

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE & CRIME PANEL

PAPER MARKED

Report of	POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
Subject	UPDATE ON REVIEW OF COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT
Date	MONDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2014 – 2 PM.
Author :	PAUL STOCK, CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose of Report

This report provides the Police and Crime Panel (“the Panel”) with an update on the planned improvements to the functions of communications and engagement which have been agreed by the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable.

Recommendation

The panel is recommended to note the contents of this report.

Introduction

Following detailed discussions between the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable, a decision was taken towards the end of 2013 to conduct a comprehensive review of the existing communications and engagement functions of both organisations.

It was recognised that there needed to be significant improvement in a number of areas, including, but not limited to:

- Greater engagement with the many different communities of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to encourage greater public participation in policing to achieve enhanced community safety
- The provision of greater access to service delivery, not least through the increasing use of websites for transactional services
- A greater drive towards changing public behaviour in order to reduce crime
- Greater public involvement in priority setting for policing in their local communities.

It was acknowledged that the new model for the delivery of communications and engagement activity needed to respond to, and support, a number of drivers, including:

- The constitutional responsibilities of the Police and Crime Commissioner, not least to engage and consult with the community
- The operational, tactical responsibilities of the Chief Constable including the need to deliver the Police and Crime Plan
- The growth in population of Leicestershire (up by around 10% over the last decade) and the changing needs and expectations of that population
- The Force Change Programme, which is changing the structure of policing and how policing services will be delivered in the future
- Changes taking place in partner agencies, including those in the Criminal Justice System
- The effect new technologies are having on how the public communicate and wish to access services
- The increasing collaborative work being done between Leicestershire Police and both neighbouring Forces and other partner agencies and the likelihood of even greater collaborative working arrangements in the coming years

Against this background, a review was undertaken of the existing communications and engagement arrangements for both the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Force.

Whilst seeking to build a more effective, innovative and responsive communications and engagement function, those conducting the review were also challenged to develop a model which would be leaner and more agile than the existing arrangements.

Summary of plans

As a result of the review and a subsequent programme of extensive staff consultation, a final model has now been agreed by the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable.

A new shared service model is to be created, to support the communications and engagement needs of both the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable, and to respond more effectively to the needs and expectations of local residents in local communities.

The new Communications and Engagement Directorate (the “Directorate”) will be led by a Director of Strategic Communications and Engagement who will have dual accountability to both the Chief Executive of the Police and Crime Commissioner and to the Deputy Chief Constable.

Responsible to the Director will be a shared business unit whose teams will deliver three main areas of functionality.

A **Media Services Unit**, comprising a manager and four posts, will be responsible for managing the interface between the Force and the Police and Crime Commissioner with local, regional, national and international journalists, handling media enquiries and releasing information through the media to the public about operational and strategic policing issues.

The unit will handle all communications issues relating to major incidents and support front line officers in their interface with journalists. In the event of critical incidents and emergencies involving other agencies, it will, where appropriate, undertake lead agency responsibilities under the Local Resilience Forum's contingency plans to ensure the public receive timely, accurate, consistent and co-ordinated information.

Operating a shift pattern covering normal office hours, the unit will provide a fast-time 24/7 response to media enquiries and to support the management of incidents outside these hours on a 24/7 basis, 365 days a year.

A **Behaviour Change and Communications Unit**, comprising a manager and seven posts, will be responsible for developing campaigns and other communications products and initiatives to reduce crime and enhance community safety.

In part, it is hoped that this will be achieved by highlighting, in a bespoke and targeted way, how residents in local communities can help to protect themselves and their property. The unit will be directly informed by intelligence, research, surveys and local feedback from local people, partner organisations and key stakeholders.

It will develop communications products which directly respond to the needs and concerns of those local communities and partner agencies / stakeholders and so encourage greater engagement in policing and awareness of the need to enhance community safety.

The unit will work in greater partnership with other public sector bodies, and with the business, voluntary, charitable and private sectors in the force area to develop "joined-up" and more effective communications processes and products for individual key targeted audiences. The unit will operate at a very local level as well as, when necessary, at an organisation-wide and corporate level.

From an internal perspective, the unit will also be responsible for facilitating greater two-way communications and engagement within the workforce. At a time of unprecedented change in policing, the unit will play a pivotal part in communicating change internally and ensuring that officers and staff are equipped with knowledge and understanding of how the Force is evolving in terms of structure, process, and system.

The third unit within the new Directorate, a **Digital Media Unit**, will focus on how the Force and the Police and Crime Commissioner can harness new technologies to better consult and engage with the communities of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and with partners and stakeholders.

With more than 80% of all households in Leicestershire now having daily access to the internet, this unit will help drive an increasing channel shift towards making greater use of digital and web-based platforms to communicate directly with more than 1 million residents.

This unit, comprising a manager and four staff, will also be charged with increasing the public's access to transactional policing services on-line in liaison with key departments in-force as well as with external agencies which, in part, will help reduce traditional demand and make more efficient the delivery of policing in the coming years.

In summary, it is intended that the Directorate supports the Force and the OPCC in engagement and communications activity with its many different audiences that is directly relevant and responsive, that influences behaviours, that delivers strategic priorities, and that harnesses new technology to meet changing public expectation and makes more efficient the delivery of policing services.

Implementation programme

An Interim Director has been appointed to manage the daily workloads and business of the existing structures and to oversee the transition to the new Directorate.

Working closely with the Human Resources Department, a timetable for implementation has been developed and is currently being delivered.

As part of this implementation, the agreed structure of the new Directorate and all new Job Descriptions were presented to those staff directly affected, together with their staff associations' representatives, at a recent meeting and they will shortly be having individual one-to-one meetings to discuss the impact the changes may have on them.

Taking into account the potential that some posts will require external recruitment activity to fill, it is anticipated that the Directorate will be fully operational by March 31st, in order to coincide with the launch of the new policing model.

Implications

Financial:	No additional spending is being incurred in creating this new Directorate of Communications and Engagement. All expenditure will be kept within existing budgets. This report is an update for the Panel to note, and does not have financial implications.
Legal :	No legal considerations have been identified.
Equality Impact Assessment :	The changes being planned are aimed at enhancing the quality, quantity and reach of communications and engagement between the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Force with all the many diverse communities in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland as well as with the workforce.
Risks and Impact :	There is a potential risk of redundancy for existing communications staff.
Link to Police and Crime Plan :	The creation of the new Directorate will help to support the successful achievement of the aims contained in the Police and Crime Plan and therefore the operational goals and strategic priorities of the Chief Constable.

Person to Contact

Mr P Stock, Chief Executive - Tel 0116 229 8980

Email: paul.stock@leicestershire.pnn.police.uk