



**POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS –
A LONG TERM VISION:**
Levelling up accountability
and effectiveness of policing,
crime fighting and justice
in England and Wales

- Speaking up for Victims
- Fighting Crime and Disorder
- Accountability in Policing and Criminal Justice

Introduction

Ensuring the safety, security and wellbeing of citizens is the first duty of any government at home and abroad. Since Parliament voted to introduce the new elected position of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), Commissioners across England and Wales have demonstrated that the role provides a strong and accountable voice for communities and victims bringing democratic accountability to the delivery of a safer society alongside reduced crime.

Proven policy innovations by Commissioners are reducing crime and increasing responsiveness to communities. Voters' faith in the system is demonstrated by rising turnouts across three elections alongside increasing levels of engagement with the public.

Commissioners have a vital role beyond 'formal policing' in preventing crime and anti-social behaviour. Through Community Safety Grants, Commissioners use knowledge of their areas to fund wide-ranging provision for community groups including Neighbourhood Watch and youth activities as well as target-hardening initiatives like CCTV.

The Home Office's Police and Crime Commissioner Review Part Two is a timely and vital opportunity to reinforce the government's long-term vision for localism and accountability, and tidy up legislation after 10 years of institutions working together.

By advancing the role of Police and Crime Commissioners to the next level with the right tools and levers in place, Commissioners can then fully play their role in reducing crime and Anti-Social Behaviour, and preventing crime from happening in first place, that is crucial for levelling up life chances in our communities.

MORE LEVERS AND POWERS

Elected Police and Crime Commissioners were introduced in 2012 to increase public accountability in policing and create innovative and devolved responses to crime and disorder.

After three elections, Commissioners' leadership and track record of delivery have established PCCs as the people's voice in policing: speaking up for victims and convening partnerships that improve community safety.

Turnouts have risen at every election and there is now strong cross-party political support for the role of the PCC and its potential.

Following a decade of delivery, now is the right time to build on this success by giving Commissioners more levers and powers to level up accountability, improve outcomes for victims, and the effectiveness of policing, crime and justice across England and Wales.

Commissioners are making a full contribution to the government's campaign to reduce crime. Since the system's introduction, the Crime Survey of England and Wales shows crime has fallen by over a quarter from 8,757,000 in 2012/13 to 6,341,000 in 2019/20.

Reduction of 26.56% from March 2013 to March 2019. Source: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/crimeinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2020>. Excludes fraud and computer misuse.

Police and Crime Commissioners: The People's Voice

Police and Crime Commissioners have a unique and powerful voice acting for victims and communities.

Commissioners sit within historic British traditions that have placed the voice and the interests of the community at the heart of delivering law and order from the concept of the Queen's peace established in Anglo-Saxon law and through the introduction of High Sheriffs in the medieval period.

Commissioners are a continuation of the principles of policing as first set out by Sir Robert Peel, recognising that the police are the public, and the public are the police; to seek to prevent crime wherever possible and to meet the needs of the public impartially. This principle of prevention is central to Commissioners' roles.

Operating collaboratively across party differences, Commissioners have learnt from each other by sharing best practice and collectively driven the ambition to protect the public.

Power with the voters

Police and Crime Commissioners have clear electoral mandates with direct accountability to the public that is unique within the law and order system. With electorates the size of multiple Parliamentary seats, direct votes cast for Commissioners across force areas range in size up to a maximum of several hundreds of thousands of voters.

Today, Commissioners represent victims and "have their backs" in often adversarial, closed or hard to access processes for the public. They provide local and often innovative services to victims on behalf of the Ministry of Justice.

Commissioners are uniquely placed to listen and act on behalf of voters and victims, bringing the power and legitimacy of the voters into important public service conversations, especially in the commissioning of services.

“Victims are too often treated like bit-part players in the criminal justice system. The emphasis placed by Commissioners on the ground on listening to victims, responding to their needs, driving good treatment and commissioning key support services has been a critical part of the PCC role. I would welcome opportunities for greater devolution of criminal justice services so that PCCs can help put victims at the centre of the criminal justice system.”

DAME VERA BAIRD QC, VICTIMS COMMISSIONER

THE ROLE OF PCCs

As elected representatives, Commissioners are a voice for their local community around policing and community safety, engaging the public in decision making to ensure greater transparency and accountability. The responsibilities include:

- Producing a Police and Crime Plan which sets out local priorities
- Appointing the Chief Constable and holding them to account
- Engaging with the public, giving them a voice in local policing and community safety
- Setting the police budget, and deciding how much local people pay towards local policing through the precept
- Commissioning services to support victims of crime
- Working with other organisations, including criminal justice partners, to deliver a joined-up approach to local priorities
- Improving community safety

Four Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners (PFCCs) also serve a similar oversight and governance process for their local Fire and Rescue Services.

In three areas, Greater London, Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire, directly elected mayors hold the powers of the Police and Crime Commissioner. These powers are delegated to a dedicated deputy mayor for policing in those areas.

“The introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners represented a huge shift in the governance of policing locally. Necessarily this has taken time to develop and embed, and is strengthened by a relationship between Chiefs and Commissioners underpinned by mutual respect and shared values for policing. Embracing and valuing the important scrutiny role that Commissioners play is complemented by a willingness from both sides to accept mutual challenge in the public interest. I have seen first-hand how this role can be an important voice for the public.”

CHIEF CONSTABLE JEREMY VAUGHAN,
SOUTH WALES POLICE

A decade of delivery: strong leadership and the power to convene

Commissioners are key to levelling up England and Wales. Alongside the democratic legitimacy of their electoral mandates, Commissioners benefit from on-the-ground knowledge of the challenges and circumstances affecting their force areas when deploying their devolved powers and responding rapidly to events.

The PCC's leadership role setting strategy offers a single point of responsibility to complement chief constables who lead policing, and benefit more widely from a team of wider partners that bring accountability, scrutiny, innovation and delivery in the fight to prevent crime and increase quality of life across all regions of the country.

Since the first elections in 2012, they have brought real accountability to local policing, provided leadership, commissioned innovative services and established groundbreaking partnerships and projects that are tackling crime and re-offending and driving forward positive change across their police force areas.

By tailoring their strategies to the needs and priorities of their local force area, Commissioners have demonstrated the positive power of devolved decision-making with a model of good practice across England and Wales.

SPEAKING UP FOR VICTIMS

Responding to rising anti-social behaviour that comes with the seasonal tourism economy, **Devon and Cornwall's** Commissioner invested more than £850,000 into local partnership work focused on preventing anti-social behaviour on beaches, town centres, and around night-time-economy venues. A network of 'PCC Councillor Advocates' has been established to better connect with local communities concerned about disorder.

In key areas such as Hate Crime, Commissioners have played a leadership role in encouraging victims to come forwards. Police recording of Hate Crime rose significantly from 42,200 in 2012 to 124,100 in 2020/21 demonstrating how the system has brought about a change in how people seek help from policing.

The **Hertfordshire** Commissioner established the Beacon Fraud Hub in 2019 that helps hundreds of fraud victims each month retrieve money through an action plan for practical support and advocacy with agencies and financial institutions. In two years, spending just £198,000 to establish the four-person team has seen victims reclaim over £1.1 million.

Lincolnshire's Commissioner has undertaken a strategy working across boundaries with other forces to tackle often overlooked organised rural crime. As first of its kind in the country, his 2020 survey delivered better understanding of the needs of rural communities to ensure that policing responds to the particular circumstances of rural victims.

The Commissioners of **Essex, South Wales** and **Sussex** collaboratively piloted the innovative Drive Project aimed at reducing the risk perpetrators pose to survivors and to help embed behavioural change which saw the risk of high-risk physical abuse reduced by 82%. After publication of results in 2020, the Commissioner and Chief Constable in South Wales extended their funding across the whole force area and also perpetrator programmes have been rolled out across England and Wales supported by Home Office funding.

LEVELLING UP IN ACTION – STALKING AND HARASSMENT

Sussex's Commissioner has catalysed a more coordinated and effective national police response to stalking and harassment. Increased investment in officer training and contact handling has made victims more confident to report incidents so that there's been a 1,100% increase in reports in Sussex since 2015/16 and a 288% increase in solved crimes.

As the APCC national lead for stalking, the Commissioner has encouraged other PCCs to fund specialist advocacy services like Brighton-based Veritas Justice which assisted 1,954 high-risk victims of stalking over the past year and helped a further 682 people through an online chat service about staying safe in cyberspace.

Sussex Police secured the first Stalking Protection Order (SPO) in January 2020 and currently has 30 full SPOs and 11 interim orders. The Sussex PCC's office is co-ordinating the ground-breaking Compulsive and Obsessive Behaviour Intervention (COBI) programme through Interventions Alliance for all of those subject to an SPO. All 320 magistrates in Sussex have been trained in SPO's and COBI.

