

Essex Police and Crime Panel	EPCP/08/17
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Update on the Local Business Case for Joint Governance of Police and Fire & Rescue Services in Essex

Report by the Chief Executive of the OPCC to the Panel

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1. Purpose of report

This paper updates the Police and Crime Panel on progress made in relation to the local business case for joint governance of Police and Fire & Rescue Services in Essex.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that Police and Crime Panel members:

1. Note the results of the PCC's public consultation in relation to joint governance of Police and Fire & Rescue Services in Essex;
2. Note the final version of Local Business Case for Joint Governance of Police and Fire & Rescue in Essex which was submitted to the Home Office on the 17th May 2017; and
3. Note the proposed transition activities which will need to be undertaken prior to the 1st October 2017.

3. Results of public consultation

The Policing and Crime Act stipulates that the PCC must consult the top tier local authorities and the public on the Local Business Case before submission to the Home Secretary for a decision.

The Local Business assesses the options, as set out in the new Policing and Crime Act, for changes to governance of the Fire Service.

The PCC undertook a 12 week consultation with the public, top tier local authorities, police and fire & rescue staff and wider stakeholders from the 16th February to the 10th May 2017.

During this consultation period a large range of engagement activities took place to obtain the views of as many stakeholders and members of the public as possible. The highlights of the results of public consultation are as follows:

- A letter was received from Thurrock Council in support of the Joint Governance option.
- A letter was received from Southend-on-Sea Borough Council in support of the Joint Governance option.
- A letter was received from Essex County Council in support of the Joint Governance option.
- Three letters were received signed by 17 MPs of Essex in support for the joint Governance option.
- There were 1708 individual responses received from members of the public through the consultation survey.
- The consultation results show that the joint governance option scored the highest in terms of potential benefits and ease of delivery.
- The PCC engaged the services of the Consultation Institute who provided independent expertise, advice and quality assurance on the consultation process, ensuring that it was equitable, accessible and delivered to a high standard. The Institute has confirmed that the consultation is consistent with industry good practice standards.
- A sub-group of the Police and Crime Panel were involved in reviewing the OPCC's evaluation of the consultation responses to ensure that the process was fair and transparent.

Further details of the results of the consultation can be found in Appendix F of the Local Business Case.

4. Local Business Case

The Office for the PCC has reviewed all feedback gathered during the consultation phase and collated it into the final version of the Local Business case, which was submitted to the Home Secretary on the 19th May 2017. All members of the Police and Crime Panel have received a copy of the document which was submitted to the Home Office. The final documentation is also available to the public on the PCC's website:

<http://www.essex.pcc.police.uk/localcaseforchange>

The Home Office have advised that if they received the final Local Business Case by the 19th May, they would be able to review it and, subject to agreement by the Home Secretary, produce the necessary Statutory Instruments for a 1st October 2017 commencement date.

This is subject to the outcome of the forthcoming General Election.

5. Transition activity

In advance of a decision by the Home Office, the Office for the PCC has commenced initial work in planning for the transition. This work reports into the Emergency Services Strategic Governance Board which is chaired by the PCC and includes the Chair of the Fire Authority, the Acting Chief Fire Officer and the Chief Constable. The transition planning is being undertaken in close discussion and liaison with senior officers from ECFRS and Essex Police. A Transition Working Group has been established to take this work forward.

The aim of the transition programme (assuming the Home Office approve the decision) is to ensure a smooth as possible transfer to the new PCC Fire and Rescue Authority. A detailed

project plan is currently being developed, setting out what will need to be undertaken to enable these priorities to be achieved.

Key activities identified in the project plan include:

- **Constitution** - Develop a revised EFA constitution to reflect the new legislation and statutory order.
- **Governance Structure** - Review existing board structure and identify the appropriate structure to support the PCC-style FRA in their role of effectively governing ECFRS. This will need to be fed into the new constitution.
- **Statutory Roles** - Develop the role of the Statutory Chief Officers under a revised governance model. This will need to be fed into the new constitution.
- **Scheme of Delegation** - Develop a new PCC-style FRA Scheme of Delegation to the senior officers of the ECFRS.
- **Governance Meetings** – Review the existing planned business of the FRA, and realign work to the new governance structure including setting a series of meeting dates for the new boards which will support the PCC FRA.
- **Formation of Police, Fire and Crime Panel** - Liaison with Essex County Council's Secretariat team regarding the development of the revised Terms of Reference for the new Police Crime and Fire Panel.
- **Staff Formal Consultation** – Undertake a formal consultation of all staff on their transfer to the PCC-style FRA.
- **Communication Plan** - Develop an internal communication plan for activity supporting the roll out of the new governance model.

The transition plan will continue to be developed by the OPCC, ECFRS and Essex Police, with progress reported into the Emergency Services Strategic Governance Board.

6. Next steps:

The Local Business Case has now been submitted to the Home Office. The Home Office will review the case and the Home Secretary will make a decision.

The PCC will advise the Panel of the Home Secretary's decision at the earliest opportunity, once he has received confirmation of the decision.