

North Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel**11 January 2018****Update from the Sixth National Conference for Police and Crime Panels****1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To update the Panel on issues considered at the Sixth National Conference for Police and Crime Panels held on 6th November 2017 at Warwick Conference Centre.
- 1.2 To seek the agreement of the Panel to two key proposals arising from that conference:
 - (a) a financial contribution from the North Yorkshire Panel to facilitate the setting up and management of a national, representative body for Panels, through the LGA;
 - (b) a proposal for establishment of a regional Panel network, with options for administration and funding.

2.0 Background and Key issues considered

2.1 The Sixth Annual Police and Crime Panel Conference was held at Warwick Conference Centre on 6th November 2017, facilitated and hosted by Frontline Consulting, who have also previously facilitated a development session for the North Yorkshire Panel. The conference was attended by Cllr Peter Wilkinson and Diane Parsons, the Panel Secretariat officer. The event was themed "Changing context, increasing collaboration – what does this mean for us?" and included both plenary and workshop sessions. Key issues raised in the plenary sessions can be summarised as follows:

- Greater collaboration between Police forces and Fire & Rescue – noted that it is unlikely that mergers will be forced as this would require new legislation and is not a pressing matter for Government in the current climate. Different collaboration models have to work for the local area.
- The need for Panels to be more effective now they have been established a while. Importance of being able to demonstrate Panel impact and focus on real priorities. Making decisions about prioritisation/managing risk and considering what not to do.
- The importance of looking at crime and criminal justice as well as policing – this means that scrutiny and challenge is harder as it gets further afield.
- The need to spend time thinking about the future and not just focussing on visible policing.
- Importance of relationships of PCCs and PCPs
- The need for the Home Office to take the role of PCPs seriously – concerns expressed that the Home Office were notably absent from the event.
- The need to increase positive public engagement with the public around the Police and Crime Panel's work in holding the PC to account.
- How proactive are Panels? Is it a case of polite scrutiny or robust challenge?

- Grant funding and resourcing – widely different levels of capacity and support for Panels across the country and some Panels do not use the full allocation of Home Office grant.

3.0 Police complaints system reform

- 3.1 A key issue of interest for many Panels is the impact of reforms to the police complaints system and a workshop session was held on this, hosted by the Norfolk Panel. A substantive paper on the reforms and their implications for North Yorkshire will be brought by the OPCC in the next few months and as such this note does not attempt to explore the implications in detail. However, below is a summary of the key points considered at the workshop session.
- 3.2 Members will be aware that a number of reforms to the complaints system were set out in the Policing and Crime Act 2017. The government's main rationale for this has been around seeking to improve the efficiency of the system, increasing public confidence in it and also ensuring that the system keeps pace with other reforms to the rest of the policing landscape including the introduction of PCCs.
- 3.3 Currently, police forces deal with the receiving and recording of all complaints, as well as contact with complainants. Appeals are also dealt with largely by Chief Constables. The reform of the complaints system will see a shift in responsibility for some or all of these processes away from forces to PCCs, including:
- The receiving and recording of the initial complaint, including informal resolution (Model 2);
 - Keeping a complainant updated on the progress of their complaint, informing them of the outcome of their complaint and right to appeal (Model 3) ;
 - The appeal process where the complainant has not been satisfied with what has taken place and the final outcome (Model 1).
- 3.3 Model 1 is mandatory but PCCs can choose to adopt models 2 or 3 in addition. So as a minimum legislative requirement, the PCC will become the appellate body to hear appeals. This programme of reform has seen some delays and the latest update from the Home Office suggests that implementation of some of the changes will not come into place until early 2019.
- 3.4 It was interesting to note at the workshop that of around 17 force areas represented in the group, North Yorkshire was the only area where the PCC is exploring the potential for taking on the fullest possible role (recording, resolution, communication and appeal).
- 3.5 A Home Office Working Group is currently developing the detail of the reforms. It was noted at the session that Panels have concerns about the potential for an increase in complaints to Panels arising as a consequence of a PCC taking on a wider complaints remit. The Home Office will need to clarify the role of Panels in the statutory guidance produced. It was concerning that there is no representation from Panels on the Working Group. This could be an area where a national representative body for Panels (see also section 4) could have a role.

3.6 As there was little time to explore this issue in any depth, Frontline Consulting are planning to facilitate a session in London for Panels on 21st March 2018. In the meantime, Councillor Wilkinson and Santokh Sidhu will continue to represent the Panel on the local Police Complaints Working Group, Chaired by the Deputy PCC.

4.0 Creation of a National Association for Police and Crime Panels

4.1 Members have previously discussed the proposal for and given an in-principle agreement to North Yorkshire's participation in the establishment of some form of National Association of Police and Crime Panels.

4.2 A consultation paper was issued in August seeking views on the creation of a national representative association and the form that such a body might take. The three options were:

- An independent National Association;
- A Special Interest Group (SIG) within the LGA;
- A combination whereby Option 2 was considered as a stepping stone to Option 1.

4.3 Responses had been received from 30 of the 41 PCPs; all but two were in favour of the formation of a national representative body. The majority expressed a preference for this to be a SIG.

4.4 The Conference discussed the options. There was a general consensus and support for the establishment of a SIG facilitated by the LGA. The main purpose of the SIG will be to lobby/influence the Home Office on the work of Panels and to provide networking opportunities.

4.5 The LGA can provide some administrative support but a 'host Authority' will need to provide additional support and it has been suggested that this be linked to the host authority for the SIG Chair, as elected on an annual basis. The minimum cost of the LGA's support was estimated to be around £200 per Panel per year but it has been suggested that up to £500 per Panel would ensure sufficient funds are in place to get the SIG off to a good start. The Panel is asked to give an in-principle agreement to providing this funding to support the SIG.

