

News story: Home Office funds PCCs to support further police and fire collaboration

Minister for Policing and the Fire Service Brandon Lewis has awarded £1 million from the Police Transformation Fund to 9 police and crime commissioners (PCCs) for their work in developing proposals to take on the additional responsibility for the governance of fire and rescue in their area.

The proposals are expected to bring about a fundamental shift to the way police and fire services work together, including sharing estates or back office functions. It follows a police-led process which saw funding recommendations made by the Police Reform and Transformation Board.

The PCCs who will receive funds are Sussex, West Mercia, Essex, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Hertfordshire, Gloucestershire, Staffordshire and North Yorkshire.

Minister for Policing and the Fire Service Brandon Lewis said:

Further collaboration between the 2 services presents a real opportunity to increase their efficiency and effectiveness – that's good for the public as whole.

PCCs taking on responsibility for fire and rescue services will lead to the same level of public accountability for both services. I am pleased to support those PCCs who are developing proposals to take on governance of local fire and rescue services.

The new provisions in the Policing and Crime Act 2017 enable PCCs to take on responsibility for the governance of local fire and rescue services where a local case is made. It brings the same direct accountability to fire as is already in place with policing and allows PCCs to drive reform, maximize the benefits of collaboration and ensure best practice is shared.

Several PCCs are developing proposals to take on governance of local fire and rescue services as the earliest adopters of the new governance provisions. Further PCCs are expected to bring forward proposals soon and the funding award will ensure that the work and knowledge gained is properly disseminated amongst the policing community.

Set up as part of the spending review in 2015, the fund, which is police-led through the Police Reform and Transformation Board, is designed to allocate extra investment to continue the job of reform and shape policing for the future. PCCs and chief constable representatives sit on the board alongside senior leaders in policing, with the final decisions on bids made by the Home

Secretary.

[Press release: Justice Secretary visits HMP Wayland to see reform in action](#)

- Elizabeth Truss thanks staff at HMP Wayland for their vital work in delivering major reforms to improve safety and turn prisoners lives around
- Follows the launch of Her Majesty's Prisons and Probation Service, giving governors greater autonomy to improve security and recruit staff
- Major recruitment drive across the prison estate as part of £100 million investment for 2,500 additional officers and specific funding for Wayland to tackle violence

Justice Secretary Elizabeth Truss, today (12 April 2017) paid tribute to the vital work of the Governor and staff at HMP Wayland as part of a nationwide tour of prisons to see reform in action.

The visit comes after the launch of Her Majesty's Prisons and Probation Service (HMPPS), a world-leading agency, which put governors firmly in the driving seat with the power and budget to determine how their prisons are run.

Since taking up post, the Justice Secretary has taken significant action to boost safety, announcing £100 million a year to recruit 2,500 prison officers to bolster the frontline and increase staff numbers.

A further £10 million has been invested for increased security measures in a number of prisons. HMP Wayland received a cash boost of over £200,000 which they are using to recruit new specialist staff to reduce violence as well as deterrents such as mobile phone detectors and improved CCTV.

Today the Justice Secretary sat down with the Governor and officers at HMP Wayland to hear first-hand how the reforms and security investment are helping to improve the prison.

Speaking after the visit, the Justice Secretary said:

I am committed to making prisons safe and decent places to live and work, reducing the risk of reoffending and in turn creating fewer victims of crime.

I have always been clear that as well as punishing offenders, our prisons must become places of safety and reform. We must do all we

can to give prisoners the best chance to turn their lives around.

I came to Wayland today to make sure staff know I'm committed to giving them the support they need to do their jobs safely and securely.

The Justice Secretary recently unveiled the landmark Prisons and Court Reform Bill which paves the way for prisons to take action against people who break the law and give offenders the vital skills they need to turn their backs on crime.

With prison governors being given greater control over how they run their establishments – a key commitment in the Prison Safety and Reform White Paper – Wayland is creating necessary links with local employers to help reduce the risk of reoffending. This will help transform the lives of offenders by getting them into employment, with training opportunities which have secured sustained job opportunities with local employers including Camden Boss.

In the coming months, the Justice Secretary and Prisons Minister Sam Gyimah will continue to visit prisons across England and Wales to maintain their discussions with prison officers and governors and see wholesale reforms in action.

[News story: World War 1 soldiers finally honoured after over a century](#)

In a moving ceremony at Hebuterne Military Cemetery in France, new headstones were dedicated to Lance Corporal (L/Cpl) James Thomas Spencer, Private (Pte) Joseph Turton Cleaver, Pte Walter Jennings and Pte Reuben Kimberley at a service arranged by the MOD's Joint Casualty & Compassionate Centre (JCCC) and led by the Reverend Justin Bradbury, Regimental Chaplain of The Queen's Royal Hussars.

