

Cabinet

25 September 2008



Policing Green Paper - From the neighbourhood to the national: policing our communities together.

Report of Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To inform Members of the key proposals within the Policing Green Paper.

Background

- 2 The Policing Green Paper forms part of the Home Office's wider Police Reform programme and provides further measures to push the programme forward. Underpinning this is the civil renewal agenda – the belief in strong, empowered and active communities. The government wants to create a police service which, working in partnership, is more responsive to local needs.
- 3 The paper provides proposals for police reforms that aim to give the police more freedom and power and the public more say and action on crime in their streets and neighbourhoods. Three recent key national reviews underpin the Policing Green Paper:
 - (a) Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime - Review by Louise Casey;
 - (b) Independent Review of Policing - Review by Sir Ronnie Flanagan;
 - (c) Communities in Control - Communities and Local Government (CLG).

Overview of the Policing Green Paper

- 4 The paper is structured around three key areas of police reform; Empowering Citizens, Professionalising and Freeing up the Police and the Strategic Role for Government.
- 5 This report will focus the area of 'Empowering Citizens' (Chapter One – Improving the connection between the public and the police) and the 'Strategic role for Government' (Chapter Seven – Improving Performance in Policing). The remaining sections of the Policing Green Paper relate specifically to how the police work in the future.

- 6 The three key areas highlighted for improving the public's sense of connection with, and confidence in, the police are:
- a) **Answerability** – the ways in which the police consult people about their priorities and actions
 - b) **Responsiveness** – ensuring that the police respond quickly and efficiently to people's concerns in a way that leaves them satisfied that their problems have been taken seriously and tackled wherever possible
 - c) **Structural accountability** – formal, institutionalised relationships, such as the role of a police authority in improving the performance of a police force.

Answerability

Working together locally

- 7 The reviews found that although there have been major improvements in partnership working, the work of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships is not always visible to the public at a neighbourhood level or sufficiently responsive to very local priorities. Both reviews agreed that the local council is the key partner for the police in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour issues.
- 8 The Policing Green Paper emphasises the importance of closer integration of neighbourhood policing with local council neighbourhood management approaches. Louise Casey's review proposes that for integration to deliver better services to the public the police need to focus on the 'policing' element and local government the 'neighbourhood' element – the review recommends that local authorities should lead on the preventative agenda of community safety.
- 9 The Home Office are to identify areas where effective partnership working at the neighbourhood level is already happening. Good practice will define a set of core principles, complemented by a degree of local flexibility to meet local needs. Consideration will need to be given to how service delivery and partnership working in County Durham is delivered post-LGR in respect of these core principles that the Home Office have identified:
- Strong leadership at strategic level to drive integration;
 - Clearly defined and agreed neighbourhoods;
 - Shared and publicly-negotiated local community safety priorities;
 - Shared information, feedback and communication processes;
 - Teams consisting of police, local authority and other relevant organisations – co-ordinated working to tackle problems effectively. If possible team members should work out of the same office;
 - Evidence-based deployment of resources;
 - Nominated officers in police forces and local authorities to act as contact points on joint action and drive integration of engagement and service delivery;
 - A neighbourhood lead (i.e. neighbourhood manager or co-ordinator);and
 - Strong joined up community engagement with local authority involvement at neighbourhood policing public meetings and vice-versa

(building on the success of Police and Community Together – PACT – meetings).

- 10 To underpin integration at the local level, the Home Office will support the use of participatory budgeting involving local community safety resources through pilot schemes this year. Views are being sought as to what extent police authorities might be able to allocate part of their budgets by participatory budgeting and what other community safety budgets could also be allocated in this way.
- 11 Reducing re-offending is an increasing priority for CDRPs and LSPs. The Green Paper proposes to add, by statute, Probation Trusts to the list of current 'responsible authorities' and also to expand the statutory duties of CDRPs to include reducing re-offending.

Visible Justice

- 12 The Justice Secretary is taking forward work on community sentencing. Greater use of uniforms for offenders is being considered and all 'unpaid work' will in future be called "Community Payback." There will also be an increasing role for neighbourhood policing teams in sharing with their communities' information about the outcome of court cases and what has happened to criminals convicted of local crimes with their communities. In order for visible justice to be effectively implemented across the county, close links with the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) public confidence and the CDRP public reassurance agendas will need to be maintained.

Linking the local and the serious

- 13 Police forces and partners are to develop a jointly owned action plan to prevent violent extremism in early 2009. This work is currently ongoing through the Counter Terrorism sub-group of the County Community Safety Board. Police forces are to receive additional resources to improve community engagement and counter-terrorism intelligence in support of the Government's PREVENT strategy; CDRPs have been identified as having a critical role to play in coordinating this multi-agency work.

Responsiveness

Our Pledge to the Public

- 14 The police service has agreed to commit to a new Policing Pledge setting out what the public can expect from the police nationally and at a local level. The national standards for accessible and responsive local policing will focus on customer service, neighbourhood policing, contact management and services to victims and witnesses. The roll-out of national standards and support to victims and witnesses will have a positive impact upon the public reassurance agenda currently being delivered by the Public Reassurance sub-group.
- 15 The Home Office are seeking views within the Policing Green Paper on how Councillor Call for Action might add value as part of the broader local accountability arrangements for crime and disorder in respect of the Policing Pledge and implementation of national standards. Councillor Calls for Action is a new power enabling local people to raise issues of

concern on local government and crime and disorder matters. The power will allow councillors to raise local concerns with the relevant member of the local CDRP. In extreme cases it would allow the local councillor to refer a concern to the relevant overview and scrutiny committee for further action.

