

# Surrey 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,<sup>1</sup> 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 Surrey. A thematic report, *Preparing for Police and Crime Commissioners*, is available from [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk)

## Findings

### Summary

Surrey Police Authority has sound planning arrangements for the transition to PCCs. The authority has a mature approach to assessing and managing the transition process. The commitment of authority members to ensuring effective governance through to transition is strong, and key decisions have been identified. Police authority members are to be commended for their continuing commitment and professionalism.

Engagement with partners (for example local authorities, criminal justice agencies and the voluntary sector) is also positive and they are involved in the transition arrangements.

The authority and force are developing options that will enable the incoming PCC to operate effectively from day one.

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<sup>1</sup> Meetings with police authorities took place between April and June.

## ***Ensuring business as usual until November 2012***

It is evident that members are committed to ensuring that business as usual is effectively maintained between now and November. The authority is continuing with a full programme of governance leading up to the introduction of the PCC. All panels continue to operate and the authority receives engagement and attendance from all members, with scrutiny and challenge of the force where appropriate.

Key decisions required during the transition period have been identified, for example around the ICT and estates programmes, and oversight of the Business Partnering in Policing (BPP) programme continues.

## ***Plans for managing the transition to PCCs***

The transition to PCCs is being managed through an established transition steering group, which includes representation from police authority officers, the force and other stakeholders. This is chaired by the chief executive and is not only a consultative and information-sharing group, but also manages the transition plan. The transition plan has clear ownership and accountability and is supported by strong project management. Key transition risks have been identified and are managed by the transition steering group.

The authority is leading a working group which manages the partnership activity required to support the transition process. It has an engagement plan in place for PCC candidates, which appears open and fair. It is currently developing a briefing pack for prospective PCCs to explain how Surrey Police operates and candidate briefing dates have been agreed.

## ***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. Key factors for seamless handover have been identified. The authority has developed options for how the office of the PCC will operate. Options for the PCC's governance and accountability arrangements have been developed and are being discussed with the force and key stakeholders.

## ***How stakeholders are involved in the transition process***

Engagement with partners and with the wider community continues to be a strong focus for Surrey Police Authority. Partner agencies are engaged and are jointly developing plans for post election. Concerns have been raised by partners as to how funding will be delivered and the authority is working closely with funded partners to develop potential commissioning arrangements.

A PCC communication strategy is in place which covers internal and external stakeholders. The authority has ensured information about PCC transition is provided to a wide audience including staff, local councils, community safety panels and local community forums.

**Next steps**

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