

Chief Executives' Group – North Yorkshire and York

5 September 2012

Community safety and criminal justice partnerships under the Police and Crime Commissioner

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To notify the Group about a proposition by the York and North Yorkshire Safer Communities Forum regarding future community safety and criminal justice partnerships.
- 1.2 To seek initial views from members of the Chief Executives' Group on the proposition.

2 Background

- 2.1 The York and North Yorkshire Safer Communities Forum (SCF) has been in place for several years. Initially set up as a forum for Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) Chairs, senior representatives from responsible authorities and representatives from the community and voluntary sector to come together to work in a co-ordinated fashion across the entire North Yorkshire Police force area, the emphasis subsequently shifted to one of managing the delivery of outcomes against the Local Area Agreement (LAA) under the North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership (NYSP). It is fair to say that there was limited appeal to the City of York during that period.
- 2.2 Following the demise of the LAA regime the SCF now functions as the statutory County Strategy Group, with responsibility for the production of an annual Community Safety Agreement. In practical terms the SCF works closely with Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) (formerly CDRPs) and supports them through the identification and promotion of strategic priorities, and co-ordination of joint strategic intelligence assessments, strategy formulation, grant distribution and promoting good governance.
- 2.3 In terms of criminal justice partnership arrangements, the North Yorkshire Criminal Justice Board (NYCJB) serves as a strategic hub, supported by three Area Delivery Groups (ADGs) operating across the North Yorkshire Police area.
- 2.4 The SCF and CJB have a common interest; in terms of geographical area they are co-terminus, and in terms of functional remit there is significant overlap e.g. reducing anti-social behaviour and re-offending. Several organisations are members of both the SCF and the CJB at the strategic level, and of CSPs and ADGs at the tactical level. Indeed, in some cases, the same representatives attend both forums at the strategic and the tactical levels.
- 2.5 Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) will have a mandate covering both community safety and criminal justice partnerships. Whilst much uncertainty remains as to how the PCC will interface in practice with constituent organisations and/or partnerships - because that will be a matter of personal choice – it is reasonable to assume that the PCC will have a full workload that will preclude frequent meetings with many local partnerships as the means of doing business. One or two strategic partnerships are anticipated to be more attractive prospects for the PCC.
- 2.6 The present arrangements are untenable. Given the rapidly diminishing resources in the form of government grant, combined with efficiency measures having to be taken

within partner organisations, there is a pressing need to drive out cost from partnership functions whilst maintaining sufficient capacity and focus to meet societal expectations of our communities.

3 Proposition

- 3.1 At the Safer Communities Forum meeting in July, a full discussion took place on future options for partnership working in view of the economic situation and the impending move to partnership life under a PCC. Various options were considered before agreeing to a particular way forward that is intended to be put to the newly elected PCC in the form of a blueprint for the future.
- 3.2 The proposition is simply to move to a 'hub and spoke' arrangement for both community safety and criminal justice partnerships. Under the proposal there will be a single strategic community safety/criminal justice partnership board, supported by several local delivery groups, across the police force area.
- 3.3 The strategic board will serve as the principal point of reference for the PCC and will take responsibility for managing those functions that can sensibly be carried out centrally on behalf of all partners. For example, strategy formulation, data collection and analysis, priority setting, and governance (ie performance against target and spend against budget). If, as anticipated, commissioning is the modus operandi for the PCC, appropriate bids will need to be compiled and this requires factoring into the Board's capability requirements.
- 3.4 The local delivery groups - assuming for the purpose of this report that they are organised to be co-terminus with unitary/district/borough boundaries, and being relieved of much of the administrative functions as set out in para 3.3 above (on which approximately two thirds of all grant is currently spent) - will be responsible for undertaking multi agency problem solving and tasking at that geographical level and delivering tangible improvements on the ground that members of the public will recognise as such.

4 Scoping and implications

- 4.1 The detail of the proposal has yet to be worked up and the intention is to bring the outcome of that scoping work in the form of a business case to the next meeting of this Group in November. Work has commenced on developing costed options relative to the current arrangements for comparison/ benchmarking purposes. In plain terms, the outcome sought is a significant improvement in delivery of outcomes on the ground at significantly less cost.
- 4.2 Not to be overlooked is the prospect of the PCC commissioning services from 'over the border' or private sector organisations if local public and community/voluntary sector partners cannot provide the services at a competitive rate.
- 4.3 There are clearly going to be political sensitivities attached to this proposition. An obvious sensitivity will be amongst middle and junior staff whose position may become vulnerable as a consequence of the proposed structural arrangements. This is likely to manifest itself as opposition to the proposals on the premise that local delivery requires local support. A further sensitivity may arise with elected members where there may be a perceived loss of control or influence over the prioritisation and emphasis of partnership work in their area. In both cases, a focus on objectivity and presentation will be required.
- 4.4 Initial views on the proposition are sought at this meeting. Subject to support for the work, the intention, as mentioned earlier, is to bring a worked up business case to the next meeting of the Group in November. The Group is also invited to give a view

about taking the issue to a meeting of the LGNYY, and if so when would be the best time?

- 4.5 Finally, one issue that was aired at the Safer Communities Forum meeting was the implications for overview and scrutiny. Though not a focus of this piece of work, it does prompt the question as to opportunities to review overview and scrutiny arrangements, particularly given the establishment of a Police and Crime Panel.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 That the report on the Safer Communities Forum's proposition, to be put to the PCC at the appropriate time, is noted.
- 5.2 That members of the Group offer views on how best to take the matter forward within the timetable suggested, particularly in respect of elected members and potentially affected staff.
- 5.3 That the Group receives a further report at the November meeting.

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Chair of the York and North Yorkshire Safer Communities Forum

17 August 2012