

Contact Plan 2009/12



CONTENTS	PAGE
CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD	2
THE ROLE OF THE AUTHORITY IN COMMUNITY CONTACT	3
AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF COMMUNITY CONTACT	3
CONFIDENCE & SATISFACTION	4
UNDERSTANDING OUR COMMUNITIES	5
PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM	5
WORKING WITH PARTNERS	5
THE CONTACT CYCLE	6
Communication (Telling)	8
Consultation (Asking)	8
Community Involvement (Influencing)	9
Conversing (Giving Feedback)	9
THE AUTHORITY'S KEY MESSAGES FOR COMMUNITY CONTACT	10
TARGET AUDIENCES (Who we will contact)	11
METHODS OF CONTACT	14
MONITORING	15
BARRIERS	15
APPENDICES	
1. Statutory Duties	16
2. Policing Pledge	20

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to introduce Cheshire Police Authority's Contact Plan which describes how the Authority will communicate, consult and engage with the people who live and work in Cheshire over the next three years.

It is important that the Authority represents all the people that it serves when carrying out its duty to ensure that Cheshire Constabulary delivers an efficient and effective police service.

The Authority has a statutory duty to consult with citizens about policing services in order to develop policies and determine priorities, therefore, the Authority will ensure that the views, needs and expectations of communities are taken into account in all policy development processes throughout the Constabulary and Authority business. By enhancing mechanisms for local accountability, the Authority aims to enable local people to have a real role in setting the policing priorities and to have the means to rigorously hold the police to account for delivery.

In order for people to formulate informed opinions and make educated choices, the Authority will ensure that communication processes are in place for communities to have sufficient access to information regarding the delivery of local policing, the decision-making processes that supports it, and how they can express their views, needs, expectations and disappointments.

This Plan explains how we aim to better coordinate how we engage with the public and communities - based on our belief that:-

- all communities should be involved in the decisions that affect them;
- all communities deserve high quality policing services, shaped around their needs; and
- policing policies and strategies should reflect local priorities, requirements and aspirations.

This Plan recognises the diversity of our communities and the need to provide appropriate opportunities for people to participate at whatever level they wish to influence service delivery, decision making and policy development. The Plan aims to address the concerns of the public and improve their confidence and satisfaction in the way policing is delivered.

We are committed to the national Policing Pledge which sets out the standards of service the public should expect from the police. We will continue to reduce crime and disorder by working in partnership with the public and other key stakeholders and creating strong communities in which people feel safe.

Margaret Ollerenshaw

Margaret Ollerenshaw
Chairman

THE ROLE OF THE AUTHORITY IN COMMUNITY CONTACT

The Authority has a statutory duty to engage the community in a number of areas, as outlined in Appendix 1. In addition, there are areas of work which are important to improve the delivery of policing services and enable the Authority's role of monitoring and scrutiny of services. In broad terms, the areas about which the Authority will contact the community are:-

- The role of the Authority
- Confidence in and satisfaction with policing services
- Policing priorities
- Budget and council tax precepts for policing
- Performance and use of resources
- Investment and development activity
- Promotion of the policing pledge, see Appendix 2
- Complaints
- Quality of service, confidence and satisfaction levels
- Equality and Human Rights
- Stop and search
- Neighbourhood policing and public reassurance
- Independent custody visitors
- Serious and major crime
- Preventing violent extremism

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF COMMUNITY CONTACT

The aim of community contact is to ensure processes are in place for communities to have sufficient access to information regarding the delivery of local policing and how they can express their views, needs and expectations.

The objectives of the Contact Plan are to:-

- increase the knowledge and understanding of citizens and Constabulary staff about the role and responsibilities of the Authority;
- ensure that the Authority's policies and decisions are, where appropriate, informed by the needs and expectations of the public, the business community, partner agencies and staff;
- reach a broad cross-section of people, representative of the population and identify public priorities in order to influence the delivery of policing services;
- ensure that community contact takes into account the differing needs of diverse communities;
- develop multi-agency approaches in order to support effective engagement, information sharing and partnership working;
- gather views and opinions about policing standards and quality of service;
- ensure arrangements are in place to support and oversee the consultation and community engagement activity of the Constabulary;
- support the Constabulary in improving policing services; and
- assist the Authority in working towards maintaining an effective and efficient police service for the people of Cheshire.

