

Negotiating the bill
The introduction of Police
and Crime Commissioners
in England and Wales



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About this research

For this paper, Deloitte LLP interviewed 17 chief constables in England and Wales, together with a number of leading police authority chairs, chief executives and local government figures. These conversations, combined with our work on large complex public sector programmes, represent the evidence base for the analysis.

Executive summary

For the police in England and Wales, the next four years will be challenging. All 43 forces will undergo significant budget reductions until 2014-15. Senior officers face hard choices on operational resourcing and staff. The 2011 disturbances in London and other English cities provided a reminder of the scale of operational requirements as forces seek to take out cost from their businesses and prepare for new ways of working.

Overlaying these developments is another challenge. The election of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) will change policing fundamentally. It will also tilt the balance of local power and provide an opportunity to change the way local criminal justice services are delivered. Although unified by a common profession, the priorities, capabilities and communities of police forces in England and Wales vary significantly. The challenge of managing the transition to PCCs is symptomatic of a wider tension in local public service delivery: how can public bodies take advantage of aggregation, collaboration and joint working, and yet still reflect local needs?

For this paper, Deloitte surveyed over a third of police forces in England and Wales about PCCs, together with a number of police authorities and local councils. The purpose of the research was to assess how forces are preparing for the changes. We found that just over half of forces we interviewed (55 per cent) have begun formal preparations for the introduction of PCCs.¹ Transmission and induction arrangements will need to be in place well ahead of the election to enable PCCs to be ready for the role. Some forces have established working groups to deal with this need. A practical change management exercise will take place in each force area.

But the real question for the longer term is how PCCs might shake up the way local public services are organised and delivered. There will be opportunities to bring together processes at county or force-area level and break down some of the institutional boundaries between councils, police and local agencies. As with governance and leadership style, one size will not fit all as police forces seek to build local alliances and joint working.

This was corroborated by conversations with chief constables. Many view the introduction of PCCs as an opportunity to change things – either through improved partnerships with local agencies, better collaboration with other forces, or by upgrading working practices to reflect those in the best public and private organisations. In this way, the advent of PCCs could provide a roadmap to end traditional, often less efficient, ways of working.

Our analysis shows areas where police forces need to prepare for PCCs: by addressing the practicalities, governance and accountability processes, and using the PCC model as a catalyst to drive new approaches in local criminal justice services. As intended, approaches across 41 different police forces will each look different and reflect local requirements. But at a minimum to prepare for transition, our analysis has produced five critical success factors that police forces and authorities need to action now.

Critical success factor 1: Assemble a transition team

Led by the police authority chief executive, a transition team must prepare the ground for change. A series of milestones in the run up to the election should include an induction programme that takes account of a complex matrix of stakeholders, including local authorities and other agencies. Some initial offering is also needed to agree protocols for media and public engagement, access to documents and financial information, budgetary agreement, and corporate and individual performance indicators. Chief executives can draw lessons from elsewhere in government where changes in political leaders are more routinely managed.

Critical success factor 2: Outline the PCC work programme

PCCs will need support at the outset to use their time effectively and focus on key issues. This necessarily involves prioritising across a patchwork of different issues and local areas. In support, authorities could consider an options package to provide PCCs with choices on levels of policy and oversight support. The transition team should consider how best to bring the PCC up to speed on aspects of a large complex business (such as capital investment or cost reduction programmes) and map out the PCC's personal workload. What is the PCC actually going to do on day one?

Critical success factor 3: Use best practice to develop appropriate governance

Over the coming months, 41 separate governance models will be developed and then reworked following the election. Police authorities and forces need to begin now to consider what works locally. This should include assessing best practice from the public and private sector, and defining PCC methods of scrutiny and involvement in finance and other strategic issues. Key processes such as right of access and dispute resolution will need to be formalised. PCCs might strengthen oversight by appointing senior colleagues to represent them in different ways. They might also consider using senior figures from the private sector to advise on business and management issues.

