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# Driving accountability from within:

## Key lessons for newly elected Police and Crime Commissioners

Matthew Davies

June 2016

Police Effectiveness in a Changing World Project

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The views contained in this paper are those of the author alone, and not necessarily those of the Police Foundation.

### About the author

Dr Matthew Davies is an Associate Analyst at RAND Europe. He completed his PhD at the University of Oxford, where he conducted research into Police and Crime Commissioners, part-funded by the Police Foundation. The research examined the introduction and implementation of the policy and specifically explored the wider implications for the democratic governance of the police.

### About the Police Foundation

The Police Foundation is an independent think tank focused on developing knowledge and understanding of policing while challenging the police service and the government to improve policing for the benefit of the public. The Police Foundation acts as a bridge between the public, the police and the government, while being owned by none of them.

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# Executive summary

On 5 May 2016, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) were directly elected by the public across England and Wales for the second time. PCCs – introduced in 2012 – were intended to strengthen the accountability of the police, reconnect the police and the public, and drive innovation and efficiency in policing. To do this, they were granted a range of powers, including setting local police priorities, appointing and dismissing Chief Constables and directing police and crime reduction budgets. The election of a single, locally accountable figure represents a radical change from Police Authorities which previously held Chief Constables to account.

Based on one of the first ever empirical studies of PCCs, this report highlights a set of key findings and related recommendations for newly elected PCCs to develop internal capacity and build key relationships that are essential to the unique and challenging role. This report considers key lessons from the first set of PCCs, and focuses on understanding the PCC role, and developing robust and accountable relationships with both Chief Constables and Police and Crime Panels.

The research entailed a total of 60 interviews with PCCs, Chief Constables, deputy PCCs, Police and Crime Panel members and other local and national stakeholders between 2012 and 2014. This report also consolidates lessons from other recent reviews of the PCC policy, including the House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee (2014; 2016), the Committee on Standards in Public Life (2015).

The key findings include:

1. **The PCC role is multifaceted and expanding, which has implications on the ability to perform the job.** The role entails governance of the police, as well as wider crime prevention responsibilities. The first set of PCCs interpreted the role broadly, and reported a heavy workload. PCCs will now also take on further responsibilities for fire and rescue services, as well as other public services, which will further stretch their capacity to undertake the role.
  2. **PCCs developed a varied set of teams to support them in the role, and not all appointed deputies.** Those who appointed deputies found value in doing so, although the appointment process was controversial and not always transparent.
  3. **A minority of PCCs were able to articulate measurable indicators of success, and some had begun to develop strategic partnerships to support evidence-based decision-making.** Some PCCs had engaged with research partners to identify policies based on evidence of 'what works', which enabled clarity about what constituted 'success' and how it could be measured. There was scope for PCCs to further consider how they could play a pivotal role in fostering evidence-based policing within their forces.
  4. **There were concerns about the recruitment of Chief Constables.** There was a shortage of applicants to Chief Constable positions, and those who applied to the role were often incumbent deputy chiefs. There were also concerns about the fairness of the recruitment process.
  5. **Relationships between PCCs and Chief Constables were generally positive, but at**
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**times lacked sufficient distance to exert scrutiny.** PCCs reported positive relationships with their Chief Constables, particularly where they had appointed their Chief Constable and where they had previously known each other. At times, PCCs found it difficult to balance the competing scrutiny and support functions within the role, which limited their ability to hold Chief Constables to account.

6. **Uncertainty or confusion about respective roles diluted the ability of Police and Crime Panels to effectively scrutinise PCCs.** Some Panels struggled to adapt to their role and did not provide sufficient scrutiny of PCCs. PCCs

reported positive relationships with their Panels when respective roles were clearly understood.

7. **Panels struggled to provide constructive criticism, in part because of a lack of information from PCCs.** Panels were limited by a lack of power and resources to undertake their scrutiny function. This was exacerbated where PCCs had not provided timely and accessible information to their Panels.

From these findings, a series of recommendations can be drawn to help newly-elected PCCs establish robust accountability in the governance of the police, indicated in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. Recommendations for Police and Crime Commissioners**

### *The Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)*

1. **Review existing OPCCs** to ensure that they meet the broad and expanded nature of the role.
2. Where appropriate, **consider appointing a Deputy as a priority** to support the breadth of the role. The appointment of 'assistants' instead of deputies should be avoided, since assistant posts are not defined under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and therefore such appointments may evade the required scrutiny process.
3. **Recruitment of Deputy PCCs should be made through a fair and transparent process** that clearly acknowledges the consultation review from Police and Crime Panels.
4. Consider how best to **incorporate ethical standards into the organisational structure**, using the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) Ethical Framework as a basis (see Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015).
5. PCCs can strengthen their own accountability by **engaging with research partners to implement evidence-based policies** within their forces. PCCs can achieve this by developing research capacity within OPCCs, forming strategic partnerships with research partners, and commissioning independent evaluations of their policies.

### *Relationships with Chief Constables*

6. A **transparent recruitment processes** is required, using **independent policing professionals** to encourage external applicants to apply (see Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015).
7. Only Chief Constable candidates who have **served as chief officers in other forces** should be considered for the role (see House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016).
8. From the outset, **PCCs should agree mutual goals and values with Chief Constables**. The Police and Crime Plan provides an opportunity for PCCs and Chief Constables to articulate respective priorities, but ideally these discussions should take place even sooner at the first meeting between a PCC and the Chief Constable.
9. **PCCs and Chief Constables should set out clear lines of authority and communication**. Both parties need to discuss their respective roles, based on the terms set out under the Policing Protocol (Home Office, 2011a). To action this, PCCs and Chief Constables should review existing employment arrangements (i.e. which party formally employs staff). This could be undertaken as part of the review of existing OPCCs.
10. As the relationship develops, **PCCs and Chief Constables should ensure that there are opportunities for mutual learning**. Both PCCs and Chief Constables have unique insights and sharing this information will be beneficial to both parties. This could be done as part of an induction period for PCCs, but it is important that there are opportunities for learning thereafter.
11. **PCCs and Chief Constables should, where possible, use 'middle agents' to maintain robust relationships**. A middle agent acts as a point of liaison between both parties and could in theory be anyone who works in close proximity to the PCC and Chief Constable, such as a Deputy PCC, or a PCC's CEO.

### *Relationships with Police and Crime Panels*

12. **Produce a Memorandum of Understanding with Panels** that details the roles of both and overarching principles, which may help to formulate clarity in the relationship (Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015).
  13. Establish **regular formal communication with Panels** at least every two months (House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016).
  14. **Create a forward Plan that clearly details key decisions to be made** and any corresponding documentation, and the level of scrutiny that will be expected of the Panel (Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015).
  15. **Share specific, accessible information with Panels** that allows time for comprehensive review and response.
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# Introduction

On 5 May 2016, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) were directly elected by the public across England and Wales for the second time. PCCs – introduced in 2012 – were intended to strengthen the accountability of the police, reconnect the police and the public, and drive innovation and efficiency in policing (Home Office, 2010). To do this, they were granted a range of powers, which included setting local police priorities, appointing and dismissing Chief Constables and directing police and crime reduction budgets. The election of a single, locally accountable figure represents a radical change from Police Authorities who previously held Chief Constables to account.

