



REPORT OF THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

CONSIDERATION OF THE POLICE AND CRIME FIRE AND RESCUE GOVERNANCE – LOCAL BUSINESS CASE REPORT

Date of Panel Meeting: 6 September 2017

Date of Report: 13 September 2017

Guidance

This report gives the recommendation(s) made by the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel in accordance with section 28(4) of Part 4 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. Its purpose is to outline the Panel's recommendations following its review of the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner's Fire and Rescue Governance – Local Business Case Report.

Panel Meeting

On 6 September 2017 the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel considered the Police and Crime Commissioner's Fire and Rescue Governance – Local Business Case Report.

Decision

Having reviewed the Report of the Police and Crime Commissioner the Panel AGREED to NOTE the Report and made the following RECOMMENDATION in response.

This panel views with some concern the haste by the Police and Crime Commissioner to place the fire service within his portfolio, given that the consultation ends on the 4th September and he plans to take his recommendation to the Constabulary Business Co-ordination Board on the 21st September and the Home Office on 30th September.

We consider that this haste gives the appearance of a lack of consideration and flexibility to address legitimate concerns and objections raised during the public consultation and/or to consider the views of the Fire Authority, and Peterborough and Cambridgeshire County Council (who have all opposed change [as proposed by the Commissioner]).

We would recommend that the PCC pauses to establish a focus group of the main players in the area to include at least Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council [the two statutory consultees], along with Cambridge City, Fenland, Huntingdonshire, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils, the Fire Authority, Chief Fire Officer and the Fire Brigades Union to further discuss this matter before coming to a decision.

Reasons for the decision

The Panel understands that the Police and Crime Commissioner intends to proceed with his proposal to assume the role of the Fire Authority. However the two statutory consultees, Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council, both opposed the proposal. Because of this, the matter will have to go through an arbitration process. The Home Office has yet to set this up, and preparing for it will inevitably require time and resource for the participants.

The Panel therefore made a recommendation that the Commissioner make one last effort to seek consensus with the statutory consultees, thereby avoiding the need for arbitration.

The Panel noted that Huntingdonshire District Council are supportive of the Commissioner's proposal, and that the public consultation indicated 53% support and 38% oppose it.

Terms of Reference

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, Section 28 (6) requires the Police and Crime Panel to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, by the relevant police and crime commissioner in connection with the discharge of the commissioner's functions; and make reports or recommendations to the relevant police and crime commissioner with respect to the discharge of the commissioner's functions

Signed Edward Leigh

Date 13 September 2017

Chairman of the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel