

COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM

Agenda Item 22
Brighton & Hove City
Council

Subject:	Response to consultation on the Home Office Green Paper: "From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing Our Communities Together"		
Date of Meeting:	6 October 2008		
Report of:	Director of Environment		
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Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

For General Release

1.0 Introduction and Purpose of this Report

1.1 The Home Office Green Paper has been released for consultation. Responses are required by 10th October 2008. The Paper is based upon the Review of Policing (Sir Ronnie Flanagan) and Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime (Louise Casey). The Sussex Police Authority and Sussex Police are to respond.

1.2 This paper aims to advise the Community Safety Forum and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) of the main proposals contained within the Paper, highlighting those in which Brighton & Hove City Council and the CDRP will have a particular interest and which are likely to have strategic or resource implications. A draft response to those particular proposals is also included in this paper.

1.3. It should be noted that although the Government are to publish further details of plans to implement these changes in the autumn, including progress towards a Policing and Crime Reduction Bill planned for the next session of Parliament, a number of key recommendations already have suggested implementation dates. These are set out at the end of this report.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the Community Safety Forum note in particular, the proposals summarised in section 4.0 of the report and the draft response set out in section 5.0 of the report. The Forum is asked to agree the draft response which rejects the Green Paper's proposals as described in 5.2: these are in relation to:

- arrangements for scrutiny (5.2.1 and 5.2.2)
- crime and policing representatives (5.2.3)
- chairing arrangements for the CDRP (5.2.4)
- use of the Basic Command Unit Fund (5.2.5)

2.2 That the Community Safety Forum consider other proposals described within the report and agree that if implemented, they would generally be a positive addition to the existing good practice arrangements of Brighton & Hove's CDRP.

3.0 Information

3.1 An improvement in public confidence and satisfaction in policing and in partnership work to reduce crime and improve safety is 'at the heart ' of the reform proposals which are set out in the seven chapters of the Green Paper.

4.0 Chapter 1. Improve the Connection between the Public and the Police

4.1 A new Policing Pledge and greater joining up of police, local authority and criminal justice agencies at neighbourhood level. A new Policing Pledge is proposed which will set out the 'Top Ten' Policing approaches that the review found the public want to see as well as service standards to be expected from the police (see appendices for the 'Top Ten' approaches and Service Standards).

4.2 The Policing Pledge builds on the success and infrastructure of Neighbourhood Policing Teams. The additional proposals confirm the importance of their accessibility and visibility and of local public neighbourhood policing meetings supported by local authority partners to enable identification of local priorities and provide feed back about action taken. (see appendix). The proposals also seek to embed neighbourhood policing into the broader management of local neighbourhoods.

4.3 There are further proposals about the value of local multi-disciplinary teams and/or co-ordinated partnership working with teams consisting of police, local authority and other relevant organisations, nominated officers in police and local authorities to act as contact points on joint

action, councils driving integration of community engagement and service delivery and strong joined up local authority involvement at neighbourhood level. The aim is to make overall progress and action more visible- by both the police and the CDRP and a greater understanding of the role of the local authority in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour.

4.4 The aim is to also require Neighbourhood Policing Teams to also be 'the face' of the wider criminal justice system providing increased visibility and information about appropriate custodial sentences, actions which 'make good the damage caused', about restorative justice. The wider aim is of course to increase public confidence in the justice system and provide reassurance that offenders have received consequences for their actions and 'community payback'.

4.5 An emphasis is placed on the value and role of Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) and ring fenced funding for PCSO's is confirmed for a further three years. While their preferred role is confirmed as engagement on high visibility patrols, reassurance, community engagement, problem solving, dealing with anti-social behaviour and quality of life issues as well as support to victims and vulnerable people, the Paper advises that further clarity is yet to be provided on standard and discretionary powers of PCSO's.

4.6 The Policing Pledge also focuses on the importance of achieving high quality treatment of and responses to, individual members of the public at all points at which they engage with services in a way that leaves them satisfied that their problems have been taken seriously and tackled wherever possible

4.7 It is also acknowledged that addressing local concerns before they become problems, removing the source of grievances and good dialogue and engagement increases trust and confidence and will also assist in the delivery of the building resilience (preventing) violent extremism priority.