The first ever elections in November 2012 drew a turnout of 15 per cent – the lowest ever turnout in British electoral history. However, the most recent elections drew an improved average turnout of 26 per cent, ranging from a low of 17.4 per cent in Durham, to a high of 49.1 per cent in Dyfed-Powys. Without survey data about voting preferences, it is not possible to know exactly why turnout was higher, but it is likely that the combination of PCC elections with local government and Welsh Assembly elections may have increased the number of people voting. In some areas, the higher turnout may also stem from greater public awareness of PCCs now that they have been in place for almost four years.<sup>1</sup>

One of the most notable 2016 election results was that only three independent PCCs were elected, down from 12 in 2012, while there were gains for the Conservatives (+4), Labour (+2) and Plaid-Cymru (+2) (Figure 2). Commentators have suggested that these gains for the political parties are a result of voting along party political lines while voting in local

government elections (Casciani, 2016). Of the 26 incumbents who sought re-election, nineteen were re-elected to the role, meaning that almost half of all PCCs have experience in the role.

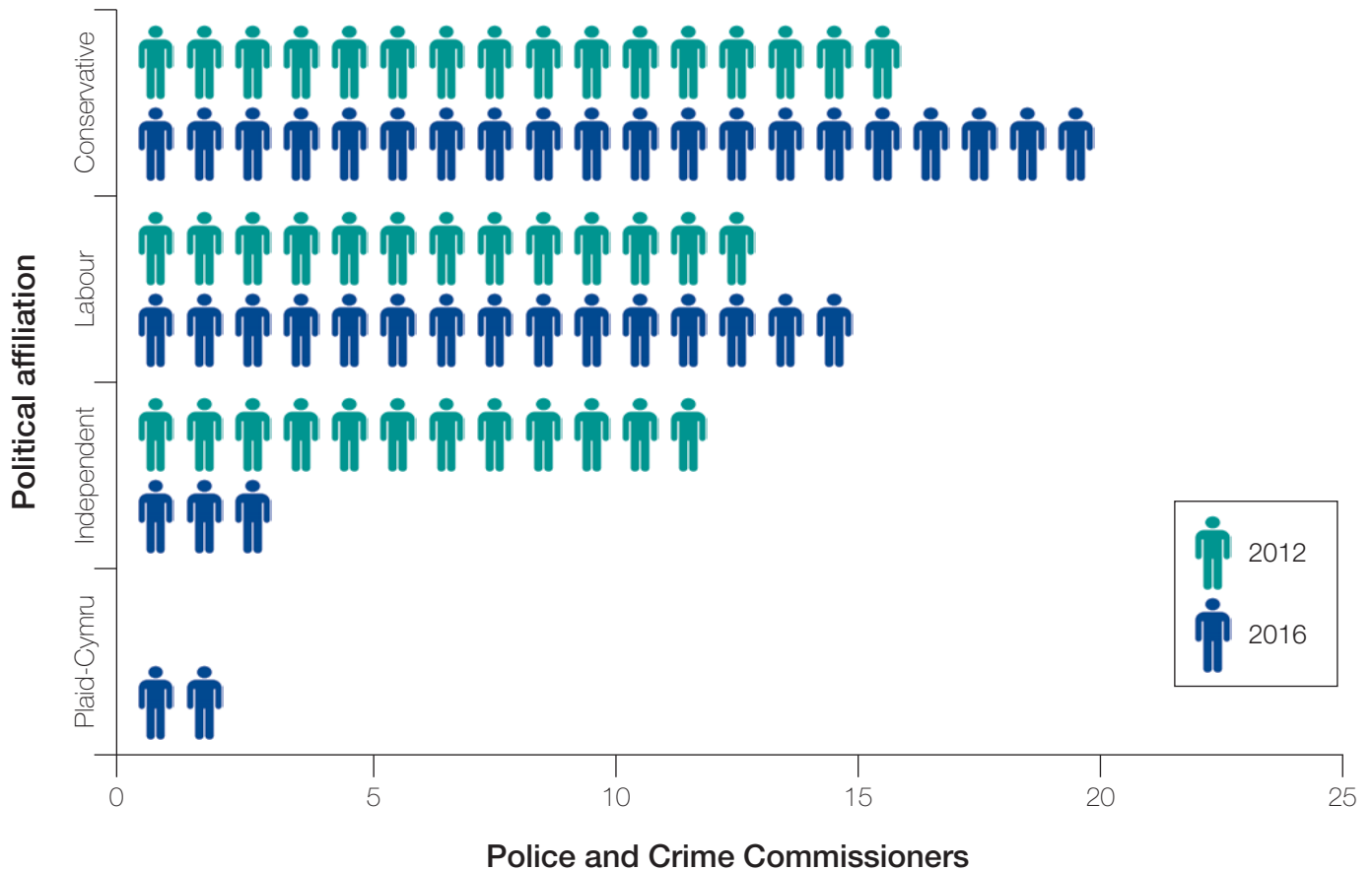
*PCCs were intended to strengthen the accountability of the police, reconnect the public and drive innovation and efficiency.*

Now that the elections have passed and PCCs begin to look ahead at the next four years, it is timely to consider the role of PCCs and some of the key challenges they are likely to face. In particular, PCCs will need to grapple with an increasingly broad remit, as well as building effective and accountable relationships with key stakeholders, such as Chief Constables and Police and Crime Panels (Panels).

This report highlights a set of key findings from the first term of PCCs, and draws related recommendations for newly elected PCCs to support the development of accountable relationships. Section 1 identifies some of the challenges associated with the role and considers these in the context of likely expansion of the PCC remit. It identifies the varied ways in which PCCs approached the job and the related implications for developing an Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (herein OPCC). Section 2 examines issues related to holding Chief Constables to account. It consolidates concerns relating to the recruitment of Chief Constables, and addresses the challenges associated with fulfilling a dual role of scrutiny and support over Chief Constables. Finally, Section 3

<sup>1</sup> Although survey results prior to the elections indicated that public awareness remained low, with fewer than 10 per cent of the public able to name their PCC (Electoral Reform Society, 2016).

Figure 2: PCC winners in 2012 and 2016



considers challenges that Panels faced in holding PCCs to account, and identifies specific actions that PCCs can adopt to work constructively with Panels.

