

Home Secretary to strengthen Police and Crime Commissioner role

Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) will be more accountable to the communities they serve as a result of a review led by Home Secretary Priti Patel, by requiring them to explain their record on crime to the public and strengthening their relationship with the Chief Constable and force.

The Home Secretary will today (Tuesday 16 March) outline the recommendations of part 1 of the review ahead of the upcoming PCC elections in May 2021.

The review will ensure the public have transparent, democratically-elected, local leaders who are equipped to drive down crime and deliver the safer communities the public deserve. It could also see them lead a wider range of services, in time, such as fire and rescue.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

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.

These recommendations, once implemented, will strengthen and potentially extend the role of PCCs and help them deliver the safer streets that the British public deserve.

The 2-part review was announced in July 2020 and delivers on a manifesto commitment to strengthen the accountability of PCCs and expand their role.

The initial recommendations will enhance the role of the PCC by:

- changing the PCC voting system to first-past-the-post, so the public can vote out those who are failing to deliver – this will create stronger and clearer local accountability, and reflect that transferable voting systems were rejected by the British people in the 2011 nationwide referendum
- making sure PCCs provide the public with clear information on their force's performance
- mandating the appointment of deputy PCCs to ensure continuity in unforeseen circumstances
- making changes to ensure more effective and consistent relationships

between PCCs and chief constables

The recommendations will also help all parties (government, PCCs and forces) establish clearer ways of working and provide chiefs with more clarity on their operational independence.

The review also found strong support for the government's ambition to increase the accountability of fire and rescue services by having a directly elected official take on governance of the services in order to simplify and strengthen them across England.

As a result, we will consult publicly on whether to mandate the transfer of fire and rescue authority functions to PCCs in England. This will form part of a Fire Reform White Paper, to launch later this year.

The review's findings also confirmed our desire to see more combined authority mayors with PCC and fire and rescue authority functions, and the government will set out its approach to achieving this longer-term aim in the Devolution and Local Recovery White Paper in due course.

The review's recommendations were outlined to Parliament via a [written ministerial statement](#).

The government has been clear that the review will not consider the 43-force structure, or scrap the role of PCCs.

The second part of the review will take place after the May 2021 elections and the government will communicate more about these plans in due course.