

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

### Findings

#### *Summary*

Lincolnshire Police Authority has a mature approach to assessing and managing the process. This includes ensuring partners are involved in the transition, and making the public aware of what the changes will mean to them. Police authority members are to be commended for their continuing commitment and professionalism.

There is a clear commitment to ensuring business as usual and key decisions that need to be made between now and November have been identified. The authority has begun to develop options for how the PCC will operate from day one. Options for an accountability framework are being developed; however, these should provide options for the PCC to consider rather than establishing a structure to run alongside the existing arrangements.

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

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

Police authority members are committed to ensuring that business as usual is maintained through to the introduction of the PCC in November. Existing internal committee structures are continuing. It is intended that once the proposed framework for how the PCC will hold the force to account has been finalised it will be run alongside the current committee structure so as to ease transition to the PCC. There are dangers with this approach, given that it is not possible to pre-judge how the PCC might wish to operate.

Key decisions that have to be made by the authority in the next few months have been clearly identified and include decisions in respect of the force resource position, ensuring it is able to meet the current financial challenge.

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

Lincolnshire Police Authority has put in place appropriate arrangements to manage the transition to PCCs. A transition board has been established and this includes representatives from the police authority and force alongside other partners, such as local authorities. The authority is working to a clear transition plan and has brought in additional staff to help to ensure the transition planning is progressed without affecting current authority business.

The transition plan is broken down into workstreams assigned to named individuals. Key risks have been identified with evidence of action being taken to mitigate them. These risks are monitored through the transition board and are overseen by the authority's Strategic Planning Committee which reports to the full police authority.

### ***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. These options will need to ensure accountability of the force to the public through the PCC.

The authority is also working to develop proposals for how the PCC will commission work by other agencies and organisations for which the PCC holds a budget.

Plans for briefing prospective PCC candidates are transparent and are being shared with staff to ensure a consistent approach.

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

Engagement with partners in relation to transition arrangements has been positive both internally with the force and externally with the local authority and other criminal justice agencies. The transition plan also includes community engagement.

**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.