The findings presented in this report are based primarily on data collected as part of empirical research on Police and Crime Commissioners conducted between 2012 and 2014. The research entailed a total of 60 interviews, including 32 (out of 41) PCCs, two Deputy PCCs, three Chief Constables, five members of Police and Crime Panels, six chairs of Community Safety Partnerships, three political advocates of the policy, six PCC candidates (for the

2012 elections) and one Local Area Commander.<sup>2</sup> This report also consolidates lessons from other recent reviews of the PCC policy, including the Home Affairs Select Committee (House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, 2014; 2016), and the Committee on Standards in Public Life (2015).

Unlike the first elections, PCCs now have the benefit of being able to draw upon lessons from the first four years of the policy. This report – based on one of the first ever empirical studies on PCCs – outlines some of these challenges and makes recommendations as to how they might be addressed by PCCs.

<sup>2</sup> One PCC and one Chief Constable were interviewed twice.



# Understanding the role of a Police and Crime Commissioner

This section examines how the role was interpreted by the first set of PCCs and considers the implications of a likely expansion to the role. It identifies how PCCs developed their OPCCs, exploring issues related to appointment of deputies and setting out clear markers of success. Based on these findings, it argues that newly-elected PCCs will need to exercise caution in building suitable teams that enable them to undertake a broad and expanding role, but simultaneously minimise unnecessary spending.

## Finding 1: The PCC role is multifaceted and expanding, which has implications on the ability to perform the job

The role of a PCC is set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Policing Protocol 2011 (Home Office, 2011a). Broadly, the PCC role can be understood as twofold: 1) securing an efficient and effective force; and 2) wider functions relating to community safety and crime prevention. A third element of the role is also in development with regard to holding fire authorities to account, discussed further in below. (see also, Loader and Muir, 2016).

Ensuring an efficient and effective force entails powers to:

- Set local police priorities through a Police and Crime Plan.
- Set the annual local precept and annual force budget.
- Hold Chief Constables to account (through powers to appoint and dismiss Chief Constables).
- Scrutinise, support and challenge the performance of the force.

- Collaborate with other PCCs, policing bodies and partners.
- Act as the local link between the police and the community.
- Monitor complaints against officers and staff and are responsible for complaints against the Chief Constable.

With regard to the wider community safety and crime prevention functions, PCCs are also expected to:

- Bring together Community Safety Partnerships at the force level (England only).
- Make crime and disorder reduction grants.
- Ensure that collaboration with other local policing bodies and forces delivers better value for money or enhances effectiveness.
- Enhance the delivery of criminal justice in the force area.

In practice, PCCs interpreted the role in various ways and tended to emphasise different aspects of the role (see Davies, 2014). Interviews with PCCs approximately six months into office revealed that over half (18) saw the primary function of the role was to manage the police organisation, in line with the requirement to ensure an efficient and effective police force. The response for them entailed strong leadership over the force, and success was rooted somewhat narrowly based on reduced crime figures and stronger accountability mechanisms. Conversely, just under a half of PCCs (14) emphasised the significance of what they often described as the 'and crime' part of the job. This alluded to a wider responsibility for crime and justice management beyond the police service, squaring with the

community safety and crime prevention functions. Success was defined more broadly by partnership working, public engagement and community safety.

*“the PCC role is big. No one quite knows yet how big, because we’re still defining it and pushing the tent out”.*

These perspectives-shaped by the backgrounds and pre-existing relationships that the PCCs had<sup>3</sup> – illustrate the breadth of the role and the wide scope that PCCs have in developing it in their own terms. As one PCC explained, *“the PCC role is big. No one quite knows yet how big, because we’re still defining it and pushing the tent out”.*<sup>4</sup> This is indicative of the novelty of the policy in which PCCs are testing the limits of the role, but it also encapsulates the spirit of the reform, which provides flexibility to PCCs to deliver local solutions to policing and crime reduction. In parallel, the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 gives local authorities the ability to submit proposals for the transfer of powers and budgets from Whitehall to cities and counties. In turn, this may shape the contours of the PCC role in local areas, with nuances in how the job is undertaken from force to force (e.g. in Manchester, the PCC post will be replaced with a city mayor) (Loader and Muir, 2016).

Additionally, the role is set to become broader. Following consultation, the government has announced that it is taking forward legislation to enable PCCs to hold their local fire and rescue services to account – part of a broader move to establish closer collaboration between the police, fire and rescue and NHS ambulance services.<sup>5</sup>

The proposed developments – set out under the Policing and Crime Bill – would enable PCCs to adopt the responsibilities of Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA) (and at minimum have representation on their local FRA). They would also have a duty to collaborate on all three emergency services.

Furthermore, the Policing and Crime Bill gives PCCs a greater role in relation to police complaints. In particular, PCCs would act as the single point of contact for complainants throughout the process and would have responsibility for receiving, recording, assessing and allocating complaints (and resolving complaints suitable for local resolution). There are still other developments to the role that are under consideration. For example, the Home Secretary, Theresa May, has expressed interest in granting PCCs further powers across the criminal justice system, including youth justice, probation and court services (House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016). Some PCCs have also advocated an even broader role. For example, Adam Simmonds, former Northamptonshire PCC, commissioned a free school with a ‘crime focus’ for troubled youths – an initiative which has again attracted support from the Home Secretary (Travis, 2016). These are indications that PCCs will play an increasingly prominent role across local government, beyond simply policing and crime. PCCs will have discretion in the extent to which they assume these responsibilities, and there will inevitably be variation in how these additional functions are developed across forces.

However, expanding the role of PCCs may come at the price of stretching the capacity to deliver the job. Almost half of PCCs who were interviewed for the research reported that they were facing an

<sup>3</sup> For example, those who approached the role from a crime-reduction perspective often had backgrounds working in local politics, while those who concentrated on the police aspect of the role had typically worked in the police and military (see Davies, 2014).

<sup>4</sup> Conservative PCC 13.

<sup>5</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/legislation-to-allow-police-and-crime-commissioners-to-take-responsibility-for-their-local-fire-service>.

overbearing workload, and reported frequently working 12 hour days. These PCCs described how in addition to the wide set of strategic responsibilities they had to fulfil, they simultaneously had to spend substantial time attempting to engage a number of diverse communities across large force areas and across multiple local authorities. This workload became even heavier for those PCCs who had perceived the job in broad terms and had decided to take on a large proportion of the work alone (i.e. they had not appointed deputies and were working with small teams). Alongside concerns about the ability to deliver the job, expanding the role may therefore also have welfare implications, particularly given the age profile of many of the PCCs.<sup>6</sup>

*Almost half of PCCs interviewed said they were facing an overbearing workload.*

This may also have implications for decisions to stand again for election. At the time of interviews (roughly six months in office), four PCCs had already ruled out running for the post again – some citing the tiring nature of the job. Given that the re-election of PCCs was supposed to be one of the key forms of accountability over PCCs (see for example, May, 2010), this raises some questions about the ability to hold PCCs to account who have already decided that they will not be standing again. Broadening the role any further, in legislation, may therefore have an impact on the accountability of PCCs.