4.8 Empowering individuals to play their part in tackling crime: these proposals are about encouraging reporting and personal responsibility for safety and behaviour, being a good parent, being neighbourly and playing an active part in the community. More support for community groups is expected as well local actions to increase the visibility of their work. The proposed creation of Information Packs (model packs being drafted by the Neighbourhood Crime and Justice Advisor) could assist in this

4.9 Improved structural and local accountability and direct elections by local people of local Crime and Policing Representative

4.10 The Paper identifies in particular, the lack of direct public participation in the selection of police authority members and perceives that as a result, if citizens are dissatisfied with the service they receive or the scrutiny of it – they have little means of redress.

4.11 The Home Office is therefore committed to introducing a stronger link between those responsible for delivering policing and the public they serve. Legislation is planned to 'make police authorities more democratic and more effective in responding to local needs'. The proposal is that the majority of members will no longer be councillors, that Independent Members will remain (at least one member a magistrate) and that at least one councillor will sit on each police authority in order to 'retain the link with local government'. However, there is also recognition that perhaps 'a number of councillors could also be invited to sit on the police authority'.

4.12 The public are to directly vote for individuals, known as Crime and Policing Representatives (CPR). Each CPR will be elected on the basis of current CDRP boundaries (where a local area already directly elects a mayor, this person will automatically be their local CPR). It is acknowledged that some councillors will stand as CPR's and 'that many of these will be successful. Their roles will include sitting on the Police Authority and ensuring that local issues are reflected at Force and Police Authority level. The paper states that 'this is likely to bring additional understanding of local government to the police authority'.

4.13 It is also proposed that the CPR's sit on local CDRP's and it is proposed that one of them also chair the CDRP.

4.14 Communication

More dynamic and interactive ways of enabling people to access local crime information is proposed: monthly crime information is to be published (relevant to the locality) about action that is being taken to tackle crime, contact numbers and details of local policing and CDRP/local authority policing teams. Community 'Crime Fighter Programme' and 'Crime Watch' style information packs are to be piloted with the aim of encouraging public activity in tackling crime.

4.15 Establishing Community Safety funds for local people to allocate to local priorities

The proposal is that the fund will allow Crime and Policing Representatives to directly address locally identified priorities. However, the fund is to be created from the resources in the existing Basic Command Unit Fund. The money is to be either held by the Police Authority or by the CDRP. There is acknowledgement that the money could be used to spend on core preventative or policing services.

4.16 Alongside that proposal, is the introduction of **Community Safety Participatory Budgeting**. That proposal to be piloted this year with a wider role out in 2009.

4.17 Building Resilience to (Preventing) Violent Extremism Terrorism.

CDRP's and LSP's have a major role to play in co-ordinating this multi-agency work

4.18 Councillor Call to Action: the provisions set out in the Police and Justice Act provide for 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.

4.19 In addition:

- Statutory duty for CDRP's to reduce re-offending and the Probation Service added to the list of Responsible Authorities
- Safer Schools Partnerships: parents and schools will be able to trigger a review of whether a Safer Schools Partnership would be appropriate for their school.
- Greater focus on youth crime and delivery of the Youth Crime Action Plan
- Neighbourhood policing teams also to meet the needs of local businesses
- More leadership expected from local authorities to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour with greater involvement from the Local Government Association and the Improvement and Development Agency

5.0 Draft response to proposals

5.1 We welcome:

5.1.2 building on the success of Neighbourhood Policing Teams and the role of Police Community Support Officers and we are already working towards greater integration of CDRP and local authority services at the point of delivery in neighbourhoods

5.1.3 The CDRP is working towards the delivery of community engagement within a city wide framework which is being developed by the local authority and which will offer some support to Neighbourhood Policing Teams

5.1.4 Our work to establish a network of Local Action Teams across the City, reporting into District wide Joint Action Groups and an Operational CDRP is a model which is consistent with the new proposals and we intend to speed up that development process

5.1.5 We will continue to support our strong partnership working within the CDRP, particularly where multi-agency problem solving and solutions are required

5.1.6 New work is required to increase the visibility of the CDRP and to communicate to the public the extent of actions that are being delivered to deal with crime and our achievements and good performance.

5.1.7 New work is also required to integrate within CDRP and Neighbourhood Policing activity, that of being 'the face' of the Criminal Justice system

5.1.8 We agree that initiatives such as local crime information packs and the Policing Pledge at neighbourhood level, offer good opportunities for developing and communicating service standards and engaging and informing local people within police and CDRP activity.

5.1.9 We understand and support the CDRP's role in developing and leading a multi-agency Preventing Violent Extremism Working Group and are taking forward this work and fully participating within Home Office (and GOSE) arrangements.