Domestic abuse affected 2.3 million adults in the past year, and 1 in 4 women will experience domestic abuse during her lifetime. It is absolutely critical that we all play our part in responding to domestic abuse, and PCCs sit at the heart of local leadership. To truly transform our response to domestic abuse, PCCs must work with Local Authorities, statutory agencies and specialist third sector organisations to deliver the services and change that people subject to domestic abuse need."

NICOLE JACOBS, DOMESTIC ABUSE COMMISSIONER

SafeLives is committed to ending domestic abuse for everyone and for good. That goal is only possible through an effective response for the whole family, and this includes challenging perpetrators to change and addressing their harmful behaviour. Partnering with Police and Crime Commissioners has allowed us to develop, embed and expand what we know works in areas across England and Wales, and we look forward to working with them into the future, driving positive change for adult and child survivors of domestic abuse."

SUZANNE JACOBS OBE,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE – SAFELIVES

LEVELLING UP IN ACTION – DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

In **Northumbria**, the Commissioner is prioritising work to reduce violence against women and girls by recruiting Link Workers and funding Family Hubs to work with those who may be experiencing domestic abuse, coercion and control.

Alongside the core-commissioned provision of specialist services for survivors and multi-agency case conference arrangements, she has introduced Domestic Abuse Practitioner Standard training, developing three levels of accredited multi-agency training. This is complemented by the Domestic Abuse Workplace Champions and 'Ask Me' projects where OPCC staff are undertaking workplace and community training offering early signposting to help, support and understand coercive control.

A specialist education team in the Northumberland VRU is delivering sessions at schools to raise awareness of healthy relationships and domestic abuse.

FIGHTING CRIME AND DISORDER

To get the best results tackling crime, strategic alignment and collaboration matters during the development of both the Police and Crime plan and CSP plans. In **Essex**, the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner along with CSPs undertake regular performance meetings with both heavily embedded in their respective strategy development processes. Safer Essex works at county-wide level to bring CSPs together to ensure alignment and coordination.

Commissioners have established and led Violence Reduction Units (VRU) focussing particularly on knife crime and youth violence. In **Nottinghamshire** by the end of the VRU's first year recorded knife crime was down by 13.5% whilst **Northumbria** saw an even greater reduction of 18%. VRU-led activity in **Greater Manchester** has also seen measurable health outcomes with knife-related hospital admissions there down by 16%.

The Wales Violence Prevention Unit (VPU) launched in 2020 takes an **'all-Wales'** collaborative approach across four Commissioners and Welsh Forces plus Public Health Wales to investigate the causes of violence, employ evaluative approaches and target local and national funding. The Wales VPU recognises that police cannot "arrest our way out of crime" and that long-term crime reduction requires all agencies to be engaged.

A jointly funded partnership between **Dyfed-Powys'** PCC and NPS supported a new Integrated Offender Management Strategy. Bespoke interventions were implemented for offenders in 2020-21, there were 22 individuals de-selected from the IOM scheme as their pathways to crime had been partially or fully stabilised with a 'cost of crime' saving over £120,000.

In **Durham**, opportunities to attract external funding has resulted in an innovative partnership submission for the universal funding element of the public health grant to reduce drug-related crime. The Commissioner in partnership with Durham Constabulary, Durham Public Health team, Probation Service and service provider, Humankind, designed a £545,000 proposal focusing on out of court disposals, close interaction with offender management and provision for women offenders.

ACCOUNTABILITY IN POLICING AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

The Commissioner's office in **Norfolk** directly manages a county-wide community safety function on behalf of all the responsible authorities. A single CSP, chaired and managed by the OPCC, under the strategic direction of the PCC, has enabled integration of overlapping functions, roles and responsibilities and supported statutory partners to discharge their duties through a county wide partnership.

In **Wiltshire**, the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) has been progressively becoming more effective since the OPCC took over the chair in 2018. The role has been to provide coordination and convening partners to tackle key issues. This resulted in the first WCJB strategy in 2018, cross system scorecard and review of delivery mechanisms.

In **Bedfordshire**, the Stop and Search scrutiny panel review dip-sampled footage from officers' Body Worn Video, and then provide a 'traffic light' grading of the officer's delivery of legal requirements, as well as their manner and tone throughout the interaction. When a red grading is made, the PCC then raises the matter directly with the Chief Constable and their team.

