

Notes
Joint Police and Crime Panel Chairs meeting
9 December 2016

Attendees:

Councillor Brian Wilcox (Chair, West Mercia)
Councillor Tony Miller (Vice-Chair, West Mercia)
Robin Verso (Chair, Warwickshire)
Councillor Nicola Davies (Vice-Chair, Warwickshire)
Tim Rice (Support Officer, West Mercia)
Stefan Robinson (Support Officer, Warwickshire)

1. Discussion on how the two panels operate

Warwickshire arrangements

- Six meetings of the panel each year;
- 10 councillors and 2 independent members;
- 1 hour pre-meetings before each meeting which is useful for preparing questions and helps avoid a scatter approach. These pre meetings also improve the flow of the public meeting and are valued by members;
- Meets at various locations around the county;
- Senior Police Officers regularly attend Panel and working group meetings, but not the Chief Constable;
- Victims of Crime Task and Finish Group – successful and thorough;
- 2 working groups that report back to the Panel.

Budget Working Group – 4 members

- Undertakes quarterly monitoring of the Commissioner's budget including the medium term financial plan, reserves, capital programme and precept;
- Recent interest has been in the new Operational Command Centre and the spend against original proposals;
- Pre-meeting with finance officer to prepare.

Planning and Performance Working Group – 5 members

- Analyses the latest performance reports to identify key issues to raise with the Commissioner and highlight at future Panel meetings;
- Reviews the Work Programme of the Police and Crime Panel and makes recommendations to the Panel regarding areas of business for future meetings and Task and Finish Group reviews;
- February 2017 meeting will consider how best to scrutinise the PCC's delivery of the new Police and Crime Plan priorities.

West Mercia arrangements

- Six meetings of the panel each year;
- 10 Substantive members, 5 co-opted and 2 independent members;
- Larger geography creates difficulties for meeting frequently;
- Members invited to observe interview for new Chief Constable;
- Chief Constable attends Panel meetings, but PCC leads on answering;
- One dissolved task and finish group, intended to look at the resource implications of investigating historic crimes;
- Task and Finish Groups used to review the precept in more detail;
- Occasional informal meetings with the PCC.

Request to send minutes of the most recent meetings of the Warwickshire Working Groups to West Mercia's Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Police and Crime Plans

It was highlighted that the two Police and Crime Plans were similar, except in their length. Warwickshire had a much longer narrative in the plan. Both PCC's intend to publish a victim's charter, with [West Mercia's draft](#) available online. It was noted that the West Mercia Victims Board had already been established and had their first meeting.

3. Audit and Governance

The question was asked, how can we scrutinise whether the PCC's have good governance arrangements? Warwickshire's PCC sometimes provides the panel with a written audit trail of the questions he has asked the Chief Constable, and these often cover the questions the Panel would want to ask.

It was suggested that the governance arrangements of the Strategic Alliance were not clear to the public. The arrangements for the [Alliance Governance Group](#), the [Trust Integrity and Ethics Committee](#), and the [Joint Audit Committee](#) could be more transparent. There needs to be more clarity on whether meetings are public or private, where and when they are held, and the papers could be published in a more timely manner.

Members said that in West Mercia, 34 groups/panels were established to coordinate and hold to account various elements of static and operational policing. It was suggested that the Police and Crime Panels may want to review these arrangements to see if recommendations can be made for rationalising the amount of meeting being held. Members requested the support officers to liaise and produce a brief on the current governance arrangements of the Alliance.

4. Future Collaboration Possibilities

The Strategic Transformation Partner proposals and the 2020 Vision were discussed. In November 2015, a decision was taken to seek a transformation partner that would support the Alliance by conducting a comprehensive service review, redesign and implementation programme across many functions. Furthermore, adding technology and actively developing staff and creating a 'change capable community'. It was highlighted that members had not heard of any further developments since 2015. Stefan said a full business case proposal for transformation would be prepared for April 2017. This was on Warwickshire's work programme as an item to be timetabled. Both Panels' expressed interest in reviewing any proposals. Stefan was requested to discuss with Warwickshire OPCC about when best to programme the Strategic Transformation Programme/Partner and what information would be available.

West Mercia members were conscious that any change in the PCC's strategic policies and direction may have an impact on those organisations that relied on the previous PCC's grant scheme. Under the new Police and Crime Plan, organisations may be in a weaker position to bid for funding, and what will happen to those organisations? how will the PCC's manage this change?

West Mercia's PCC had a Head of Commissioning and two commissioning officers. Warwickshire did not have these positions. West Mercia members expressed an interest in comparing the procurement processes for each of the PCC's and whether there was scope for joint procurement. How involved was the PCC in the procurement process, as it requires a mix of operational and strategic decision making? How do the PCC's scrutinise joint procurement arrangements? In reviewing the HMIC Efficiency and Legitimacy reports (following the meeting), there is no detail on procurement processes. Also, questions were asked of how fit for purpose and future proof the new ICT systems and Operational Command Centres would be.

PCC budget and precept proposals were discussed. It was expected that the PCC's would need to have the same precept proposals to ensure either force was not at a funding disadvantage. It was highlighted that the level of unallocated reserves for Warwickshire and West Mercia, as a proportion of gross revenue expenditure, were recently 3rd and 7th highest in the country respectively.

It was agreed that the principles of exchanging minutes and bi-annual meetings between the chairs would be a basis for better and more collaborative working. Stefan said he would add a section to the Warwickshire Work Programme report that details West Mercia's upcoming work.

5. Development of an Association of Police and Crime Panels

There was general support for the idea of establishing an Association of Police and Crime Panels. It would enable a collective voice, a greater profile and lobbying power to the Home Office, and promote the interests of panel members. Robin requested a report on the matter to be prepared for the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 13 July 2017