Critical success factor 4: Adapt the PCP to suit local needs

While media and parliamentary focus has centred on PCCs, the role of the Police and Crime Panel (PCP) has been arguably overlooked. How the panel will work vis-à-vis the chief constable and the wider crime prevention community will be an essential part of the new model and a check against potential corruption. The structure, membership and working practices of the PCP need to be agreed well ahead of time: some forces and authorities interviewed have already created a 'shadow' panel to aid transition. Forces could consider the use of formal training packages for new PCP members, together with ways to split out work and responsibilities to ensure that adequate checks and balances in other public and private sector organisations are incorporated.

Critical success factor 5: Seize the opportunity for a review of local public service delivery

The introduction of PCCs provides an opportunity for communities to review how services are delivered and by whom. The debate needs to be managed locally, but take account of best practice and trends in other areas. For the transition team, this means lining up the right contacts and relationships for the PCC in the early days, assessing the full extent of opportunities for outsourcing (custody suites, control room functions, facilities management or forensics) and working with other local agencies through a range of delivery mechanisms to tackle shared problems. In particular, the arrival of PCCs may reinvigorate inter-force collaboration.

Context

The election of Police and Crime Commissioners will mark a fundamental change to the way policing in England and Wales has worked for 150 years. In its July 2010 consultation the Government stated that it did not want:

“...to shackle Commissioners with reams of guidance and prescription on their role. Their local focus will be largely determined by the public.”

Policing in the 21st Century: Reconnecting the Public and the People

For forces preparing for transition, this uncertainty could be problematic. It is complicated by the other strategic challenge facing chief constables: budget cuts are expected to lead to significant job losses and workforce reconfiguration. Police officers will also be working for politicians, some of whom may be non-specialist with no direct experience of policing. This arrangement functions across many other aspects of government and public services, but for the police in England and Wales, it is wholly new.

Evidence from our discussions with chief constables and police authorities shows a group of professionals less anxious about the principle of PCCs than the uncertainties and business risks it involves. In this context, professional thinking gravitates towards ‘worst case’ possibilities as senior officers consider a set of ‘what if...?’ questions around the experience, approach and suitability of candidate PCCs.

The evidence-gathering for this study was an interesting exercise. Some of those interviewed were concerned about the police’s role in elections, and how forces might need to manage misleading campaign messages such as the misuse of data on police performance. But other interviewees were more optimistic. This group believed that the problem was not the reforms themselves, but a lack of entrepreneurialism in public service culture and a tendency for public officials to panic in the absence of clarity on process. They also suggested that senior police officers must come to terms with an environment that is more overtly political: chief constables who have not already done so must wake up to this new reality.

What was also clear from the analysis was that significant differences exist in force budgets, local priorities and across different communities with complex policing requirements. Some key indicators shown in Figure 1 confirm that forces often face distinct local challenges. As such, it is difficult and inappropriate to prescribe a one-size-fits-all approach to the role of the PCC beyond the five critical success factors set out in this study.

Despite contrasting force needs, interviewees showed broad consensus on one particular issue: the value of relationships. Even with fit-for-purpose governance structures and processes outlined in this study, a key critical success factor that cannot be assured through good process will be the ability of the chief constable and the PCC to get on, recognise each other’s boundaries, and share responsibility for outcomes, good or bad.

Figure 1: Diversity among selected police forces

Force	Area (Sq km)	2011-12 Budget (£m)	Population (m)	Languages spoken	Police officers as a % of total staff	People per police officer	Reported crimes per 10,000 households	People who feel the police do a good job (%)
West Midlands	902	577.60	2.60	100	64	319	2,633	53
Greater Manchester	1,276	585.16	2.50	100	60	321	2,850	54
Merseyside	645	350.20	1.50	50+	58	349	1,857	60
Devon & Cornwall	10,270	304.00	1.65	10	54	480	2,101	67
Surrey	1,890	213.2	1.06	20	41	562	2,114	68
Dorset	2,653	140.00	0.71	10	49	489	1,788	66

Source: Home Office statistics, 2011

Methodology

In preparation for this study, Deloitte LLP spoke to 17 chief constables – over a third of all forces in England and Wales. This sample covered a range of locations, including urban communities with high rates of crime and poverty, as well as more affluent or rural areas with distinct policing requirements. We also interviewed 15 police authority chairs or chief executives, a number of local authorities, potential candidates and ACPO. Insight provided by these organisations, together with Deloitte’s work on police and criminal justice engagements, forms the evidence base for this paper.

