

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

## Findings

### Summary

Hampshire Police Authority has put in place plans for managing the handover to PCCs. The authority has a mature approach to assessing and managing the transition process. The commitment of members to ensuring effective governance through to transition is strong, and key decisions have been identified. Stakeholder engagement is also good with the authority ensuring that partners (for example local authorities, Victim Support and Local Criminal Justice Board representatives) and other interested parties are being kept informed of transition arrangements.

The authority is working with the force to develop effective governance and accountability options for the incoming PCC to consider. Police authority members are to be commended for their continuing commitment and professionalism.

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

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

The authority has a clear governance structure for the transition period which will allow it to continue to deliver effective police authority governance until the PCC is elected. The existing committee structure and link members allow the authority to challenge and scrutinise performance and the force change programme.

It is evident that members are committed to ensuring that key decisions are made and that business as usual is maintained between now and the elections November.

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

The authority has a clear transition plan which is being managed through an established transition board. The board includes both authority and force representatives. Partners have been kept well informed through a partnership transition board and a stakeholder event held earlier in the year. Key risks have been identified, each with an owner and milestones and there is evidence of action being taken to mitigate these. The risks are reviewed on a monthly basis to ensure they are being properly managed.

The authority and force have prepared a briefing document for prospective PCC candidates to give information about policing in Hampshire. The Chief Constable has already held some briefing sessions with people interested in being the PCC. Questions and answers from those sessions are published on the authority website to ensure the process is 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. A range of options for governance, accountability and decision making are being developed for the incoming PCC to consider. The development of options is at an early stage.

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

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

There is a strong emphasis by the authority on keeping people informed about the transition to PCCs. The authority and force have developed an engagement and communication strategy to assist with informing internal and external parties about the new PCC arrangements. The use of face-to-face meetings, local media, websites and newsletters has assisted in providing information to a wide audience.

### ***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.