

CoPaCC - monitoring police governance

**CoPaCC Thematic
“PCCs and Partnership”**

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in association with
G4S Policing Support Services



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Foreword

About the Authors

CoPaCC is an independent organisation, established in early 2013 to monitor policing governance. CoPaCC was established by **Bernard Rix**. He has worked since 1990 as an independent advisor on policing. His clients have included: every UK police force; other UK bodies such as Home Office, Scottish Office, Ministry of Justice, Crown Prosecution Service, ACPO, Police Superintendents' Association for England and Wales, Police Federation of England and Wales; plus forces and agencies across Europe, Northern Africa and the Middle East. Several of his over sixty policing, criminal justice and community safety assignments have been of national significance. This work has – amongst other benefits – improved police investigation of burglary, cut court delays, given victims a better service, helped community relations, and enhanced police officer safety.

Primary author of this CoPaCC Thematic report was **John Tizard**. John is an independent strategic advisor and commentator on public policy and public services. He works with a range organisations in the public, third, social, trade union, academic and business sectors providing strategic advice and challenge, with a focus on governance, strategic change, collaboration, partnership, and leadership.

John currently holds several non-executive and trustee appointments; and membership of some national advisory boards including SMF and Collaborate. He is Vice-Chair of the National Association of Voluntary Community Action (navca) and a trustee of Tomorrow's People and Action Space. He is also a non-executive director of both ResultsMark and Entrepreneurs in Action. He is Chair of Governors of the Isle of Portland Aldridge Community Academy. He is an Honorary Senior Fellow at the University of Birmingham and a Visiting Fellow at London South Bank University. He is a Fellow of the RSA. John has had senior positions in the corporate sector (Capita 1997 – 2007), academia (University of Birmingham 2008 -2010) and third sector (Scope 1977 – 1997); and has been a county councillor (1981 – 1997) and leader of a county council and has had non-executive and advisory appointments in in the NHS, police, social, housing, education and with central government; and at an European level in local government. He was an evaluator for the European EPSA public service awards in 2009, 2011 and 2013.

Acknowledgements

CoPaCC would like to extend heartfelt thanks to the many organisations and individuals who contributed to this CoPaCC “PCCs & Innovation” Thematic. Extracts of these organisations' and individuals' contributions are contained within this core Thematic document, whilst their full submissions are contained in the associated Appendix.

CoPaCC also wishes to thank G4S Policing Support Services for their support for the development and publication of this “PCCs and Partnership” Thematic. G4S Policing Support Services supply police forces across the United Kingdom with a range of services covering both operational and

organisational support functions.

Methodology and background

This CoPaCC Thematic examining “PCCs and partnership” is the fourth in a series of six core CoPaCC Thematics comparing PCCs and sharing best practice. Our first Thematic, published in November 2013, examined PCCs’ transparency. Our second Thematic, published in March 2014, examined PCCs’ public engagement. Our third, published in June 2014, covered PCCs and innovation. Together with two more to be published in the coming months - covering commissioning and governance - these will cover PCCs’ key areas of responsibility. We plan to revisit all six topics regularly, to see how PCCs (or any policing governance replacement) improve year on year in each area, and to identify further good and best practice as it emerges.

We include the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) in our consideration of PCCs, as its responsibilities are similar to those of the Offices of the 41 Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs). This Thematic thus covers 41 Offices (OPCCs) of elected PCCs plus MOPAC. Throughout, we use the term OPCCs to represent all 42 entities.

CoPaCC invited every OPCC to contribute to this Thematic. We received replies from eleven OPCCs: two of the eleven apologised for not having staff time available to provide a contribution, whilst the remaining nine provided insight on their approach to innovation. The OPCC submissions are contained in full within Appendix A, and as extracts within this core document. These submissions were typically prepared by OPCCs in December 2014 and submitted to CoPaCC during January 2015.

CoPaCC also invited a cross-section of interested parties to contribute their thoughts on “PCCs and partnership”. Those invited included public, private and third sector organisations as well as individuals. Ten responded to our invitation with submissions. These ten submissions are contained in full within Appendix B, and as extracts within this core document under the heading “Viewpoints”.

