



**REPORT TO THE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**

**20<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

**REPORT OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

**POLICE AND CRIME PLAN CONSULTATION 2021-25**

---

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To outline the Police and Crime Commissioner's emerging priorities for the Northumbria Police and Crime Plan 2021-25 and to outline the consultation process which will support the formation of that plan.

**2 Background**

- 2.1 The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (the Act) brought about significant changes to the governance of policing in England and Wales. This included the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) across England and Wales with responsibility for 'the totality of policing' in their respective police force areas. The Act requires PCCs to hold their Chief Constable to account for the operational delivery of policing and secure and maintain efficient and effective local policing services.
- 2.2 Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) have therefore played a significant role in securing efficient and effective police and criminal justice services, holding Chief Constables to account for delivery and setting the budget and strategic direction of police services. In doing so, their statutory police and crime plans have formed a critical component.

**3 Police and Crime Plan Statutory Framework**

- 3.1 The Plan by its nature will be a localised document and will reflect the needs of each local area. It is via this plan that a Commissioner sets out the vision and objectives for the services over which they have responsibility. The Plan acts as a planning tool and is also the means by which a PCC communicates their intentions to local communities, service users and delivery partners and other stakeholders. The plan also sets a framework by which the commissioner's achievements during their term in office can be judged.
- 3.2 The Police and Crime Plan should determine, direct and communicate the PCC's priorities for their period in office and set out for the period of issue:-
- the PCC's police and crime objectives for the area;
  - the policing of the police area which the Chief Constable is to provide;
  - the financial and other resources which the PCC is to provide to the Chief Constable;

- the means by which the Chief Constable will report to the PCC on the provision of policing;
- the means by which the Chief Constable's performance in providing policing will be measured;
- the services which the Commissioner is to provide or arrange to support crime and disorder reduction, or help victims or witnesses of crime and anti-social behaviour
- any grants which the Commissioner is to make, and conditions (if any) of those grants.

3.3 Chief Officers of police and local unitary, county and district authorities have a duty to co-operate with the PCC for the purpose of formulating the Police and Crime Plan. In turn, PCCs have statutory duties, when formulating and implementing the plan, to:-

- co-operate with responsible authorities in formulating and implementing local crime and disorder strategies - giving due regard to their respective priorities;
- co-operate with local criminal justice bodies to provide an efficient and effective criminal justice system for the police area;
- achieve value for money;
- make arrangements for engaging with local people;
- ensure that the Chief Constable fulfils their duties relating to equality and diversity;
- have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- have regard to the Strategic Policing Requirement and any guidance or codes of practice issued by the Secretary of State

3.4 In addition to any local assessments of need, Police and Crime Plan objectives will be informed by:

- The elected manifesto which sets out the Commissioners pledge to the people and communities they serve
- Views of local people, rate payers and victims of crime
- The Strategic Policing Requirement which is issued by the Secretary of State setting out national threats and the national policing capabilities required to counter them
- Priorities of the Police Service, internal force priorities are to be considered when setting the plan together with the national vision or priorities for policing.
- Priorities of other partners agencies and other stakeholders and Commissioners may wish to ensure where possible that partnership objectives are aligned.

#### **4. Shaping the plan**

4.1 The starting basis of the next Police and Crime Plan is the Police and Crime Commissioner's manifesto upon which she was elected. From here the PCC has set out to shape the region's policing priorities around three key areas, fighting crime, preventing crime and improving lives. Alongside this, a two-month public survey was launched on October 1, entitled Fighting Crime, Preventing Crime. This survey,

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/PCPConsultation20>, asks people to rank their regional and local policing priorities, as well as providing demographic information.

- 4.2 There is also free text space in order to ensure people can either give more information about their policing needs or request an issue not identified in the survey is considered a policing priority.
- 4.3 To ensure a wide reach in promoting the plan, the public consultation is being promoted through paid-for advertisements, including in local media.
- 4.4 The details of the survey have also been spent to more than 500 local organisations in order to ensure a wide range of views. As part of this process, partners and stakeholders have been asked to share the survey. They are also asked to set out in more detail what their organisation needs of the police and the criminal justice system, and what their users need of those services.
- 4.5 The OPCC is also working with Newcastle University's Open Labs team on ways to widen the reach of the survey, particularly how to use social media to gather quantitative data. Open Labs works with people as active co-producers of research using participatory research and co-design methods. They are a world-leading research group working at the cutting edge of Human-Computer Interaction, Design Futures and Digital Social Innovation. Their work addresses the grand challenges of social and environmental sustainability, and future living, through the design of innovative digital technologies.

## 5 Covid Restrictions

- 5.1 Proposals for the public consultation on the plan were originally supported with a large scale face to face engagement process. The consultation would see the PCC work with the team responsible for Northumbria Police's community engagement van to actively seek out the views of those who would not necessarily find the survey on social media. This engagement process would have seen the PCC visit different locations, rural and urban, every Thursday and Friday and meet directly with the public.
- 5.2 However, since these plans were formed the North East has entered into further lockdown restrictions. While many professional engagement opportunities remain possible while observing social distancing rules, it was felt that with a rapidly changing situation locally it is best to pause the use of the engagement vehicle. These plans will be revised as the situation develops and with guidance from public health officials.
- 5.3 Clearly, this means a reduction in the potential for face to face engagement. A variety of methods are being explored in order to offset this loss. One example of this is a direct mail letter to local residents. The OPCC will write to 100,000 households across the region informing them of the plan and the website survey. For households who are not able to use the internet, a telephone number is provided. People calling this number receive a return phone call from the OPCC and the survey is filled in on their behalf.

- 5.4 While writing to every household in the region would be desirable it would be prohibitively expensive. Efforts have been taken to ensure the 100,000 mail list covers all seven local authority areas, and as best a cross-section of society as possible within the confines of the delivery agents.
- 5.5 The OPCC is also exploring the possibility of online town hall-style consultation exercises, but it is essential to avoid these becoming another way for the “usual suspects” to have their voice heard.
- 5.6 Alongside this, the PCC was happy to attend the Northumberland Association of Local Councils’ AGM recently. This was an opportunity to hear the policing needs of sometimes very rural communities, and further work will be done to ensure these are heard further.

## **6. Next Steps**

- 6.1 The first step of the public consultation process closes on November 26th 2020.
- 6.2 A separate Advisory Group will be held with the Police and Crime Panel in December to inform the consultation process. At this meeting the panel will have sight of an early draft of the statutory plan following the first round of public consultation and will be able to consider the emerging priorities.
- 6.3 A draft Police and Crime Plan will then be produced, and shared with the public and stakeholders in early January.
- 6.4 In accordance with the requirements of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 the Commissioner is required to submit the draft Police and Crime Plan to the Police and Crime Panel on completion. It is intended that this will be at the February meeting of the Panel and the panel will review and make a report or recommendations in response to the draft and will be given a reasonable amount of time to do so

## **7 Recommendations**

- 7.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report.