



# Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Panel

Hosted by Somerset County Council Democratic Services



## **Link Member Report - Collaboration**

### **Priority – Working together effectively with other Police Forces and Key Partners to provide better services**

Following a briefing with John Smith (CEO) on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018, I can provide the following update in relation to collaboration.

Historically there was already a fair degree of collaboration on firearms, roads, dogs and major crime. However, one of the problems is that although they are working together, they aren't connected at the back office with a common HR recruitment process and this can cause problems. So, for example if they wanted to see who is on during any given shift they have to search three systems rather than a single database.

There were talks about doing a 'host-Force' model in the region of working together in the SW – this is where one force agrees to lead on the issue for the other two. Devon, Cornwall and Dorset were all supportive but this was not supported by Wiltshire and Gloucestershire.

As it is now, even the original tri-force work appears to have broken down with the firearms being done by a host force model which will address the HR and systems issues but not the dogs or roads sections. These appear to be going back to the original three separate organisational models although a deal may be resurrected with Wiltshire on a bi-force model.

### **Other areas of collaboration**

1. Major crimes will continue as Tri-Force but may link with Southern forces
2. Forensics which is 4 Force (excluding Gloucestershire) has the same HR issues. Avon & Somerset, Dorset and Devon & Cornwall are proposing a host force model, this is aimed to start on 1st April but may be Sept. Commercial Forensics is actually being done above the regional level with 25 forces working together (this allows them to buy in bulk for supplies).
3. Special Branch also operates on a four force basis (excluding Glos)
4. They are working on a joint drone approach with Wiltshire.
5. There is some scope for multi-emergency service collaboration. For example, in Minehead where they are looking at a tri-force service location, but this is proving difficult.

6. They are looking at ways to collaborate with the Criminal Justice System. This is about getting the Police, courts, CPS and prisons to work together to reduce re-offending (*The Link Member for Reducing Reoffending is Joseph Mullis*).

I think that it is important to note that this is more about efficiency of time rather than monetary efficiency. The collaboration has saved some money - £8.5m regionally, around £3m locally, but it was nowhere near the previous estimates of around £25m.

**On the Fire Authority Collaboration specifically:**

There are no plans for a Police takeover of the Fire Authority. The lack of coterminous boundaries make it exceedingly hard to build a case for a governance change.

**NB:** The Southern Merger between Dorset and Devon & Cornwall is looking at September / October for the DCG ruling.

**Councillor Mark Weston**