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1. Introduction

Modern policing cannot succeed without the consent of the population and equally without with the police being very much part of society and local communities. The causes of the problems and challenges facing the police originate from a mixture of social, economic, health and environmental influences as well as from political decisions. Increasingly over the last few decades the police have recognised that they cannot address these problems and challenge alone.

Contemporary policing relies on working with a range of other organisations and professionals from across the public sector, business and the social, voluntary and community sectors. Police officers and staff at every level in the policing hierarchy often have to partner with others. It is the same for police and crime commissioners.

This is well summed up by Alun Michael, Police and Crime Commissioner for South Wales in his submission to this Thematic:

*The fundamental Peelian principles, of reducing and preventing crime are the two key pillars on which the role of Police and Crime Commissioner is built. In order for the role to be effective in delivering for our communities, we need to expand our horizons beyond the 20th Century policing landscape to develop an effective partnership approach with other agencies, especially local authorities and health. In fact there is a statutory duty on Commissioners to ensure effective partnership working within their area, but to be successful we would have to do that anyway. So promoting a partnership approach is not just a “nice to have” - **it is a must.***

[extract from submission by Alun Michael, South Wales PCC - Appendix A.6]

The view is reinforced by those who lead organisations which partner with the police including Councillor Peter Fleming, Leader of Sevenoaks District Council and Chair of the Local Government Association’s Improvement Board, Steve McGuirk, the Chief Executive and Chief Fire Officer of Greater Manchester FRS and Javed Khan, Chief Executive of Barnardo’s.

This CoPaCC Thematic report examines such partnership working and draws on a wide range of contributions from practitioners, academics and commentators to understand why partnership matters and how it can best deliver for the public.

This report also shares examples of interesting partnerships, to offer ideas and to stimulate innovation and improvement.

Partnership working for the police is not new. It has existed as long as there has been modern public police service. It is not unique to the UK and in particular to England and Wales which are the focus of this report.

Partnerships tend to be established for a variety of reasons including:

- a legal requirement
- operational effectiveness
- the ability to harness a range of expertise, experience and credibility with stakeholders
- capacity issues
- financial efficiency

The appendices to this report contain examples of all of these.

Some partnerships are strategic and some much more operational. Some are at chief constable, and police and crime commissioner level whilst others are much more concerned with either a continuing or a discrete operational issue. The submission from the Chief Executive of Barnardo's demonstrates how a specialist organisation such as Barnardo's can support the development of national policy as well as local police operations on issues as sensitive, specialist and important as addressing the horrendous crime of child sexual exploitation.

Some involve the transfer and sharing of resources including people, finance and premises. Some have partnership governance arrangements whilst others are based on contractual relationships or informal agreements.

Interestingly but understandably the nature and form of partnership are inevitably different in different places and for different police services. This is because needs and circumstances are different as is the capacity of the police and other organisations to respond.

This Thematic seeks to:

- share some examples of partnership working
- share some lessons from these examples
- explore what makes partnerships most effective; and when partnership might not be best option
- understand the leadership style and behaviours necessary for successful partnership

In order to produce this Thematic CoPaCC invited police and crime commissioners in England and Wales to contribute a case study usually in the form of a short essay. This Thematic also includes submissions written from the Police Federation, local government, fire and rescue service, business and voluntary and community sector perspectives.

Partnership working is never easy and it is credit to the contributors that they have often been willing to share their challenges, lessons as well as their successes. CoPaCC very much hopes that through this sharing lessons can be learnt and great practice developed.

2. Why partner?

The police traditionally have partnered with other agencies on matters such as community safety and community cohesion.

