

“ PPP ”

People for Proper Policing in North Wales

Elected Individuals ‘Will Hire and Fire Chiefs’.

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Home Secretary Theresa May has confirmed the government will begin pushing through legislation to replace police authorities with directly elected individuals later this year.

Despite strong criticism from some senior officers and opposition MPs, May told the **APA-ACPO conference in Manchester** that a single post would be created in each force and those elected would have the power to hire and fire chief constables.

While no firm timescales for their introduction have yet been set, May later told PoliceOracle.com that she expected **the individuals to be in place within two years.**

She said the Home Office would continue to work with police authorities in the interim period while the required legislative and administrative changes are carried out.

May added: *“There will be legislation brought forward in the autumn and there will be more detail soon – we have also been talking to ACPO and the APA.*

“In addition we have also been speaking to individual police authorities about the changes and will be calling on them to help when we go through the interim period.”

The announcement fulfils a pledge in the Conservative Party manifesto, which claimed that directly elected individuals would bring greater local accountability to police forces.

In their election literature, the Liberal Democrats had planned to create directly elected police authorities, although these proposals have been shelved.

Concerns have been raised about the issue by senior officers including ACPO President Sir Hugh Orde who warned it is likely to be deeply unpopular among chief constables.

But he added that the government had “nailed” the crucial issue by reassuring officers that there would be safeguards in legislation to retain operational independence.

Meanwhile **Shadow Home Secretary Alan Johnson** has pledged the Labour will fiercely oppose the new legislation. He said plans for directly elected individuals are misguided.

He added that he had “not met a single police officer of any rank” who supported the move, adding that elections would cost the taxpayer around £50 million.

The PPP comments ... When the PPP was formed in 2003, we like most of the public knew nothing about Police Authorities or who the members were. What we found was a close knit group of minor politicians and magistrates ‘working’ too closely with the police force. They generally responded slavishly to every Government initiative and the micro-management of police priorities via the complex and inefficient funding system. In the case of NWPF they were ignored by the chief officers on the rare occasions they attempted to control their actions or behaviour. We were unable to see any useful return for the significant funds and police time adsorbed by the Authorities public meetings and talking shops. The public consultation meetings were also mostly publicity stunts designed to slavishly pursue some Government brainwashing campaign. We found these generally an insult to our intelligence and poorly attended. Major activities such the recruitment of their own members and senior officers was at best inept and disorganised even in terms of advertising and at worst distorted or even corrupt. We only have experience of the NWPA under Labour. But we understand how the arrangement suited

the various Home secretaries such as Blunkett, Kelly, Smith and Johnson whose successive knee jerk initiatives controlled the PA and PF like puppets on a string as they moved progressively away from the daily, hard and unpleasant grind, that is REAL policing. We, the public, have been offered many carrots of apparent democracy, of which the PAs themselves are one with their consultations, as well as the IPCC, but nothing has really changed. If the elected commissioners come from the same pool of gravy and vested interests as previous so called watchdogs then the change will fail to achieve what we need which is fully accountable chief officers on short term contracts. We would like to see more accountability for Policing from our elected representatives both AMs and MPs working together irrespective of Party.

The Role of the various Policing quangos must be reviewed nationally. These include ACPO that seems to have it's own agenda and unacceptable business and financial practices.

The NPIA likewise which duplicates work that ACPO claims to do and which is really the responsibility of the Home Office. This link indicates that they **spent** over £440m to **save** £150m http://www.policeoracle.com/news/NPIA-Saves-Police-Service-Money_24855.html

SOCA which again overlaps with the other three and all absorb £millions and manhours which are lost to REAL policing. This link identifies the reality of the cost and effectiveness of SOCA (a Blair babe!)
<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/crime/article3919731.ece>

We believe that the various forces and all their own armed response units have often failed in terrorist and other public situations and put the public at great risk. The armed forces special services should take over control of the homeland and border security role.

In conclusion the UK population has allowed the government and civil service including systems like the PAs fall into disrepute due to neglect and ignorance by the electorate. Most of the members of these organisations without any accountability have taken advantage of the national gravy trains just like the MPs and councillors. The system as set up should work in principle and if the elected commissioner was responsible for a greatly streamlined full time professional PA with a small membership with the right breadth of skills and experience and INTEGRITY then it can be made to work.