A key challenge, which will remain in place right up to the election of PCCs, is that the winning candidates are likely to have specific ideas about the practical arrangements for their office, how their powers will be exercised, and what they will actually do day-to-day. Such is the power of the role that a PCC’s personal style may significantly influence the governance structures and processes around them.

Just over half of forces and authorities we interviewed had begun formal preparations for the introduction of PCCs. Those who had not started preparing cited a number of reasons, including a fast-moving legislative context, the priority of cost reduction over PCC transition work, and the lack of engagement on the issue by their local political community.

From these conversations and our experiences working on change programmes with major public and private sector organisations, we describe below three key areas that forces, authorities and PCCs will need to consider: the practicalities; governance, relationships and accountability; and rethinking local services.

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The practicalities

Following the election of PCCs, a Police and Crime Panel will be appointed and police authorities will cease to exist. Our discussions with forces and authorities have highlighted a number of practical steps needed before, during and after the election to preserve business continuity and adapt working practices. In most cases, authority chief executives plan to lead on this work in close co-operation with senior police officers.

The Office of Police and Crime Commissioner

Even for practical matters, the transition team will need to consider first principles questions: what will the PCCs actually do each day? What will be the scope of their activities, and what emphasis will they place on communications, investigations, policy, or political and community engagement? Each of these functions will require appropriate staffing, including a private office, a communications and press team, and liaison roles to manage relationships on behalf of the PCC. As the PCC is accountable to the public for the management of the Police Fund, the PCC must also appoint a chief financial officer (CFO).

In partnership with the CFO (who in practice may be a member of the current authority team) the PCC will need to understand existing contract commitments for estates, information technology and facilities management. For staff surplus to new requirements, arrangements for redundancy or transfer out of the group will be required, together with appropriate vetting for new staff. Staff who port across to the new office may be entitled to TUPE benefits. A significant human resources exercise is likely.

The physical location of the new office, its assets and equipment, and the access controls to main police force buildings will need to be defined. At present, most authorities are located at force headquarters sites, but in separate buildings and facilities.

The PCP will also require office space and support. It may be symbolically important for PCP members to be physically separate from both PCC and force buildings. The PCP will require a secretariat to provide administrative, financial and media support. Although smaller than the office of the PCC, the PCP function will necessarily involve plenary sessions and areas for PCP members to work. Space for at least one public meeting of the PCP to discuss the PCC's Annual Report will also be required.

Inducting the Police and Crime Commissioner

To devise an induction programme, chief executives could consider how PCCs can quickly get to grips with a large, complex business that, on average, spends nearly £200 million each year and covers areas up to 10,000 square kilometres.² For the largest, such as Greater Manchester or West Midlands that spend over £500 million per annum, acute socio-economic contrasts and competing community interests complicate the task of deploying police resources fairly and proportionately. Variations also exist in forces that cross multiple local authority areas, such as Thames Valley and West Mercia.

PCCs must also become familiar with ongoing cost reduction work. It is not clear at this stage what powers PCCs will have to stop or modify programmes that for most forces will be underway. In addition, business-critical investment that may take several years to implement (such as custody suites or IT systems) may also be part way through delivery as PCCs join.

Although several chief constables we interviewed planned to brief PCC candidates on these issues ahead of the election, it is clear that the majority of PCC learning must take place on the job. Several police authority chairs noted that it typically takes around two years to become fully aware of complex policing issues. But PCCs will have to start taking informed decisions from day one. The police authority chief executive will provide vital support in these early days. All those interviewed felt that for the inaugural PCC to dismiss an incumbent chief executive would be a mistake given their value to the transition process.

The final aspect of induction involves a discussion on collaboration. Many forces collaborate with neighbouring forces and local agencies – not only on corporate services such as IT or finance, but increasingly by pooling operational capabilities such as organised crime or firearms units. Existing National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) guidance has set a framework for collaboration. Ministers have made clear they expected to see more of it in response to budget reductions.³ Immediately after their election, however, PCCs will need to understand specific projects their force is involved in, and consider how to balance accountability to the force area public with a wider need to share resources.

