



Friday, 15th December 2017

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**Annual Police and Crime Panel Conference held
6th November 2017**

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the key issues considered at the Sixth Annual Police and Crime Panels Conference held on 6th November 2017. The report also raises issues discussed at the event which the Panel are asked to consider.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Sixth Annual Police and Crime Panel Conference was held on at Warwick Conference Centre, Coventry. It was facilitated and hosted by Frontline Consulting who have organised the Conference since Panels were introduced and who earlier this year, supported the West Yorkshire Panel with a development event.
- 2.2 The Conference was attended by Cllr Alison Lowe, Cllr Geraldine Carter, Roger Grasby and the Police and Crime Panel Officer. The theme for the day was 'Changing context, increasing collaboration – what does this mean for us?' Cllr Lowe spoke at the event and sat on the expert Panel throughout the mornings discussions.

3. Key Issues Raised in the Main Session

- 3.1 Key issues raised by the event speakers and then by the wider audience in the question and answer sessions were around some of the following issues:
- 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 understanding of roles and responsibilities

- Importance of relationships of PCCs and PCPs
- The need for the Home Office to take the role of PCPs seriously
- Increasing positive public engagement with the public around the Police and Crime Panel's work in holding the PC to account.
- How pro-active are Panel's – is it polite scrutiny or really challenging
- Grant funding and resourcing – very different levels of capacity and support across the country – many Panels do not use the full allocation of grant

3.2 Councillor Lowe gave a number of practical examples of the ways that the West Yorkshire Panel hold the PCC to account and the Panel use their influence in lieu of 'powers'.

4. Creation of a National Association of Police & Crime Panels

4.1 Members have previously discussed the proposal and given an in-principle agreement to West 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 Option1.

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 the Panels and to provide networking opportunities.

4.5 The LGA can provide some administrative support but a 'host Authority' will need to be identified to provide additional support. The cost of the LGA's support was estimated at around £200 per Panel per year.

4.6 The next steps will be to establish a Steering Group with a view to drawing up final proposals for the Aims and Objective 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 and both Cllr Alison Lowe and Cllr Geraldine Carter put their names forward for the Steering Group.

5. Workshops

5.1 Different workshops were attended by the four West Yorkshire representatives on the following topics:

- Performance Monitoring of Police & Crime Plans
- Regional Collaboration
- Partnership working and evidence gathering
- Police & Crime Plans – The National Picture.

5.2 Each session was an opportunity to consider best practice and share experiences from the Panels represented.

6. Regional Network

6.1 Regional Sessions were held during the afternoon, with the Yorkshire and Humberside session facilitated by Tim Young from Frontline Consulting. All Y&H Panels were represented, and there was a discussion on the merits of the National SIG, but also the establishment of a Regional Network.

6.2 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 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
- Fire and Rescue Service – PCC plans

6.3 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 do with others across the UK.

6.4 The cost of Frontline Consulting supporting a Regional Network would be for 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.

6.5 There was a general view across the Y&H members present that given current workloads and capacity, they could not offer any capacity to be self-supporting.

7. Decisions Required

- 7.1 Panel are asked to consider if they would be willing to contribute for additional support for a SIG facilitated by the LGA in the region of £200.**
- 7.2 Panel as asked to consider the proposals for a Regional Network and agree whether this should be self-supporting or whether to fund Frontline Consulting to co-ordinate and support the Network at a fee of £500.**