Legislation and government have demanded some partnerships as was the case under the Labour Government which expected every local authority to establish a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) involving local government, the police, the NHS, other public bodies, the voluntary and community sector and businesses. Special government funding was channelled via these bodies (or at least for them to take a view on how to use such funds) and the aim was that the LSP would develop cross-cutting programmes on issues such as

- crime reduction
- community safety
- mental health provision – see in particular the submission from Steve White, Chair of the Police Federation
- social cohesion
- social inclusion
- community capacity building
- spatial planning and planning policies that could contribute to wider agendas
- to a limited extent, economic regeneration and related agendas

These are all clearly matters of concern and interest to the police and ones which can contribute to local police performance. The quality and effectiveness of LSPs was mixed as was the commitment of the police – sometimes the representation would be a chief constable and/or chair of the police authority, sometimes a borough or district commander and in others cases which ever more junior officer could be spared for a meeting. Much of the LSP's more effective work took place away from the formal board meetings which could have upwards of fifty attendees in some cases. Some LSPs survive today. Others have morphed into public service boards which co-ordinate strategic decisions and budget allocations between public sector agencies.

The Labour Government's "Total Place" programme and to some extent the current Coalition Government's "Community Budgets" have built on the LSP model. However, there has been no coherent and consistent approach either nationally and in most cases locally.

The case study from the Worcestershire Shenstone Group explores the value of the police and other local leaders from every sector taking the time to understand each other; to explore ideas together; to problem solve and through this build the trust, understanding and networks necessary to build beyond a LSP model. The Shenstone Group was set up following a review of the LSP and a recognition that local cross sector leaders would benefit from developing their relationships and that consequently the local community would benefit. The then Chief Constable of West Mercia was a founding member of the Group and served on the steering group which designed its original

programme and invited the original membership. His successor continues to play a significant role and as his quote in the case study indicates sees it as being critically important to the police and policing:

The Shenston Group submission reports, David Shaw, West Mercia Chief Constable, as commenting:

"The Group has proven invaluable to me on number of levels. Firstly, it was the ideal way to meet many of the key decision makers and opinion formers in the County when I took up my post as Chief Constable. Very soon afterwards I realised however that its true value is derived from it not being a decision making forum. Therefore, there are no "agendas" other than that of collectively trying to do what is right for Worcestershire.

I now see it as probably the most influential forum for helping to shape thinking, alter perceptions and challenge assumptions in the County. Its' ability to attract and retain key leaders from across all sectors is very impressive and is tangible evidence that it is valued by its members.

A lot of business that is conducted outside of the Shenstone Group often has its' origins from a Shenstone discussion and almost always, that business is delivered more effectively because of networks and relationships very often established through the Group.

The County is stronger, there is better coordination and collaboration, there is a better sense of "Team" Worcestershire because of Shenstone and, while it may be difficult to put a price on what it delivers, there is little doubt that it adds real value".

[extract from submission by The Shenstone Group- Appendix B.9]

Progressive senior police officers, and police and crime commissioners recognise the importance of working in partnership with others on critical issues such as domestic abuse, drug abuse reduction, mental illness and crime, child sexual exploitation.

Javed Khan, Chief Executive of Barnardo's in his submission stresses the importance of collaboration with the police recognises the need to build bridges between two different cultures and to ensure each partner understand each other:

Police forces and voluntary organisations are different worlds in many ways: culture, language, skills and experience to name a few. We bring different things to the table, but if we are to safeguard children effectively in terms of both prevention and bringing criminals to justice, it is essential that we work closely together, both in the community and at a national level.

A key factor which fundamentally underpins the excellent relationships we have with some police forces is a true recognition of the unique value that we can add as a voluntary organisation. Our workers build relationships and trust with young people in a way that is often not possible for police officers or indeed workers from other statutory agencies. This

can be of huge benefit to police forces in helping bring perpetrators of sexual offences against children to justice. Take the recent Operation Brooke case in Avon and Somerset, which resulted in the conviction of a group of men for child sexual exploitation offences; the police force stated that without the support of Barnardo's, a number of the victims would never have made it to court.

It might sometimes be difficult to appreciate the tenacity and commitment that this requires.

I would encourage police colleagues to take the time to speak to voluntary and community sector practitioners about the nature of their work, about why and how they do it and where it fits with their own work. This could be as simple as dropping in for a coffee. One of our services extended a standing invitation to senior police officers in their area to do so, which has helped to build mutual understanding.