Capacity and cost

A central issue brought up in interviews was the problem of capacity. The reforms essentially involve replacing 17 to 19 part-time authority members with one full-time individual. The PCC will also have expanded powers and areas of responsibility, including delivery of community safety services. The PCC will make crime and disorder reduction grants to local agencies, and maintain wider responsibility for criminal justice in the local area.⁴ He or she will also spend at least part of their time reporting to the Police and Crime Panel comprising councillors and independent members.

Setting aside the challenges of capability and experience, the intensity of the PCC's personal workload will make coverage across all issues and parts of the force area potentially difficult. Even if the use of appointed deputy commissioners is not included in the legislation or Home Office Protocol, it was clear to those we interviewed that some form of delegation will be essential to enable PCCs to do their job effectively.

Once again, the role of the transition team headed by the authority chief executive will be essential to help PCCs balance required support with cost pressures. Police authority costs typically involve around 0.5 per cent to one per cent of total force budgets.⁵ Because costs are drawn from the main police budget, some interviewees were concerned that any increases on previous arrangements may divert resources away from frontline policing.

Process agreement

Some PCCs may choose to adopt existing business processes and protocols for policing oversight – especially if best practice is clearly described at national level. However, our interviews highlighted potential areas where the scale of reform may mean existing authority processes are not appropriate. In particular:

- **Media and public engagements.** Our interviews yielded a range of views on who should act as the 'public face' of the local police. Most chief constables thought that responsibility should be split according to whether an engagement involves operational or non-operational issues (for example, updating the public on an investigation versus commenting on police performance). They recognised, however, that some PCCs will expect to lead on all media engagements. Building consensus on the approach to media and public engagement from the outset will be important.
- **Access to documents and financial information.** The Home Office Protocol states that PCCs should have general access to force information and that "such access to any information must not be unreasonably withheld by the Chief Constable".⁶ Again, it may be that good working relationships establish sensible access conventions. However, uncertainty around PCC expectations – particularly in regard to operationally sensitive information – emerged as a concern in interviews. Getting the timing right around operational briefings will be particularly important.
- **Appointment and dismissal of chief constables.** Removal of such a senior figure is likely to be complex. Current appointments and dismissal procedures are widely regarded as fair, consistent and transparent by police (and therefore less vulnerable to legal challenge). The PCC community will need to work together to establish processes that demonstrate similar rigour.

- **Budgetary agreement process.** Perhaps the single most important process to agree will be the protocol for budget setting between the chief constable and the PCC. The Home Office has made clear that PCCs will have primacy on resource allocations, except where vetoed by a majority of PCP members. Most forces interviewed plan to transpose budgetary sign-off processes from the existing authority model. But given the changing balance of power, forces may need to look to models from the corporate sector and internationally to devise the best response.
- **Performance indicators and targets.** Police targets are undergoing a period of change as requirements from central government are dismantled, and local priorities and contributions to national threats are balanced with budget reductions.⁷ The pendulum might swing again, however, as PCCs adapt existing performance management frameworks to fit manifesto commitments. The issue of translating election promises into objectives is highly sensitive for chief constables. Several of those interviewed said they expect to brief potential candidates to understand (and in reality, to influence) high level commitments.

In preparation for the introduction of PCCs, we recommend police forces in England and Wales take the following steps:

Critical success factor 1: Assemble a transition team

Led by the police authority chief executive in partnership with senior police officers, this team must prepare the ground for change by developing proposals for the PCC's office, including staffing requirements, roles and budget. Plans must be flexible to incorporate changes PCCs may make as they take office. A series of milestones in the run up to the election should include a comprehensive induction plan which takes account of a complex matrix of stakeholders, including local authorities and other agencies.

Critical success factor 2: Outline the PCC work programme

The PCCs will need support at the outset to use their time effectively and focus on key issues. This necessarily involves prioritising across a patchwork of different issues and local areas. In support, authorities could consider an options package to provide PCCs with choices on levels of policy and oversight support. This will need to be further refined once the PCC is appointed.

