

Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent Decision	
PCCG-2016-019	Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent Decision
Subject	The production of a joint Strategic Equalities Plan (SEP) 2016-2020 between the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and Gwent Police.
Summary	The purpose of this paper is to record the decision to produce a joint SEP 2016-2020 between the OPCC and Gwent Police. The paper outlines the advantages and potential disadvantages to implementing a new approach to reporting and scrutinising the equality duties.

DECISION

1. The Equalities Act 2010 requires all public authorities to pay due regard to the general duties, which are as follows:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited under the Act
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

In April 6th 2012 'specific duties' were introduced to support the delivery of the general duties. These specific duties are:

 - Equality information must be published and include, in particular, information relating to people who share a protected characteristic who are:
 - OPCC / force employees and
 - People affected by its policies and practices.
 - Publish equality objectives every four years: OPCC and force must prepare and publish one or more objectives. These objectives must be specific and measurable.
 - Publish equality information and the equality objectives in a manner that is accessible to the public. They can be published as a separate document, or within another document such as an annual report or a business plan.
2. The advantages for a change in approach, from individual SEPs to one joint SEP, are outlined below:

Efficiencies: The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) has a dual legislative role. Within the Police Reform and Social Responsibilities Act 2011 the PCC is responsible for holding the Chief Constable to account to ensure the force fulfil their equalities duties. In addition, section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, stipulates the PCC must ensure the OPCC complies with the equalities duties.

By producing one over-arching joint SEP it will provide an opportunity to demonstrate compliance by the OPCC and force of their equality duties in a simpler, more accessible, effective and efficient manner.

Legally Compliant: A joint approach is an accepted format as outlined within the Equality Act 2010 'specific duties'. The duties stipulate that equality objectives and information must be published '*in a manner that is accessible to the public. They can be published as a separate document or within another document*'.

Precedence: A number of Police forces and OPCCs have produced joint strategic equality plans and have found the approach effective and beneficial. These include North Wales and South Wales Police forces and OPCCs.

Clarity and awareness of the distinct roles between the OPCC and Force: The OPCC's SEP consultation (November to December 2015) demonstrated a lack of understanding and confusion between the role of the OPCC and Gwent Police. Specific comments were made regarding the actions both organisations undertake to comply with the equality duties. A joint document could assist in providing clarity to the public and stakeholders on this issue.

Shared vision: A joint document enables robust collaboration with the force and a shared vision on all equality and diversity issues and ensuring comprehensive compliance with the general and specific duties. This shared vision illustrates to the OPCC staff, force Staff, stakeholder, partners and the general public a strong relationship and a joint commitment to all people who share protected characteristic.

3. The disadvantages to consider in undertaking a joint SEP 2016-2020 are:

Confusion: A joint plan could potentially mean confusion between the independent role of the OPCC and the force.

To mitigate any confusion regarding the role of the OPCC and the force, the joint equality plan will clearly outline the distinction between roles of both organisations with regards to fulfilment of their equality duties

Potential operational changes: Both the OPCC and force operational procedures and practices regarding equality and diversity will need to be reviewed and potentially re-aligned prior to publication in April 2016, which may prove challenging.

The operational procedures and practices regarding equality and diversity for the force and OPCC have been reviewed and they are aligned. This will ensure publication of the plan will achieve the 5th April 2016 deadline.

4. Gwent Police Views:

The OPCC Policy Officer has consulted with Gwent Police Community Cohesion Coordinator and they are in agreement with a joint approach. The views of the Chief Constable have been obtained and he is content with this approach as it affords some efficiency and scrutiny advantages for all

concerned.

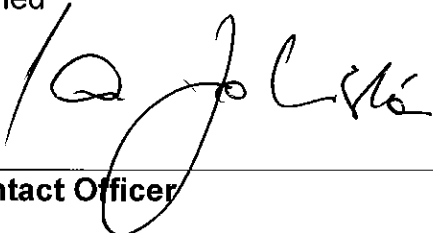
5. In light on the work undertaken in this area to date and the actions taken to mitigate any potential risks, I agree that a joint SEP 2016-2020 will be published by 5th April 2016.

Ian Johnston QPM, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent

I confirm I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with my code of conduct. Any such interests are recorded below.

The above request has my approval.

Signed



Date

7.3.16.

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Background papers

- Equality Act 2010
- North Wales joint OPCC and north Wales Police Strategic Equality Plan 2015 - 2019
- Is Wales Fairer - Equality and Human Rights Commission