[extract from submission by Barnardo's - Appendix B.1]

Many of these comments and this advice applies equally to partnerships across sectors and between different agencies.

Often they also understand the benefit of collaborating with others and contributing to wider local social, economic and environmental agendas.

The police work with planners and companies to prevent crime through design and technology.

There are also examples of 'partnership' based contractual relations between the police and companies through the provision of outsourced services ranging from custody suite management to 'back office' functions. Usually outsourced contracting has little partnership about it so it is important to be careful when using the term to describe such relationships. It may be necessary to test how much the relationship actually is collaborative and how much is a traditional client – supplier relationship.

There are even examples of commercially sponsored police vehicles and equipment.

In some cases the relationship between partners has to be carefully managed because the partners have more than one interest. The police have clear statutory duties and public expectations are high especially as resources become ever scarcer whilst demand continues to grow.

Indeed, rising demand for limited police resources may be another motivator for partnership working. This may take the form of shared resources, equipment and specialist personnel between forces or it may be focused on prevention and long term demand management. This report contains details of partnership working on a strategic alliance to share resources between West Mercia and Warwickshire police services through a strategic alliance. And between the police and fire and rescue services in Greater Manchester, North Yorkshire and Humberside.

There are many examples of local informal partnership arrangements involving the police – at both

force and beat officer level -and police and crime commissioners. These are essential and are to be encouraged but it is important that they are transparent and those involved are able to be held to account. This does not mean that police officers, for example, should be discouraged from working with local groups, local businesses, staff from other agencies and may be parish and town councils to secure beneficial outcomes. It does mean that, where appropriate, records are maintained and that the activities are known and understood within their organisations.

It is very important not to seek to develop a partnership approach where this would not serve the interests of any of the partners; could compromise any partner; and or would not be cost effective especially in a period of austerity. It is equally important to recognise as the submission from the Police Federation reminds us not to see partnership as means of avoiding the impact of austerity especially when and if the form of partnership proposed is actually outsourcing. Though as the CBI in its submission states outsourcing in the right circumstances and with the right conditions can add value.

Steve White, the Chair of the Police Federation, comments on the implications of austerity for policing and partnerships:

In recent years, the government has enforced severe cuts across the public sector and the police service has been no exception. Austerity measures have seen extreme losses to numbers of police officers and staff across the board. As a result policing priorities have been forced to be reconsidered and partnership work has become even more of a necessity.

Yet on more and more occasions, the police service is under pressure to fill gaps where other public services are struggling to cope. Responding quickly, compassionately and effectively to people in crisis is central to policing but this is under severe threat as the drain on resources and added expectation continues to take its toll. Other services, including the NHS, can and have said no. The police cannot. There is nowhere else to go.

[extract from submission by the Police Federation of England & Wales - Appendix B.6]

He also urges caution when police services and/or police and crime commissioners are considering outsourcing:

Whilst outsourcing has a place within policing, budgetary concerns may put pressure on police forces to sell off core services such as patrol, custody and investigation. This cannot be allowed to happen – it would damage the resilience of the service, hinder its ability to respond to changing demands and weaken police accountability to the public.

[extract from submission by the Police Federation of England & Wales - Appendix B.6]

On outsourcing the CBI in its submission states:

There is a clear role for business and other bodies in partnering with police to identify and apply approaches to help them do just that.

Many of the organisational challenges constabularies face are familiar to businesses: staff resourcing, IT integration, customer service, procurement, HR, vehicle management, for example. Partner firms can bring into forces proven ideas from business that can make tough organisational decisions easier to solve. Many also bring experience of making other public-facing services work more effectively.

Every police service should be examining how it operates, but they must also increasingly consider how they join up more effectively with local accident & emergency, health, probation and education services. Many of the issues the police address need responses from multiple agencies that are more effectively joined-up, and so more responsive to the needs and lives of modern communities and families. This requires new approaches to how problems are approached, rather than simply cutting existing services further.

