



## Business Case for the merger of Eastbourne and Lewes District Community Safety Partnerships

### 1.0 Background

- 1.1 In late 2015 the Police and Crime Commissioner for Sussex recommended that it would be appropriate for individual District and Borough Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) to investigate merging options to reflect the new policing district boundaries and make efficiency savings.
- 1.2 As a result of deliberations within the existing Eastbourne, Lewes and Wealden CSPs, it was agreed that we should work towards a new Strategy Group encompassing all three districts.
- 1.3 Work began and a 'soft merger' year was carried out between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and March 2017.
- 1.4 In February 2017 Safer Wealden Partnership (SWP) decided to withdraw from the shared Strategy Group. Following this the Chairs of the Eastbourne and Lewes District CSPs decided to continue with the 'soft merger' with a view to formally combine the two Partnerships into one by the end of performance year 2017/18, subject to a Business Case and approval of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

### 2.0 Findings

- 2.1 The 'soft merger' presented a number of efficiency savings for the partnerships. The two CSPs have reduced the total number of meetings held each per from 7 to 3. Resulting in the overall meeting hours per year being reduced from 14 to 6.
- 2.2 Further efficiency savings were found through reducing the membership of the Strategy Group to Responsible Authorities and other key representatives. This meant that the overall number of Members at Strategy Group meetings was reduced from 28 to 11. As a result this produced a saving of 126 hours as the total number hours Members spent at Strategy Group meetings reduced from 192 to 66.
- 2.3 Other, less measurable, efficiency savings include reductions in time spent:
  - travelling to and from meetings;
  - arranging meetings and coordinating partners and guest speakers
  - preparing papers and facilitating CSPs meetings, such as producing Agendas, writing Minutes and preparing rooms

2.4 The efficiency savings made during the 'soft merger' year has positively reduced demand on Partners. This in turn has allowed Partners to use their resourcing for CSP functions on delivering priorities rather than attending Strategy Group meetings.

### 3.0 Recommendation

3.1 In light of the efficiency savings made during the 'soft merger' year, it is recommended that the CSPs formally merge into one CSP. The fully merged CSP would then fulfil the Statutory requirements for both Eastbourne borough and Lewes district.

3.2 It is also recommended that:

- the individual JAGs are maintained along with their newly 'enhanced' status;
- a new name and branding for the shared CSP is explored
- further efficiencies are sought through amalgamating CSP papers and processes
- an opportunity for SWP to merge with the CSP is included in the Terms of Reference for the Partnership

3.3 A proposed Terms of Reference for the new Partnership has been attached to this business case.

### 4.0 Risks and Benefits

#### 4.1 Risks:

Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act, PCC's have the power to approve the merger of CSPs and one cannot go ahead without this. There is a risk that the PCC may not approve the merger between the two CSPs.

4.2 The impact of this would prevent the CSPs capitalising on the efficiencies savings highlighted above and benefits identified in paragraphs 4.8 to 4.10.

4.3 This risk is mitigated by the development of this business case, highlighting efficiency made, in addition to consultation with partners as part of the merger process.

4.5 Lastly, the Terms of Reference will allow SWP to join the newly formed CSP to encourage even further efficiency savings.

4.6 There's also a risk that local issues are underrepresented as the CSPs combine to cover a larger area. This may impact on the CSPs ability to meet the demands of its communities.

4.7 This risk will be mitigated by maintaining the newly enhanced individual JAGs. The enhanced status means that they have a role in setting the direction of the CSP locally by supporting the priorities setting process

of the CSP.

#### 4.8 **Benefits:**

In May 2017 the PCC outlined plans to review CSP funding arrangements across Sussex. As part of the review, CSPs were consulted on five funding proposals, including:

- Maintaining the current position
- Allocating all PCC funding directly to upper-tier authorities
- Allocating all PCC funding directly to CSPs
- Having the PCC retain the full amount and CSPs apply to the PCC for funding
- Maintaining the current position but the PCC would retain a percentage for commissioning projects and services Pan-Sussex.

4.9 Where the results of the consultation are still unknown, it is likely that there will be a change to CSP grant funding. The merger of the CSPs will allow the Partnerships to share this risk by jointly:

- Funding projects and services that meet shared priorities to maximise on economies of scale.
- Applying for funding (either to the PCC or other funding streams) for projects and services as one bigger body.

4.10 Other benefits identified during the 'soft merger' include:

- Sharing good practice across the district and borough;
- Better responding to non-geographically based issues, such as Scams, Cybercrime and Modern Slavery;
- Aligning with Joint Transformation Programme between Eastbourne Borough and Lewes District Councils
- Better reflecting the new policing district boundaries
- Giving the merged partnership more influence at a regional level and with the PCC

#### 5.0 **Next Steps**

5.1 To formally merge the two CSPs a consultation with Relevant Authorities will be launched to gain the consent of relevant Chief Executives. Following final approval from the Strategy Group, an application will then be submitted to the PCC to approve the merger.

5.2 It is recommended that the process of the merger is completed by end of performance year 2017/18 with the new CSP operating from Q1 2018/19.