5.2 However we do not agree that

5.2.1 There is an absence of arrangements for the public to achieve scrutiny or redress. Brighton & Hove has an Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee which offers the public the opportunity to refer community safety matters for scrutiny, including those services which are a police responsibility. The arrangements for calling the police, local authority and CDRP to account are further extended with our long established Community Safety Forum at which representatives from Local Action Teams, Third Sector organisations, local constituency councillors, Police Authority members, Cabinet members and members of the public are able to have a direct dialogue and conversation about all policing and CDRP matters with senior police and CDRP officers. The proposed 'Councillor Call for Action' does not in our view add anything to what we consider are already satisfactory arrangements in place.

5.2.2 We are of the view that these arrangements achieve a high level of democratic involvement which extends to our councillor representation to the Police Authority. Those councillors are democratically elected.

5.2.3 While we would not object per se to Crime and Policing Representatives (CPR), we do not see the need for them and would not welcome the additional processes that would need to be put in place to manage their selection and need for ongoing support when resources are already strained.

5.2.4 We do not support a CPR chairing the CDRP. Our CDRP is currently chaired by the Chief Executive which we believe is appropriate to the level of strategic importance, the Chief Officer responsibility from the Responsible Authorities and the complexity of the matters that have to be resolved. The CDRP is a 'significant partner' to the Local Strategic Partnership which is chaired by a community representative and we are of the view that arrangement provides the appropriate level of community leadership.

5.2.5 While we understand and will support and deliver all proposals to enable local people to identify and have met, their local priorities we do not support the use of the Basic Command Unit Fund to allocate to those local priorities to the extent proposed. Resources available to the police and CDRP are reducing year on year and the Fund is allocated as a Partnership fund to deliver against the key policing, crime and safety priorities which are identified through the Strategic Assessment process and included within the Community Safety, Crime Reduction and Drugs Strategy. These priorities are the outcome of detailed crime and disorder analysis and of consultation with local people and communities of interest. We anticipate that the local priorities identified at neighbourhood policing level are more likely to require joint problem solving and targeting and co-ordinating the actions of existing mainstream (and CDRP funded) police and local authority services and any reduction in funds for those services or to facilitate local Participatory budgeting will weaken those services.

6.0 Chapter 2. Freeing Up the Police in order that they can address people's concerns: Reducing Bureaucracy and Developing Technologies.

6.1 The issues raised in this Chapter are for Sussex Police/Police Authority to respond.

6.2 The CDRP will be interested however in the outcome of the new target regime which focuses on bringing a greater proportion of the

more serious crimes to justice and offers its support in the achievement of these targets.

7.0 Chapter 3. Defining Roles and Leadership in the Police Service

7.1 The issues raised in this Chapter are for Sussex Police/Police Authority to respond.

8.0 Chapter 4. Development and Deployment of the Police Workforce

8.1 The issues raised in this Chapter are for Sussex Police/Police Authority to respond.

8.2 The CDRP note however, the outlined three year, Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Strategy and offers its support to the police in achieving its equality and diversity vision of 'a police service which has the trust and confidence of all communities and a service which reflects the communities it serves'

9.0 Chapter 5. Strategic Role for Government - Co-ordinating Change in Policing

9.1 The issues raised in this Chapter are for Sussex Police/Police Authority to respond.

9.2 The CDRP note however, that this chapter clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the Home Office and key national policing organisations as well as confirming that it is for local forces and CDRP partners to agree the neighbourhood element of the Policing Pledge and which crimes and local problems to target. The consultation questions ask if that is the correct level of responsibility proposed. Clearly it is up to local policing and CDRP partners to agree local priorities with local people and the CDRP welcomes the freedom proposed to be given to front line practitioners working in neighbourhoods to enable them to do that.

10. Chapter 6 . Reinforcing collaboration between forces.

10.1The issues raised in this Chapter are for Sussex Police/Police Authority to respond. .

10.2 The CDRP notes however, that the intention is for greater collaboration in tackling serious and organised crime and terrorism and for those to be increasingly undertaken as part of mainstream policing and to further underpin local policing and partnership work.

10.3 The CDRP also welcomes the proposals for the creation of new national structures which aim improve the management and sharing of information at regional and local level . This is of particular relevance to our Safeguarding responsibilities (improved protection of children and adults), partnership work (Operation Reduction) in tackling the availability of Class A drugs and partnership work to build resilience (prevent) violent extremism.