In light of these pressures, PCCs will need to carefully consider the suitability of existing OPCCs to match

the requirements of the job, all the while being cautious about the costs involved and ramifications for negative public perceptions.

## Finding 2: PCCs developed a varied set of teams to support them in the role, and not all appointed deputies

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 instructed that PCCs must appoint a Chief Executive and a Chief Finance Officer. However, the government expressed that they did 'not intend to prescribe what support PCCs should have, other than the appointment of a head of paid staff and Chief Finance Officer' (Home Office, 2010).

*Six months into office four PCCs had already ruled out running for the post again.*

Therefore, PCCs had flexibility with regard to how they could build their OPCCs. With some PCCs recognising the need to undertake all aspects of the role, some appeared to place resources in large OPCCs. One PCC<sup>7</sup> from a relatively small force explained how he had established an OPCC with multiple staff working under different units to reflect the various aspects of the role, including policy, finance and communications. He reported employing 25 people to this office to provide him with the capacity to take on the diffuse tasks. However, this PCC had come under heavy media criticism for having directed so much of his resources into his

<sup>6</sup> At the time of interviews with PCCs, nearly two thirds (26) were over 60 (Davies, 2014).

<sup>7</sup> Conservative PCC 13.

own office. But some of this spending may be justified, for example in relation to communications teams, which support the vital role of public engagement (see for example, House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016).

Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, PCCs have the option to appoint a Deputy. Unlike other roles in the OPCC, the Deputy role is not politically restricted. Deputies can undertake any work on behalf of a PCC, aside from the core PCC tasks, such as the appointment or dismissal of a Chief Constable. However, according to data provided by House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee (2014), just over half (24) had appointed a Deputy a year and a half into the role.

In interviews with PCCs, eight were explicit that they had chosen not to appoint deputies because of concerns about wasting scarce money on paying for such a position and possible negative implications for their public image. Two PCCs also cited their public responsibility to be the single visible figurehead for policing in their areas and believed that delegating authority to a Deputy would detract from that in some way. However, in light of the aforementioned significant workload, interviews with PCCs who had appointed deputies revealed the value of having a Deputy in place to support them with the role. For example:

*"I've told [other PCCs thinking about appointing a Deputy] quite frankly I don't think this job is do-able by one person and you desperately need a Deputy".*

#### **Independent PCC 7**

***Some PCCs had chosen not to appoint deputies because of concerns about wasting money.***

The rules around the appointment of deputies were less stringent than appointing OPCC staff and PCCs were permitted to appoint personal and political contacts without advertising for the position. Some PCCs adopted this strategy, which prompted calls of cronyism from the media and Police and Crime Panels (House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, 2014). Police and Crime Panels are required to hold a confirmation hearing when the PCC gives notice about appointment, and the PCC has the option to accept or reject their recommendations. A year and a half into the role, there were three reported cases where PCCs had appointed deputies, despite explicit recommendations from their Panels not to appoint the chosen candidate (House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, 2014).<sup>8</sup> A further six PCCs appointed assistants to support them in the role. These assistant roles differed in scope across forces, but were broadly akin to deputies. However, since these assistant posts were not defined under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, appointments were not subject to a confirmation hearing from the Police and Crime Panel (House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, 2014).

This was especially concerning where PCCs had handed over significant responsibilities to their deputies or assistants, who had not been voted in by the public and who had not been through a formal interview process. One PCC, for example, was so impressed by his Deputy (who he had appointed without interview) that had effectively shared the PCC job with him:

<sup>8</sup> These included Humberside, Sussex and West Mercia.

*“We’re doing this very much as a joint enterprise. And the way I described his role is as that of the PCC, apart from where it can’t be”.*

### **Conservative PCC 12**

This PCC therefore essentially delegated his role to an unelected individual. This Deputy is solely accountable to the PCC as an employee and is not answerable to the public nor the Police and Crime Panel, which undoubtedly raises serious concerns for holding the Deputy to account.

With these concerns in mind, it is important that PCCs consider how best to instil ethical practice within their organisational structures, in particular relating to the appointment of staff. One resource that PCCs can use as a basis is the APCC Ethical Framework (Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015), which represents a voluntary overarching framework to guide PCCs in setting out key principles of ethical behaviour.

*Developing a clear, measurable vision of success strengthens the accountability of PCCs by allowing performance to be assessed.*

The Committee on Standards in Public Life (2015) notes that Deputy PCCs are not bound by a code of conduct and found that there was need for greater clarity in defining the parameters of the relationship between the Deputy PCC and other employees of the PCC. Accordingly, one of the recommendations made by the Committee on Standards in Public Life is that PCCs and their deputies should adhere to a mandatory national minimum code of conduct.

With regard to the appointment of Deputies, the Committee on Standards in Public Life recommended that: there is an independent member on the appointment panel to oversee the process; the panel is satisfied the candidates meet the standards of Seven Principles of Public Life; and that details of the independent panel member be published. These recommendations are also applicable to other appointments made by PCCs, including Chief Constables and other senior figures in the OPCC, such as Chief Executives and Chief Finance Officers. Incorporating these policies into standard practice will help to strengthen the accountability and legitimacy of the OPCC.

### **Finding 3: A minority of PCCs were able to articulate measurable indicators of success, and some had begun to develop strategic partnerships to support evidence-based decision-making**

Developing a clear, measurable vision of success from the outset strengthens the accountability of PCCs by allowing performance to be assessed. In interviews with PCCs, when asked what success in the role entailed, the majority pointed towards broad indicators, such as ‘reduced crime’, greater public engagement, and their own re-election. However, they were less clear about how exactly this kind of success might be achieved, and few were able to elaborate on how it might be measured (Davies, 2014). However, some PCCs were able to describe with more precision what success entailed, informed by

dialogue with both research partners and the public. For example, Labour PCC 8 explained how he had developed a public consultation exercise in relation to restorative justice:

*“...if you were to say to people, ‘do you want more restorative justice’, what would the answer be based on? Nothing. If you were to say ‘we’ve got evidence that the approach that we use in [this force] to restorative justice last year reduced offending on A, B and C categories of crime, would you accept more restorative justice on the basis that we’ll show next year that we’ve driven crime down even further in those areas’. And therefore you’re setting yourself up with a performance target that means something in terms of the safety of the public, not about some arid statistical evidence...”*

This PCC went on to explain how he was then able to use this evidence to create a ‘more mature dialogue’ with the public. In this way, he was able to forge a link between evidence of ‘what works’ and engagement with the public to produce a clear vision of what success entailed in his force. Police and Crime Plans provide an opportunity for PCCs to set out measurable outcomes, but it was not always clear from interviews to what extent PCCs had done so.