LEVELLING UP IN ACTION – REDUCING REOFFENDING

Reoffenders are the most frequent cause of crime so tackling the problem at root brings clear ongoing benefits. In **Sussex**, the Commissioner established a county-wide Restorative Justice Partnership comprising more than 20 agencies, including the National Probation Service, HM Prison Service, Sussex Pathways and Victim Support. 97% of offenders who volunteered to take part described the intervention as a positive experience with 66% going on to not reoffend. The Sussex VRU's success with school pupils has helped contribute to a reduction of 68% in school exclusions.

The time is right: more levers and powers would improve achievements

Given a proven record of achievement, more powers and an enhanced authority for Police and Crime Commissioners to convene would bring greater accountability and reduce crime further.

Now often 'beyond authority' in bringing partners together, Commissioners have proven themselves to be uniquely placed to offer cross-boundary leadership due to their geographic scope across local authority boundaries. This convening power would be strengthened and enhanced by putting this role on a more formal footing, tidying up legacy structures and remits.

Commissioners need the tools to do their job, and the levers to make things happen. They have the potential to deliver so much more and some small changes create big opportunities to prevent crime and make impact in key areas and take their roles to the next level.

Our structures can be further joined up to harness the benefits of devolution and localism that would level up the experience of law and order across England and Wales and provide a direct connection to ministers.

Therefore, this review is a timely and vital opportunity to reinforce the government's long-term vision for localism and accountability, and tidy up legislation after 10 years of institutions working together.

The APCC and Commissioners want to help the Government do this, so in this response to the Police and Crime Commissioner Review Part Two we offer our collective view about how this can happen.



New levers and powers: 5 key steps to deliver a long-term vision for Police and Crime Commissioners

1. More than Policing: Criminal Justice System and Probation

The voice of victims should be front and centre in our criminal justice system so the time is right to develop the ‘and Crime’ role for Police and Crime Commissioners to ensure direct accountability to the public in criminal justice as well as in policing.

Commissioners should be given the **same governance role in local criminal justice as they have in policing**, ensuring that local criminal justice services are directly accountable to the communities they serve. This requires a shift to a more devolved justice system which is better equipped to level up the experience of communities and victims across England and Wales, with Commissioners responsible for producing local criminal justice plans, as part of their Police and Crime Plan, and holding agencies to account for delivery of the plan through their role as LCJB chair.

Expanding Commissioners’ remits to include a formal role in probation alongside chairing their Local Criminal Justice Board would build on the proven success of PCCs using devolved powers to enhance local accountability, delivery focus and real local coordination of criminal justice.

2. Connect and Collaborate with Community Partnerships

Legislation and working practices do not all include Commissioners where they should and need updating and refreshing. Much of the partnership and organisational landscape in which PCCs’ work has been inherited from previous approaches. Commissioners can bring consistency and clarity of effort to partnerships and structures that have lost energy or strategic purpose.

With that, Commissioners are perfectly positioned to **ensure the effectiveness of re-energised and re-focused Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJBs).**

“Police and Crime Commissioners play a crucial role as the elected voice of the people for crime and policing, which is why I am committed to ensuring they are accountable to the communities they serve and are strong, visible leaders in the fight against crime.”

RT HON PRITI PATEL MP, HOME SECRETARY

3. Power with the Voters: the Primacy of Directly-Elected Commissioners

The primacy of Police and Crime Commissioners derives from their unique democratic mandate. The scrutiny provided by Police and Crime Panels has turned out to be different in practice to the original vision of a parliamentary select committee.

The **principle of Police and Crime Panels (PCPs) is important and should be retained but with a renewed focus on stronger scrutiny, with increased support, training and more consistent internal accountability.** Panels are not a replacement for public accountability, and the anomaly of the IOPC’s role in complaints for non-police officers is also at odds with the need for accountability and power to be with the public.

Transparency and accountability are key factors behind increasing turnout. British political tradition means voters are most familiar **electing their representative on a four-year term via the first past the post electoral system** and, at this stage of Commissioners’ evolution, a consistency of approach towards where PCCs sit within the political system would enhance turnout and embed greater legitimacy.

4. Data: Delivering the Full Picture

Police and Crime Commissioners need access to the full picture to help take the role to the next level: **access to and interpretation of data is vital** to the effectiveness of Commissioners.

In some fields this would be advanced by **formal powers and duties on partners to share and collaborate**, but there is also a need for central government to ‘back the play’ and help set and **drive organisational expectations** around data sharing.

