

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

## Findings

### Summary

Cambridgeshire Police Authority has put in place a plan for managing the handover to PCCs. These have recently been updated with clear ownership and delivery dates for actions to ensure a successful transition. The key decisions that the police authority will need to take before the PCC takes over have been identified.

Work is now focusing on the development of a number of options for the incoming PCC to use in order that he or she may operate effectively from day one; this includes options for governance and accountability.

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

The police authority remains fully committed to ensuring business as usual and is working closely with partner agencies (for example local councils) to enable them to understand and prepare for the transition to PCCs. Police authority members are to be commended for their continuing commitment and professionalism.

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

There is a strong and enthusiastic commitment from the authority to maintain business as usual. Existing committee structures have been streamlined so that members and authority staff have time to focus on the transition and develop the processes and systems that will be necessary for the PCC to operate effectively.

Members are fully engaged in continuing to hold the force to account for performance and provide support where required. Key decisions that have to be made in the next few months have been clearly identified and include expanding collaboration within the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Alliance.

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

Ownership of the transition process is the responsibility of the police authority, with day-to-day management being led by the Chief Executive and a project manager. Staff from the force may be requested to help with work when required. HMIC notes that the transition process is placing additional demands on the small number of police authority staff. The authority should monitor the position and take steps to resolve any capacity issues as they arise.

Key risks relating to transition, and the action that needs to be taken to deal with these, have been identified. The transition plan is very well developed and outlines the actions needed to complete the transition. These actions are detailed and clear with formal milestones, delivery dates and progress.

Plans for briefing prospective PCC candidates have been drafted and are intended to be transparent, fair and open.

### ***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. There is recognition that the development of governance options and a framework within which the PCC may operate is a priority and this will be the focus of future detailed work. The authority will research emerging PCC candidate manifestos to understand the potential scenarios the election may deliver which will help to inform the option planning.

HMIC will follow the progress of this work through the summer.

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

There is a strong emphasis on the part of the police authority in engaging with other partners and the community. These include those who have an interest in crime, community safety and the new policing landscape (including local authorities, criminal justice agencies and the voluntary sector). A partner-led group which includes representatives from the authority, the force and a wide range of partner agencies has been established to manage the partnership activity required to support the transition process. The authority has developed a PCC newsletter for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough partner agencies and is planning a second partnership event.

### **Next steps**

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