In order to develop clear indicators of success and evaluate their effectiveness, PCCs can consider how to strategically set up their offices and establish collaborations to better understand and implement policies based on the best evidence available. By engaging with evidence of ‘what works’, PCCs will be better placed to stimulate evidence-based policing practice throughout the force. As advocated by the College of Policing (2014), evidence-based policing

must be applied to the practice of leadership in order to support forces deliver for current needs and meet future challenges.

***By engaging with evidence of ‘what works’, PCCs will be better placed to stimulate evidence-based policing practice throughout the force.***

Three PCCs made specific references to encouraging evidence-based policing and were able to cite academic research. Labour PCC 8 explained how his approach had been informed by the relationships that he had developed with three local universities, drawing on skills from experts and practitioners. Another example was in Northamptonshire, where former PCC Adam Simmonds had established the Institute for Public Safety, Crime and Justice (IPSCJ), which represents a collaboration between the OPCC and University of Northampton to help ‘embed a clear relationship between evidence of ‘what works’ and practice ‘on the ground’’.<sup>9</sup> Specifically, it provides strategic crime analysis, evaluations of programmes and initiatives, and public engagement.

This illustrates how PCCs are well situated to facilitate evidence-based approaches within their forces. PCCs are able to do so in a number of ways, such as through establishing research capacity within OPCCs, forming strategic partnerships, or by commissioning independent research. In turn, strengthening this capacity can provide PCCs with tools to establish clear markers of success, evaluate the effectiveness of their policies, and ultimately strengthen their own accountability.

<sup>9</sup> See <http://www.ipscj.org/about-us/>.

## Conclusion and recommendations

The PCC role is broad, and set to become even more expansive. PCCs also face increasingly diverse challenges. Their offices will become more disparate as they take on different functions in their localities (such as mayoral functions or responsibility over other public services, such as fire and rescue). In this context, PCCs will need to ensure that they have the capabilities to adapt to these challenges.

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

1. **PCCs review their existing OPCCs** to ensure that they meet the broad and expanded nature of the role.
2. Where appropriate, PCCs should **consider appointing deputies as a priority** to support the breadth of the role. The appointment of 'assistants' instead of deputies should be avoided, since assistant posts are not defined under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and therefore such appointments may evade the required scrutiny process.
3. **Recruitment of Deputy PCCs should be made through a fair and transparent process** that clearly acknowledges the consultation review from Police and Crime Panels. The recruitment process should be reviewed by the Association of Policing and Crime Chief Executives (APACE), the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC), and the Home Office (Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015).
4. PCCs should consider how best to **incorporate ethical standards into the organisational structure**, using the APCC Ethical Framework as a basis (see Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015).
5. PCCs strengthen their own accountability by **engaging with research partners to implement evidence-based policies** within their forces. PCCs can achieve this by developing research capacity within OPCCs, forming strategic partnerships with research partners, and commissioning independent evaluations of their policies.

## Developing robust relationships with Chief Constables

This section examines relationships between PCCs and Chief Constables. It identifies concerns relating to the recruitment of Chief Constables, and highlights the challenges associated with fulfilling a dual role of scrutiny and support over Chief Constables.

The relationship between a PCC and Chief Constable is governed by the Policing Protocol (Home Office, 2011a). The relationship is intended to be one of both challenge and support – the PCC has a duty to ‘scrutinise, support and challenge the overall performance of the force’. Accordingly, the PCC ‘draws on their mandate to set and shape the strategic objectives of their force area in consultation with the Chief Constable’ and simultaneously is required to ‘hold the Chief Constable to account for the performance of the force’s officers and staff’ (Home Office, 2011a: 3).

Although there were early concerns about high profile clashes between PCCs and Chief Constables,<sup>10</sup> overall, relationships have appeared to be characterised by ‘healthy tension and respect for one another’s positions’ (May, 2016). But findings from interviews suggested that the one-on-one relationship between a PCC and Chief Constable poses challenges. PCCs and Chief Constables co-exist in a symbiotic relationship: the PCC holds the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of their Police and Crime Plan; but the PCC simultaneously relies on the Chief Constable for information about performance (Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015). Interviews with PCCs and Chief Constables indicated that the model creates a highly personalised dynamic whereby it becomes very easy to fall into either a hostile or overly amicable position. Both PCCs and Chief Constables indicated that it was difficult to find

the appropriate mid-point between both roles, and in some instances relationships tended to fall closer to being amicable, calling into question the PCC’s ability to independently hold the Chief Constable to account. This is problematic because accountability lies at the heart of the PCC concept. Where PCCs do not retain sufficient distance from their Chief Constables, they risk undermining the impartiality that is integral to the concept of accountability.<sup>11</sup> Retaining some distance may also reduce role confusion among the public, which was flagged as a possible issue by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (2015).

*The relationship is intended to be one of both challenge and support.*

This section identifies how inconsistencies in the appointment of Chief Constables, coupled with pre-existing relationships between PCCs and Chief Constables, meant that some relationships appeared to be characterised by amicability as opposed to accountability. It then recommends a series of practical steps that PCCs can take to manage relationships with their chiefs so that they are able to develop a ‘healthy tension’, in which they can fulfil both their scrutiny and support functions.

### Finding 4: There were concerns about the recruitment of Chief Constables

One of the most pressing concerns from the first term of PCCs was a reported shortage of applicants to Chief Constable positions (House of Commons Home

<sup>10</sup> See for example clashes reported between PCCs and Chief Constables in Avon and Somerset (Hough, 2012), Lincolnshire (Laville, 2013), and Gwent (Guardian, 2013).

<sup>11</sup> Adopting the definition from the Committee on Standards in Public Life accountability can be defined as: ‘Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias’ (2015: 111).



Affairs Select Committee, 2016). According to survey data from 25 forces between April and October 2015, there were five Chief Constable (or equivalent) appointments, which had attracted in total 11 applications (two recruitments involved single applications) (Chief Police Officers' Staff Association, 2015, cited in Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015). There have also been concerns that recent appointments often favour local candidates (College of Policing, 2015). For example, it appears that Chief Constables appointed by PCCs are almost twice as likely to have served as a Deputy Chief Constable in the same force as serving Chief Constables appointed by Police Authorities (Hales, 2015).

One of the possible explanations for the low numbers of applicants offered by HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, Sir Tom Winsor, was that PCCs' had a 'chilling effect' on applicants for senior police jobs because of a possible perception that PCCs had an existing close working relationship with the Deputy Chief Constable (Ford and Hamilton, 2016). The House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee (2016) report found this situation 'deeply concerning' and called PCCs to ensure that Chief Constables only be appointed if they had served at least two years in another force at the rank of Assistant Chief Constable or equivalent (House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016: 15-16).

There have also been concerns about the transparency and fairness of the recruitment process. Although guidance is provided to PCCs in the appointment of Chief Constables from the APCC, the Home Office, and the College of Policing, the recruitment process is decided by the PCC. Of concern to the Committee on Standards in Public Life

was that there is 'no requirement for an individual with professional policing knowledge to act as either a member of the appointments panel or in an advisory capacity' (Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015: 99). Two PCCs interviewed for the present study similarly expressed concerns that they were not required to consider the advice of HMIC in Chief Constable appointments (which was previously the case under pre-existing Police Authorities).

*Data from 25 forces showed that five Chief Constable vacancies only attracted a total of 11 applications.*

Appointments of Chief Constables are fundamental to developing a robust relationship that allows PCCs to enact both their support and scrutiny functions in equal measure. Once a Chief Constable is in place, both parties will then need to consider how best to reinforce a healthy form of tension within the relationship. Recommendations for striking this balance are presented at the end of this section.

### Finding 5: Relationships between PCCs and Chief Constables were generally positive, but at times lacked sufficient distance to exert scrutiny

Relationships between PCCs and Chief Constables appeared to be less adversarial where PCCs had appointed their Chief Constables.<sup>12</sup> Part of this may have been related to a 'honeymoon' phase in which Chief Constable had only recently been appointed.

<sup>12</sup> Independent PCC 4; Labour PCC 3; Labour PCC 9; Conservative PCC 4.

However, some of this was related to an inherent consensus that had emerged on the back of appointment. For some PCCs, when asked what criteria they were looking for in their ideal Chief Constable candidate, one common response was 'the person best equipped to deliver my plan'. One PCC elaborated:

*"[B]earing in mind they [Chief Constables] are under an obligation to deliver it [the Plan], you really do want somebody who at least understands the relevance of it and is prepared to direct their resources in support of it. If they didn't agree with it, it would be difficult, that's just the reality of the way we're structured now."*

#### **Labour PCC 9**

These types of appointment meant that agreement was implicitly built into the new relationship and Chief Constables were naturally inclined to defer to their new employers. One Chief Constable explained that:

*"there is a view that some of the newer chiefs are in a weaker position, and that is borne out by fact. There are definitely chiefs who I've heard talk about 'stage two transfers' who feel that they've had to agree things because they're newbies or worse than that, they were acting, so they were relying on somebody to give them a job."*

#### **Chief Constable 2**

Relationships where both PCC and Chief Constable had previously known each other were also generally described by PCCs in positive terms. In several of these relationships where the PCC had known the Chief Constable by virtue of having been on the Police Authority, it appeared that the dynamic between PCC and Chief Constable was 'business-as-usual'.<sup>13</sup>

There was a difference between relationships where the PCC was well acquainted with the force structures (such as former Police Authority members) – and therefore less likely to make significant changes to the organisation – and those PCCs who had come from outside the organisation. The former Police Authority members for example, tended to be more accepting of force practices and more likely to accept existing procedures. As one former Police Authority PCC explained in relation to the formation of his Plan,

*"The Chief Constable and myself worked very closely on the formation of the Plan...the force have a very good tried and tested engagement program in place and because of that we knew we were going to be able to dovetail the actual policing and the ambitions of the people of [force area]. There were no points of conflict whatsoever."*

#### **Conservative PCC 6**

One PCC expressed that he had been involved in the formation of the last Police and Crime Plan while serving on the pre-existing Police Authority and consequently, he saw little point in changing the existing state of affairs. This meant that there was relatively little friction between himself and the Chief Constable with regard to key decision making, since much of it was already in place before the PCC had come into power. For the current set of PCCs, there will be a similar case for PCCs who have been re-elected and are working with pre-existing Chief Constables.

As such, where PCCs had appointed Chief Constables and where they had previously known one another, the relationship between the PCC and Chief Constable appeared to be very close, built upon implicit agreement. However, this kind of

<sup>13</sup> Conservative PCC 8, Conservative PCC 11, Labour PCC 8.

proximity raises questions as to whether adequate scrutiny can take place. For this reason, it is imperative that appointments are made using independent members with expertise in policing, so that agreement with the Police and Crime Plan is not the primary measure of capability. Improving the rigour of the recruitment process may in turn enhance the perceived openness of the competition and encourage more external applicants to the role.

## Conclusion and recommendations

One of the key objectives of the PCC reform was to strengthen accountability over local police forces. Part of this entails holding Chief Constables to account. However, findings from the first round of PCCs illustrate that in some instances, PCCs struggled to consistently fulfil their scrutiny function both in the recruitment of Chief Constables and managing the relationship thereafter. There are a number of precautions that PCCs can consider to fulfil their dual scrutiny and support roles that will ultimately make the relationship more robust.

With regard to appointments:

6. A **transparent recruitment processes** is required, using **independent policing professionals** to encourage external applicants to apply (see Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015). Although there is no existing requirement for PCCs to consult an independent expert with professional policing knowledge, PCCs could strengthen the recruitment process through doing so.

7. In accordance with recommendations from the House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee (2016), only Chief Constable candidates who have **served as chief officers in other forces** should be considered for the role. However, the requirement to have served two years in another force (as proposed by the House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016) may be too restrictive and PCCs should use their discretion to determine whether an applicant has served sufficient time as a chief in another force. This would strengthen the pool of applicants and could facilitate greater innovation through bringing in experience from other forces.

There are also a series of steps that PCCs and Chief Constables should consider to strive towards a 'healthy tension' that is supposed to characterise the relationship. Four key interventions are summarised here (for an elaboration of these interventions, see Davies and Johnson, 2016):

8. From the outset, **PCCs should agree mutual goals and values with Chief Constables**. The Police and Crime Plan provides an opportunity for PCCs and Chief Constables to articulate respective priorities, but ideally these discussions should take place even sooner at the first meeting between a PCC and the Chief Constable.
9. **PCCs and Chief Constables should set out clear lines of authority and communication**. Both parties need to

discuss their respective roles, based on the terms set out under the Policing Protocol (Home Office, 2011a). To action this, PCCs and Chief Constables should review existing employment arrangements (i.e. which party formally employs staff). This could be undertaken as part of the review of existing OPCCs (as per recommendation 1).

10. As the relationship develops, **PCCs and Chief Constables should ensure that there are opportunities for mutual learning.** Both PCCs and Chief Constables have unique insights and sharing this information will be beneficial to both parties. The Home Affairs Select Committee (2014) called for an induction period for PCCs to formally learn about the role. It also suggested that as part of this, both PCCs and Chief Constables could have training on the Policing Protocol. This would be a welcome introduction to facilitate knowledge exchange between both PCCs and Chief Constables, which could then be followed up throughout the partnership.
11. **PCCs and Chief Constables should, where possible, use 'middle agents' to maintain robust relationships.** A middle agent acts as a point of liaison between both parties and could in theory be anyone who works in close proximity to the PCC and Chief Constable, such as a Deputy PCC, or a PCC's CEO. This need not be a formal position, but when reviewing existing OPCCs, PCCs may consider who within the

OPCC (or externally) may fulfil such a function. This may help the PCC to hold sufficient distance from the Chief Constable to allow the PCC to hold the Chief Constable to account. This would also help stay away from the detail and retain oversight of the strategy, which in turn could both reduce the workload for PCCs and mitigate fears of PCCs impinging on a Chief's operational independence.