Perhaps the single most important process to agree will be the protocol for budget setting between the chief constable and the PCC.

Effective governance, relationships and accountability

However the Protocol evolves, ministers have been clear that the Home Office will only go so far to prescribe method on PCC conduct. Except for some specific powers for the PCP and the legal duties of the chief constable, the legislation is clear: PCCs will have primacy over policing issues and the freedom to establish governance arrangements independently. Effective accountability will be important; constructive professional relationships will be vital.

Effective governance

Concentrated power, visibility and hands-on managerial involvement will set PCCs apart from today's authority chairs. The PCC should bring high-quality political leadership and management capability to a complex business and an essential public service. PCCs will need to consider how they can divide up their work and reduce the bureaucracy that can afflict authority processes. Visibility in the form of local public 'surgeries' or road shows will be important, but arguably secondary to the actual 'business' of policing.

In lieu of the committee system, a major task for PCCs in the early days will be to institute appropriate forms of governance and controls. To do this, an examination of the best structures and processes in the public and private sectors will be essential. Home Office protocol stipulates that all parties abide by the core principles of *The Good Governance Standard for Public Services* document published by The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.⁸ Separately, The Association of Police Authority Chief Executives is working with the Audit Commission to establish guidance and best practice on governance in the new system.

This signposting will be helpful to a point, but issues specific to the PCC role such as a need to represent local diversity will require further thinking. PCCs must balance rigorous scrutiny and involvement in finance and other strategic issues with a need to let chief constables fulfil their responsibilities. The PCC will require support from the chief executive to understand how the chief constable responds to criticism and also how to strike a balance between local interests and force contribution to national and international threats. The PCC will also need to consider what level of challenge the chief constable is used to and how this could be changed without adversely affecting working relationships.

PCCs will need to formalise accountabilities within their new structure and agree mutual responsibilities with the chief constable such as right of access, ownership of issues and dispute resolution. Despite their public-facing nature, many interviewees we spoke to were adamant that disputes between forces and PCCs should remain private and, as appropriate, without the knowledge of the PCP. For the public-facing side, however, new arrangements will also require a formal process for the handling of complaints against police action. A final issue highlighted was the management of risk including financial, operational and reputational risk. PCCs will need to develop robust risk management processes in partnership with the chief constable. These should include the use of scenario planning, contingencies and formal training to respond to incidents through clear lines of accountability and as a single, unified team.

Relationships

Most chief constables and authorities we interviewed described the quality of relationships as the single greatest determinant of effective governance. PCCs need to engage the chief constable and the senior team. But they will also need to foster high-quality relationships with local authority stakeholders, Members of Parliament, local courts and probation service heads, business leaders, community safety partners such as housing groups, social services and youth justice bodies. Each of these will lobby hard for recognition and engagement. The PCC will have to adopt an approach that balances these interests with the needs of the wider electorate.

Perhaps the most complex relationship will be with the community itself. For the majority of forces we spoke to, their area includes several communities, each with separate, often conflicting expectations of police priorities. Some force areas such as Devon and Cornwall or Thames Valley may cover hundreds of square miles, and include urban and rural areas, political fragmentation and a range of crime and public safety issues. Recent survey work carried out by Lancashire Police indicates that public confidence in PCCs will be driven chiefly by their ability to improve policing at a very local level, and instil a sense of community safety, responsiveness and visibility.⁹

Good corporate governance typically requires several individuals acting objectively in slightly different roles. PCCs might seek to strengthen their oversight and increase capacity by appointing senior colleagues to represent them in different ways. They could explore the use of non-executive style advisers such as retired police officers, civil servants or local authority figures to support their work. PCCs could also introduce senior figures from the private sector to advise on business and management issues.

A local public interest approach

PCC decision-making will naturally reflect electoral cycles. There is a risk this could distort strategic investment and financing allocations. Some chief constables cited examples of poor quality policing infrastructure in the United States brought about by such behaviour. In capability development, for example, or estate restructuring, PCCs will need to take a longer term view of business requirements, including through an annual strategic planning process, and a commitment to co-ordinate with central government and other forces on key strategic issues.

