

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS

On 15 November 2012, for the first time, you will be able to vote for your local police and crime commissioner (PCC). This is a new role and the job of the PCC will be to oversee the police and ensure they prioritise what matters to you.

What is a Police and Crime Commissioner?

A police and crime commissioner will be elected by you to oversee how crime will be tackled in your police force area (in London, the Mayor is the PCC). Their aim will be to cut crime and to ensure your police force is effective. They will bring more of a public voice to policing and they will do this is by:

- Regularly engaging and meeting with the public to help set police and crime plans.
- Ensuring the police force budget is spent where it matters most.
- Appointing the chief constable, and if necessary dismissing them, if they have not performed well.

The PCC will not 'run' the police force. Chief constables will continue to be responsible for the day to day operations of the police, but they will be accountable to the public via PCCs.

PCCs are voted in to serve you and if you think they are not, then you can vote them out at the next election in 4 years time. PCCs will have an enormous amount of power and will make and influence key decisions that will impact on how your local area looks and feels - from CCTV, street lighting and graffiti to tackling gangs and drug-dealing. Use your vote to put that power in the hands of the person you think will serve you best.

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS' ELECTIONS

You will be able to vote in elections on the 15 November for the candidate you want to represent you.

Elections will be held in all police force areas in England and Wales, except in London, where the mayor of London has the powers of a police and crime commissioner (PCC) in relation to the Metropolitan Police.

How to vote

You need to be registered to be able to vote. If you are registered and eligible to vote you can either vote in person at a polling station, by post, or by proxy (allowing someone you trust to vote on your behalf). In this election you can vote for a first and second preference of who you want to win.

You can vote in the election of your PCC if you are resident in that area and you are:

- a British citizen living in the UK or registered to vote as a crown servant or member of the armed services.
- a European Union citizen living in the UK.
- a Commonwealth citizen who either does not need leave to be resident in the UK, or has the necessary leave and is legally resident in the UK.

WEST MERCIA AREA PCC CANDIDATES

While the final list of candidates will be announced on 19 October, those who have announced their candidacy so far are:

ADRIAN BLACKSHAW - Conservative



Mr Blackshaw is currently a cabinet member at Herefordshire Council

Adrian Blackshaw, the Conservative candidate, has a background in business and finance and is Herefordshire Council's cabinet member for economic regeneration.

His election pledges include supporting the plans to share resources with the Warwickshire force and to reinvest any savings into West Mercia Police. He said he sees no reason for the outsourcing of any services, which tallies with the views of the current police authority and chief constable.

BILL LONGMORE - Independent



Mr Longmore spent 30 years with Staffordshire Police in a variety of roles

Bill Longmore, an independent candidate, served with Staffordshire Police for 30 years and built up a manufacturing firm after retiring in 1986.

He said he had "endeavoured to serve the community" all his life and if elected, he said he would "not be a faceless man sitting in an office" but out listening to the community.

His election priorities include continuing to support the police in tackling crime effectively.

SIMON MURPHY - Labour



Dr Murphy is a former West Midlands MEP

Dr Simon Murphy, who is standing for Labour, is the former leader of the Labour group in the European Parliament and an ex-West Midlands MEP.

If elected he said he would protect front line policing from government cuts and prioritise victims' needs.

He also wants to "keep politics out of the police" and has promised to release details on how he would do this in the coming weeks.