Bob Bristow relative of of Pte Cleaver with Rev Justin Bradbury, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

All 4 soldiers were killed on 1 July 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme but their final burial location has until now been unknown. War Diaries from the Warwickshire Regiment provide evidence that 14 soldiers of the 1/7 Battalion were killed that day and whilst it was believed all were buried in Hebuterne Military Cemetery, it wasn't possible to confirm this positively for each individual.

However, a more recent review of the evidence, including historical records, has allowed JCCC to be able to say there is now firm evidence the 4 soldiers

are indeed buried at Hebuterne. Although it still hasn't been possible to confirm in which of the many unknown soldier's graves they are buried, the new headstones, provided by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), mean there is now a permanent memorial to them within the cemetery.

New headstones at Hebuterne Cemetery, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

All 4 men were from Coventry. Two of them, Pte Kimberley and Pte Cleaver, had been friends from childhood, joined the Royal Warwickshire Regiment together, served and later died together.

Rev Justin Bradbury conducting the service, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

Rev Justin Bradbury said:

It has been a privilege to conduct this rededication ceremony in such a beautiful cemetery and finally recognising their final resting place.

Nicola Nash, from the Joint Casualty & Compassionate Centre (JCCC), said:

We feel very lucky to have been able to attend such a moving ceremony for these four Warwickshire soldiers, made even more poignant that two were very close friends and died together on the first day of the Battle of the Somme.

[News story: Accelerating innovation with public and private investment: apply](#)

As a UK business you can apply for a share of £8.5 million in grants and venture capital investment for early stage feasibility projects.

The investment accelerator pilot by Innovate UK will provide UK companies with simultaneous grant funding and venture capital investment for early stage projects worth up to £8.5 million.

This competition aims to bring private investors into Innovate UK grant-funded companies earlier. It should give applicants greater confidence that investment will continue, remove the need to chase additional investment and

match funding, and award direct access to commercial acumen and market opportunities.

Funding available and eligible projects

There is £3 million of grant funding and £1.25 million of private equity investment for infrastructure systems projects. This includes:

- smart infrastructure
- energy
- urban living
- connected transport

A further £3 million of grant funding and £1.25 million of private equity investment is available for projects related to health and life sciences. This includes:

- agriculture
- biosciences
- health

Project requirements – what you need to know

We are looking to fund innovative high-risk projects and invest in companies that have real potential for growth. Single small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can win full project costs up to £150,000 for early stage feasibility studies.

We will assess applications using the standard assessment process. Investors will use their own assessment techniques. Both Innovate UK and the investor partner must identify a project as fundable before a grant is offered.

The investor partners

To apply you will need to choose an investor partner based on their interests for this competition. These are:

PDF, 1.37MB, 8 pages

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Competition information

- this competition opens on 8 May 2017, and the deadline for registration is 28 June 2017
 - projects should last up to 12 months and range in size up to total cost £150,000
 - single SMEs only should apply
 - a total of 100% of project costs will be provided
 - a [briefing event](#) will be held on 15 May 2017 for potential applicants
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[Press release: New crossing to provide transport and jobs stimulus](#)

A new crossing beneath the River Thames will unlock billions of pounds worth of economic benefit and create thousands of jobs, Highways England's Chief Executive said today as he welcomed the Government's announcement of the preferred route for a new Lower Thames Crossing.

Jim O'Sullivan said the new crossing east of Gravesend and Tilbury would improve journey times and dramatically increase capacity for traffic crossing the river east of London.

The existing Dartford Crossing, with the Dartford Tunnel and the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge, are the only way to cross the Thames by road east of London.

Highways England will be responsible for delivering the crossing, which will see a new tunnel constructed, easing pressure on the existing Dartford Crossing – currently the only road crossing of the River Thames east of London

The new crossing will be linked to the road network by a new road north of the river, which will join the M25 between junctions 29 and 30, and a new road south of the river which, will join the A2 east of Gravesend.

Highways England chief executive Jim O'Sullivan said:

This route will greatly improve journeys as well as unlocking more than £8 billion of economic benefits and create some 6,000 jobs.

The decision for a new crossing east of Gravesend and Tilbury is underpinned by years of studies, assessments and careful consideration of the record breaking response to our 2016 consultation. As we progress there will be further consultation and opportunities to be part of shaping the detail for the area, now

and for future generations.

The Dartford Crossing is already over capacity – the new Lower Thames Crossing will relieve this.

The scheme will cost £4.4 billion and the new 70mph, 13 mile route and crossing will improve journeys for drivers. Capacity for vehicles crossing the Thames east of London will increase by 70 per cent.

Around 55 million journeys are made each year on the Dartford Crossing, six million more than it was designed for, and it suffers from closures due to incidents almost daily. This announcement provides a huge boost for local businesses, of which many agree that the new crossing will help their business to grow and employ more people.

While the Dart Charge system has helped to relieve congestion, a new Lower Thames Crossing has been needed for some time.

More than 47,000 people responded to a consultation about the proposals last year, to help the Government reach this decision.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.