As PCCs take office, they may wish to cancel or postpone programmes that began prior to their tenure, or renegotiate IT or estates agreements to support cost reduction efforts. But contractual obligations may limit the scope of PCC ambition here: many forces are involved in large, joint procurement arrangements. National or multi-force contract arrangements may be extremely difficult for PCCs to unpick without incurring significant extra cost.

The breakup of the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) will see a number of its functions managed in new ways. For example, the Home Secretary has confirmed the creation of a police-led ICT company to provide central management of the £1.2 billion spent annually on police ICT.¹⁰ But for leadership development, another function previously managed by the NPIA, the future is less clear. A number of chief constables we interviewed were concerned that PCCs operating independently might be more likely to make ACPO level appointments from within their own forces. Such action could limit development opportunities on an inter-force basis and reduce the talent pool for senior police officers. In response, some central co-ordination on leadership and capability development may need to be taken forward at national level.

The role of the Panel

A number of those interviewed for this study viewed the PCP as a potential aid to problems that might arise under the new arrangements, although political differences between panel members and the PCC will require careful management. Most authority chairs emphasised the non-partisan style in the committee system at present, but relationships may become more adversarial as the PCC prioritises local issues. To be of value, the panel must be capable of changing both a PCC's mind and *mindset*. Other issues were also raised in interviews including:

- **Measuring PCC performance.** PCP members will need to establish some mechanism for independent scrutiny of PCC performance. Although the PCC's Annual Report and Police and Crime Plan will be key documents, there may be other indicators PCPs could consider, such as whether the PCC represents the full breadth of local public interest. PCCs will also need to decide when the PCP becomes involved in budgetary cycles and decision-making processes. If the PCP scrutinises decisions post facto it may weaken its ability to influence the PCC.
- **Insight and expertise.** If PCP members are new to policing, it may take time before they are up to speed on complex issues managed by the PCC. There is a risk that the PCP will return to a process of simply inspecting figures. Once again, the practical responsibilities of the PCP may reflect the style of the PCC. Some could seek to take on greater responsibilities, for example through direct control of police staff and administration. PCPs will also need to scrutinise costs if PCCs seek to increase the size of their office in line with their responsibilities.

Perhaps the most difficult challenge for the PCP in the early days will be to drive public engagement and support for their role. A May 2011 YouGov poll showed little public appetite for PCCs. Only 15 per cent of those polled said they would trust a PCC more than the present system to protect their family from crime.¹¹ The PCP will need to lead on 'selling' the new model to the public, which will necessarily involve greater visibility and communication.

Critical success factor 3: Use best practice to develop appropriate governance

Over the coming months, 41 separate governance models will be developed and then reworked following the election. The risk that this may lead to ineffectual arrangements is high. Police authorities and forces need to start now to consider what works locally. This should include an assessment of best practice from the public and private sector. Forces should consider the use of formal training packages for new PCCs, together with ways to split out work and responsibilities, to ensure adequate checks and balances present in other public and private sector organisations are incorporated.

Critical success factor 4: Adapt the PCP to suit local needs

While media and parliamentary focus has centred on PCCs, the role of the PCP has been largely overlooked. How the panel will work vis-à-vis the chief constable and the wider crime prevention community will be an essential part of the new model, and a check against potential corruption. The structure, membership and working practices of the PCP need to be agreed well ahead of time: some forces interviewed have already created a 'shadow' panel to aid transition.



Rethinking local criminal justice services

The analysis set out above considers immediate action to establish new machinery and processes in police forces. The final part of this study examines how the introduction of PCCs might change the way local criminal justice services are delivered over the longer term.

The policy context

For PCCs who want to change the way local services are delivered, the breadth of their powers will enable them to commission services outside of the police – particularly functions that might not be regarded as ‘core’ by the public. A number of police authorities interviewed thought that PCCs might consider involving charities or local agencies to free up police officers to concentrate on priority crime issues.

Some forces already contract out corporate services such as finance, human resources or call centres to the private sector. PCCs might consider expanding the range of business areas that are outsourced to include custody suites, control room functions and facilities management. One example of this, SouthWest One, delivers a suite of corporate support functions and was an instance where a force formed a partnership with the private sector and other local public bodies.¹² Forces such as Cleveland, Surrey and West Midlands Police are now actively considering large scale outsourcing programmes.

