



**Supported in Leicester by Equanomics UK, Clarion Voice and the National Black Police Association**

## **Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire**

On 15<sup>th</sup> November, residents in Leicestershire (and all over England and Wales) will have the opportunity to vote for a Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The introduction of elected Police and Crime Commissioners represents one of the biggest changes to policing in Britain for decades. However, polls repeatedly indicate that much of the public is unaware or unconcerned about these potentially radical reforms. Here in Leicestershire a group of organisations working with StopWatch want to ensure people in Leicestershire are properly informed about what PCC is and how we can get the best from a PCC for Leicestershire. We want to use this opportunity to make sure that stop and search is part of the debate and that all members of the community have their say.

### **How can you be involved?**

You can vote for the Leicestershire PCC. Over the coming months, individuals will be announcing their candidacy, sharing their manifestos and attending local events and hustings to canvass for your vote. This will provide a real opportunity to have your say and raise local community safety issues.

Here in Leicestershire we are going to be holding a series of information meetings in different areas if you are interested in attending please email us to find out the dates and nearest meeting to you: [LeicesterPCC@gmail.com](mailto:LeicesterPCC@gmail.com)

### **Background**

There are currently 43 Police Authorities across England and Wales. These consist of members of the local authority, the local police force and the public and they are responsible for ensuring provision of policing for a given area. These authorities will be abolished. (London's authority was abolished in January 2012 as in London the Mayor takes on this role).

A Police and Crime Commissioner will replace the current Police Authority. He/she will be directly elected by the residents of Leicestershire and will have responsibility for a broad range of powers. They will set policing priorities – from graffiti to domestic violence to terrorism and, vitally they will have control over both the policing and the crime prevention budget. This means they will decide levels of funding for youth clubs, refuges and drug treatment centres as well as for policing. Chief Constables will retain operation control but they will be directly answerable to the Commissioner, and the Commissioner directly to the electorate. Once elected, Commissioners will have huge powers to affect the way local communities experience crime prevention in their area.

### **Who can stand?**

Almost anyone over the age of 18 can stand as a Police and Crime Commissioner. The only restrictions are that they: are British, Commonwealth or EU citizens, are resident in Leicestershire, are not currently a serving police officer or employed in police related area, are not currently employed by the local authority in Leicestershire, have never been convicted of an imprisonable offence, are not a judge or civil servant.

### **Who will scrutinise the PCC?**

After electing a commissioner each area will be expected to have Police and Crime Panels. The panels will be formed from members of the local authorities covered by the Police in Leicestershire. Police and Crime Panels are limited to a maximum size of 20 members per panel. A Police and Crime Panel will scrutinise the work of the PCC, however this is only required to meet quarterly. While the panel has the power to scrutinise policy and spending by the Commissioner it will have only limited powers of veto.

### **What are the benefits of the new system?**

As Crime Commissioners will be elected, the public will be given a unique opportunity to press for the kind of policing they want to see in Leicestershire. If you are concerned about the use of stop and search, if you would like more community engagement, if you think the police force in Leicestershire is not representative, this is your opportunity to argue a change. Turnout for local elections are traditionally low turnouts for elections in winter even more so; so a concerted group of votes could make a decisive difference in these elections and candidates will know that.

### **What are the potential problems with the new system?**

Police and Crime Commissioners will have wide powers. They will be given tens of millions pound budgets to handle but there is no requirement that they have experience of financial management. Cronyism or simple incompetence are both significant risks. There is also a risk that policing will become highly politicised with negative outcomes for marginalised groups.

### **The election?**

The election will take place on the 15<sup>th</sup> of November 2012. It will be organised like a local council election. To vote you will need to register and be put on the electoral roll. You will then be able to vote from your appointed polling station.

You can register to vote online here:

**[http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/register\\_to\\_vote.aspx](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/register_to_vote.aspx)**

Or call **020 7271 0500** for more details

For further information see the StopWatch website: **[www.stop-watch.org](http://www.stop-watch.org)**

If you are interested in the issue or being part of the organising group please contact us :

Email: [LeicesterPCC@gmail.com](mailto:LeicesterPCC@gmail.com)

Telephone: 07582909819