UNDERSTANDING OUR COMMUNITIES

In order for effective contact to take place, the Authority will seek to ensure that it has a comprehensive understanding of the communities within the policing area.

The Authority will:-

- capitalise on the skills, experience and networks that Members bring as representatives of the community;
- work with the Constabulary and partners to gather and share data in relation to the make-up of local communities to help tailor consultation, engagement and information provision in an effective manner;
- support the Constabulary in the delivery of a tiered sustainable approach to the delivery of local policing;
- represent the views of the citizens of the whole policing area;
- have an understanding and awareness of community intelligence to support the development of the `Rich Picture` to enable the identification of individuals vulnerable to violent extremism and use this to monitor policing interventions; and
- Members will engage with the delivery of policing at a neighbourhood level by working with local officers in the Neighbourhood Policing Unit to which they are each assigned.

PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

The Authority has a number of statutory responsibilities and a key role in contributing to the objectives of the Prevent, counter-terrorism agenda. Community contact regarding preventing violent extremism will form a key part of the Authority's activity and will work with the police service and partners at regional and national level to meet its obligations within the agenda.

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

The Authority will work with the Constabulary and partners to establish areas of mutual interest in relation to community contact. The activity and outcomes of community contact will be shared where appropriate to influence Local Area Agreements and the Comprehensive Area Assessment.

Requirements are placed on partners under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to have mechanisms in place to consult, engage and communicate with communities.

"Delivering Safer Communities: A guide to effective partnership working" sets out the regulations defined in the Police and Justice Act 2006 for crime and disorder reduction partnerships which came into effect on 1 August 2007. The regulations state that the interaction between partnerships and their communities is an important theme running through all the new statutory requirements and the six 'hallmarks' of effective partnerships:-

- empowered and effective leadership;
- visible and constructive accountability;
- intelligence led business processes;
- effective and responsive delivery structures;
- engaged communities; and

- appropriate skills and knowledge.

Partnerships are required to seek the participation of communities in their work and there is requirement for partners to share information gained from consultation and engagement activity. This matches the new role under the duty to “consult and involve” set out in the Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

The Authority will seek to work in partnership to conduct joint engagement activity, for example:-

- ‘Have Your Say’ meetings will continue to be offered to Crime and Disorder Reduction partnerships as “Face the People” meetings as stipulated in the Police and Justice Act 2006;
- Collaboration in Area Committees and Boards as appropriate;
- Inclusion of relevant Local Area Agreement satisfaction indicators in Authority surveys;
- Organisation of joint consultation events; and
- Sharing of information gained from public engagement.

However, communities should also understand the role of the Authority as distinct and different from the services provided by other partners and the partnership as a whole. In that respect, the Authority will communicate with communities separately from partners when appropriate and will seek to establish joint mechanisms wherever possible.

As a “responsible” Authority, the targets and objectives cited in partnership arrangements such as Local Area Agreements, Children and Young People’s Plans and Local Public Service Agreements will be considered in all community contact activity.

THE CONTACT CYCLE

Throughout this Plan, the term “contact” has been used to describe the cyclical approach to community engagement that we will take to communication, consultation, community involvement in influencing Authority decisions and providing feedback. All of these are key drivers to improving policing services.

The Authority works within a framework of belief that policing must be more open, transparent and provide a greater means for consumers (those who benefit from, use, pay for and are affected by policing) to have more input into the process. This involvement of the public and partner agencies in shaping or delivering priorities signals a fundamental shift from simply ‘policing by consent’ towards ‘policing by participation’.



Our aim is to focus on the public's local needs and deliver efficient and effective services that provide value for money whilst balancing these factors against national targets and local priorities.

Effective community contact will assist the Authority in ensuring that the priorities of local people translate into strategy and decision making. Community engagement means ensuring that everyone in the policing area is given the opportunity to comment on the services provided for them and on the organisation's priorities. It also means involving them in influencing decisions that will improve their quality of life.

