



District Councils' Network Briefing Police and Crime Commissioners

What are Police and Crime Commissioners?

Each force area in the country will have directly elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The PCC will replace the Police Authority. The elections for the PCCs will take place on 15 November and they will take office on the 22 November. Local Authorities will run the elections and will be reimbursed for the work as a new burden.

The PCC will be the democratically accountable officer for the police force of an area.

The PCC will have responsibility for the police force of an area but not for the policing of an area. This means they are accountable for the police force and reducing crime, but not who is arrested or how investigations are conducted.

What is the role of a Police and Crime Commissioner?

The PCC is responsible for appointing the Chief Constable and holding this postholder to account. The PCC will also be responsible for appointing a Chief Finance Officer.

It will be the responsibility of the PCC to produce a police and crime plan which sets out the police and crime objectives of an area. The first PCC Police and Crime plan must be produced by the end of March 2013 and will be in place for five years, with a discretionary annual review process. This plan replaces the Annual Policing Plan.

The PCC will be responsible for setting the police force budget and setting the level of the precept.

There is a requirement on the PCC to contribute to national and international policing.

What is the relationship between PCCs and PCPs

The Police and Crime Panel will hold the PCC to account and will have the power to question the PCC. The PCC will need to consult with the PCP on the police and crime plan and the precept level. The PCP can veto the precept with a 2/3rds majority.

What funding is the PCC responsible for?

The PCC will be responsible for setting the force budget, making community safety grants and setting the local precept.

The PCCs will be able to give grants to organisations to deliver community safety priorities, but they will not have a duty to allocate funding to Community Safety Partnerships.

PCCs and Community Safety Partnerships

Unlike police authorities, PCCs are not responsible bodies and will not be members of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs).

The police and crime plan, however, will need to have regard to the priorities of local CSPs. It may be practical for the CSPs to amend the priority planning cycles to compliment those of the police and crime plan.

The PCC may commission community safety services from CSPs. They do not have a requirement to fund existing projects or services.

The Secretary of State currently can ask for a report from the CSP in instances where it is considered that the CSP is not meeting its requirements. This ability will transfer from the Secretary of State to the PCC under the new arrangements.

Next steps for Districts

Districts must be ready to engage with the new Commissioner in November 2012 and will need to provide evidence around local priorities to discuss how the Commissioner will address them.

Districts should become familiar with the responsibilities and requirements of the Police and Crime Panels and of the Police and Crime Commissioners, in order to make the most effective contribution to and gain the maximum benefit from the new arrangements when they come into force in November 2012.