Constable and the process through which the Home Secretary can establish a Panel.

Official Home Office guidance on setting up the Panels is still awaited. The Local Government Association and Centre for Public Scrutiny have recently published a guide on establishing police and crime panels, which can be found on the Centre for Public Scrutiny's website.

In Cheshire, Warrington Borough Council will lead on establishing the Panel and it is anticipated that this work will commence in early spring to have the Panel established by July 2012.

COMMISSIONING

PCCs will have a commissioning role wider than their policing responsibilities. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act provides powers for the PCC to award grants to any organisation or body they consider will support their community safety priorities.

This means that the Police and Crime Commissioner will be able to prioritise resources for use on wider community safety objectives. They will receive some consolidated grants, made up of funding currently provided to a range of organisations (see table below), which they will decide how to spend.

In order to minimise bureaucracy and prevent disruption to existing work programmes, the Coalition Government have decided that current arrangements for community safety and partnership funding will continue during 2012/13, but the budget will be provided to the Police and Crime Commissioner from 2013/14. In 2013/14, in addition to the main police grant and precept, Police and Crime Commissioners will receive funding from the Community Safety Fund. The Community Safety Fund can be used to tackle drugs and crime, reduce re-offending, and improve community safety. Allocations for the Community Safety Fund have not yet been set.

Subject to confirmation from the Coalition Government it is also anticipated that the following funding streams will transfer to Police and Crime Commissioners in the future:

Grant	Current Recipient(s)
DIP Main Grant	Drug action teams
Drug Testing Grant	Police forces
CSP Funding	Local Authorities
Positive Futures	VCS sector and LAs
Early Interventions Grant	Local Authorities
Youth Offending Team drug workers	Youth Offending Teams
Youth Offending Team Grant	Youth Offending Teams

LOCAL ACTIVITY

The Police Authority has established a Transition Board with the following objectives:

- To provide strategic oversight of the transition process, manage the various workstreams that will be required, and provide a regular forum for discussion on the transition.
- To put into place the necessary requirements to enable the transfer of all Police Authority staff and assets including all related rights and liabilities.
- To satisfy the information requirements of candidates for Police & Crime Commissioner in an open and fair manner.
- To consider the necessary processes to establish the Police and Crime Panel and support as appropriate the nominated Borough Council Chief Executive in establishing a Panel.

Superintendent Andy Mitchell is the Constabulary's Transition Co-ordinator. Superintendent Mitchell will be working alongside the Authority's Project Manager, Stephen Pickup, to assist with the transition arrangements. See contact details below.

AWARENESS RAISING EVENTS

From January 2012, the Home Office is arranging a series of seventeen events across England and Wales. The events will bring together partners working across a maximum of three police force areas, with the intention of aiding local discussions and preparations from the arrival of Commissioners next November. The events will include dedicated sessions on police and crime panels and partnership working.

The event covering Cheshire, Merseyside and Staffordshire will take place in Crewe on 25 January 2012.

The Authority's Deputy Chief Executive, Stephen Pickup, is also available to provide presentations to partner organisations on Police and Crime Commissioners and the new police governance arrangements. If you would like to make arrangements to receive a presentation, please contact Viv Craven on Tel: 01606 364002.

CONTACT DETAILS

Mark Sellwood, Chief Executive, Transition Board Chairman — 01606 364001

Stephen Pickup, Deputy Chief Executive & Project Manager — 01606 364003

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Further information on Police and Crime Commissioners can be found on

**Cheshire Police Authority's website: cheshirepa.police.uk
or on the Home Office website: home.office.gov.uk**