10.4 In the delivery of this aim, the CDRP notes the importance placed on the development of community intelligence with the aim of building a comprehensive picture of local information which can help inform police decisions as to where interventions can be most effective. Some initiatives are already in place within Brighton & Hove's CDRP such as regular Drug Intelligence meetings. The structure of the Local Action Teams and Joint Action Groups have the potential to further assist in the creation of street based information and neighbourhood profiles.

11. Chapter 7. Improving Performance in Policing

11.1 This Chapter focuses on changes to the ways in which performance management of outcomes is delivered. The changes reflect the Home Office views and those at the heart of the Green Paper, which are that **public confidence is the critical issue and that the Government wish to move to a system in which the police service is held to account much more at local level.**

11.2 Firstly then, the intention is described to scale back the Home Office role to performance manage police forces and instead to achieve that through the goals expressed in the new Public Service Agreements to tackle crime and terrorism, improve criminal justice and raise confidence. In particular they are:

- PSA 23 'make communities safer, reducing levels of serious violent crime and serious acquisitive crimes, increasing confidence on local crime reduction agencies and reducing re-offending
- PSA24 Deliver a more effective, transparent and responsive criminal justice system for victims and the public, increasing public confidence in the fairness of the system and delivering better standards of service for victims and witnesses
- PSA 25 Reduce the harm caused by alcohol and drugs, improve the level of effective treatment for drug users thereby reducing the harm to communities and as a result for associated crime,

disorder and anti-social behaviour and for the first time extending this focus to alcohol abuse

- PSA 26 reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from international terrorism , stopping attacks , mitigating their impacts and tackling violent extremism

11.3 The aim is that the Home Office will not set targets for police forces or CDRP's outside of the Local Area Agreement process. Iquanta will be reshaped to avoid the impression that the relative benchmarks contained within it represent implicit targets. APAC's will remain (they are already linked within PSA/CDRP performance management) but there will no longer be graded assessments under this (currently interpreted by some as 'de facto' targets).

11.4 Instead, the Governments expectation of a significant improvement in public confidence over the next three years is reflected in their move to propose a single top down numerical target for police forces, measured by the PSA indicator from the British Crime Survey that asks whether people think that the police and their partners are dealing with the crime and anti-social behaviour issues that matter locally.

11.5 To drive and track progress and evaluate where action is making a difference, the Government therefore intends this autumn, to set demanding targets on this one measure for all police forces. Based on force level baselines available in October 2008, an improvement will be expected in every area and forces with the lowest levels of public confidence will be expected to make greater improvements than the rest.

11.6 The increased role for local people, CDRP's and police authorities to participate in performance management, to hold to account to a greater extent and to focus more on public confidence is proposed to be achieved through:

- The annual publication of crime data and police activity to also include public confidence data and the CDRP's role in successfully preventing crime (see chapter 1)
- Removing barriers to data exchange
- The policing pledge and the publication of local information on crime, police and CDRP activity (see chapter 1) which means the public will be better informed about the level of service that is being delivered
- Using better the information that local communities have to hold the police service to account by being able to directly elect representatives onto police authorities (see chapter 1)

- Raising the capacity and influence of police authorities to hold forces meaningfully to account through guidance an improvement, training and skills for members
- Strengthening partnership working further and delivery through and by CDRP's and support to ensure that the targets within the LAA process are met and that any risks to national delivery of the PSA's are identified and addressed
- A more hard hitting role in performance monitoring through the HMIC, inspection programmes for police forces and authorities, followed up by detailed action plans and other measures .
- An increased role in improving public confidence in justice as set out in the 'Justice for All' PSA.

11.7 The Home Office is therefore to 'scale back' its performance management of police forces and refocus on strategic issues such as securing the successful delivery of the PSA's and supporting new problem solving approaches such as recent initiatives to tackle gangs and knife crime. As stated, the Home Office will operate through the Local Area Agreement process and ensure that any risks to successful delivery are speedily addressed.

12.0 Implementation

- The government are to publish further plans in the autumn, including progress towards a Policing and Crime Reduction Bill planned for the next session of Parliament .
- The dropping down of police targets will be implemented this summer
- The provision of regular local information on crime and policing activity will be nationwide by the end of the year
- Discussions are beginning on the publics view of the Policing Pledge which is to be introduced by the end of this year
- By 2010 it is aimed that the public will be able to elect the majority of the members of their police authorities.

13 FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

13.1 Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications.

Finance Officer Consulted: Jill Spedding Date: 25/09/08

13.2 Legal Implications:

There are no legal implications

Lawyer Consulted: Simon Court

Date: 25/09/08