Contact will involve individuals, voluntary and community organisations and public sector bodies working together to address local issues.

We believe that a community consists of many diverse groups be they based on ethnicity, gender, age, disability, location or interest. Each community will have different wants and needs that have to be balanced against Government priorities and policing intelligence.

The Authority will work with the Constabulary and partner agencies to:-

- inform the community about the issues that affect them;
- ensure the priorities of the community are considered in decision making;
- reduce consultation fatigue;
- share information about customers and communities;
- improve quality of life and services for local people;
- listen to communities and ensure feedback to participants about the outcomes of consultation and engagement;
- provide variety and flexibility and choice in community engagement activities; and
- listen and learn from our own and others' experience and share community engagement skills and knowledge, putting the citizen's views at the heart of decision-making.

COMMUNICATION (Telling)

The Authority will provide residents and communities with information about policing services, including how to access them, their performance, future changes, and progress on issues affecting them. This includes activities such as newspaper and radio articles, the Policing Plan, Local Policing Summary, posters and leaflets and oral presentations delivered in public meetings. Communication is a one way process to impart information where input from the community only occurs if an individual chooses to contact the Authority in response to what they have learned.

As part of statutory duties, the Authority is required to produce information relating to different aspects of police business and ensure that the public have regular and consistent information regarding the following:-

- information about who to contact in what circumstances, including how to report crime and anti-social behaviour (including information on relevant local partners agencies);
- contact information of local neighbourhood teams, headquarters and the Authority;
- information about how to make a complaint against the police;
- information about how members of the public can express their views on local crime and anti-social behaviour, police response to local issues, local or force-wide priorities and strategies and budget issues; and
- an overview of the Constabulary priorities and objectives; and
- how well the Constabulary is performing.

CONSULTATION (Asking)

Consultation is a means to gather the views and opinions of the community. Consultation activity will relate to a decision that the Authority intends to take, where the views of a community must be taken into account. This includes activities such as public meetings, surveys, focus groups and workshops. Input from the community is greater than for information giving in that they provide information or attend an event to express their views.

The Authority will adopt the Government's code of practice on consultation and will:-

- consult widely, allowing a minimum of 12 weeks for written consultation at least once during the development of a policy.
- be clear about our proposals, who may be affected, what questions are being asked and the timescale for responses.
- ensure that consultation is clear, concise and widely accessible.
- give feedback regarding the responses received and how the consultation process influenced the policy.
- monitor the effectiveness of consultation methods
- ensure that consultation follows best practice, including carrying out Impact Assessments when appropriate

On a strategic level, the Authority must consult communities on a number of issues, including:-

- Identifying local priorities
- budget decisions
- assessing levels of satisfaction with performance and against priorities
- monitoring levels of satisfaction and confidence in the police service
- thematic issues, e.g. stop and search
- understanding the views, needs and expectations of the public in relation to specific key issues/priorities

'Have Your Say' public meetings will focus on the strategic issues affecting policing. This will allow local problem solving to be conducted at neighbourhood level with local officers at Community Actions Meetings, police surgeries etc.

The Authority will take into account the range of consultation mechanisms already in place both nationally (e.g. through the British Crime Survey, Place Survey and other national surveys), within the Constabulary (e.g. user satisfaction surveys), and through partners (e.g. Sustainable Community Strategies).

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (Influencing)

Involvement is when people are able to influence the design, development and direction of activity and services together with the Authority, Constabulary or our partners. This results in the people who use services having a say in decisions about how and by whom services are delivered and monitored. This requires more input from the community as people will need to play an active role within the decision making process for example by being a member of a steering group or regularly attending a Community Action Meeting or 'Have Your Say' meeting when consultation results in a change of policy or service delivery. This may be extended to include responsibility for the community to deliver the activities, actions and services agreed by the decision-making body.

CONVERSING (Giving Feedback)

It is important that communities feel their views are taken into account in a way that meets their expectations. The Authority will consider how expectations can be managed to ensure that the public understand the limitations around the area or issue they are being consulted or engaged on are understood.

