

Review into the role of Police and Crime Commissioners

Terms of Reference for part-one of the Review

Purpose

The purpose of the two-part review, as set out by the Minister for Crime and Policing, is to consider how the role of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) can be sharpened and expanded in line with our overarching ambitions in respect of Mayoral devolution.

Objectives

The totality of the review will consider how the PCC role has developed over the past eight years and provide recommendations as to how the existing model may be improved through a future reform programme, which also ensures consistency with the Government's mayoral devolution agenda.

Part-one of the Review will be an internal review considering the following:

- How to reinforce and sharpen the accountability of PCCs to the communities they serve, including how to raise the profile of the PCC model and improve the ease with which the public can access information about their PCC.
- How to ensure that PCCs have sufficient resilience in the event that they cannot undertake their role, by considering existing arrangements for appointing Deputies.
- How to improve the current scrutiny model for PCCs, including the provision of common quality standards and considering the role of Panel chairs.
- How to share and embed best practice among PCCs.
- The effectiveness of the current PCC and Chief Constable oversight dynamic, including consideration of the process for the suspension/dismissal of Chief Constables and reviewing the Policing Protocol.
- Whether any steps are needed to strengthen accountability or clarity of roles within the Mayoral PCC model; reflecting the direction of travel for mayoral devolution.
- How we set out our long-term ambition on fire governance reform ahead of the May 2021 PCC elections.

Outputs

The review team will report on part-one by October 2020 which will inform the Government's priorities for pre-May 2021 PCC model reform. The report should provide recommendations on improvements which could be made to the PCC model, including any legislation which may be required to achieve them. Any recommendations should be evidence-based and proportionate, with consideration given to their possible implementation and impact on the model.

Scope

The review should consider the role of PCCs as set out in the Policing and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and will not consider a wholly new governance model for policing (mayoral PCC transfers aside) or territorial structures. The review may consider interdependencies of the model with wider reforms to law enforcement or public services where relevant, although any reforms which cut across ambitions for the transfer of PCC functions to mayors will be out of scope.

Governance

The review team will be accountable to the Head of Unit for Police Strategy and Reform, who will report to the SRO (Policing Director) and provide strategic oversight to the work programme. There will be strong working level links to the Fire Strategy and Reform Team to ensure work complements the fire reform programme. This element of the programme will be led by the Head of Fire Strategy and Reform Unit and report to the Fire and Resilience Director. The Review programme will be ultimately accountable to the Home Secretary.

Timing

The final part-one report, including recommendations, must be submitted to the Secretary of State by October 2020. This will allow Ministers to consider the report's recommendations ahead of the agreed package of reform being brought to the National Policing Board, with a view to final cross-Government agreement being in place so recommendations can be taken forward prior to the pre-election period for PCC elections (end March 2021).

Methodology

A time-limited internal review with rapid evidence gathering (including public polling/focus groups, consultation with key sector stakeholders and other departments (plus a review of existing secondary sources) and development of potential legislative options. The Review Team will also engage with the Advisory Group throughout the review as recommendations are being developed.

Stakeholder Engagement

We will engage a sample of citizens and local/national victims' groups through polling/focus groups, as appropriate, and stakeholders within the sector, during part-one of the Review.