



GRAMPIAN JOINT POLICE BOARD

COMMITTEE: GRAMPIAN JOINT POLICE BOARD

DATE: 18TH MARCH 2011

TITLE OF REPORT: A CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE OF POLICING IN SCOTLAND

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the publication of the Scottish Government's Consultation on the Future of Policing in Scotland, to highlight the consultation timetable and to propose a method for preparing and submitting a response to this consultation on behalf of the Grampian Joint Police Board.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Board:

- 2.1 Approve the method set out within the report for the preparation and submission of a response to the Scottish Government on behalf of the Grampian Joint Police Board
- 2.2 To consider the content of the Scottish Government consultation document, in particular the 12 stated consultation questions.
- 2.3 To instruct the Depute Clerk to undertake the preparation of the Board response in draft format for circulation to all Board Members for approval.
- 2.4 To otherwise note the report.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None at present. There may be future financial implications for the Board dependent upon the outcome of the Scottish Government Consultation process and these will be reported to the Board in due course.

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

The outcome of the Scottish Government Consultation is likely to have a significant service and community impact in the Grampian area and beyond.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Depending on the outcome of the Scottish Government consultation there may be a range of other implications which can be reported to the Board in due course.

6. REPORT

Background

- 6.1 In January 2011 the Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Kenny MacAskill MSP, announced his intention to consult on the future structure of Policing in Scotland. A consultation document entitled 'A Consultation on the Future of Policing in Scotland' was published on 10th February 2011.
- 6.2 The Cabinet Secretary for Justice indicated that there are three options to be considered. These are:
- Retention of the current 8 force structure, with greater collaboration
 - The introduction of Regional Forces
 - The introduction of a single Scottish Police Service
- 6.3 The Scottish Policing Board, comprising of representatives of the Scottish Government, Police Conveners Forum, Police Forces and COSLA have been tasked by the Cabinet Secretary for Justice, through a Sustainable Policing Sub Group, to 'rigorously appraise' the three proposed options to enable an informed decision to be made by the Cabinet Secretary at the conclusion of the consultation process. The Scottish Policing Board is to receive a report of this appraisal, covering both the financial and quality of service of each option, at its meeting on 21st March 2011.
- 6.4 A wide range of organisations have been invited to respond to the consultation, a list of which is detailed in Annex e in Appendix One to this report.
- 6.5 The date by which responses to the consultation have to be submitted is Thursday 5th May 2011.

Context

- 6.6 Within Scotland the Christie Commission on the future delivery of public services is due to report in June 2011. The purpose of this Commission, which was established by the Scottish Government, is to develop recommendations on the future delivery of public services through the production of a 'road-map' for the future reform of public service delivery in Scotland.
- 6.7 The remit given to the Christie Commission covers a wide ranging vision for Scotland's public services and instructs the Commission to take a long term view and not be constrained by the current pattern of

public service delivery, but recognise the importance of local communities and the geography and ethos of Scotland and well as the significant direct and indirect contribution the delivery of public services make to Scotland's economy.

6.8 Although the date by which submissions to this Commission were invited (January 2011) has passed, the Commission has indicated that it is still willing to receive submissions up to 31st March 2011. The Board may wish to instruct the Depute Clerk to prepare a response to the Christie Commission also.

6.9 The Christie Commission is to be informed by the Independent Budget Review process which reported in July 2010. Within the IBR Report, 'The Report of Scotland's Independent Budget Review Panel', is one chapter, Chapter 7, which focus on 'Shaping the Future'. In a section headed 'Structures and Boundaries' are the following remarks:

"Scotland is a small nation, which has, arguably at present a public service infrastructure which is over-complicated, unduly fragmented and in need of fundamental redesign to address the future needs of a rapidly changing society." (paragraph 7.5)

"This is not to argue for an immediate, sudden, wholesale restructuring of public services. Such a path at this time could be counter-productive and, possibly, unachievable in practice. However, that should not inhibit change that we are aware have already begun both between and among public bodies." (paragraph 7.6)

Consultation

6.10 Within the Scottish Government Consultation document, the Cabinet Secretary states that the consultation is "about improving local services for local communities". The Cabinet Secretary provides commentary on each of the three options as follows:

- Single Police Force – the Cabinet Secretary suggests this could provide the greatest flexibility to deploy resources and to provide better response to national threats. However, he notes that questions remain around accountability and on the centralisation of services.
- Regional Model – The Cabinet Secretary notes the uncertainty around perceived benefits and suggests "it is for those in favour to demonstrate that a Regional Model would provide these"
- Retention of 8 Force Model – the Cabinet Secretary states that "it is clear to us that the model would not provide the savings necessary of the enhanced services required".

6.11 With respect to the three options, the document suggests that the merits of each option should be measured against the following criteria:

- Improving services and the delivery of better outcomes at local and national level

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- Accountability to, and close engagement with, local communities
 - Efficiencies must be delivered whilst protecting frontline services as far as possible.

6.12 The Consultation document poses 12 direct questions for consideration in any response submitted:

- 1) How could police reform improve services and the delivery of outcomes?
- 2) What do you think are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing policing in Scotland today and how do you think they should be addressed?
- 3) How can partnership working between the police and other organisations be improved?
- 4) How can the police better engage with communities to help them be more resilient and self-reliant?
- 5) What arrangements and relationships do you think would lead to the greatest improvements in national and local accountability?
- 6) Do you agree that change is necessary to protect frontline services? (Yes / No / Don't Know)
- 7) Which option do you think should be pursued and why? (Single Scottish Force / Regional Model / Retain 8 Forces with increased collaboration / Other / Don't Know)
- 8) How could we best improve accountability, deliver efficiencies and deliver service improvements at local and national level?
- 9) Do you have any views on how the process of change should be approached, including the extent and pace of change within a given option?
- 10) To assist with our Equality Impact Assessment on the reform, please describe any equality issues (in relation to race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, transgender people and religion) relevant to each of the options.
- 11) To assist with our Regulatory Impact Assessment, please describe any financial or other impacts for business, charities and the voluntary sector relevant to each of the options.
- 12) Do you think there needs to be any change to the existing roles and responsibilities of the key bodies responsible for policing?

Board Response Timetable

6.13 Following consideration by the Board of the response it wishes to make to these consultation questions the following timetable is proposed:

- Week commencing 4th April 2011 – Depute Clerk will circulate a draft Board response via e-mail to all Board Members. Feedback will be invited – to be received by Depute Clerk by Friday 15th April 2011.

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- Week commencing 25th April 2011 – Final draft response to be circulated to Board Members for information. Any final comments to be submitted by Tuesday 3rd May 2011.
 - Wednesday 4th May 2011 – Board response to be submitted.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Scottish Government Consultation Paper – The Future of Policing in Scotland (Attached at Appendix One)
- Independent Budget Review – The Report of Scotland's Independent Budget Review Panel, July 2010.

Karen M Donnelly
Depute Clerk
11th March 2011