Strengthening Local Accountability

Crime and Policing Representatives

- 16 The government are to legislate to reform police authorities in order to make them more democratic and more effective in responding to the needs of the local community. By 2010 reform of Police Authority membership is proposed so that the majority on each police authority will no longer be formed from local councillors, instead people throughout England and Wales will directly vote for “Crime and Policing Representatives” (CPRs) to represent their concerns locally. The representatives would be elected based upon CDRP boundaries.
- 17 The CPRs will sit on the local CDRPs and under the proposals in the Green Paper a CPR would chair the County Durham CDRP. Where a local area already directly elects a mayor this person will automatically become their local CPR.
- 18 The proposal that the CPR must chair the CDRP is a departure from the recent guidance published by the Home Office in ‘Delivering Safer Communities: a guide to effective partnership working.’ Strong strategic leadership is highlighted within the Hallmarks of Effective Practice, clearly identifying that transparent, local governance arrangements for electing chairs should be in place, ensuring that the person with the right level of experience and skills is elected.

Community Safety Fund

- 19 The Green Paper proposes the creation of a Community Safety Fund which would be made available to CPRs to enable them to address locally identified priorities. This fund will be created from the resources in the existing BCU Fund that Police Area Commanders have responsibility for. The CPR will have to consult CDRP partners and local people – suggested through participatory budgeting – on how best to spend the fund. The fund, to be managed by the Police Authority, could either be used at a CDRP level or delegated to the neighbourhood level.

Local Information

- 20 Forces will continue to publish local crime information via their websites, however, the Home Office is considering developing the use of more dynamic crime maps. These crime maps should be in place by December 2008 showing ward or neighbourhood level data. Work is ongoing in respect of developing a website for the new County Durham CDRP based upon the Sedgefield CDRP model which currently uses crime mapping. The partnership and police sites will need to link to ensure that consistent information is provided to the community.

Improving Performance in Policing

- 21 The government intends to reshape the performance management system for the police service and its partners to reflect the new challenges of the PSAs. Government Office will provide support to ensure that targets CDRPs have agreed on crime, alcohol and drugs through the LAA process are met, and any risk to national delivery of the PSAs is identified and addressed. Targets outside of the LAA process will not be set for CDRPs.
- 22 The removal of top down targets for police forces will have one exception. The Government expects to see a significant improvement in public confidence over the next three years, measured by **whether people think that the police and their partners are dealing with the crime and anti-social behaviour issues that matter locally**. Baselines will be set in October 2008 and each force will be required to meet demanding targets to improve public confidence.

Current Position

- 23 The County Community Safety Board is to receive a presentation on the Policing Green Paper to inform members of key proposals. A response to the consultation questions (Appendix 2) will be co-ordinated by the Board on behalf of partners in County Durham. The deadline for the consultation period is 10th October 2008.
- 24 Durham County Council will contribute to the proposals as part of the wider partnership consultation process, however, a corporate response to the consultation from the authority will need to be co-ordinated to feed into this process.
- 25 Arrangements are in hand to bring Members together to consider DCC's response (Provisionally arranged for 17.9.08).

Recommendations and Reasons

Cabinet is recommended to:

- (a) Note the contents of this report in respect of the proposals contained within the Green Paper.
- (b) Ensure that comments from Durham County Council are co-ordinated and fed into the wider partnership consultation response.
- (c) Consider whether a separate response should be submitted from Durham County Council, and, if so, to determine whether the response should be brought in to Cabinet on 9 October prior to submission.

Background Paper(s)

Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime, a Review by Louise Casey
The Review of Policing by Sir Ronnie Flanagan
DCLG - Communities in Control

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Appendix 1: Implications

Local Government Reorganisation (Does the decision impact upon a future Unitary Council?)

The closer alignment between Neighbourhood Policing and Neighbourhood Management proposed in the Policing Green Paper will need to be considered when the delivery structures for Area Action Partnerships and local delivery of Community Safety services in the new unitary authority council are considered.

Finance

The Green Paper is seeking views on placing the current BCU fund with a Community Safety Fund, some or all of which could be used for participatory budgeting. Views are also being sought on which other community safety funds could be used for participatory budgeting.

Staffing

Best practice identifies co-located police and local authority teams working at a neighbourhood level.

Equality and Diversity

No adverse implications.

Accommodation

Best practice identifies co-located police and local authority teams working at a neighbourhood level.

Crime and disorder

Crime and Disorder is the main focus of the report.

Sustainability

No adverse implications.

Human rights

The proposals are compliant with Human Rights legislation.

Localities and Rurality

No adverse implications.

Young people

No adverse implications.

Consultation

Consultation period ends 10th October 2008. A response will be co-ordinated by the County Durham Community Safety Board on behalf of partners across County Durham. Durham County Council will need to ensure that a corporate response is provided as part of that process.

Health

No adverse implications.