The cost of non-frontline staff, at about 21 per cent of total costs, provides an incentive for PCCs to rework how core functions are provided.¹³ The introduction of PCCs will also open the door to commissioning of some frontline services such as Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) functions, as well as wider use of the private sector in specialist roles such as forensics. Several of those interviewed felt that a single leader providing strategic direction on working with the private sector will bring significant benefits. The challenge will be to ensure PCCs recognise this opportunity and have the capabilities to take it forward effectively.

Local partnerships

In many areas PCCs will become part of a complex multi-tiered local public governance model of county, district and parish councils, local MPs and (subject to referenda) directly elected mayors in 12 of England’s largest cities. Each of these organisations will have a view on policing. Some may be represented on the PCP. However, in a future where area based service delivery replaces central government prescription, it seems likely that PCCs will play a central role in allocating resources across this matrix. There may be significant opportunity to join up local resources to tackle particular local issues such as problem families. Like the private sector, councils already support the work to combat crime and disorder by funding PCSOs, managing CCTV and street lighting, and tackling crime such as benefit fraud.

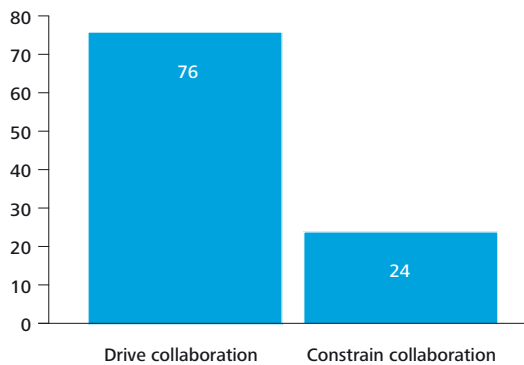
Although the PCC will be powerful, the role is unlikely to have the wide reaching influence of the mayoral structures of London or New York that have direct budgetary and management control of all crime and disorder issues. In this context, the need to take account of local concerns will be important. There is a risk of fragmentation of local partnerships as a result of council-PCC disagreements. In Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government will basically have to work with PCCs that it didn’t want, and in force areas that cover large geographic areas, PCCs may have to use sub-regional representation to manage political and agency relationships. Despite the cost, the use of political advisers, as described by the Policing Minister, may also be essential to manage relationships across the area.¹⁴

Collaboration

Collaboration between forces has been commonplace for some time. But the issue has been reinvigorated by tougher budget settlements that have prompted chief constables and authorities to explore opportunities beyond existing agreements. While the public is generally unconcerned which force resources are used for which function, our interviews show local government and police authority politicians can be reluctant to collaborate across force boundaries. We asked interviewees for their view on how the introduction of PCCs will affect collaboration. The results are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Expectations on collaboration

The introduction of PCCs will:



Source: Deloitte Research, 2011

Mandated use of collaboration from central government now seems unlikely given the emphasis on local accountability. But as Figure 2 shows, most chief constables and police authorities believe PCCs will set aside parochialism to focus on what is best for local people. There are two distinct opportunities here.

First, there may be better collaboration between police forces as PCCs seek to explore areas of mutual interest, for example on tackling intercommunity crime or pooling specialist capabilities. This already happens in a number of regions, but cost saving requirements could strengthen co-operation in this way. Second, greater use of partnerships between agencies within a local area may now be more likely in light of the wider powers of the PCC. Examples could include specific agreements on sharing back office functions, or wider use of contestable markets for key functions such as community safety.

In both cases, the difficulty may arise in aligning all local political viewpoints, as well as in the actual execution of specific programmes. Such projects typically involve complex change and professional expertise. PCCs may need to seek professional and political advice to push projects through.

Critical success factor 5: Seize the opportunity for a review of local public service delivery

The introduction of PCCs provides opportunity for communities to review how services are delivered and by whom. PCCs need to lead this discussion on the policing, safety and criminal justice side, but it should also include relevant stakeholders across local government and local agencies to facilitate genuine joining up across local public services. The debate needs to be managed locally, but take account of best practice and trends in other areas.