The direct and invaluable engagement with, and scrutiny of, Chief Constables has proven positive, mutually challenging, constructive and creative. That capacity for leadership needs the full picture behind it.

5. Tidying up the Legislation to Secure Strong Leadership and the Power to Convene

Now often ‘beyond authority’ in bringing partners together, Commissioners have proven themselves to be uniquely placed to offer cross-boundary leadership due to their geographic scope across local authority boundaries. This convening power would be strengthened and enhanced by putting this role on a **more formal footing, tidying up legacy structures** and remits.

Table of APCC recommendations in response to Home Office Part Two Review

OFFENDER MANAGEMENT

- 1** To give Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) the same governance role in local criminal justice services as they currently have with policing, to ensure direct accountability to the public. This should include responsibility for producing a local criminal justice plan as part of their police and crime plan and holding Criminal Justice System (CJS) agencies to account for delivery against the plan through their role as chairs of Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJBs).
- 2** In the short term, to provide PCCs with a formal role with regards to the local governance of probation to include co-commissioning, alignment of resourced effort, a seat at the table for the recruitment of the most senior management for their probation areas, and a right to access important management information on probation. The local National Probation Service (NPS) leadership should have a duty to have regard for the priorities of the statutory Police and Crime Plan in their areas.
- 3** That PCCs are supported in establishing local leadership and coordination over offender management processes to ensure that efforts are aligned to local as well as national priorities – providing assurances to Ministers – and to facilitate greater collaborative working between policing and probation services.
- 4** To ensure that PCCs have a greater ability to reflect the needs of local communities through direct involvement in the setting of priorities for probation following PCC formal consultation processes with communities.

PARTNERSHIPS

- 5** To empower PCCs to merge local Community Safety Partnership (CSPs) (not merely approve merger) when it would enable more effective and efficient community safety arrangements in their area. That PCCs be provided with a greater oversight role of CSPs to enable them to have assurance that the CSP duty has 'due regard' for their Police and Crime Plan to be fulfilled. PCCs seek a duty on CSPs to provide an annual report, detailing their activity and ensuring that funds provided by PCCs are aligned to agreed priorities.
- 6** That LCJBs be placed on a statutory footing with PCCs as statutory chairs. CJS partners should be defined as statutory attendees.
- 7** The national response to the Covid 19 pandemic has further emphasised the need for agencies to work effectively together. PCCs are well - and often uniquely - placed to coordinate the efforts of partners to ensure that the needs of the public and the voice of victims is central to response efforts. As the role of PCCs expands and deepens, clear consideration needs to be given to their relationships with emergency and resilience structures to include a review of their status within the Civil Contingencies Act to enable PCCs to provide strategic oversight and a direct link for Ministers, and for the Office of Police and Crime Commissioners (OPCCs) to be involved at an operational level.
- 8** That PCCs are given the General Power of Competence to ensure they are able to co-ordinate and collaborate more effectively across local strategic partnerships and with wider local partners. This will enable the development of innovative, whole-system solutions to the problems facing people in our communities in terms of crime and disorder.

PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

- 9** That PCCs be given a clear role as local 'guardians' of the Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) processes, with the ability to direct, steer and challenge relevant partners across the spectrum of local ASB services through to victim care.
- 10** That a duty be placed on local authorities and housing providers to both record and share ASB data with PCCs to enable scrutiny, ensure consistency of effort and drive improvements.
- 11** That PCCs be given greater governance, scrutiny and convening powers over providers of local ASB services, such as local authorities and housing providers, to ensure the voices of victims and communities are reflected in proportionate and effective local responses.
- 12** If Community Triggers are to be maintained, PCCs should have an oversight role of the process.

EFFICIENCY AND DATA

- 13** Local authorities, housing providers and CSPs should be supported in their recording, use and sharing of data with PCCs to enable PCCs to contribute to and lead local responses more effectively. This should be to an effective and consistent national standard.
- 14** LCJB member agencies, having been placed on a statutory footing (see recommendation 6), should be required to share data under a similar provision as exists for Responsible Authorities of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Furthermore, they should be required to share data with PCCs to enable priority setting, commissioning and to reflect the needs of communities and victims in the wider CJS. At the very least, pseudonymised data and non-personal management information should be provided.
- 15** HM Government should publish and drive a national standard of expectation with regards to data sharing between CJS agencies and PCCs supported by a national framework to enable meaningful comparison and performance management and provide direct assurances to Ministers through PCCs.

POLICE AND CRIME PANELS

- 16** That Police and Crime Panels (PCPs) should have their powers of veto removed for individual appointments, (Chief Constables, OPCC senior staff, and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioners), while retaining the responsibility to scrutinise Commissioners' decisions. This will protect the primacy of directly elected PCCs and further strengthen and clarify the appropriate role of PCPs in their scrutiny function.
- 17** That PCPs should be hosted by upper tier local authorities and be provided with more defined and better resourced professional support and training to assist them with discharging their roles.
- 18** Panel members' eligibility for their roles be more tightly defined to prevent conflicts of interest in lines of good governance and accountability. In addition, that there is a renewed focus on panel membership in recognition of the potential expansion of PCCs role. Independent panel members should be required to sign up to the host authority's code of conduct, in line with members nominated by a local authority.

IOPC, COMPLAINTS AND RECALL

- 19** That PCPs should retain their role in overseeing non-criminal complaints but be further supported in their professionalisation. PCPs should be required to have vexatious complainants' policies with the investigation of complaints to be handled by an appropriate function outside of the PCP.
- 20** The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) or other non-elected function should not have a greater role or the power to remove democratically elected persons and that the PCP and electoral mechanisms be supported through the further professionalisation of PCPs.
- 21** To stand as a Police and Crime Commissioner, candidates must satisfy the highest level of qualification of all directly elected representatives in the UK. Commissioners who have a criminal conviction are automatically disqualified from office, and as such the systems to ensure removal of a Commissioner are also the most rapid and robust in the UK's political system. As such, the potential requirement for recall may be extremely limited in potential application. In addition, PCCs hold the status of 'Corporation Sole' with executive powers and the discharge of powers and duties cannot be undertaken by another directly elected representative. Therefore, while supportive of the principle of recall, any consideration of a process of recall should be supported by considerable thought and assessment of risks and implications.

How Commissioners fit into British policing traditions

1829

The Metropolitan Police Act 1829 founds the Metropolitan Police in London, the first modern police force in the United Kingdom.

1959

The 'Popkess Affair' leads to a Royal Commission into policing following the dismissal of the Nottingham City Police Chief Constable by the city's Watch Committee of local councillors.

1960s - 1980s

As the UK changes socially, economically, and demographically the police service evolves considerably into a more professional and complex set of institutions. Greater emphasis is placed on procedural correctness underpinned by inspection.

1990s

Considerable challenges are faced by policing as a result of the increasing social presence of illicit drugs and the criminal apparatus supplying it.

2011

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 creates the role of Police and Crime Commissioners to reconnect governance of policing with democratic leadership more directly whilst maintaining the operational independence of policing.

2012

Responsibility for public health transferred to local authorities and Health and Wellbeing Boards. PCCs become important funding contributors to drug and alcohol treatment services alongside their responsibilities for victim services commissioning.

2017

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 enables the transfer of the role and functions on Fire Authorities to PCCs following a government consultation on the proposals in 2015. As of 2021 there are four Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners (PFCCs) in England with legislation having been enacted for these areas over 2018 and 2019.

2020

Global pandemic of Covid-19 places the UK into crisis response structures and galvanises a national effort. PCCs play a key local role in supporting the policing response and importantly receive considerable additional funding from the Home Office and Ministry of Justice to support local victim and survivor services, especially for domestic and sexual violence as those services come under strain.

1835-1856

Various acts expand the concept from London to the rest of the country, places constabularies on a permanent and professional footing with borough-level Watch Committees to oversee policing.

1964

The Police Act 1964 defines the independence of the police service and seeks to ensure limits are placed on political interference in policing. Police Authorities are established to ensure local oversight of policing whilst maintaining operational independence of Chiefs Constable and their officers.

1985

The Prosecution of Offences Act 1985 transfers prosecutorial responsibility from police services to the newly founded Crown Prosecution Service.

1998 - 2009

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 created what became Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) defining (through amendments to the Act) local authorities, Police Authorities, Fire and Rescue Services, NHS Primary Care Trusts and probation providers are responsible authorities with a duty to form CSPs with plans to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour, substance misuse and reoffending as well as to share data.

2012

The first election for 43 PCCs across England and Wales is held with a turnout of 15.1%.

2016

The second election for PCCs is held with a much increased turnout of 27.3%.

2019

Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) are established under the leadership of PCCs.

2021

The third PCC election is held having been postponed for a year due to the global pandemic. Turnout again increases to an estimated 33.2% perhaps indicative of increased voter recognition of the maturing role.

