

## Report to the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

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**Title:** Topical issues

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Panel



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### Fire Collaboration

The following article says that the PCC, after discussion with the three fire and rescue services in the area, has taken a decision not to combine the governance of them with the Force.

[http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/15476385.Fire\\_and\\_police\\_merger\\_plan\\_scrapped/](http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/15476385.Fire_and_police_merger_plan_scrapped/)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-40714145> (Essex PCC takes over Fire Service)

#### Quote from the mail

But after a series of meetings with fire chiefs, the PCC agreed to not go ahead with any governance changes in the 'foreseeable future'. Today Mr Stansfeld said his office would continue to explore and develop 'more collaboration options' between the police and fire services to 'deliver operational and financial benefits to the public'.

He added: "Within the Thames Valley we are in the complex and unique position of having three fire and rescue services and over the last few months I have had regular discussions with fire and rescue authority representatives and local authority stakeholders to consider potential collaboration and governance change options and developing a possible joint way forward. I recognise that the three Thames Valley fire and rescue services have already achieved a high level of operational collaboration, not only between themselves and other public sector partners but with [Thames Valley Police](#) as well. This collaboration can be seen in the many combined police and fire service joint hubs that have been set up in several towns within the Thames Valley.

Part 1 of the new Police and Crime Act places a duty on police, fire and rescue and ambulance services to collaborate, and enables PCCs to take on responsibility for fire and rescue services. It supports the implementation of the Government's manifesto commitment to "enable fire and police services to work more closely together and develop the role of our elected and accountable Police and Crime Commissioners".

The provisions:

- a) Introduce a duty to collaborate on all three emergency services, to improve efficiency or effectiveness.
- b) Enable PCCs to take on the functions and duties of Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs), where a local case is made ("the governance model").

- c) Further enable PCCs to create a single employer for police and fire staff where they take on the responsibilities of their FRA, where a local case is made (“the single employer model”).
- d) In areas where a Police and Crime Commissioner has not become responsible for fire and rescue, enabling them to have representation on their local fire and rescue authority with voting rights, where the fire and rescue authority agrees.

The Bill does not mandate the transfer of fire and rescue services to PCCs. Instead, it introduces an enabling power which would allow a PCC to assume responsibility for their local fire and rescue service(s) where it would be in the interests of economy, efficiency and effectiveness or public safety where a local case is made.

The key issue in the Thames Valley area that the PCC will face is the complexity of current service delivery and governance arrangements, and the implications that will have for planning and managing any proposed transfer of governance.

## **National Association of Police and Crime Panels**

### **1. Association of Police and Crime Panels**

Setting up an independent Association to develop a voice for PCPs across the UK seemed to be a popular option.

### **2. Special Interest Group within the LGA**

A Special Interest Group (SIG) within the LGA would arguably more quickly enable the establishing of a national voice for PCPs. It might also provide a convenient first step towards establishing APCP.

### **3. Combination**

At a time when the landscape surrounding PCPs is changing rapidly, it might be argued that the need to set up a national voice is pressing and that we need to move forward more quickly. If one accepts that argument, a combination of both the above options would be feasible whereby a SIG might be set up as a ‘stepping stone’ towards the establishment of a National Association.

### **4. Other**

One final option involving a possible link with another organisation.

## **Local Government Association – Police and Crime Panel Workshop**

### **Presentations included :-**

<https://www.local.gov.uk/police-and-crime-panels-workshop-12-july-2017>

- Jon Scanlan – Police Strategy and Reform Unit, Home Office
- Governance issues
- Overview of the Fire and Rescue Service
- National Association
- Creating successful Panels with meaningful influence

The link provides information on the presentations but points to note include the following:-

- A large focus on the day related to fire governance (the LGA have issued a briefing in relation to this)
- There will be no further resourcing for PCP, in relation to fire collaboration and there are no extra powers for Panels including the new complaints process. Panels need to consider co-opting Members on the Panel with fire experience. Panels will need to look at how to deal with fire complaints if they are taking on governance of their Fire Services. If Panels operate a triage process the LGA advise them to remain with this process for fire issues as well. Issues at the Workshop were discussed e.g having two Chief Fire Officers and one Chief Constable (the rationale for this would need to be presented in the business case)
- Relationships with OPCC/Panel has sometimes been referred to as a game of tennis. Reference was made to the expanding roles of PCC with fire collaboration and also reference to criminal justice strategic plans. There is also a changing landscape – counter terrorism, new Act, Metro Mayors etc.
- Successful Panels – reference was made to the Powercheck report undertaken by Frontline Consulting/Grant Thornton. Issues discussed were proactive scrutiny (well reasoned evidence), balancing the role between scrutiny and support, having a skilled cohesive Panel who provided robust challenge, good relationship with OPCC, annual training, Member champion roles, work planning meetings with the Panel/OPCC
- Scrutinising Terrorism (some of the themes of this will be used in looking at the Police and Crime Plan – Members may consider whether they wish to look at this as a themed item)

### **Community Safety Partnership Manager's Forum (6 July)**

The OPCC hold a Forum for Community Safety Managers and at this Forum the following issues were discussed (some of these items are referred to in this agenda)

- Modern Slavery
- Cyber Crime Strategy
- Prevent agenda in the Thames Valley – no overarching organisation delivers Prevent so there is no single process where Authorities can learn from each other – therefore the OPCC are looking into a virtual learning group which can provide a hub of information. The Home Office are also conducting Prevent pilot projects to use interventions to stop being drawn into terrorism e.g. by providing funding for a Channel and Prevent Co-ordinator.
- Victim Needs Assessment – the OPCC have been working with Perpetuity Research. The victim needs assessment research is an opportunity for people to have their say on the PCC's commissioning of support services for victims of crime. Some of the gaps that need to be looked at include the needs to look at services for males and Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. Other issues include the need for longer contracts to provide stability in vulnerable services, victim services for complex crimes, waiting times, travel to services and victims of anti social behaviour not being taken seriously. An officer in the Team has also been undertaking research on how to assess value for money on these services

- Victims Redesign
- Community Safety Fund Grant Top Slice – three areas are being looked at which include Domestic Violence Perpetrator Schemes, Cyber Crime and FGM (focus on prevention in all three areas). A BAMER post is also being considered and this person would be able to undertake work in a number of areas e.g. breast ironing.
- Next Meeting – February 2018

## **Recent publications/events and media interest**

### **National Issues**

#### **HMIC**

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/hmic-inspection-programme-consultation-2017-2018.pdf>

#### **Hate crime**

The CPS have stated that online hate crimes should be treated as seriously as abuse committed face to face

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40981235>

#### **Local Issues**

##### **OPCC Office**

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4519400/Police-official-tried-kill-affair.html>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-40921529> (Oxford flats explosion)

[http://www.sloughobserver.co.uk/news/15485758.Council\\_launches\\_drive\\_to\\_stop\\_domestic\\_violence/](http://www.sloughobserver.co.uk/news/15485758.Council_launches_drive_to_stop_domestic_violence/)

[http://www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/news/15474813.Unauthorised\\_traveller\\_camp\\_moves\\_off\\_private\\_land/?ref=mr&lp=27](http://www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/news/15474813.Unauthorised_traveller_camp_moves_off_private_land/?ref=mr&lp=27)