

HERTFORDSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL



KEY POINTS FROM PANEL WORKSHOP - 28 SEPTEMBER 2012

Mike Walker, Chief Executive Officer,
Broxbourne Borough Council

Item 4

25 October 2012

RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is invited to comment and identify other learning points from the workshop.

Purpose of Report

To advise the Panel of some key points made at the training workshop which the Panel may find helpful in developing its work programme and priorities.

Key Points from the workshop

Resource matters

- In view of the short timescales facing the Panel, an early statement of all stakeholders' financial intentions for 2013/14 would be helpful.
- The relative scale of the Commissioner's revenue and capital budget, revenue £202 million, one-third related to council tax, capital £23.5 million, is significant from a district council perspective.
- 82% of the police budget is expended on staffing, so cash restrictions in funding directly impact on manpower and staffing.
- The scale of **collaborative arrangements** by the force is significant and growing.

- The scale of the force's forecast budget gap: 2013/14 → £8.4 million; 2015/16 → £10.3 million, i.e. £35 million over next four years, is also significant. The present predicted shortfall is up to £8.7 million per annum.
- The Government's funding settlement will be announced on 10 December. However, the Director of Resources advised that the key risk factors are beyond 2013/14 in the following three years ... there will be 18% reduction in police funding over next four years. He envisaged that the Government's next spending review is the biggest risk.
- A statement of commitment to existing funding streams would assist the Commissioner in the first year's budget process.
- The EHDC representative suggested that safeguarding/multiplying 'bottom up' joint activity in the wider community safety family would be helpful, and that finding new ways of securing local funding would be helpful.

Role of other bodies allied to the Panel

- The PCP will need to give attention to the role of other key bodies -
 - CPS
 - Probation Service
- The PCP need to recognise the role of health and children's services in relation to the wider issue of 'crime'.

Ways of working

- Andrew White noted that the legal framework is not restrictive: 'The legislation is written to allow every flower to bloom.'
- The Police Authority stressed the value of a collaborative co-operative working model.
- Early and frequent discussion with the Police crime Commissioner will be helpful before decisions.
- Retaining and sustaining the gains from collaboration is an issue for the PCP - sustaining gains.
- The goal of the PCP should be to provide **additionality** to the police plan adding value on the wider issues, such as:-
 - Restorative justice
 - Community issues

Timetable for Panel's work

- The scale of the key actions being taken by the PCC and the PCP in the spring (precept, budget, first plan) is challenging. There is an extremely **compressed timescale**: 22 November - 13 February for key financial decisions.
- There is a wider or higher dimension to bear in mind: strategic planning requirement and collaborative arrangements with other forces.
- The PCP is to scrutinise the Commissioner, not the police force.