



## Norfolk Police and Crime Panel

### Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 January 2018 at 11am in the Cranworth Room, County Hall, Norwich

#### Main Panel Members Present:

Mr W Richmond (Chairman)	Norfolk County Council
Mrs S Butikofer	Norfolk County Council
Mr M Storey	Norfolk County Council
Dr Christopher Kemp (Vice-Chairman)	South Norfolk Council
Mr Colin Manning	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
Mr Paul Kendrick	Norwich City Council
Mr Trevor Wainwright	Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Mr Fran Whymark	Broadland District Council
Mr Frank Sharpe	Breckland District Council
Air Commodore Kevin Pellatt	Co-opted Independent Member
Mr Peter Hill	Co-opted Independent Member

#### Officers Present:

Mr Greg Insull	Assistant Head of Democratic Services
Mrs Jo Martin	Democratic Support and Scrutiny Team Manager
Mrs Nicola LeDain	Committee Officer

#### Others Present

Mr Guy Clifton	Grant Thornton
Mr Tom Foster	Grant Thornton
Mr Lorne Green	Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Norfolk
Mr Mark Stokes	Chief Executive, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk (OPCCN)

- 1. To receive apologies and details of any substitute Members attending**
  - 1.1 Apologies had been received from Mr Richard Shepherd (North Norfolk District Council).
- 2. Members to Declare any Interests**
  - 2.1 No interests were declared.
- 3. To receive any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency**

3.1 The Chairman paid tribute to local councillor Jack Sadler, who had recently passed away. He explained that Jack had been a local councillor for many, many years and had most recently held senior positions on the Norfolk Association of Local Councils. It was in that capacity that he had observed meetings of the Panel, attending nearly all of them since it was set up in 2012. He had always been very supportive of the county's public service providers, particularly in recent times when budget pressures had resulted in the need for significant change. He would be greatly missed.

#### **4. Police and Fire Collaboration – Local Business Case Update**

4.1 The Panel received the annexed report (4) which contained the Options Analysis [an independent review of options for the future of Police and Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) governance in Norfolk] undertaken by Grant Thornton.

4.2 In welcoming the PCC and consultants from Grant Thornton, the Chairman highlighted that Police and Crime Panels were not named stakeholders in the process for considering the creation of PCC-style Fire and Rescue Authorities. However, Norfolk's Panel welcomed the opportunity to consider Grant Thornton's Options Analysis at this extraordinary meeting, where members would be able to ask the consultants about the conclusions they had reached, as well as questioning the PCC about his response and next steps.

4.3 The Chairman invited Grant Thornton to introduce their Options Analysis, and in doing so the following points were highlighted:

- The scoring system was inevitably a subjective process, but it was intended to be a tool to support the wider discussion about the relative merits of each option, not a focus of discussion in itself.
- The scoring of each option was relatively close overall, but Option 3 offered benefits over and above voluntary collaboration, and the benefits arising from local voluntary collaboration to date had been taken into consideration.
- With regards to the scoring of Option 3, the question of deliverability would be affected if key stakeholders couldn't reach a consensus view.
- Stakeholders currently maintained different views. The FRS was cautious about the preferred model, although recognised that there was room for further collaboration. Norfolk Constabulary was supportive of a change of governance, and was of the view that significant benefits could be gained from it. The County Council was not supportive of change.
- There was clearly some synergy between the FRS Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and the Police and Crime Plan for Norfolk, and while the IRMP made an important contribution to the County Council's Plan, the FRS appeared to have a better strategic fit with the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).
- Financial benefits arising from a change in governance were evident, for example the opportunity for faster progression of a joint estates strategy. However, financial benefits did not create a case on their own. There was also an opportunity to streamline decision-making processes under a Police and Fire and Crime Plan, rather than trying to align the separate priorities of key stakeholders. This in turn

could bring operational benefits, as well as improvements to community engagement, prevention activity as well as efficiencies for training and recruitment.

- The deliverability criteria aimed to balance the overall score with the likely benefits and ease of change. Option 3 would clearly be more challenging if there was disagreement between stakeholders and the overall score for that option would need to be reduced.
- Where similar discussions had been held in relation to county-based FRS elsewhere in the country, and stakeholders had not reached a consensus view, PCCs had taken different approaches; some had progressed to a Full Business Case and public consultation, others had not.