Although it is helpful for those people directly involved and consulted to be provided with feedback, it is also beneficial to provide all communities with consistent messages about how public views have impacted decision-making and policy development, which in turn encourage and promote the advantages of engaging and responding to consultation.

Giving feedback to the community about what decisions have been taken as a result of their information or involvement closes the circle, leads to greater trust and confidence and strengthens future engagement activity. Feedback may be face to face or through communication methods, immediate or following a period of reflection and decision making.

THE AUTHORITY'S KEY MESSAGES FOR COMMUNITY CONTACT

All Authority contact with communities will be set in the context of raising the profile and awareness of the Authority's roles and responsibilities.

For example, when undertaking a consultation exercise, members of the community will be influenced by the content, tone, and other factors of the consultation exercise to form opinions about the Authority and potentially related issues such as the volume of crime in their local area. They may also relate the consultation to an article they recently read in the local press which also mentioned the Authority, and may remember the consultation when they next access the internet, perhaps searching on the Authority website.

Whilst this approach provides a more sustainable framework for community engagement it will remain viable only if activity is undertaken alongside partners.

The key messages that will be implied or explicit in all forms of community contact are:

Improving Policing Services

- The Authority's purpose is to improve policing services by securing an efficient and effective police service.

Independent Governance

- That the Authority aims to be representative of the public
- That on behalf of the community, the Authority holds the Constabulary to account

Finance

- That the Authority determines the police budget and council tax precept for policing
- That the Authority allocates the resources available with needs and ensures value for money

Involvement

- That the Authority listens to the people of Cheshire and this influences the objectives which the Constabulary work towards
- That by engaging with the Authority, citizens can influence policing service delivery
- That the Authority monitors complaints against the police and will pursue issues brought to members' attention as appropriate

Partnership

- The Authority works in partnership with statutory and voluntary organizations, which also have an interest in improving quality of life for the resident and transient population.

TARGET AUDIENCES (Who We Will Contact)

Some contact methods are effective as a broadcast medium for communicating with “the general public”. However, more effective contact can be achieved by targeting specific groups and using the most relevant methods to convey different messages and achieve different aims.

Contact with each of these groups will be tailored to their specific needs using innovative and creative methods. For example, we may wish to target opinion leaders and lobbyists to challenge decisions taken by Government or the Home Office. We may wish to make victims of poor service more aware of how to make a complaint when the Constabulary process has failed. We may wish to convey a particular message to a geographic area or community or we may wish to ask a particular community group about their experiences and how the policing services could be improved.

The public can be broadly categorised into six segments which are outlined below, however, there may often be crossover between the groups or occasions when we will target within a group or contact more than one or several groups.

GROUP A Internal Stakeholders

In an environment of continuous change and a need to achieve improved efficiencies and effectiveness across the force, there is an ever-increasing need to provide meaningful and effective internal communications through planned strategies and tactics. This is key to keeping staff informed, creating opportunity for feedback and enabling them to do their jobs to the best of their ability. The Authority supports the Internal Communications Plan implemented by the Constabulary and will seek to reinforce and not conflict with its key messages.

In addition, the Authority will communicate and engage with staff about its role, purpose and in order to influence decision making processes.

GROUP B Opinion Formers / Messengers

Opinion formers and messengers are those organisations who communicate messages on our behalf, make policy decisions which affect the delivery of service or to whom communities go to gather information about public services.

Perceptions about the Authority can be greatly influenced by them and they have the potential to communicate negative messages if not engaged with appropriately in decision making.

GROUP C Opinion Leaders

Opinion leaders have greater sway than opinion formers and when making decisions about policing objectives, budget or council tax precepts, they need to be engaged early enough to influence the passage of those decisions.

GROUP D Communities

Government Office North West estimates that there are over 400 groups of community representatives in the policing area. Many are self appointed community interest groups, others work for organisations, who by their nature have the ear of large segments of the population. Contact with these groups will take place when required but they are also an important means of communicating key messages to a wide audience. These community group can be separated into those who are nominated or elected to represent the views of others or those who are able to act as the voices of others through specialist service delivery.