Private sector partners support a range of transformative approaches to the way police work:

- *Delivering improvements in the efficiency of administrative services, such as finance, HR and procurement*
- *Giving operational to frontline officers, such as taking over the management of custody suites*
- *Providing forces with insight to improve organisational performance and equipping them with new technologies to fight – and prevent – all types of crime*

[extract from submission by the CBI - Appendix B.3]

It is likely that there will more consideration of outsourcing and shared services over the coming years and the thoughts of the Police Federation and CBI should be considered by police leaders. They should also look at the experience of outsourcing in other public services and the mixed picture evidence of success; understand when and how it can add value and when not; and ensure approaches that sustain accountability, public service ethos and effective policing.

It is always important to define the boundaries of any partnership arrangement. When two or more organisations agree to partner it is best that they recognise that this does not mean that everything they are responsible for and/or undertake will be delivered through the partnership. The scope has to be tight but may over time expand or even shrink.

It is also important to understand when not to partner – perhaps it is best just to do it, allow some other body to do it and /or to contract rather than to partner. Too much time and effort can be unnecessarily spent on futile or even counter-productive attempts to create and sustain partnerships. When considering a partnership it is vital to consider the following questions:

- do we have the legal powers to partner (or not to do so)?
- what will be the benefits and dis-benefits?
- who could we partner with and what would be in for them and for us?

- how will we judge the strengths, ethos and values of potential partners?
- what resources and time will be required to establish the partnership and sustain it?
- is there clarity of the roles, contributions, responsibilities and accountabilities for the partners and the interface between them?
- what is the risk assessment?
- what would the governance arrangements be; how would there be accountability and to whom?
- what would the exit strategy be?
- could we abort the partnership development process and if so at what cost?

There are too many examples across the public, business, and voluntary and community sectors of partnerships been pursued without these questions having been sufficiently considered if they have ever been considered. Such approaches are dangerous and can be costly.

We have to learn the lessons of failure and success and build on the latter. This requires us to understand what partnership is.

And it may be different and there may be different objectives for the police service and a police and crime commissioner. The latter will have to consider questions about

- political accountability
- political credibility
- manifesto commitments
- wider party political issues for aligned and sponsored PCCs
- relationships with other locally elected politicians and with their police leaders

These are complex matters and often without easy clear cut approaches.

The important and significant role that police and crime commissioners can make to partnership working is explained by the Revolving Doors Agency in its submission for this Thematic:

Whatever the criticism of the role, the introduction of PCCs has presented an important opportunity to drive change at a local level. With a broader strategic responsibility than the Police Authorities they replaced, PCCs have a duty to work with a range of partners and a direct interest in supporting preventative work to reduce demand on their police force. Their commissioning role enables them to support a variety of services that fit their strategic plan, and to joint-commission with partners around key priorities so that shrinking local budgets can go further to achieve shared outcomes.

[extract from submission by Revolving Doors - Appendix B.7]

The range of partnerships which a police and crime commissioner might champion are described in the submission from North Yorkshire:

North Yorkshire Police (NYP) has embraced a partnership and collaboration ethos for a number of years, working closely with other regional police forces and local services. Since

her election, the Commissioner has developed these, as well as encouraged new partnerships, creating a structured four-point plan.

The plan is based on securing and improving service quality, whilst achieving the necessary financial savings through economies of scale and new, more efficient ways of working. These partnerships can be separated into 4 distinct areas, as follows:

- 1. Strategic Collaboration (Scarborough and ‘Durham and Cleveland’)*
- 2. Regional Collaboration (Yorkshire and the Humber - YaTH)*
- 3. Local Collaboration and Partnerships (e.g. North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue)*
- 4. Operational Collaboration (e.g. Safety Service (Police and Fire), River Safety (York City Council, NYP, OPCC and other partners), Together York (NYP, NHS, City of York Council))*

[extract from submission by North Yorkshire OPCC - Appendix A.5]

