

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date:** 2 October 2008

**Subject:** Policing Green Paper “From the Neighbourhood to the National”

**Report of:** Director of Environmental Services

**Contact officer:** Ian Harrison 01942 828086

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**Purpose / summary:** To inform Cabinet of the views endorsed by the Community Protection Panel about the consultation on the Policing Green Paper “From Neighbourhood to the National” and to discuss and decide on an appropriate response.

**Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended:** To not submit a response to the consultation.

**Recommendation / decision:** That Cabinet approves the submission of the response as detailed under each individual consultation question at Appendix ‘A’ subject to any amendments it wishes to make.

**Risks / Implications:**

Financial:	n/a
Staffing:	n/a
Policy:	n/a
Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?	Not necessary at this stage as this is a response to first stage consultation on a national Green Paper.
Wards affected:	All

**Property Implications – Does the proposal involve a reduction, addition or change to the Council’s asset base or its occupation?**

No

**If yes, have the property implications been agreed with the Corporate Property Officer?**

**Does this proposal have significant implications for the Council and the local population?**

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

**Does this proposal involve a new policy or procedure or significant changes to an existing policy or procedure?**

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

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Has the Service Director - Borough Solicitor confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution?	<b>No</b>
Has the Service Director - Corporate Services confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget?	<b>No</b>
Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council?	<b>No</b>

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**For Cabinet reports only :**

Categorisation of the report:	<b>x</b>		<b>x</b>
Discussion leading to a decision		Discussion	<b>x</b>
Monitoring		Decision	<b>x</b>
Sharing for corporate understanding		Information	

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**Tracking/Process:**

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
15 September 2008		2 October 2008	

There are no Background Papers to this Report within the meaning of Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Proper Officer Martin Kimber

Date 17 September 2008

## **Background**

1.0 On the 17<sup>th</sup> July the Home Office issued a Policing Green Paper “From the neighbourhood to the national” and communicated to interested parties a consultation timeframe which ends on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

1.1 The purpose of the document is to outline ways in which policing can be improved and how it delivers to the public. The ideas contained in the report have come directly from the public and police officers, generated by events held as part of the “Review of Policing” conducted by Sir Ronnie Flannigan and the “Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime” review conducted by Louise Casey.

### **2.0 The Green Paper – Key Issues**

2.1 The paper focuses on seven key issues:-

- The local dimension, service standards and neighbourhood policing
- Reducing bureaucracy and red tape – making better use of technology
- Developing and Supporting Leadership
- Development and deployment of the workforce
- Providing government support for change
- Collaboration and co-operation across forces
- Performance management – improving public confidence.

2.2 The paper describes in each chapter what improvements it would like to achieve in relation to the Key Issues and sets out proposals for achieving those improvements. The paper concludes by highlighting that the Government is keen to hear fresh ideas from the public on how best to implement the proposals and provides details of the consultation process which is being conducted in line with the Government Code of Practice on Consultation.

### **3.0 Key Issues for Local Government -**

3.1 There are two chapters contained within the Green Paper that have greater impact and require greater consideration in terms of the proposals and how they affect Local Government. These chapters and the key issues arising from them are summarised below. The remaining chapters 2,3,4,5 and 6 are mainly concerned with internal organisational issues for the police force as a whole and as such may mean that it is difficult to form a considered view from an external standpoint. It is recommended that any consultation response is focussed on chapters 1 and 7 which directly impact on Local Government.

3.2 **Chapter One - Improving the connection between the public and the police.**

## **Summary**

- Ring fencing of funding for neighbourhood policing and PCSO's (Police Community Support Officers) to continue for a further three years, with PCSO's integrated into neighbourhood policing teams or deployed directly to support those teams.
- Greater standardisation in PCSO powers, training and uniforms.
- Work to integrate neighbourhood policing and neighbourhood management, to be delivered locally by police forces in conjunction with regional partners.
- The Home Office and CLG (Communities and Local Government) working with volunteer police forces and local authorities to pilot Community Safety Participatory Budgets in 2008.
- The addition of probation services to the list of responsible bodies under a duty to co-operate in tackling crime as part of CDRP's (Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership's), with CDRP's and CSP's (Community Safety Partnerships) having a duty to reduce re-offending.
- A "Policing Pledge" which sets out what the public can expect nationally and locally.
- How do Councillor Call for Action provisions in relation to Crime and Disorder matters compliment the other proposals highlighted?
- Reform of police authority membership by 2010 to create a majority of directly elected members from Crime and Policing representatives, retaining independent members and at least one councillor.
- Representatives to be elected on the basis of CDRP/CSP boundaries.
- Directly elected mayors to be automatic Crime and Policing Representatives
- Creation of Community Safety Funds (from the Basic Command Unit Funds) to allow local needs and priorities to be addressed.

### **3.3 Chapter Seven - Improving Performance in Policing**

#### **Summary**

- Police to be held to account much more at a local level through the "Policing Pledge" and directly elected Crime and Policing Representatives.
- Raise capacity of police authorities including introduction of independent inspection of police authorities from April 2009 with regulations to address under performance
- Continue Home Office support for CDRP's and CSP's in driving performance and ensuring LAA targets are met.
- A refocus of Home Office strategic issues, with the end of top down targets for individual forces.

- Removal of graded assessments from APACS (Assessment of Policing and Community Safety)
- One national target to remain with the Home Office setting targets for police and partners based on increasing public satisfaction in relation to crime and anti social behaviour.

### **3.4 Issues for further debate**

The majority of the proposals are welcome and support the locally developing agenda around empowering communities, improving public confidence and increasing satisfaction in how the council and police deal with crime and anti social behaviour issues.

