



To: Business Coordination Board

From: Chief Constable

Date: 12 June 2014

PCSO REVIEW

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to outline the background, key findings and accepted recommendations of the PCSO review, as well as setting out the way forward in implementing the recommendations of the review.

2. Background

2.1 PCSOs have been employed in Cambridgeshire Constabulary since 2003. Funding for PCSOs provided by central government was ring-fenced. This ring fencing was due to cease in 2014 which in light of the financial challenges being faced by the Constabulary prompted a full strategic review of the purpose and value of PCSOs.

3. Methodology

3.1 The PCSO review utilised a wide range of research methods and avenues; and involved both internal and external stakeholders. It can be broken down into four parallel work streams which ran concurrently.

3.2 The first involved a review of existing academic and official/governmental reviews into the value and efficacy of PCSOs.

3.3 The second consisted of internal consultation workshops with PCSOs to discuss a number of key areas. These included their day to day activities, crime investigation, supervision and training. This work stream also included one to one interviews with senior managers, area commanders, first line managers and other interested stakeholders.

3.4 The third included detailed research, conducted by subject matter experts in areas such as intelligence and crime investigation.

- 3.5 The fourth involved external consultation and research. Included in this programme of consultation was
- i) Telephone Survey - A Force-wide telephone survey concerning contact/awareness and satisfaction with PCSOs conducted with 641 members of the public. This sample was large enough to be statistically valid and demographically representative of the county.
 - ii) Partner-agency consultation - A wide range of statutory agencies and partner groups (including for example the Fire Service, District and County Councils and Neighbourhood Watch) were contacted by letter, inviting them to give their views on a range of issues regarding PCSOs. These were drawn from a corporately held list of key partners and all those who responded were interviewed in person by a member of the PCSO review team.
 - iii) Open public consultation - an online survey was made available for the public to complete and publicised through traditional and social media. This survey took the form of free-text response to broad questions that allowed the public to express their views in as detailed and nuanced way as possible. These responses were then subjected to a qualitative analysis to identify themes and patterns thus developing a richer picture than could be obtained through statistical-survey analysis alone.
- 3.6 The final work stream of the review consisted of joint research with Cambridge University's Department of Criminology into hot-spots policing by PCSOs.

4. Main Findings of the Review

- 4.1 The key finding of the review was that the public, partner agencies and officers at all levels of the police service put a very high value on the work done by PCSOs. The role of PCSOs is considered beneficial to the public in a variety of ways and therefore evolution and fine-tuning should be the preferred option over revolution and revision.
- 4.2 The review found that that the public put most value on the visibility that PCSOs offer as well as a consistent and approachable 'face' of the Constabulary.
- 4.3 The review found that PCSOs contribute approximately one quarter of all intelligence received by the Constabulary and that there is a real and evidenced relationship between the visibility of PCSOs and public confidence in the police.
- 4.4 The review found that there are a number of areas where improvements in their deployment could be made and their work enhanced. This includes a focus on safe-guarding of vulnerable persons, a more corporate approach to training, re-drafting of the deployment guidelines (especially around double-crewing) and the removal of certain crime investigation functions that add little value or chance of positive resolutions for victims.

5. Recommendations of the Review

5.1 The review made 19 separate recommendations that were considered by the Chief Constable's Management Team on 21st March 2014. The following decisions were made:

- Establishment:

The PCSO establishment for Local Policing was confirmed as Peterborough 48, Cambridge 28, Hunts 29.5 , Fens 19, East Cambs 9, South Cambs 16, a total of 149.5)

- Training:

The recommendations relating to training and training needs analysis were supported in principle (Recommendations 1, 7, 13, 14, 15 & 16).

- Role:

The proposed PCSO role profile was approved without change and referred to People Board for formal ratification. The Recruitment Department are now progressing a number of vacancies to advert.

- Enquiry Offices:

The provision of exceptional support to enquiry offices was approved (Recommendation 2).

- Double Crewing:

The removal of the 8pm double crew policy was approved (Recommendation 18).

- Crime Investigation:

Recommendations regarding any future operating model, the efficacy of house to house enquiries and ASB standard risk response were deferred to an implementation working group (Recommendations 3 and 9).

- Fitness Test:

The proposal for a compulsory fitness test for PCSOs was rejected (Recommendation 10).

- Rural Policing:

One post was ring fenced in CIB to for rural policing (Recommendation 12).

- Specialist PCSO Posts:

The decision to grant Area Commanders the flexibility to establish other specialist PCSO posts was deferred to the implementation working group (Recommendation 11).

- Tasking:

Recommendations relating to PSCO tasking to gather intelligence, search and secure CCTV, and support victims and witnesses were referred to the implementation working group. In order to improve organisational tasking of all staff and officers in proactive and reactive circumstances (Recommendations 4, 5, 6, 8 & 9).

- **Shift Pattern:**

The shift pattern change to 10pm finish was not to be considered until the Force tasking infrastructure had matured. This would allow informed decision making regarding PCSO productivity and value between 10pm and midnight (Recommendation 17).

6. Consideration of proposed changes

- 6.1 The intention of the proposed changes is to mitigate the reduction in the establishment of PCSOs to 150 officers. The overall impact of the recommendations will be to improve productivity and efficiency and enhance those aspects of the PCSO role that the public value. However it is accepted that some of the recommendations may have limited impact on PCSO roles valued by some sections of the public (i.e. a focus on victim safeguarding may detract from traditional high-visibility patrol).
- 6.2 The findings of the review have been communicated to the public through a media strategy. The full report is available for the public to read via the Constabulary website.

7. Consideration of proposed changes

- 7.1 That the Board note the contents of the paper.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Document(s)	The PCSO Review
Contact Officer	T/Chief Inspector James Sutherland