

Norfolk Police Authority

Transition to police and crime commissioners

About this review

On 15 November 2012 the first elections outside London for police and crime commissioners (PCCs) will be held across England and Wales. PCCs will hold chief constables to account for policing in their force area on behalf of the public. New police and crime panels will scrutinise the actions and decisions of each PCC and make sure information is available for the public, enabling them to hold the PCC to account. Police authorities will cease to exist.

During early summer 2012,¹ Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) assessed how police authorities are preparing for this change. We examined their transition plans and visited every authority to ask:

- Is the police authority ensuring business as usual until November 2012?
- Has the police authority got a plan for managing the transition to PCCs?
- Are arrangements in place to secure a seamless handover to PCCs?
- Are other stakeholders properly involved in the transition process?

This report summarises what we found in Norfolk. A thematic report, *Preparing for Police and Crime Commissioners*, is available from www.hmic.gov.uk

Findings

Summary

Norfolk Police Authority has already put in place sound plans for managing the handover to PCCs. This includes raising awareness of transition by working with partners, such as local councils and local criminal justice boards, to ensure they are involved in the change.

¹ Meetings with police authorities took place between April and June.

The police authority remains fully committed to ensuring business as usual and has identified the key decisions that need to be made between now and November. The police authority has already begun to develop some options for how the PCC might operate from day one, although these are yet to be fully developed.

Police authority members are to be commended for their continuing commitment and professionalism.

Ensuring business as usual until November 2012

Norfolk Police Authority is committed to ensuring that business as usual is maintained up until November 2012 and members remain fully engaged. The authority has retained its existing structure to monitor force performance. This includes committees set up to ensure continuous improvement.

The key decisions which affect policing in Norfolk have been identified and are being managed. This includes continuing to develop collaborative working as part of the force's strategic alliance with Suffolk.

Plans for managing the transition to PCCs

Police authority oversight of the transition workstreams is managed through the strategic development group. This group includes police authority members and officers as well as senior members of the constabulary. The police authority Chief Executive chairs the transition officer working group, which manages day-to-day planning. The working group has developed a transition checklist which is a comprehensive plan designed to identify and manage the work required to ensure the effective handover to the PCC.

A joint finance group with Suffolk ensures the work on collaboration is considered.

Arrangements to secure a seamless handover to PCCs

It is important that the incoming PCC is able to work effectively from day one. It will be for them to decide how they wish to run their office, hold the force to account and engage with the public to identify local priorities. The police authority is developing options in respect of the police and crime plan and budgets. These options are aligned to candidates' manifestos where they are available.

A range of options is also being developed in respect of governance and accountability for the PCC to consider. HMIC will follow the progress of this work through the summer.

How stakeholders are involved in the transition process

Norfolk Police Authority has continued to develop relationships with partners, which includes raising awareness of the transition to PCCs and the framework in which they will operate. Plans for engagement with candidates for the role of the PCC are in place, supported by a dedicated section on the authority's website providing background information and signposts to relevant material. A new website is being developed for the incoming PCC.

Next steps

HMIC will continue to monitor the transition to PCCs, with a focus on the arrangements that will enable PCCs to work effectively from day one.