

Feedback from the Exploratory Meeting in respect of the the formation of an Association of Police and Crime Panels on 17 February 2017 from Councillor Sebastien Bowen, Herefordshire County Council

An exploratory meeting was held last February to consider the potential formation of an Association of Police and Crime Panels (PCP's). Frontline Consulting convened the meeting (generously hosted by Grant Thornton) in response to requests at conference last year.

Thirty seven chairmen, members and officers attended the exploratory meeting from 25 Panels; three other PCPs had given their apologies. One Panel had written to say that it considered its regional network to suffice; only one Panel had indicated that it was not interested at this stage.

The overwhelming consensus of participants at the meeting was in favour of a proposal to establish a national Association of PCPs.

A steering group has been established to draft a report with recommendations. The proposal will be sent to all PCPs for comment, expressions of interest and formal decision.

Notes of the discussion to feed into the steering group will be prepared. In summary, the emphasis in the discussions was on:

- having a simple, inexpensive and non-bureaucratic structure
- engaging members and officers (with voting rights to be considered)
- focusing on lobbying (immediate issues that presented were on the implications for Panels of regional and blue light collaboration, ongoing resource issues, complaints handling and possible changes to arrangements for this further to the HO consultation) and
- providing a mechanism to consult and agree common positions to feed through to the Home Office, APCC and others (discussion to continue about how to prepare a common position that is democratically arrived at and gains support, bearing in mind the timescales of consulting Panels who have infrequent meetings).

It was considered that there are existing opportunities for networking and learning and development, which would not need to be part of the work of an APCP.

Comments from Panel members would be welcomed in order to assist the Steering Group in its work.

The Home Office, the Home Affairs Select Committee, the APCC, the LGA and Caps are being made aware of this initiative and asked to explore the possibility for resources, should an APCP be established.

Sixth Annual Conference for PCPs

Panel members may wish to note know that the sixth conference for PCPs will take place on Monday 6 November from 10 am to 4 pm at Warwick Conference Centre. This provides an excellent opportunity for networking between Panel members and officers

and to hear from speakers, share good practice and tackle challenges together through practitioner led workshops and possibly regional/Wales-wide meetings. Details of the conference will follow and bookings will open next month. Please could you note the date; hopefully early notice will help to avoid clashes with Panel meetings.

Based upon evaluation forms, initial thoughts for the programme are to allow more time for plenary discussions and networking, and to include a regional/Wales-wide meeting instead of a repeated workshop. Copies of the 2016 conference report were available last Friday; they are being posted to PCPs who attended the conference but could not attend the meeting. It will be available at www.pcps-direct.net