

Notes as prepared for delivery: Speech to Partnership Summit 27 November 2015 – Chief Executive OPCC

I enjoy the opportunity to speak to the Partnership Summit. It is an opportunity to think through where we've been and the Commissioner's approach to the coming year.

Last time I spoke to the Partnership Summit, we had entered a period of significant transition: it was 5 months after Bob Jones passed away, and 3 months after David Jamieson took office. We had embarked on a review of Police and Crime Plan, and review of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, and it is to those two things that I turn first.

Last year I reported that a Review of Police and Crime Plan had started. This was approved in March of this year, with six themes:

- Pride in Our Police
- Stronger, safer, more prosperous communities
- Protecting people from harm
- Making better use of people and resources
- Creating a new era in policing
- Playing our part in responding to national threats

Key, new elements:

- Increased emphasis on hidden crimes and vulnerability (Public Protection etc (data publication), Victims Commission, Mental Health Champion, business crime, fraud)
- Emphasis on prevention (MH, offender management, violence prevention, support for Force-wide DV perpetrator programme)
- Supporting economic development (a novel and coherent approach to how the police and policing support the wider economy: the Commissioner will be launching a policing and economic development strategy early in the New Year). Brings together work already in place and new initiatives, for example work on bilking and the European Social Fund Youth Employment Initiative.
- Better, closer oversight of WMP2020 (using the Strategic Policing and Crime Board members and staff in an embedded governance role, and breathing life back into the formal contractual oversight mechanisms). Subject of a presentation this afternoon. Radical change – can be seen as a series of internal mergers, transforming business processes

Nine quantitative measures and a large number of quantitative and qualitative risks and objectives to be matched against activity. PCC led development of the plan, moving away from the Police Authority model where the Force wrote the Plan. Thus we now have joint performance reporting and a clear action plan built around the objectives in the Police and Crime Plan. Thank you to Esther

for her work in supporting the development of the Plan – my apologies that I will miss her presentation, which looks at the strategic assessment in a new way.

The Plan has proved an effective tool for working with the Force, holding to account and allocating resources. I can therefore confirm that the Commissioner will not be reviewing the Plan before May 2016.

Less visibly, the Commissioner launched a review of his office, focussing staff on delivery of the plan, built around four teams. His objective was to make us “future proof”, with a clear and easily understood “service offer”:

- Finance and audit – headed by a new, full-time Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer – Mark Kenyon – speaking later this morning
- Policy, Engagement, Partnerships and Commissioning – Alethea Fuller, who many of you will know already – her responsibilities encompass services for victims of crime, restorative justice, partnership working and policy support. As this team forms up, new points of contact will be reaching out across the partnerships. Vikash is one of our new starters, here today, and many of you will come to know him in the coming months.
- Business Support – our public facing contact and casework team, custody visiting service, close support to the PCC/DPCC, committee management and transactional services, headed by Andrea Gabbitas
- Communications – headed by Rich Costello. Rich and his comms officer will be coming to you to support communications activity to promote your work

This new structure, and the staff we have recruited (by early next year, over half the team will be new joiners appointed since David came into office) is built around providing an effective governance function with capabilities to deliver the full spectrum of activity associated with a directly elected individual, primarily the oversight and delivery of a plan that derives from political strategic direction, but also:

- Public contact, casework management and complaint handling
- External and internal communications
- Public engagement and consultation
- Research and policy development
- Partnership working
- Service commissioning – an area of particular interest
- Financial and contract management (including a s.151 officer)
- [But also other functions, with which you might be less familiar] Volunteer management

- Administration of quasi-judicial processes – such as Police Appeals Tribunals and recruitment of a Chief Constable (a function we completed this summer with the appointment of Dave Thompson to become the new Chief Constable in the New Year).

Partnerships on that list. OPCC and partnerships. Wider thinking – something that CSPs are also thinking about as they adapt to the current environment. PCC has varying roles in partnerships: sometimes at the head of the table, sometimes joins the table (either as a stakeholder or governor, for example), and sometimes the Commissioner brings the table and encourages others to join him. Today's event, rightly, has a focus on community safety partnerships, but what is clear, particularly as we look forward, is that the PCC, and other organisations represented here today, are operators within a network of partnerships – a challenge that I know CSPs are addressing too:

