



**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**
for Leicester,
Leicestershire & Rutland

Your Communities - Your Commissioner

Police and Crime Panel for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

June 2026

Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner Engagement and Lobbying

Report Date	June 2026
Report Author	Oliver Bryan – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
Security Classification	Official

Purpose of Report

1. In his role as the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) the Commissioner may appoint a Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner (DPCC) to assist him in delivering his role.
2. The DPCC brings this report to update the Panel on the activities carried out since appointment, as outlined in the Confirmation Papers considered by the Panel.

Request of the Panel

3. The PCC requests that the Panel scrutinise the contents of this report. DPCC Bryan will be in attendance at the panel meeting to respond to any questions.

Background and Appointment

4. In Autumn 2025 the PCC requested that Oliver Bryan take on the role of Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner with a specialist focus on Engagement and Lobbying.
5. The Police and Crime Panel considered the proposed appointment and determined that Mr Bryan understood the role, met the criteria and would be fully committed to carrying out his duties.
6. The Panel noted that Mr Bryan was clearly competent, with a good level of experience in engagement and lobbying, partnership working and prior experience of working within the OPCC.
7. The Panel observed that whilst Mr Bryan demonstrated an understanding of operational and personal independence from the PCC, this would be an area to maintain awareness of. They also identified onboarding needs in relation to gaining a wider understanding of the diversity of communities within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and their different needs.
8. In response to those observations: Mr Bryan welcomes the Panel's constructive scrutiny and takes those observations seriously. On community diversity, Mr Bryan has undertaken relevant training and has continued to meet with community leaders and representatives across the full breadth of LLR communities. On personal independence, Mr Bryan is mindful of the need to bring an independent and evidence-based perspective to his role, and the challenge work described in this report, particularly in relation to national police reform, demonstrates a willingness to take and advance positions on the basis of evidence rather than simply deferring to any single view. This was also displayed during the budget process with which panel members will be familiar.

9. Following his appointment, the scope and commitment of the role was revised from two and a half days per week focused on engagement to a four day per week more formal deputy role, reflecting both the scale of the challenges facing policing nationally and the PCC's confidence in Mr Bryan's capacity to contribute more broadly.

Role and Responsibilities

The PCC outlined the responsibilities as follows:

Specialist

10. Leading engagement and lobbying activity on behalf of the OPCC, representing the interests of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland in national policing debates and reform processes.
11. Building and maintaining relationships with key stakeholders, community leaders and partner organisations across the region.

Generic

12. Supporting the PCC to drive the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan.
13. Providing support in respect of holding the force to account, by attending meetings with force personnel, deputising for the PCC in his absence and supporting the improvement of OPCC assurance activities.
14. Supporting the PCC in attendance at the Police and Crime Panel to ensure that the Panel can support and challenge effectively.
15. Supporting partnership working on behalf of the PCC.

Activities – Summary of the First Six Months

Stakeholder and Community Engagement

16. A priority from the outset has been building productive working relationships with the full range of senior stakeholders across the force area. This has included senior officers at Leicestershire Police, elected representatives, senior local authority officers and community and voluntary sector leaders.
17. Meetings have taken place with community leaders representing a wide cross-section of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland's diverse communities, with a particular focus on groups that are sometimes less visible in formal consultation processes. This work directly addresses the onboarding priority identified by the Panel.
18. These relationships are the foundation for effective engagement and lobbying. I want to ensure that the voices and concerns of LLR communities are accurately understood and faithfully represented in national and regional forums.

Deputising and Representation

19. Mr Bryan has deputised for the PCC across a wide range of meetings, panels and forums, maintaining continuity of representation and ensuring the OPCC's voice is consistently present.
20. This has included attending conferences and formal consultations across the country on the PCC's behalf, ensuring Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland's interests are represented in national policy discussions.
21. This broader deputising role, beyond the original engagement brief, has been a significant element of the expanded four-day-per-week commitment. This has also included radio interviews and media work.

Lobbying and Written Representations

22. Formal written representations have been made to the Secretary of State for Justice, the Home Secretary, and the Policing Minister on a range of current reform issues. These letters have been carefully drafted to set out LLR's position clearly, with supporting evidence and to register disagreement with elements of proposed reform on the public record.
23. The correspondence has covered the most significant current policing policy debates, including force restructuring, the proposed abolition of the Police and Crime Commissioner model, neighbourhood policing and accountability frameworks.
24. Written lobbying has been coordinated with other PCCs and DPCCs where shared interests exist, strengthening the collective voice of smaller and medium-sized forces.