The submission from Warwickshire explains the role that the Warwickshire PCC and his partner, the police and crime commissioner for West Mercia, have played in the successful strategic alliance between the two police services:

Given the nature of the alliance, the two Police and Crime Commissioners have endeavoured to work in partnership where possible, whilst retaining their own independence, and commitment & focus on their individual force areas. Both PCCs backed the alliance model for their individual forces following their election, and have since made efforts to extend the principle into their own offices where appropriate. Staff across the two PCC offices share work and best practice where possible on things like communications, financial management and commissioning services on a regular basis, all the while representing the individual interests and integrity of their Commissioner. The two politicians have retained their own distinct ideas and priorities though, including around the development of the alliance. Warwickshire PCC Ron Ball recently stated that “I do not believe that a full merger is necessary or desirable and one will not take place under my leadership”, whereas his West Mercia counterpart Bill Longmore has said “I’ve got an open mind about it”.

[extract from submission by Warwickshire OPCC - Appendix A.8]

3. Who to partner with

As will be seen from the case studies and submissions in the appendix the police and police and crime commissioners will be involved separately and together in a range of partnerships including with

- other police services
- the security services
- the UK Border Force
- local authorities including town and parish councils
- central government
- the probation service
- other agencies in the criminal justice system
- the NHS
- the fire and rescue services
- other emergency services
- voluntary and community bodies in the role as specialist providers, advocates and representatives (see for example the submissions from the Chief Executive of Barnardo's and from Voluntary Action Leeds)
- businesses as corporate citizens and employers
- companies as providers of services to the police

The list could go on and on - no list will ever be exhaustive. Partnerships will be strategic and operational. Formal and informal. Statutory and voluntary. Local and national and sometimes international.

Creative outcome focused leaders across the police service including police and crime commissioners will continually seek out the most appropriate body to partner with. They will have criteria for this and should undertake due diligence before consummating a partnership. There can be no retreat from partnership working – and this will always expand.

As Steve McGuirk, the CEO and Chief Fire Officer for the Greater Manchester Fire Services points out in his submission, many services including the police share clients and users so partnership working is inevitable:

It is no coincidence that the people who live in the homes we visit are also receiving services from other public partners, particularly the police service. And the relationships that we have built with our partners – especially blue light partners - have seen us move to a position where we are bringing together a much more integrated and collaborative approach to helping local people.

[extract from submission by Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service - Appendix B.5]

He also describes how partnership working which enables the sharing of resources and premises

across agencies including the police can both save money but also enhance service delivery and outcomes.

Joint commissioning is an approach that many police and crime commissioners have adopted. In the submission from Gwent provides an example of this:

The PCC's Commissioning Vision is to provide better outcomes for individuals and communities through reducing crime, supporting victims and making Gwent a safer place.

The purpose of the Board is to provide strategic direction to the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) Commissioning Programme in relation to strategic planning, service quality, contracting performance and management and stakeholder engagement.

The Board is chaired by the Deputy PCC and has representation from:

*The Office of the PCC;
Local Authorities;
Gwent Police;
South Wales Fire & Rescue Service;
Wales Probation Trust;
Aneurin Bevan Health Board;
Gwent Registered Social Landlords, and
The Gwent Voluntary Sector.*

[extract from submission by Gwent OPCC - Appendix A.3]

There is a good example of regional commissioning in the submission from Surrey:

Surrey co-ordinated the project: the southeast region collaborated on joint research and the consortium jointly developed a specification. The OPCCs for Surrey, Sussex and Thames Valley worked together to engage the market and held a well-attended market engagement event. This partnership working made effective use out of a small staff group, which had a large workload and short deadlines. It ensured that the consortium went to tender in good time, with an effective specification for services and a market that had opportunity to comment on the specification. This would not have been possible if any one OPCC worked alone.