The issues that may need to be debated further in order to achieve a considered view to inform the consultation response would appear to be:-

- Creation of directly elected crime and policing representatives
- The establishment of Community Safety Funds
- CDRP's and CSP's having a duty to reduce re-offending.

### **4.0 The Consultation Questions**

4.1 There are nine consultation questions in relation to Chapter One of the Green Paper. There are no consultation questions in relation to Chapter Seven. The full consultation paper and the full version of the Green Paper can be obtained from the Home Office website ([www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk)) and individual responses can be submitted.

4.2 The consultation questions and associated supporting comments in relation to Chapter One are reproduced at Appendix One of this report. Any response panel wishes to submit must be made by 10 October 2008. Panel may also wish to considered asking Cabinet to endorse its response and if so any submission would need to be submitted to Cabinet on or before 2 October 2008

### **5.0 Conclusions**

5.1 Panel has an opportunity to consider and agree or disagree with the suggested proposals for improving policing as contained within the Policing Green Paper. Panel also has an opportunity to suggest further ideas for improvement as part of its consultation response.

### **6.0 Recommendation/Decision**

- 6.1
1. It is recommended that Panel discuss and decide on an appropriate response to the consultation questions at Appendix One.
  2. It is further recommended that Panel consider if it would be appropriate to submit the suggested response to Cabinet for endorsement.



## Appendix One

# Empowering Citizens

## Chapter 1:

### Improving the connection between the public and the police

1. How can we best ensure that neighbourhood policing teams can hear from as many people locally as possible in shaping their plans?

*The Neighbourhood Policing Programme has been rolled out across England and Wales, giving every community access to a dedicated local team. The Neighbourhood Policing Team's role is to engage with their community so that the police can understand the community's priorities and tackle them. (Free response)*

**Response:-** Neighbourhood Policing in common with community safety work in general cannot be delivered by the police alone. It is therefore important that on a local basis there is a joined up approach to engaging with communities identifying their priorities and responding to them.

2. What is the most effective means of encouraging customer service in the police?

*The police service's customers are the general law-abiding public. However, people are also more individually customers of the police service – for example as victims, witnesses, or citizens. This experience of the police service shapes perceptions and feelings of safety and confidence. (Free response)*

**Response:-** As suggested in the Green Paper the development of a customer charter or policing pledge which sets out what the public can expect to be delivered would be a useful development although it would need to be accompanied by a clear and robust accountability process.

3. Given the core role of PCSOs – which is one of high visibility patrol, community engagement and problem solving - do PCSOs have the right powers to enable them to do their job?

*The current powers available to a PCSO can be found on page 18 of the main document. (Free response)*

**Response:-** A balance needs to be maintained in this regard. Communities value the core role of PCSOs. Whilst any additional powers to enable them to carry out those aspects of their work would be welcomed caution should be exercised in giving them additional powers which would add to bureaucracy or reduce their visibility within communities.

4. How can we ensure that police authorities and local authorities everywhere cooperate in tackling local people's priorities – including ensuring that the local pledge is delivered everywhere?

*The police are not solely responsible for crime and disorder reduction; it is important that they work alongside their partners such as the police authority, fire and rescue services, the local council and health trusts. It is important that they cooperate in order to make communities safe. (Free response)*

**Response:-** We have already highlighted the importance of working together in engaging together to identify and respond to local priorities. It does therefore appear appropriate that accountability processes are put in place on a locality basis.

5. What is the right balance between local council representation and independent members?

*Under these proposals police authorities will have a majority of directly elected members, complemented by representation from local councils and independent members. (Free response)*

**Response:-** We do not see any benefit in the proposal to directly elect members of Police Authorities from a local democracy perspective. The current arrangements allow for a clear link between Local Authorities and Police Authorities which appears to work well.

6. To what extent might police authorities be able to allocate part of their budgets by participatory budgeting?

*Participatory budgeting is when ordinary citizens are able to decide how to allocate elements of a budget. (Free response)*

**Response:-** Any flexibility with regard to budgeting would be welcomed however the decisions concerning participatory budgets should be made at a local level if the aim is to meet local priorities. The Local Area Agreement and related Area Based Grant process points towards the development of a more inclusive pooled budget arrangement which should extend to mainstream budgets.

7. What other community safety budgets do you think might be suitable to be allocated in this way? *(Free response)*

**Response:-** As at 6 above all relevant budgets should be included in a joint fund for local decision making based on local priorities

8. Do you consider the creation of the Communities Safety Fund to be the best way to use the money that currently makes up the BCU fund?

*The BCU Fund is currently used at Basic Command Unit level to help deliver crime and disorder reduction locally and promote partnership working. The Community Safety Fund will be available to Crime and Policing Representatives to allow them to address locally identified priorities. (Free response)*

**Response:-** Locally we have always aligned the BCU fund with other grant funding streams for collective CDRP decision making to address our priorities. We anticipated this fund would be included within the Area Based Grant and believe this should be the case.

9. How might the Councillor Calls for Action be best used to complement the broader changes to local accountability arrangements for policing?

*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 Councillor Calls for Action would 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. (Free response)*

**Response:-** As previously we suggest there is a need to strengthen local accountability processes with regard to policing and crime and disorder issues. In most cases this should enable issues to be raised and dealt with before any need to escalate to a Call for Action. However if an issue needs to be dealt with via a Call for Action and overview and scrutiny arrangements we do not see the rationale for dealing with policing and community safety matters differently from other issues of concern to local communities.