

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

## Findings

### Summary

Staffordshire Police Authority has a comprehensive plan for managing the handover to the PCC. This includes ensuring partners are involved in the transition and actively making the public aware of what the changes will mean to them, through clear and consistent communication.

The authority is fully committed to ensuring business as usual. It has identified the key decisions that need to be made during this period and is taking action to ensure progress is made. 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***

Staffordshire Police Authority has made a clear commitment to ensure that business as usual is maintained throughout the transition. It has identified the key decisions that have to be made in the next few months, including how collaboration with West Midlands Police could be further developed.

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

Staffordshire Police Authority has a clear transition plan. This is managed through an established transition board, which has representatives from both the authority and the force and is supported by a dedicated working group (which is chaired by a senior officer).

The authority has identified key risks and taken positive action to deal with them. For example, some roles within the authority have been changed so that they will work more effectively in the PCC structure.

The authority is fully committed to monitoring the force's performance throughout the transition period.

### ***Arrangements to secure a seamless handover to PCCs***

The authority has recognised that the PCC needs to be effective from the very start. It is establishing processes to enable the PCC to make early and effective decisions in relation to the 2013/14 budget, producing the police and crime plan, and developing options for the PCC office (and support arrangements).

The authority has clear plans to amend governance arrangements using a structured transition from current committees towards possible models of governance for the PCC. These are supported by a clear and phased communication plan that will support the transition and the development of the PCC role.

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

The police authority makes effective use of newsletters to inform key partners and the public of the changes. These partners include those who have an interest in crime, community safety and the new policing landscape (such as local authorities, criminal justice agencies and the voluntary sector). The force has used social media to deliver key messages. A detailed communication plan ensures comprehensive and consistent publicity both within the force and to the general public.

### **Next steps**

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