Conclusion

The introduction of PCCs will change policing in England and Wales. It involves systemic reforms to multi-million pound organisations that act as vital public services. These organisations are already under significant stress as chief constables seek to bring down costs and reconfigure their organisations for the future. Public and media interest in the issue may ebb and flow either side of the election, but for police forces preparation for a new way of working has already begun. The first year of PCCs will be critical as precedents are set and relationships develop.

The rationale for this study was to explore how police forces and authorities were responding to this change and to begin the process of developing a toolkit for forces to prepare for transition. As noted by many interviewees, high-quality relationships cannot be underwritten by good process alone. Even with sophisticated governance and accountability responses, there is no guarantee PCCs and chief constables will get on, or more importantly, work effectively together to improve local policing.

Yet clearly there are a series of issues that forces, authorities, councils and prospective PCCs need to consider. These are the five critical success factors which include immediate practical considerations for day one, and the need to embed effective governance doctrine into the new model. From conversations with authorities and chief constables, it is clear that PCCs will need to think strategically about the long-term interests of local policing and confront the central issue of capacity. One person cannot realistically devote sufficient time to dealing personally with all the issues – political, financial and managerial. Delegation in some form may be inevitable.

The role of the Police and Crime Panel is the issue that some of our interviewees were most concerned about. As the principal check to the PCC's power, the PCP cannot afford to become marginalised. It has no right of access to the chief constable, but in reality it cannot easily form a judgement of the PCC's performance without engaging senior police officers. When working with the PCP, forces will have to 'feel their way' to ensure the entire force area is appropriately represented, and that panel members have the tools, expertise and character to hold the PCC to account as required.

This, together with other key processes, will be different in different force areas. But although one size will not fit all, it is clear that some kind of association for PCCs is necessary to co-ordinate policy on common issues. PCCs are intended to reflect local diversity and local public expectations. The use of an association would not compromise these values, but provide a hub for common governance and policy best practice. Despite the abolition of the NPIA and the inherent localism of new PCC arrangements, police forces will continue to face a set of common challenges such as leadership development, financial professionalism, procurement and ICT. On the latter, the government has set out its plans. But on the others, centres of excellence in some form may need to be established to meet the long-term corporate requirements of policing as a whole.

PCCs will begin their work at a time of profound change to the way public services are organised and managed. The future of policing is occupying policymakers and chief constables around England and Wales. But a wider issue is how different approaches might lead to greater variety in the way local public services are delivered. The change is as much about localism as it is about policing in this respect. PCCs may act as a catalyst for new ways of working and the dismantling of traditional boundaries. The nuts and bolts of implementing a new regime matter in the short term. But in the longer term, making some sense of changing local police, safety and criminal justice structures will be the biggest challenge for police forces and the communities they serve.

Notes

- 1 Deloitte Research, 2011.
- 2 Home Office Police Statistical Bulletins, 2009, 2010.
- 3 <http://library.npia.police.uk/docs/homeoffice/statutory-guidance-police-collaboration.pdf>
See also <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/speeches/theresa-may-sp-NPC>
- 4 <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/police/police-commissioners-protocol?view=Binary>
- 5 <http://www.dyfedpowyspoliceauthority.co.uk/documents/FOIResponses/FOI-Responses-Oct10.pdf>
- 6 <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/police/police-commissioners-protocol?view=Binary>
- 7 <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/theresa-may-axes-police-performance-targets-2013288.html>
- 8 http://www.cipfa.org.uk/pt/download/governance_standard.pdf
- 9 <http://www.getintheloop.co.uk/survey/police-and-crime-commissioners>
- 10 <http://www.computerweekly.com/Articles/2011/07/04/247178/Police-led-ICT-company-will-replace-NPIA-says-home.htm>
- 11 <http://www.liberty-human-rights.org.uk/media/press/2011/lack-of-public-trust-in-elected-police-commissioners.php>
- 12 <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmselect/cmhaff/50/5006.htm>
- 13 *Ibid.*
- 14 <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/8171215/Elected-police-commissioners-could-get-own-political-advisers-minister-suggests.html>

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