National Collaboration with Other PCCs

25. A notable strand of work in the period has been collaborating with other Police and Crime Commissioners to develop a coordinated, evidence-based challenge to the proposed police reform programme, specifically the proposed merger of forces and the abolition of directly elected PCCs.
26. This collaborative work has enabled PCCs to punch above their weight in national debates, combining the weight of multiple voices with rigorous shared evidence.

Challenge to National Police Reform Proposals

27. The most significant single engagement activity of the period was participation in the Government's review of police force structures, including attendance at the Roundtable held at Leicestershire Police HQ with Lord Hogan-Howe.
28. Mr Bryan prepared and advanced a detailed, evidence-based challenge to the force merger and PCC abolition proposals. The principal lines of challenge were:
 - a. Process legitimacy — the decisions appeared to have been made before consultation began, raising serious questions about whether the process was a genuine consultation or a post-hoc exercise. Specifically, PCCs and their offices

were not consulted before the decision to force mergers and abolish the PCC model was announced.

- b. The evidence base — the merger proposals rest on projected efficiency savings that are not supported by comparable international evidence. In Scotland, the merger of eight forces into one was projected to deliver £1.7bn in savings. The IT reform element alone failed to deliver £200m of projected gains and was condemned by the Scottish Parliament's own Justice Committee for poor financial management and unclear lines of responsibility.
 - c. Existing collaborative models — forces across England and Wales are already demonstrating that efficiencies can be achieved without costly restructuring. Thames Valley and Hampshire share road and canine units; Warwickshire and West Mercia share neighbourhood policing teams. The case for full merger rather than deeper collaboration has not been made.
 - d. Neighbourhood policing — when the Metropolitan Police merged its 32 borough commands into 12 larger units in 2017 on efficiency grounds, Baroness Casey's independent review found that the force had become disconnected from Londoners, with neighbourhood policing stripped back. The Met's own Turnaround Plan then had to make restoring local policing its first priority. After the Scottish merger, twelve out of thirteen local divisions ended up with fewer officers on the ground.
 - e. Democratic accountability — abolishing PCCs removes the only directly elected check on policing in England and Wales. The proposals do not provide a convincing answer to who replaces that democratic function, particularly at a time when public confidence in policing is declining.
 - f. Transition costs and risk — the full transition costs relating to IT, estates, redundancy, rebranding, restructuring have not been transparently set out, nor has any robust answer been provided as to who bears the risk if projected savings fail to materialise and there is a dip in overall performance.
 - g. The central contradiction — centralisation is frequently driven by the belief that bigger is more efficient and cheaper. The evidence from both Scotland and London demonstrates that it frequently delivers neither, whilst actively damaging the local accountability and community trust that effective policing depends on. Making forces larger and more remote is difficult to reconcile with the Government's own stated ambition of rebuilding public trust in policing.
29. The majority of these challenges did not receive a substantive response at the Roundtable. Where responses were given, the Government's representatives indicated they would revert in writing on the specific evidential questions raised — those responses are awaited.
30. It is worth noting that the challenge to neighbourhood policing is particularly hard to rebut: it was the Government's own commissioned reviewer, Baroness Casey, who identified the Metropolitan Police merger-within-a-merger as a mistake.

31. Mr Bryan will continue to pursue these lines of challenge through written submissions, further roundtables and the collaborative network of PCCs, and will keep the Panel informed of developments. We do not want to lose Leicestershire Police as its own entity.

Looking Ahead

32. The engagement and lobbying programme will continue, with a particular focus on the ongoing police reform consultation process and ensuring LLR's position is clearly on the record.

33. Community engagement visits will be sustained and broadened, with the aim of ensuring that all significant communities within the force area have had an opportunity to engage directly with the OPCC.

34. Mr Bryan will continue to represent LLR at national conferences and to work collaboratively with other PCCs where shared interests arise.

35. Begin to chair meetings of the Local Criminal Justice Board and adopt the Road Safety Brief.

36. Prepare the groundwork for next year's budget setting process.

37. The Panel will be updated at future meetings on outcomes and developments, as requested at the time of appointment.

Request of the Panel

38. The Panel is requested to note the contents of this report and to raise any questions with the DPCC, who will be in attendance at the meeting.

Officer to contact:

Oliver Bryan- DPCC

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