



## **West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel**

### **Principles for Engagement:**

## **West Yorkshire Criminal Justice Board**

### **Background to the West Yorkshire Criminal Justice Board**

The West Yorkshire Criminal Justice Board, often referred to as the Local Criminal Justice Board, is a non-statutory body that was established in 2003 to bring more offenders to justice, to deliver real improvements for victims and the local community and to improve links between criminal justice agencies.

It comprises eight criminal justice partners: West Yorkshire Police, Crown Prosecution Service, Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service, West Yorkshire Probation Trust, Youth Offending Services, Her Majesty's Prisons, Legal Services Commission and Victim Support.

An 'Executive Board' oversees three steering groups charged with addressing its key strategic priorities. These relate to improving efficiency and effectiveness, increasing victim and witness satisfaction and reducing re-offending.

### **Impact of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011**

As the West Yorkshire Criminal Justice Board is a non-statutory body, the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act does not directly impose any changes to its role, priorities or operating arrangements.

However, the duty placed on Police *and Crime* Commissioners to 'deliver an efficient and effective Criminal Justice System,' necessitated consideration of the way in which criminal justice partners will work together and engage with the Police and Crime Commissioner from November 2012 onwards.

Although criminal justice agencies and the Commissioner must work together 'as far as is appropriate', aside from the Police, the Commissioner will not have control over what these agencies do and for that reason the West Yorkshire Criminal Justice Board will continue to operate as independent body.

The Commissioner will be invited to meetings of the West Yorkshire Criminal Justice Board as and when required to ensure the independence of the judiciary and prosecution is not compromised.

The Board is keen to ensure that any opportunities to better join up 'policing and crime' under the Commissioner are fully realised.

## **Rationale for Engagement**

The West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel believe that establishing and maintaining strong links with the West Yorkshire Criminal Justice Board will:

- Enable the Panel to **assess the extent** to which the Police and Crime Commissioner is contributing to the delivery of an **efficient and effective Criminal Justice System**
- Assist the Panel in **judging** whether or not the Commissioner is offering sufficient support to **victims and witnesses**.

Equally, the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel is eager to assist the West Yorkshire Criminal Justice Board by aiming to ensure that the Commissioner:

- **Works co-operatively** alongside the criminal justice agencies and in doing so considers the impact of all decisions on individual partners and on the collective ambitions of the Board
- **Contributes to** the Board's strategic priorities; improving efficiency and effectiveness, increasing victim and witness satisfaction and reducing re-offending.
- Preserves the **operational independence** and impartiality of the judiciary and prosecutors
- Respects that each individual criminal justice body remains responsible for setting its **own priorities** in line with its statutory obligations.
- Accepts that each criminal justice body's **accounting officer** remains ultimately accountable to the National Audit Office and the Public Accounts Committee.

## **Moving Forwards**

On the basis of the rationale outlined above, the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel will work in partnership with the West Yorkshire Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) in the following ways:

### **1. Influencing the Police and Crime Plan**

- 1.1 The Police and Crime Panel is in a fortunate position in terms of its ability to influence the development of the Police and Crime Plan and the LCJB is encouraged to inform the Panel's approach when exercising this influence.

- 1.2 The Police and Crime Panel will encourage the Commissioner to have regard to the strategic ambitions of the LCJB, and its constituent agencies, when developing his/ her Police and Crime Plan.
- 1.3 The LCJB will be sent a copy of all the draft iterations of the Police and Crime Plan that are submitted to the Panel and will be asked to return any comments or suggestions in advance of the Panel meeting during which the draft will be discussed.

## **2. Exchanging Information and Intelligence**

- 2.1 The Police and Crime Panel will, at the very least, dedicate a bi-annual discussion to the Commissioner's approach to 'delivering an efficient and effective criminal justice system' and to 'supporting victims and witnesses.'
- 2.2 The LCJB will be asked to provide a written report to support this discussion and supplement the information provided directly by the Commissioner on the same subject.
- 2.3 To further support a meaningful analysis of the Commissioner's impact on the criminal justice system/ victims and witnesses, the Panel will also utilise additional evidence gathered from Community Safety Partnerships, Local Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committees, direct contact with the public and any other information sources identified as relevant.
- 2.4 The LCJB is encouraged to notify the Panel of any issues/ concerns which arise in-between these scheduled discussions and require the input of the Panel and/ or a conversation with the Commissioner.

## **3. Membership**

- 3.1 The LCJB will nominate one of its Executive Board Members to sit on the Police and Crime Panel as an Advisory Member.
- 3.2 The Advisory Member will not have voting rights on the Panel but will be invited to participate in those discussions which take place at Panel Meetings.
- 3.3 As an Advisory Member, the LCJB representative will ensure that the Panel has a firm understanding of the Commissioner's impact on victims and witnesses, on the strategic priorities of all criminal justice agencies and on the collective ambitions of the LCJB.
- 3.4 Equally, the LCJB representative will aim to support and inform the Commissioner's approach to better connecting 'policing' and 'crime' and in doing so will help the Panel better understand these linkages and inter-dependencies.

## **Endorsement**

These principles have been endorsed by:

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Cllr Peter Box (on behalf of the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel)

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Sue Hall (on behalf of the West Yorkshire Criminal Justice Board)