4.4 In response to Panel members' questions to Grant Thornton, the following points were noted:

- It was explained that the main changes the public would notice under Option 3 were: a more visible Chief Fire Officer profile, a more joined-up approach between emergency services, improved community engagement, and improved financial accountability through a separate precept for the FRS. Funding through the precept would be ring-fenced only for the FRS, where it was not through the current local authority grant.
- While the deliverability element of the scoring criteria may appear to water-down the value-for-money argument for Options 3 and 4, the Association of Policing and Crime Chief Executives (APACE) guidance was clear that deliverability needed to be taken into account. It was a standard element of similar criteria used elsewhere to assess the likely success of change.
- Option 1 did not reflect a "standing still" position, but included a renewed focus on voluntary collaboration.
- The public perception that the FRS was delivering an effective service had been ascertained through consultation with stakeholders. No direct public consultation had taken place; that would form part of the next stage of the process, if the PCC wished to progress to a Full Business Case.
- Consultants had determined that the FRS was highly valued by Council Members by speaking with the Leader of the County Council and Chairman of the Communities Committee. They (the consultants) had used the term 'value' to reflect a combination of both political and financial value.
- Grant Thornton had undertaken a similar analysis for PCCs elsewhere in the country, including Northamptonshire. When asked if, in comparison with other places, the Norfolk preferred option represented a robust case for change, consultants explained that comparing the conclusions was difficult. There were many differences between places, and Norfolk should therefore be cautious in seeking to apply lessons from other counties. For example, there had been a lot of public support for change in Northamptonshire, and the process had largely been driven by the Chief Fire Officer who had felt there were a great many opportunities to be gained from a change of governance. This demonstrated the importance of key stakeholders' commitment to driving forward any change.

- The lowest effectiveness score (Option 2) reflected the likely complexities of a PCC being given a position on a County Council committee.
- The report did not imply that there would be implications for public safety if a local consensus could not be reached. This section of the report addressed the need to consider how possible disruption might be managed during a short-term transition period. If there was no local consensus, the risk would be high but it was a risk that could be managed. A theoretical worst-case scenario might be a breakdown in communications around joint responses, or reduced resources as a result of prolonged union activity.
- In Northamptonshire, FRS union bodies had largely been supportive of change given that it had been driven by the Chief Fire Officer. In other places, the FRS had supported change where elected members had not.
- District and Borough Councils were not key stakeholders in the process, but they would have the opportunity to put forward their views via the public consultation should the PCC decide to progress to a Full Business Case.
- Key challenges for implementing Option 3 included making sure the current effective voluntary collaboration arrangements around joint response and joint headquarters was not undermined. It was important to maintain goodwill between partners.
- Implications for collaboration with Norfolk Constabulary's preferred partner (Suffolk) would be explored at Full Business Case stage, and if there were to be a change of governance, via an implementation plan. Option 3 offered some flexibility, in that it didn't rule out changes if the emergency services landscape changed at a later date, as a result of a new government policy.
- A Full Business Case would only be necessary if the PCC were to progress either Option 3 or Option 4.
- A Full Business Case would focus on the preferred option, but in setting out the reasoning behind selecting that option it would include details of the other three.
- It was too early to learn lessons from other PCCs who had moved to a Full Business Case. Essex was the only place that had implemented Option 3 and now had a Police and Fire and Crime Commissioner, having received support from key stakeholders as well as the public.
- In presenting a case for change, it was better to be cautious about stating the financial benefits.
- Flexible emergency service resources were being explored in other places, for example in Northamptonshire where the Deputy Chief Constable was exploring the implementation of a "purple resource" (police and fire together), using volunteers as part of that package.
- Public consultation was a fundamental part of the Full Business Case stage. Where change had been proposed, the public had largely been in support.

- Concerns had been expressed about the FRS losing its identity if a change of governance was implemented. However, it could be argued that Option 3 would enhance the identity of the FRS, through an enhanced profile for the Chief Fire Officer and as a result of the precept process. There would be a disadvantage if Option 4 were to be implemented.
- The Full Business Case would also include more detailed analysis of the percentage of FRS funding allocated specifically to the FRS and to support other County Council work.

4.5 In response to Panel members' questions to the PCC, the following points were noted:

- The PCC confirmed that he was still in "listening mode", and that he valued the independent analysis undertaken by Grant Thornton.
- The PCC was of the view that Norfolk already had a good FRS, and an excellent police force, but he was considering how things could be made even safer and more cost effective for the local community. To do that, he would take into account the views of key stakeholders as well as the results of the independent Options Analysis. He had not wished to contact District and Borough Councils until he had received formal confirmation of the County Council's view from its Leader, as well as advice from the Panel.
- The PCC confirmed that while he had heard reports of the outcome of the Communities Committee, he had not yet received a response from the Leader of the County Council. Once he had received that, he would write to the Leaders of the District and Borough Councils, asking for their comment and giving them two-weeks to reply. He would then make a decision about whether or not to progress to a Full Business Case, which should be well ahead of local election purdah.
- While the PCC was aware of decisions being made around the country, he wanted to make the best decision for Norfolk.

4.6 The Panel **RESOLVED** to;

- 1) Request regular updates from the PCC to future meetings, and that he should inform the Panel as soon as he has reached a decision about whether or not to progress to a Full Business Case (in which case the Chairman would consider the need for an extraordinary meeting).
- 2) Request that copies of the following correspondence should be made available for circulation to the Panel: the PCC's letter to the Leader of Norfolk County Council and the Leader's response; the PCC's letters to Leaders of the District and Borough Councils, and their responses.

Meeting ended at 12.25pm

**Mr William Richmond, Chairman,  
Norfolk Police and Crime Panel**



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