

WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME PANEL 29 OCTOBER 2018

WEST MERCIA WITHDRAWAL FROM THE STRATEGIC ALLIANCE WITH WARWICKSHIRE

Recommendation

- 1. Members of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel (PCP) are invited to:**
 - a) consider the information provided in this report;**
 - b) discuss issues arising from the decision to leave the Strategic Alliance with the Police and Crime Commissioner; and**
 - c) decide whether it wishes to conduct any further scrutiny of the matter.**

Background

2. On 9 October the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and Chief Constable jointly announced their intention to withdraw from the current strategic alliance arrangements the force has with Warwickshire. The reasons given for this decision are 'to deliver more effective and efficient services to communities, and ensure the public get better value for money'¹.

3. A formal process has started which will bring the existing strategic alliance to an end, which includes negotiations with Warwickshire Police to identify where efficiencies may remain and maximised through a shared service arrangement.

4. The PCC and Chief Constable sent a letter dated 9 October to stakeholders notifying them of the proposals, attached at Appendix 1 to this report. A letter dated 15 October was also sent to the Chairman of the Police and Crime Panel, attached at Appendix 2. This includes a stakeholder briefing which addresses a number of queries that stakeholders may have about the decision to end the Alliance.

5. The Strategic Alliance was set up in March 2012 via a set of Collaborative Agreements. The objective of the creation of the Strategic Alliance is to provide 'an effective and efficient service to both Forces.....' The 'Strategic Alliance Objectives' set out the benefits, which include all or a combination of the following:

- To provide a more efficient and effective policing service in the geographical areas of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, Warwickshire and Worcestershire
- Enhanced capability and capacity
- Greater resilience and flexibility in the use of skilled specialist staff
- Reduction in duplication of roles and resources
- Greater opportunity to maximise financial savings

¹ News release, West Mercia PCC [website](#)

6. The Strategic Alliance Agreement sets out the governance arrangements for the Alliance. Further details are available on the PCC's website: <https://www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk/key-information/policing-alliance-and-how-its-governed/> .

7. Whilst the Alliance was set up by the then Police Authorities, provision was made for it to continue when the Police and Crime Commissioners took over governance of the Police later in 2012.

8. In accordance with the Agreement, the PCC and Chief Constable have given one year's notice of their intention to end the current Alliance arrangement, effective 8 October 2019. They have publicly stated a preference of negotiating a new and mutually beneficial relationship with Warwickshire.

9. In view of the strategic nature of the Alliance and concern and interest engendered following the announcement of West Mercia's notice to leave the Alliance, the Chairman of the Panel has arranged to hold this meeting of the Police and Crime Panel in its Scrutiny role to discuss the reasons for the decision with the PCC.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1: Letter dated 9 October 2018 from the PCC and Chief Constable to stakeholders

Appendix 2: Letter dated 15 October from the PCC and Chief Constable to the Chairman of the PCP setting out further details and including a Stakeholder Briefing

Specific Contact Points for this Report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.

All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website [here](#)