- Community safety partnerships – statutory role, CSPs as a group are by some margin the single largest recipients of PCC external funding. Commissioner in the Plan said he would review his approach to CSPs and that process is reaching its conclusion. We are grateful for your support and engagement. Mark will be presenting his findings and his recommendations – and they are just that, recommendations - to the Commissioner later this morning. A brief aside about budgets: first, funding for policing will be flat in real terms only if the Commissioner, and indeed all Commissioners, increase the police part of council tax, the precept, by the maximum amount they are allowed to do, each year, for four years. In this area, this would mean an increase of over 4% a year for four years, a significant commitment. Second, it is the case that while funding for the police is flat in real terms, the government has made a series of commitments to spend hundreds of millions of pounds on a series of national objectives. It is therefore inevitable that there will be further significant reductions in the funding available to West Midlands Police and the Commissioner locally
- Other partnerships: Two operational partnerships: 1. CT – CTU and CT Network, Security Service
- 2. SOC – Regional Organised Crime Unit, NCA etc
- Victims services – Victims Commission – 3rd sector - a new approach that is thematic and less based on geography, built around provider expertise
- Vulnerability – PVVP, vulnerable citizens referral portal
- Reoffending – RRSO, DV perpetrator programme (2016-17)
- Health and mental health – a more complex partnership landscape: VPA, MH Champion, WMCA MH Commission
- Information sharing – Project Opera, Predictive Analytics – opportunities for partners
- Resilience
- Criminal justice – combined authority – public service reform board, local criminal justice partnership, external reviews

- Economic development – where does the PCC sit? The LEPs? ESF/YEI B’ham and SH. Black Country? Coventry? Combined authority.

Combined Authority – where are we? The view from the Commissioner’s office

Agreement signed 17 November by government and WMCA shadow board.

Talks about a “relationship” between combined authority, mayoral functions, and policing governance functions held by the PCC.

Cities and devolution bill indicates that PCC functions can transfer to the mayor. The Commissioner is supportive of this proposal, subject to a “due diligence” exercise that sets out the business case for merging police governance functions in this way, and offers a governance model that retains the direct accountability for policing that comes with the PCC model.

Greater Manchester: already has an established combined authority so, once the Bill becomes law, there will be a statutory instrument establishing a mayor with policing governance powers. Once this is in place, there will be a further statutory instrument cancelling the 2016 Greater Manchester PCC election, and extending the current PCC’s term (who coincidentally is also the interim mayor) until 2017.

West Midlands: more complicated. There is no combined authority – it only exists in shadow form. Without a combined authority, there cannot be a statutory instrument establishing a mayor and without this the PCC election cannot be cancelled, and so it goes ahead as planned.

Assuming the election goes ahead, then the transition point becomes unclear. Will it be mid-term, in 2017 or 2018? Or will it have to wait until the end of the PCC’s term of office, in 2020? We don’t know the answer to these questions yet.

Emergency Services Collaboration

Another variable to consider. A government initiative: Police, Fire, Ambulance collaboration. A personal view: helpful to have focus on Police/Fire collaboration. Allows space for a “Think Fire First” approach that supports the Commissioner to require collaborative thinking.

Proposes options – the first two do not enjoy the Commissioner’s support:

1. Do nothing
2. PCC as member of the fire authority
3. PCC assuming governance responsibilities for fire and policing, based on two variations of organisational framework

The Commissioner has not yet reached a position on option 3. The Commissioner and office continue to build stronger relationships with West Midlands Fire Service and Authority. Both the Commissioner and Authority submitted responses to the national consultation on emergency services collaboration (which closed on 23 October) and the outcome of the consultation is expected to be reflected in the forthcoming Policing and Criminal Justice Bill. The Commissioner recently met with the Fire Brigades Union to discuss both the consultation and local collaboration opportunities.

The office is looking actively for opportunities for West Midlands Fire Service to engage with the WMP2020 innovation and integration partnership – WMP can learn from WMFS on its approach to supporting vulnerable people for example. However, looking forward, a letter from the Home Secretary to PCCs received yesterday stated that it remains the government’s intention to “extend the role of PCCs to police complaints, fire and rescue and other services, to support better coordination and improve accountability”. As the PCC has said, the potential position in which we find ourselves is to take the opportunity to collaborate in partnership now, on our own terms, or face future mandation.

We expect the Policing and Criminal Justice Bill to receive its first reading in December, with Royal Assent in the middle of next year, and we will be continuing our close relationship with the Fire Authority through this period.

Another uncertainty however is how the proposed changes to fire service governance will interact with the combined authority / elected mayor. In Greater Manchester and London, the governance of the respective fire and rescue services will become part of the mayoral function. The West Midlands devolution agreement hints at this possibility, but the sequencing and statutory vehicle by which this might happen are not clear.

A conclusion: a combination of uncertainty and confidence.

On the Combined Authority and Fire Service collaboration, we understand in principle what we wish to achieve, but the process by which those goals are to be reached is unclear. We also have a clear sense of strategic direction on what partnership working can achieve, and a growing sense of the partnerships we need to develop, but again, we do not yet fully understand how we will work with others to develop that range of partnerships. However, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner is moving to a position where it has a team with the skills and experience to operate effectively in this changing and evolving environment.