4.6 The next steps will be to establish a Steering Group with a view to drawing up final proposals for the aims and objectives and Terms of Reference for a SIG, as well as plans for forging links with the Home Office and other bodies as appropriate. The Steering Group will be made up of 10 volunteers from a cross-section of Police and Crime Panels. As a high number of volunteers put themselves forward at the conference, a 'virtual' forum has been established in the first instance, to agree key points and an agenda, prior to an inaugural meeting in late February/early March 2018. The suggested outline agenda for that meeting is as follows:

1. Introductions
2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

3. Structure and meeting arrangements
4. Subscription levels
5. Setting the agenda
6. Any other business

Views are sought from Panels on this agenda, by 26th January 2018.

5.0 Proposal for a Regional Panel Network

- 5.1 Regional sessions were held during the afternoon of the conference, with the Yorkshire and Humberside session facilitated by Tim Young from Frontline Consulting. The Panels represented were North Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and Humberside.
- 5.2 There was unanimity from all present around the value of continuing to meet as a network to discuss matters of common interest, share experience and exchange information. The discussion around 'hot topics' produced a number of potential agenda items including:
 - Regional (police) collaboration
 - Child sexual exploitation (including unaccompanied migrants)
 - Modern Slavery (in the wake of the recent HMICFRS report)
 - Police Finances (Police pay rise impact on budgets)
 - Complaints reform
 - Fire and Rescue Service – PCC plans
- 5.3 Two options were suggested:
 - For Panels to meet as a Regional Network but be totally self-supporting.
 - For Frontline Consulting to support the Regional Network – as they currently do with others across the UK.
- 5.4 The cost of Frontline Consulting supporting a Regional Network would require an annual fee of £500 per Panel. In return, Frontline could also offer one free day delegate place per Panel at the Annual Conference, and a 10% discount on any learning and development sessions that Panel want to engage Frontline to deliver. A full outline of the benefits of this approach and support available with this offer is provided at Appendix A.
- 5.5 There was a general view across the Yorkshire and Humber Panel members and officers present that given current workloads and capacity, they could not offer any capacity to be self-supporting.
- 5.6. Consideration would need to be given to hosting arrangements for the network. Options could be:
 - a) one host authority would take on hosting a network meeting twice a year, indefinitely;
 - b) each of the four host authorities could take it in turn to host a year's worth of meetings; or

c) the meetings would rotate around the host authorities, so that each one hosts a meeting every two years.

- 5.7 Members are asked to consider the proposal for a Yorkshire and Humber regional Panel network and agree a preferred option for managing the administration of such a network.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 That the Panel:

- (a) note the update provided on issues considered at the national conference;
- (b) agree in principle to provide a subscription to support the establishment of a Special Interest Group for Police and Crime Panels nationally;
- (c) agree the formation of a regional Panel network for Yorkshire and the Humber and an appropriate option for the administration and facilitation of such a network.

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2nd January 2018

Background Documents:

Appendix A – Opportunity for Support for a Regional Network of PCPs
(Frontline Consulting)

OPPORTUNITY FOR SUPPORT FOR A REGIONAL NETWORK FOR PCPs

Benefits of a regional network

A regional network would enable Panels to share their experience and ways of working, explore the nature of their engagement with their Police and Crime Commissioners, exchange views about good practice and perspectives on hot topics and discuss potential solutions to difficult challenges.

As cross-border and regional collaboration among Forces and PCCs increases, the Panels especially would be better positioned to look at common issues that might arise from regional collaboration. Networking also lays the basis for potential joint working on items that affect a Police and Crime Plan's strategic objective of more than one or perhaps all of the PCCs in the region.

Support from Frontline Consulting Associates

Frontline Consulting Associates has been supporting Police and Crime Panels across England since the early days of shadow Panels. Following a national conference in Gloucester in June 2012, we ran a number of induction sessions for Members joining the new Panels, then learning and development events and reviews for Panels so they could take stock of their experiences and reflect on how they might improve their working practices.

At our second national conference, which took place in July 2013, some participants raised the possibility of regional networks being set up to assist Panels and provide mutual support. As a result, we have worked in the South West, East Midlands and East to bring the PCPs together.

Over recent years there has been a trend to increasing regional collaboration, which has raised the implications for PCPs and joint working. This has developed most recently with Blue Light Collaboration, especially of Police and Fire and Rescue Services. We therefore have extended our offer to facilitate regional networks in other parts of England and Wales.

How a network might operate and what is on offer

Our proposal for Regional PCPs Networks is customised to meet the precise requirements of the participating PCPs.

Typically, we offer the following:

- Two meetings a year for the Chairs, Vice-Chairs and support officer (substitutes allowable) of each Panel to share information and experience, to problem-solve and to collaborate as appropriate; agendas are devised by the participants and could include a regional update based upon information provided in a common template as well as 'hot topics' of challenges to address across the Force areas, all as identified by participants
- A 'helpline' facility (by telephone, e-mail and online) supported by Dave Burn, Frontline Consulting's Lead on Policing and Crime or Tim Young, to answer queries and provide advice
- A website www.pcps-direct.net with briefings, experiences and good practice (currently being refreshed)

In addition, we offer:

- One free day delegate place at our annual PCP conference
- A 10% discount on any learning and development sessions that PCPs might want to engage Frontline Consulting to deliver.

Costs

We are very aware of the limited budget available for Police and Crime Panels. We therefore charge a modest annual subscription of £500 per annum per Panel + VAT. As with any subscription, this does not presuppose automatic annual renewal.

Any queries?

Please feel free to contact Ann, Dave or Tim to discuss any aspect of this proposal.

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