GROUP E Consultees

There are several groups of individuals with whom we may consult face to face or by survey. The Authority will contact these groups when appropriate to influence decision making. However, particular attention will be paid to developing the relationship between the Independent Advisory Group who may be asked to provide feedback about policing in general, or in relation to specific functions such as stop and search or policies such as equality schemes or the Independent Custody Visitors Scheme.

The limitations of these groups are recognised. The Authority will not rely solely on this mechanism to consult or engage particular communities and should be supported by other processes to gain the views of diverse groups.

GROUP F Diverse Groups

There is an identified need to increase contact with diverse communities and targeted community segments which find it more challenging to access or influence policing services.

The table below provides examples of the organisations and groups of individuals by group. This is not an exhaustive list and different organisations within the groups may be contacted for specific reasons.

GROUP A INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS	GROUP B OPINION FORMERS/MESSENGERS	GROUP C OPINION LEADERS
Volunteers Police staff PCSOs Police Officers UNISON Police Federation Women's Network Cheshire LGBT Cheshire Black Police Association Cheshire Christian Police Association	Media 3 rd sector (voluntary, community faith and social enterprise groups) Homewatch co-ordinators Chief Executives Libraries Citizen's Advice Bureaus Comunity Services	MEPs Members of Parliament Cheshire Association of local Councils Local Government Association Councillors Chambers of Commerce Cheshire & Warrington Economic Alliance
GROUP D COMMUNITIES	GROUP E CONSULTEES	GROUP F DIVERSE GROUPS
REPRESENTATIVES Residents Associations Youth Parliament Govenors' Associations Parent/Teachers Associations Trades Unions Student Unions Parish Councils VOICES Victim Support Women's Institute Polish Association Chester Asian Council Cheshire Ethnic Women's Group Cheshire older people's network Warrington older people's engagement Group Age Concern Cheshire Disabilities Federation Cheshire Community Action	'Have Your Say' attendees Young People's Panel Independent Advisory Group Constabulary Citizens Panel Council Citizen's Panels Key Individual Networks Custody Visitors Cheshire Halton and Warrington Race Equality Council PARTNERS Cheshire East Council Cheshire west & Chester Council Halton Borough Council Warrington Borough Council Local Strategic Partnerships Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships Children's Trusts Drug Action Teams Youth Offending Teams, NHS Trusts, Fire & Rescue Services Registered Social Landlords Connexions Cheshire Domestic Abuse Partnership Courts Service Probation Services Crown Prosecution Service	People with a disability Gypsies Travellers Victims of crime Faith Groups Older people Young People Parents /carers Homeless Education (schools & colleges) Businesses Migrant Workers Unemployed Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities Black and minority ethnic communities

METHODS OF CONTACT

The following methods will be use to communicate, consult with, involve and converse with the public of Cheshire.

External	
Publications	The Authority will report the policing objectives, budget, Constabulary performance and the role of the Authority using publications delivered to all households and key locations throughout the policing area twice per year. These will include the Local Policing Summaries.
Council Tax Leaflet	Delivered to all households annually
Policing Plan	An annual, three year plan which sets out the direction for the police service published on the website and sent to key opinion leaders.
Website and e.policing	The Authority website will be developed and reviewed to communicate with and involve the public.
Press Releases	Local & National newspapers, TV and radio to publicise the role of the Authority, Constabulary performance and development and engagement activity as required.
Media Interviews	Interviews, quotes provided at the request of media
'Have Your Say' public meetings	The Authority will consult with the public at 'Have Your Say' meetings in each policing area, every 4 months about the strategic issues affecting policing such as:- the budget, policing priorities, council tax precepts and other areas of police business as required .
'Have Your Say' newsletters	Circulated to a database of meeting attendees, stakeholders, libraries, press and website
Posters & Leaflets	Circulated to libraries, Citizen's Advice Bureaus, police stations, Key Individual Networks, Watch co-ordinators, parish councils etc
Partner Newsletters	Articles will be developed for partner agency publications
Meetings	For particular audience group e.g. Chambers of Commerce, Independent Advisory Group, Staff Associations, MPs etc
Surveys	The Authority will use the Young People's Panel, Constabulary's Citizen's Panel and the Independent Advisory Group as a minimum to conduct postal, telephone and web enabled surveys to ask questions and gather views about a particular subject e.g. council tax, budget, policing priorities etc.
Focus Groups	To discuss a specific subject/issue i.e. policing services, activity or used to evaluate a method e.g. public meetings. Maximum 15 attendees as required
Workshops	As per Focus Groups to reach up to 80 participants
Conferences	To communicate a key message to a group of target stakeholders. 200 delegates
Road Shows	Use of the exhibition vehicle to visit communities and engage in face to face contact to inform the policing objectives

