

Briefing for Police and Crime Commissioner

Topic: Collaboration

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Purpose of briefing

To appraise the new Commissioner of existing collaborations between the OPCVC, Durham Constabulary and other OPCCs and forces.

Background

The Police & Crime Act 2017 introduced a specific duty to collaborate though it should be noted that some collaborations existed prior to this Act. The primary aim of the duty and the supporting legal framework is to strengthen and deepen the joint working between emergency services in order to be able to deliver high quality services to the public and to keep them safe. Demand on blue light services continues to evolve and become more complex, and collaboration offers an opportunity to meet new demand, deliver prevention and early intervention initiatives, enhance the knowledge, skills and practice of the workforce, ensure resilience and enable efficiency, effectiveness and value for money benefits to be realised.

The outcome of Phase 1 of the PCC Review indicates the government's commitment to blue light collaboration models. There is also a strong signal of the Government's desire to accelerate the pace of change with collaborations, as they are seen offer a more consistent and reliable national picture, in which services can more easily identify and meet local priorities and the needs of their communities. A further benefit is seen to be that cross-service working support good service design which provides the balance needed for forces to maintain good capacity and competence to meet national capability issues.

Formal collaborations are formed by virtue of legal agreements known as Section 22a agreements. This is a reference to the Police Act 1996 which provides that forces can enter into collaboration agreements for the discharge of functions.

PCCs are required to sanction 22a agreements; Chief Constables cannot unilaterally collaborate or de-collaborate, and must seek the support of their PCC.

Current Issues

There are a number of existing local and national collaboration agreements to which Durham OPCVC and Durham Constabulary are party to.

Significant local collaborations include:

CDSOU – Cleveland & Durham Special Operations Unit. This includes road policing, firearms, driver training). Its Head of Service is Det C/ Supt Lisa Theaker from Cleveland Police, and Durham Superintendent Steve Ball.

NERSOU – North East Regional Special Operations Unit. This is the regional organised crime unit, linked to the National Crime Agency, and the collaboration involves Durham, Cleveland and Northumbria PCCs and their forces. It is headed by Det C/ Sup Alistair Simpson.

Red Sigma – this is a collaboration between Durham and Cumbria PCCs and forces in respect of the primary crime recording database and linked innovations.

EVOLVE Legal Services – this is a collaboration between Durham, Cleveland and North Yorkshire PCCs and forces for the provision of legal advice and support.

National collaborations include:

- National Police Air Service (NPAS)
- Forensic Collision Investigation Network
- Modern Slavery
- Casualty Bureau

Decisions Needed

The CDSOU agreement is currently being reviewed.

A collaboration agreement is currently being developed in respect of the Forensic Capability Network, but it is not formalised due to concerns from PCCs and Chiefs regarding the ongoing grant support from the Home Office and the termination clauses in the agreement.

Partnership Involvement

The collaborations involve different PCCs and their Chief Constables.

Police Involvement

The collaboration agreements intrinsically require the involvement of the Chief Constable and the Constabulary.

People to Meet

CDSOU – other PCCs, Chief Executive, Chief Constable, Chief Finance Officer, Supt Steve Ball

NERSOU – other PCCs, Chief Constable, Chief Executive, Det C/ Supt Alistair Simpson

Red Sigma – Cumbria PCC, C/ Supt Jonathan Blackwell

EVOLVE Legal Services – Director Xanthe Tait, Force Solicitor Steve Mooney.

NPAS – Assistant Chief Officer

Others – Chief Executive