Beyond this, both PCCs and Chiefs should consider ways in which they can open the relationship to further external input and scrutiny to increase the likelihood of information exchange and the alignment of both parties' goals. Police and Crime Panels, audit committees, HMIC, the College of Policing and the Home Office, among others, all play an important role in supporting PCCs to manage a complex relationship.

## Maximising the value of Police and Crime Panels

This section considers challenges that Police and Crime Panels faced in holding PCCs to account and identifies specific actions that PCCs can adopt to work constructively with Panels.

According to the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, the role of a Police and Crime Panel (hereafter 'Panel') is to both scrutinise and support the work of PCCs. In terms of their scrutiny function, Panels are limited to suspending a PCC only where he or she had been charged with an imprisonable offence which carries a maximum term of two years or more. They also have powers of veto over the PCCs' decisions to change the precept and in the appointment a Chief Constable – although no powers to exercise a second veto in either case. Panels were given no powers to prevent a PCC dismissing a Chief Constable, with their only option being to ask HMIC for a professional view on the matter and to summon the PCC to a hearing. Other ways in which Panels may be able to execute their scrutiny function is through requiring a PCC to provide information and answer questions and making reports on the PCC's Police and Crime Plan and annual report, to which the PCC must take account of and respond to. These powers have been criticised elsewhere for being limited and preventing Panels from fulfilling their scrutiny functions (for example, House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, 2014).

Another factor which appeared to incapacitate Panels was that they were under-resourced. In 2013-14, each panel received £53,000 of funding from the Home Office (House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, 2014). This was provided on the assumption that each would have one full-time scrutiny officer and that Panels would meet four times a year. However, most Panels had already

met this estimate within the first five months of their existence. Furthermore, those in larger force areas who had larger Panels to manage felt that this uniform funding was inappropriate.

A further problem included political allegiances amongst Panels which inhibited their scrutiny function. The House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee (2014) raised concerns about the ability of Panels to challenge their PCCs on account of evidence they heard which suggested that almost two thirds of Panels (26) were chaired by a member of the same political party as their PCC. Furthermore, 25 out of 41 Panels were comprised of a political majority – 17 of whom shared the same political allegiance as the PCC (Lister, 2014). Other issues concerned uncertainty in dealing with complaints against PCCs and a lack of time to scrutinise important decisions such as precepts (Centre for Public Scrutiny, 2014; House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, 2014).

Despite these limitations, Panels can still play a vital role in holding PCCs to account. They are comprised of locally elected councillors from representative Local Authorities, and as such are directly connected to local communities served by the PCC. They provide an extra layer of engagement with the public, and can support PCCs in their role. As such, it is important for PCCs to consider how they can develop their relationship with Panels so that they are held accountable and supported, which in turn will help PCCs to deliver their broad mandate.

*Panels are limited to suspending a PCC only where he or she had been charged with an imprisonable offence*

## Finding 6: Uncertainty or confusion about respective roles diluted the ability of Police and Crime Panels to effectively scrutinise PCCs

Relationships between PCCs and Panels varied considerably. Some of this related to a lack of clarity regarding respective roles. Interviews with PCCs and Panel members, as well as observations of Panel meetings, suggested that some Panels – comprised of a number of former police authority members – had mistaken their role under the Panel as a continuation of the Police Authority.<sup>14</sup> In these instances, Panels essentially recreated the Police Authority, and therefore appeared to misdirect their powers of scrutiny towards the Chief Constable.

This might partly be explained by the limited numbers of Panels who took steps to formally induct members into the new role as a result of financial and practical obstacles (Centre for Public Scrutiny, 2014). One challenge this presented was that some of those who had worked on the Police Authority were not acquainted with the PCC's new broader remit related to the wider criminal justice system. Some of these issues may be considered 'teething' issues in the transition from Police Authorities to Panels, and therefore may not be as pertinent going forwards.

However, it is of interest for PCCs to consider how they can establish clear roles with their Panels to maximise their value. For example, one PCC who was interviewed for the research spoke about expanding the role of his Panel to give them a more supportive capacity:

*"I'm keen for them to play a bigger role rather than just scrutinising the decisions I make and the things that I do...I've asked them if they will carry out a pro-active piece of work looking at how best the public want to liaise with police and make contact with police on a daily basis. So I want them to undertake a policy development role as well."*

### **Labour PCC 8**

This type of constructive relationship appeared to work well where the Panel slotted into pre-existing political networks. In a case study site, there was a unique structure in place which was aligned with the pre-existing local political network in place. The Panel was made up of Chief Executives of the network, which dealt with some of the broader strategic issues around budgets and PCC priorities. This Panel then formed a sub-panel of crime and community safety cabinet members in each of the Local Authorities in the area, who dealt with more day-to-day operational issues associated with holding the PCC to account. In this manner, there was essentially a two-tier system of accountability in action.

Therefore the Chief Constable believed that any significant issues were likely to be addressed early on by the sub-panel and the strategic Panel simply acted as a safety net to ensure that all procedures had been followed. Consequently, both the Chief Constable and chair of the Panel in this area reported a healthy form of accountability over the PCC. Although the PCC was from the same political party as the majority of the Panel, the chair of the Panel stressed that this was not simply a cosy political arrangement and that the PCC was a keen partner in this process because it was in his best interests to

<sup>14</sup> Independent PCC 2, Independent PCC 10, Conservative PCC 2, Conservative PCC 6, Labour PCC 3

have a positive working relationship with the local leaders from the different local authorities:

*“the PCC knows if he’s going to be effective, he needs to work in partnership with other local authorities, with other public agencies, and working through the [local] arrangements as he does, and that’s his best opportunity to do that. So in a sense he’s a willing partner and not a reluctant partner.”*

**Panel Member 6**

Therefore they were able to avert any issues associated with other areas where PCCs seemed to have a distant and somewhat dismissive relationship with their Panels. PCCs may therefore similarly consider how best to engage their Panels and see them as supportive bodies – all the while remembering the Panel’s simultaneous scrutiny role.

This is in line with findings from the Committee on Standards in Public Life, which argued that Panels can provide PCCs with constructive criticism that is grounded in local expertise and considers local implications of the policy. They advocate the value of developing mutual understanding of roles, proactive communication, good links to local authorities, and constructive day-to-day working relationships (Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015).

