

Regional Collaboration – Nottinghamshire PCP's Experiences

1) Why collaborate?

- a) HMIC Reports – 'Policing in Austerity: Rising to the Challenge' (2013) and 'Increasing Efficiency in the Police Service: The role of collaboration' (2012) identified the benefits of collaboration in terms of increased efficiency and effectiveness.
- b) The Police Act 1996 gave the legal framework for collaboration and duties to Chiefs and PCCs.
- c) The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 strengthened the duties on Chiefs and PCCs to keep collaboration opportunities under review and to collaborate where it is in the interests of the efficiency or effectiveness of their own and other police force areas.
- d) Where collaboration is judged to be the best option, **they must collaborate**. Another key difference from the previous arrangements is that where collaboration would provide the best outcome for another police force or group of forces, then a chief officer or policing body (PCC) **should pursue it – even if they do not expect their own force to benefit directly itself**. This is designed to ensure that collaboration takes place wherever it is in the wider public interest.
- e) Home Office funding available to develop collaboration arrangements via the Police Transformation Fund (e.g. £2.24m funding in 2016/17 and £3.5m funding in 2017/18 towards the Tri-Force Collaboration).

2) History of regional collaboration in Nottinghamshire

- a) Nottinghamshire was previously at the forefront of force collaboration with the establishment of the East Midlands Special Operations Unit in 2002 (originally Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire & Leicestershire before the other forces came on board). Resourced through funded posts and officers in kind.
- b) In 2013, the five PCCs in the region commissioned an HMIC review of collaboration which highlighted that progress had stalled somewhat with a clearer vision and overarching business plan needed, along with the development of truly integrated services and appropriate infrastructure and support to ensure renewed progress.

3) The Governance Context (see Appendix A for governance structure chart)

- a) The East Midlands PCC Board was established in 2012 (with related meetings feeding into this) - not public meetings and no direct links into the PCPs. All collaboration agreements involving permutations of the five forces are signed off by the Board with the actual Section 22 agreement decisions then taken individually by each of the relevant PCCs.
- b) An internal audit of the Board in 2016 recommended the production of a Governance Framework, a Strategic Plan, a Strategic Risk Register and improved performance reporting on each of the areas of collaboration.
- c) East Midlands Collaboration Programme – based in Hucknall, Notts. – this has four portfolios led by different Chief Constables (with the remaining Chief Constable taking an overview role). Each PCC has also been given a lead area of responsibility (not linked to their own Chief Constable's lead role).

- d) Distinct budget for collaborative units of approximately £23m, plus a further £8m in officer-in-kind contributions, £500k capital budget & £1m reserves budget.
- e) A Strategic Alliance Board was previously established to develop the ongoing collaboration between Notts, Leics & Northants – now no longer being pursued in the way initially planned. In its place, a Tri-Force Collaboration Board has been established alongside a Design Authority Meeting.
- f) On 11 October 2016, the Tri-Force Collaboration Board agreed a series of business cases and reports in relation to the following five workstreams to enable closer working between the three Forces (whilst engagement with Derbyshire & Lincolnshire continues):-
 - 1) Contact Management
 - 2) Enabling Services (HR, Finance, procurement etc)
 - 3) Technology
 - 4) NICHE Optimisation
 - 5) Professional Standards
- g) A potential five force Governance Structure is being developed by the Chief Executive of the Derbyshire OPCC - to include structures, systems & process and the development of a Regional Strategic Plan, regional decision-making and a performance framework.

4) Nottinghamshire PCP – steps taken so far

- a) The Panel has received regular update reports on regional collaboration and has tried to both scrutinise the Commissioner on this issue and offer support to help develop collaboration in the region further.
- b) The Panel requested a specific update on progress with the recommendations arising from the HMIC review mentioned in 2) above. This was considered by the Panel in June 2014.
- c) Discussions about regional collaboration at a Panel Away Day led to the development of a Regional PCP Network by Frontline Consultancy (attended by Chairs & support officers).
- d) We have made contact with the consultants involved in developing potential new regional collaboration governance arrangements with a view to building in appropriate links to the PCPs.

5) Work with the other Panels In the region

- a) Discussions have continued through the Regional PCP Network to look at how best to scrutinise this issue so that all five Panels are confident they are 'on the same page' and to enable the feedback from each PCC to be cross-referenced.
- b) Although there is no reference within the legislation to Panels themselves collaborating, we are taking the view that there is also nothing preventing this and that there is sense and added value in doing so. In a similar vein, the Chairs of the five PCCs' Audit Committees have met together (12 October 2015 and possibly further meetings) in order to look at sharing best practice and also to look at areas where it might be possible to co-ordinate activities – e.g. publishing / auditing statutory accounts.

6) Obstacles faced

- a) Lack of clarity and readily accessible information - Panels have struggled to cross-reference each PCC's views against the others in the region so potentially we are faced with five different versions of the current picture across the region.
- b) Lack of contacts - there is currently no single Chief Constable, PCC or OPCC officer with regional overview and responsibility (although the possibility of establishing a Head of Regional Governance role is being considered).
- c) Changing landscape – e.g. Blue Light Collaboration, work with other local providers, the development of the Tri-Force Collaboration, new PCCs and new Chief Constables.

7) Planned Next Steps

- a) Further discussions to be held to ensure the roles of Panels are not overlooked in any new regional Governance structures.
- b) The Panels, through the Regional PCP Network, are developing a common set of questions for each Panel to ask to enable responses across the region to be cross-referenced e.g. :-
 - a. What is currently covered through regional collaboration?
 - b. How is it being governed?
 - c. What are the key aspects of the regional framework?
 - d. Are the planned savings expected from collaboration being achieved?
 - e. Is collaboration delivering operational effectiveness?
 - f. Is there a performance management scorecard?
 - g. Are there business cases for further areas of collaboration?
- c) The possibility of a future joint meeting, involving Chair & Vice-Chair of each of the five Panels and possibly the PCCs, Chief Constables etc will be pursued at a later date.

East Midlands Regional Collaboration - Governance Structure Chart

Appendix A

