

PCC Review Consultation responses from Hertfordshire Police and Crime Panel

1. (i) How effectively do PCC's engage to the public?
- (ii) How do we ensure the public can easily hold their PCC to account at the ballot box, for reducing crime and delivering an effective and efficient Police force?
 - Low turn out to PCC elections
 - PCC should look to engage the public more than it does.
 - Nationally the PCP should be empowered to require the PCC to attend its meetings.
 - PCP should have the power to require the Chief Constable to attend the PCP meeting annually to review how effective the PCC has been in his role.
 - PCC reports are provided too late for the public to review, comment and pose questions prior to the PCP meeting. So do not consider it is easy for the public to hold PCC to account.
 - PCP is a toothless tiger, PCPs have no real powers.

2. (i) Is the current model resilient enough to hold up when things go wrong?
 - Concern that over a millions pounds spent on PCCs civil servant staff, providing a workforce for the PCC, this could be spent on more police officers.
 - Not completely clear what the PCC deputies are accountable for, they are appointed by the PCC and not elected.

3. (i) Are the right checks and balances in place to make PCC-led accountability work?
- (ii) Do Police and Crime Panels have the right skills, tools and powers to hold the PCC's to account?
- (iii) Should a system of recall be introduced for PCCs and if so, what should be the trigger mechanism?
 - PCP is a toothless tiger with no real powers to hold the PCC to account.
 - Checks and balances are weak.
 - PCP have no powers to effectively deal with complaints against the PCC. PCP cannot investigate a complaint against the PCC, ask questions of witnesses or impose sanctions.
 - There should be more national training provided for PCP members.

- Should be mandatory for PCP members to attend training, to achieve minimum standards.
 - For budget meeting should only need two thirds of PCP members attending the meeting instead of two thirds of the PCP membership to veto the budget. The current threshold is too high.
 - Yes, there should be a system of recall, for serious wrong doing. But there needs to be clear identification of what constitutes serious wrong doing.
 - PCPs need progress report from the PCC through the year e.g. on how the budget is going.
4. (i) Are PCC powers around the removal and appointment of the Chief Constable correctly calibrated?
- (ii) Is the balance right in the PCC/CC relationship and what changes might be needed to the policing protocol?
- Do not think the powers around the removal and appointment of CC is correctly calibrated.
 - PCPs need to have more input in the appointment of the CC, if the PCP reject the appointment of CC the PCC can appoint the next candidate without recourse to the PCP.
 - PCP need to be able to ratify renewal/extension of the CC contract. PCPs do not currently have this power.
 - Suspension of the CC should be brought before the PCP.
 - Should have a statement from central government about the process for the dismissal or suspension of the CC.
 - PCP need to be involved in CC role to understand whether the PCC is effectively holding CC to account. Should be part of the PCPs scrutiny role to look at the relationship between the PCC and CC.
5. (i) What do you see as the strategic benefits of having a single elected and accountable leader, who is responsible for a range of public safety functions?
- (ii) What are the opportunities and issues with transferring PCC and FRA functions to Mayors?
- (iii) What are the lessons learned to date from transferring PCC and FRA functions to Mayors models?
- Unable to answer this question until the devolution paper is published. But, concerned it would lead to dilution of its effectiveness.
 - The panel as currently constituted is drawn from each of the District councils representing distinct communities of Hertfordshire. A Mayor with the responsibilities of the PCC would presumably be in charge of the single Hertfordshire Unitary authority. It is not clear how, under such an arrangement, a panel such as ours would be constituted and how scrutiny of the PCC/proposed Mayoral PCC could be effectively delivered on behalf of the county's distinct communities. The current

set up enables the specific issues and priorities of different areas and communities to be aired and the PCC held accountable against these. Not sure how this could be guaranteed under such a proposal.

6. (i) What are the benefits and challenges of the current model for transferring fire governance to the PCC?
 - (ii) How can we strengthen the accountability and transparency of fire governance?
 - (iii) How can we strengthen and clarify the distinction between strategic and operational planning in fire?
 - (iv) Could governance change help maximise collaboration between policing and fire?
 - (v) What are the benefits of having a range of services and strategic plans under one elected individual?
- Unable to comment as Police and Fire not combined in Hertfordshire.

General comment by Hertfordshire PCP

There should be better control and accountability of all the fractions of the criminal justice system such as (for example) the probation service.