## Finding 7: Panels struggled to provide constructive criticism, in part because of a lack of information from PCCs

While there is capacity for Panels to play a supportive function to PCCs, they are also required to scrutinise PCCs. As aforementioned, Panels were inhibited by a

lack of legal and financial support. But their scrutiny function was also constrained by other factors related to PCCs. The National Audit Office (2014) found that PCCs did not always provide sufficient information to Panels, which limited their ability to fulfil their scrutiny and support functions. Some Panels reported only receiving information once a decision had been taken, meaning that they could only retrospectively scrutinise decisions rather than offer more proactive, strategic support and challenge to PCCs (Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015). However, sharing information alone was not always sufficient, and it is important that this is targeted and accessible. As one Panel member explained:

*“I don’t think the relationship is as good as it could be, but it’s mainly to do with the fact that there’s such a vast amount of information to take on board and understand, that [the former Police Authority members] are not really in the position to criticise effectively on what’s going on and understand whether it’s right or wrong.”*

**Panel Member 2**

It is therefore important for PCCs to be able to provide clear information that Panels can use to fulfil their functions. PCCs and Panels will need to agree what exactly constitutes important information and how this will be presented. This could be discussed as part of a ‘forward plan’ of key upcoming decisions that the PCC expects to undertake (as recommended by Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015). This forward plan could also include details about who will be consulted prior to the decision and what records will be available for scrutiny. If PCCs set up such mechanisms, this would allow Panels to have more clarity about upcoming decisions and request updates where necessary.

Another issue in the first term of PCCs concerned a lack of clarity regarding the requirement for PCCs to publish records of decisions ‘of significant public interest’ (Home Office, 2011b). The Committee on Standards in Public Life recommended that Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, Association of Policing and Crime Chief Executives and the Local Government Association develop national guidance on the meaning of a decision of ‘significant public interest’. In the absence of such guidance, PCCs and Panels need to agree early on what constitutes such a decision, and what level of input a Panel is expected to have in scrutinising these decisions.

## Conclusion and recommendations

The first term of PCCs saw variable relationships with their Panels. This was inevitable as both had to adapt to novel roles. Panels faced criticism for failing to fulfil their dual scrutiny and support functions, related to their powers and funding. But there were also good examples of positive working relationships, and Panels can be seen as a valuable means of consulting key local stakeholders. With a broad role, PCCs should consider how best to strengthen their relationship with their Panels, while remembering their vital scrutiny function.

PCCs can take steps to facilitate constructive working relationships with their Panels. To achieve this, PCCs could:

12. **Produce a Memorandum of Understanding with their Panels** that details the roles of both and overarching

principles, which may help to formulate clarity in the relationship (see for example, Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015).

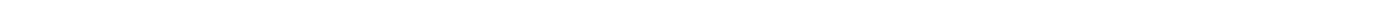
13. Establish **regular formal communication with Panels** at least every two months (House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, 2016). This would ensure that there is regular dialogue between both parties and facilitate exchange of information regarding local priorities.

PCCs should also consider how best to support their Panel in exercising their scrutiny functions. To do so, PCCs should:

14. **Create a forward Plan that clearly details key decisions to be made** and any corresponding documentation, and the level of scrutiny that will be expected of the Panel (Committee on Standards in Public Life, 2015).
15. **Share specific, accessible information with Panels** that allows time for comprehensive review and response. This would allow Panels to more comprehensively scrutinise PCCs within the legal and financial constraints in which they operate.

Panels are not the only way that PCCs should be held accountable and should be regarded as part of the nexus of bodies that hold PCCs to account, including the public, media, civil society, as well as audit committees, ethics boards, other local policing and crime stakeholders.





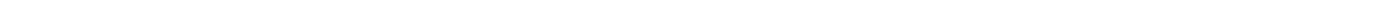
# Conclusion

Accountability is one of the cornerstones of the PCC policy, and therefore PCCs need to establish internal capacity to undertake the role, as well as build constructive and accountable relationships with Chief Constables and Panels. Interviews with PCCs highlighted how the breadth of the role posed a real challenge – a challenge set to expand under recent proposals to expand the remit of PCCs. Reviewing existing offices and considering appointment of deputies will allow PCCs to assess whether existing structures are fit for purpose. Furthermore, considering how best to engage with research partners will help PCCs to develop clear indicators of success, built upon evidence of what works. In turn, this will help PCCs to make an impact, demonstrate effectiveness, and strengthen their own accountability.

Both PCCs and Chief Constables indicated constructive working relationships, but under a personalised dynamic of the one-on-one relationship, there is an inherent risk that relationships become amicable rather than accountable. PCCs will need to consider how best to retain sufficient independence from their Chiefs, while forging a strong partnership to achieve goals set out in the Police and Crime Plan. Where PCCs are required to appoint Chief Constables, the appointment process should be regarded as an important first step to establishing a robust relationship, characterised by a healthy tension. Lastly, PCCs will also need to consider how best to support their Panels, who can offer constructive feedback informed by local perspectives. This can be achieved through establishing clarity in respective roles and sharing relevant information on a regular basis.

Beyond the relationships with Chief Constables and Panels, PCCs also have to contend with building

relationships vertically with national and local stakeholders, and horizontally with other PCCs. To do this, PCCs need to ensure that they have the capacity in place and constructive working relationships with key partners, which in turn will help to strengthen accountability, re-connect the police and the public, and drive innovation and efficiency in policing.



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# Appendix: Methodology

The findings presented in this report were based on data collected as part of a doctorate on Police and Crime Commissioners. The research aimed to examine the ways in which the introduction of PCCs fulfilled or fell short of a declared policy intention to create more democratic accountability around issues of crime reduction and policing. It entailed a total of 60 interviews, including 32 (out of 41) PCCs, two Deputy PCCs, three Chief Constables, five members of Police and Crime Panels, six chairs of Community Safety Partnerships, three political advocates of the policy, six PCC candidates and one Local Area Commander.<sup>15</sup> The research also included three case studies of different force areas, which involved a combination of media analysis and observations of 11 PCC meetings with the public, senior police, Police and Crime Panels, local councillors and representatives from the voluntary sector. To preserve anonymity, only the role and political affiliation of respondents is indicated (e.g., 'Conservative PCC 1').

This research did not set out to evaluate the PCC policy or the effects of PCCs on crime. Instead, it sought to investigate the emerging trends from the introduction of the policy and this report identifies some of the intentions, expectations and initial impressions of those involved in both implementing and receiving the policy.

## Limitations

The findings from the research may have limited generalisability since interviews with PCCs were conducted within their first six months in office, so concerns they raised might be considered as teething problems. A further limitation is that interviews were conducted predominantly with PCCs, so it was not

always possible to compare their views against Chief Constables and Panels. However, this report focuses on recurring issues that have similarly been addressed by subsequent reports (for example, Committee for Standards in Public Life, 2015; House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, 2014; 2016), namely persistent issues relating to interpretation of the role, and relationships with Chief Constables and Panels.

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<sup>15</sup> One PCC and one Chief Constable were interviewed twice.

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