

Report to the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel

Title: Governance of Thames Valley
Police Collaborations

Date: 21 June 2019

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Background

COLLABORATION – INITIATIVES AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Police and Crime Panels have a statutory duty to scrutinise the decisions and actions of their Commissioner, with a view to supporting the effective exercise of the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) functions. A failure to effectively undertake this role risks breaching the relevant sections of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, while PCC's would fail to gain maximum benefit from the "critical friend" advice of their Panel.

Included in this statutory duty, Police and Crime Panels have a duty to scrutinise the role of their respective Commissioner in the collaborative work being undertaken by their respective Chief Constables under the South East Regional Integration Partnership (SERIP).

This legitimate right extends to only scrutinising the governance arrangements the Police and Crime Commissioner has adopted to enable him to review performance of a function or service carried out under a collaborative initiative and to hold TV Chief Constable to account for the performance of that function or service.

The presentation to be given at this meeting from the Police and Crime Commissioner will provide details of the Collaboration governance arrangements which TVP are involved in.

After discussions with the Chief Executive of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Panel has to note, that any comments on performance and outcomes of services delivered under collaborative arrangements, should not be raised at the meeting, as these are operational matters, for which the Police and Crime Commissioner holds the Chief Constable accountable for.

Details on performance and outcomes can be sought from HMICFRS inspection reports about TVP performance, together with responses from the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Legislative background

Under sections 22A to 22C of the Police Act 1996, as amended by section 89 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners have a duty to keep collaboration agreements and opportunities under review and to collaborate where it is in the interests of the efficiency and effectiveness of one or more police forces or policing bodies. Where collaboration is judged to be the best option, they must collaborate even if they do not expect their own force or policing body to benefit directly.

Any collaboration which relates to the functions of a police force (a “force collaboration provision”) must first be agreed with the chief constables of the forces concerned and approved by each PCC responsible for maintaining each of the police forces to which the force collaboration provision relates. Any collaboration which relates to the provision of support by one PCC for another PCC (a “policing body collaboration provision”) must be agreed by each PCC to which the policing body collaboration provision relates.

PCCs responsible for maintaining each of the police forces to which a force collaboration provision relates shall make arrangements for jointly holding their chief constables to account for the way functions are discharged under a force collaboration agreement.

Major partnerships and consortia involving the Force and the PCC are governed by formal collaboration agreements under Section 22A of the Police Act 1996, or by Memoranda of Understanding, as appropriate. Joint collaboration oversight boards provide strategic oversight and an approval process for governance arrangements for collaboration activity. These collaboration boards comprise Chief Officers and their PCCs from each participating force.

The PCC for Thames Valley is actively engaged in the oversight and scrutiny of key collaboration activities (e.g. South East region; Bi-lateral with Hampshire, Chiltern Transport Consortium and the National Police Air Service);

In addition, the TVP/PCC Joint Independent Audit Committee (JIAC) exercise oversight of the adequacy and effectiveness of the respective governance arrangements as part of that Committee’s terms of reference. Their opinion is incorporated in its Annual Assurance Report presented to the PCC and Chief Constable.

A summary of the functional activities and governance arrangements of the major collaborative ventures involving TVP will be provided in the presentation to the Panel. However, from a previous report to the Panel, below are details of known collaborations.

Hants/TVP Bi-lateral Collaboration

The TVP & Hampshire Bi-lateral Collaboration Governance Board oversees and scrutinises the work of the existing collaborative functions (i.e. Operations, ICT and Information Management) as well as development of the Contact Management and Digital Policing programmes. Updates are provided on new collaborative opportunities being explored.

South East Region Collaboration

Governance of collaboration between forces (Thames Valley, Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire) across the South East region is undertaken at the Regional Governance Board.

The South East Regional Organised Crime Unit (SEROCU), hosted by Thames Valley Police, brings together the current regional organised crime units under one structure.

Chiltern Transport Consortium

The Chiltern Transport Consortium (CTC) is collaboration between TVP, Hertfordshire Constabulary, Bedfordshire Police and the Civil Nuclear Constabulary. It was originally set up in 2014 to operate as a transport shared service for the procurement and maintenance of the forces' transport fleet under lead force TVP.

National Police Air Service

The National Police Air Service (NPAS) is a collaborative venture involving all police forces across England and Wales. The PCC for Thames Valley is a member of the national NPAS Board.

TVP / TV Fire and Rescue Services

The PCC and the Force have previously agreed a memorandum of understanding with the three Fire and Rescue Services in the Thames Valley regarding exploring possible collaborative opportunities in the sharing of premises.