[extract from submission by Surrey OPCC - Appendix A.7]

The voluntary sector has much to offer to the police. In West Yorkshire, the Police and Crime Commissioner has seconded a staff member to his office from Voluntary Action Leeds. Both partners believe that this has resulted in significant mutual benefits. In their submission they quote the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire on this:

West Yorks PCC Mark Burns-Williams OBE commented:

“The voluntary sector plays an essential role in keeping communities safe, from bigger organisations all the way through to small community groups. I am delighted that I have been able to work with Voluntary Action Leeds to strengthen and deepen the relationship

The overall objectives for the work were two fold

- *To secure the third sector’s full engagement in the delivery of the outcomes set in the Police and Crime Plan*
- *To increase the collective influence of the sector with PCCs, the Police and the wider criminal justice system”*

[extract from submission by Voluntary Action Leeds - Appendix B.10

4. What is partnership?

A partnership has to focus on agreed objectives and some shared purpose between the participants. It requires trust, honesty and openness. Successful partnerships have to be nurtured and take time to develop. They also require commitment of time and emotional energy from those responsible for their success.

Partnership requires investment of time and emotional intelligence. It cannot be created at a whim or by flourishing signatures. It has to be planned and built over time. It has to be nurtured when being built and throughout its life.

Each partner has to benefit from a partnership and in the case of public services such as the police it is essential that there is a wider public benefit.

Partnerships should not be pursued for their own sake. For too long the local public sector was cluttered with “partnership architecture” either directed by central government or because it had always existed. Partnerships have to be for a purpose and they must demonstrate added value. They should be regularly reviewed and if necessary revised or terminated. Consequently effective partnerships are created for a purpose with review mechanisms built in and with exit strategies in place from the beginning.

These characteristics are demonstrated in the case studies in this report and in particular the importance to taking collaborative working seriously is strongly emphasised by Dr Henry Kippin, Director of Collaborate in his submission:

If collaboration beyond the surface-level of ‘partnership working’ is so important - and often so difficult - then how do we go about enabling it? First thing of all is to take it seriously. Beware the quick fix. Start with a proper diagnosis of the issues at hand. Identify and bring a range of people (including unusual suspects!), resources, insights to bear. Look at the capabilities needed to work together, and do some proper collaborative thinking about how to build readiness and shared outcomes over and above individual service priorities.

[extract from submission by Collaborate - Appendix B.2]

Partnership requires collaborative leadership

Effective partnership working requires leaders – be they senior police officers or police and crime commissioners – to adopt collaborative leadership behaviours. The essays in this publication and research demonstrate this very clearly.

The characteristics of such leadership include

- a focus on communities and citizens and securing the best possible outcomes for them and a

willingness and ability to put their interests ahead of institutional or personal interests

- an ability to leave one's 'ego' out with the partnership
- excellent communication skills especially listening
- the ability to persuade others
- a willingness to go beyond the brief and proscribed activities to find solutions and the accommodate the needs of partners
- negotiating skills and a willingness to "give and take"
- a comprehensive understanding of your partners and their organisations including their governance and decision making; their legal powers and constraints; their pressures; and the key personalities
- embedding the culture and necessary behaviours throughout the leader's organisation

Those leaders who most effectively secure their desired outcomes through partnership and collaboration usually are willing to invest time in gaining a very good knowledge and understanding of their partners. They will only seek partnerships with organisations where a partnership approach will add value and where the candidate partner demonstrates a will and ability to be an effective partner.

Effective leadership within a partnership context, as with leadership in most settings, is not about "heroic leaders" as much as it is about people throughout the partnership organisations being empowered and taking a leadership role. This means taking a personal commitment to partnership and its goals. It is also about valuing and respecting your partners and their people, their cultures and their goals.

The importance of leadership and the leadership role that a police and crime commissioner can provide is well described in the submission from Devon and Cornwall (Appendix A.2) as is the complexity of the local partnership arrangements which leaders and others have to steer through.

Of course, often for the police and for police and crime commissioners there will on occasion be a need to work with others who do not share these characteristics. In such cases, it can often be best to recognise that there is a working relationship but not one which is badged as a "partnership". There are many examples where relationships have started on such a basis but over time have evolved into effective partnerships.

