

Community Safety Overview & Scrutiny Committee 13 November 2012

Report of the AD Governance & ICT

Draft Protocol for the working relationship between the new Police & Crime Panel and the Crime and Disorder Overview & Scrutiny Committees across North Yorkshire

Summary

1. This report presents a draft protocol for the working relationship between the new Police and Crime Panel (PCP) and the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committees (CDCs) across North Yorkshire. Members are asked to comment on the protocol so that the views of this council can be fed back to North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and collated with the views of the other councils.

Background

2. Local Authority Scrutiny Committees that are designated CDCs can scrutinise responsible authorities that comprise Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). This included the Police Authority. Where it is potentially confusing is that although the legal remit of CDCs is unchanged, under the new arrangements, public accountability for the delivery/ performance of the police service now sits with the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC), and CDCs cannot directly scrutinise the PCC.
3. It is the role of the PCP to scrutinise, support and challenge the PCC in the exercise of his/her functions, and it is therefore important that the relationship between the PCP and CDCs is understood by both parties.
4. With this in mind, Scrutiny Services at North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) drafted a working protocol which was circulated to all councils within North Yorkshire in September 2012 – see copy attached at Annex A. CYC Scrutiny Services responded to let NYCC know that the protocol would be presented to this Committee at their next available meeting, and that feedback from this committee would be provided thereafter.

5. Meanwhile, the draft protocol was presented to the PCP on the 25 October 2012 for their consideration. At the meeting the Panel acknowledged the comments from District colleagues but recognised they would not be in a position to establish their work programme and priorities until the new PCC is in place and has made clear how she intends to approach her responsibilities.
6. Whilst the PCP was happy to agree that the protocol as currently written, be applied for 12 months, they were reluctant to adopt the protocol without the agreement that changes could be made during that 12 month period if experience suggested or, if in officers' view it should be revised. They also agreed that after the first 12 months the protocol should be reviewed.

Consultation

7. The Councils being consulted on the draft protocol are:

Craven District Council	Scarborough Borough Council
Hambleton District Council	Selby District Council
Harrogate Borough Council	North Yorkshire County Council
Richmondshire District Council	Ryedale District Council
City of York Council	

8. Feedback from the above councils received by North Yorkshire County Council to date is shown at Annex B.

Analysis

9. In general terms it appears that all councils agree that the principle of a protocol between PCP and Crime & Disorder Committees is a good one, particularly to help outline information flows. They have also agreed it would be helpful if the protocol was explicit about the role of the 'local' PCP member as a link between the Panel and the local Crime & Disorder Committee.
10. In addition, the PCP now has a support officer (based at NYCC), who will be attending future meetings of the North Yorkshire Scrutiny Officer Network. This will provide a regular opportunity for issues around the protocol and the work of the PCP to be raised.

Risk Management

11. Without an agreed understanding of how the PCP and Crime & Disorder Committees will work alongside each other, and of how information will flow between the two, there is a risk that crime related issues and concerns around the work of the Police will either go un-scrutinised, or the work to scrutinise those issues may be duplicated.

Recommendations

12. Members are recommended to consider the draft protocol at Annex A and provide comments for feedback to NYCC.

Reason: To clarify and understand the future role of this committee in its scrutiny of the local Community Safety Partnership and its relationship with the new PCP.

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Report Approved



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Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes

Annex A – Draft Protocol

Annex B – Feedback from other Local Councils in North Yorkshire