Police and crime commissioners have to work in partnership with politicians in both central and local government. The challenges associated with this can be amplified locally because councillors and elected mayors like the police and crime commissioner are directly elected – and usually with a much higher proportion of the same or a different electorate voting for them. They may also be different party political affiliations.

The political dimension of partnership working for police and crime commissioners is very important. Commissioners should expect to be involved in local strategic fora but this may mean having to work with a large number of local authorities across their police area. In addition there will be a different patch work of NHS bodies to relate to and so on.

A police and crime commissioner has to recognise that a key part of her/his responsibility and role is to develop partnerships with these and other bodies where there is mutual respect and trust. And where the political dimension is not lost.

Police officers and police services are and must always be non-political and non-partisan but this is not the case with elected police and crime commissioners. Therefore, it is important for the commissioners and chief constables to be aware of the boundaries and ensure that they are never breached intentionally or unintentionally.

5. Partnership governance

The legal status of partnerships involving the police, and police and crime commissioners will include:

- statutory partnerships
- contractual – as with an outsourced contractual partnership with the business sector or a voluntary organisation
- agreements based on service level agreements and agreed actions and contributions from the partners which would not be enforced through the legal system – for example perhaps a partnership with another public body
- informal arrangements

It is important to ensure that the legal basis for a partnership and any governance arrangements are proportionate to the risks involved and the significance of the relationship and its purpose. Governance needs to be clearly defined and understood by all parties and the public. It needs to be transparent and there must be accountability to the constituent partner organisations and through them to the public.

Formal partnerships and ones involving public money and public resources should be subject to external audit and scrutiny by the Police and Crime Panels as well as the scrutiny bodies for participating non-police public bodies. Partnerships must never be an excuse for obfuscation or confusing accountabilities.

The responsibilities and expectations of the partners need to be clearly set in advance and the partners have to be accountable for their contribution to and the performance of the partnership.

Where partnerships are with non-public sector bodies in particular it is essential that all aspects of the relationship and any transactions between the partners and the key personnel from these partners are declared very publicly.

Partnership is a means not an end

It is very important to recognise that partnership should be a means of achieving desired objectives and outcomes. It is too often the case that either because of traditional practice or statutory requirements “partnerships are created” and develop lives of their own with no one challenging their contribution to contemporary agendas.

There can be significant costs to effective partnering. These costs can be

- financial in terms of supporting partnership architecture and governance; setting up costs; etc.
- opportunity costs arising from people devoting time and energy to the partnership at the expense of some other activity
- preventing or seemingly encouraging organisations not to consider alternative approaches but

to use the partnership when it may not be the most effective and appropriate way of addressing an issue

Therefore, before creating a formal partnership it is important to undertake a business case based assessment of the proposal and to regular review the public benefit that it is being derived from the arrangement.

For police and crime commissioners there are also considerations of the political cost of being involved in a partnership or not being. It may be politically expedient to be involved even though the immediate benefits are small.

6. Conclusions

As many of the of the authors of the submissions to this Thematic, and especially Dr Henry Kippin, Director of Collaborate, state, the future of public services including policing will increasingly require effective collaboration and partnership within and across the public sector, and between the public sector and the voluntary and community sector, and businesses. This collaboration is driven by:

- a need to focus on outcomes for citizens and service users
- a recognition that complex challenges cannot be addressed by single professions or single agencies or often single sectors
- a need to use limited public finances and other resources most effectively
- a desire and need to shift expenditure and activity towards long term prevention
- an imperative to accountability

As the submissions to this Thematic and much wider research demonstrate, partnership working is not easy. To be effective it requires:

- clear outcomes and strategic purpose
- excellent leadership with senior leaders ensuring that everyone in their organisations are empowered as leaders to contribute to the partnership
- adequate resources – people and time
- excellent governance and accountabilities
- mutual respect and trust
- a willingness to challenge, review and if necessary terminate the partnership

The future of crime reduction, prevention and resolution; public safety; and strong safe communities requires will require active and effective partnerships.

This CoPaCC Thematic seeks to stimulate best practice and thinking about the next generation of partnering for the police, and for policing governance.