Internal	
Looking Glass	Maintenance of Police Authority area of intranet
Catalyst	Regular articles for all staff and officers
Presentations	Police staff induction and probationer training
Authority Notice Board	Staff, officers and visitors
e.mail	Global e.mails to all staff and officers

MONITORING

As part of the ongoing scrutiny process, the Authority will monitor the methods and outcomes of community contact, with recommendations for change at Engagement Committee. In addition, in exercising its duty to secure the maintenance of an efficient and effective police service, the Authority will scrutinise the Constabulary's communication and engagement processes and outcomes.

BARRIERS

The Authority recognises that there are barriers to effective engagement to overcome such as low response rates to postal questionnaires – questionnaires will be used only as part of the overall consultation strategy, and will be used to target specific groups on particular issues, often at short notice, when other forms of consultation are not practical;

Wherever possible the Authority will ensure that wherever there is an identified need, contact will be made in accessible formats and using appropriate language.

Consultation apathy will be taken seriously. The public must feel that their views have been considered seriously if they are to be encouraged to come forward and offer further views. Feedback must be given to ensure the public are kept abreast of developments;

Overall, engagement is the key to success. Wherever possible, citizens will be encouraged to take action to improve their local environment, quality of life and work with the police and partner agencies to do so.

APPENDIX 1: STATUTORY DUTIES FOR POLICE AUTHORITIES IN COMMUNICATION, CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

GENERAL FUNCTIONS OF POLICE AUTHORITIES

The Police Act 1996 Section 3 states that “every police authority shall secure the maintenance of an efficient and effective police force for its area” and was amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006 Section 7 to add “and shall hold the chief officer of police of that force to account for the exercise of his functions and those of persons under his direction and control.”

These two statements imply a duty on police authorities to communicate or consult with the public about any matter which may improve the efficiency or effectiveness of the police service or increase accountability to the people which it serves.

However, legislation makes communication, consultation and engagement a specific duty of the Police Authority in the following areas:-

COUNCIL TAX PRECEPTS

Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 states that precepting bodies should consult each financial year about the authority’s proposals for expenditure.

OBTAINING THE VIEWS OF THE COMMUNITY ON POLICING

The Police Act 1996 Section 96 states that arrangements shall be made for each police area for obtaining:-

- the views of people in that area about matters concerning the policing of the area, and
- their co-operation with the police in preventing crime in that area.

Paragraph 30 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 amends section 96 of the 1996 Act to extend the duty on police authorities to cover the making of arrangements for seeking the cooperation of the community in preventing anti-social behaviour in addition to the prevention of crime.

LOCAL POLICING OBJECTIVES

The Police Act 1996 Section 7 states that “every police authority shall, before the beginning of each financial year, determine objectives for the policing of the authority’s area during that year.

Before determining objectives under this section, a police authority shall:-

- consult the chief constable for the area; and
- consider any views obtained by the authority in accordance with arrangements made under section 96.

COMMUNICATION

The documents and reports required to be published by the Authority are laid out below. In summary, Policing Plans will have to be produced every three years along with policing strategies and published to auditors and the Home Secretary. Details about the arrangements for this are still to be issued.

Local Policing Summaries must be produced on an annual basis to every household and under the Local Government Act 1999 there is a statutory obligation to publish an annual audited report of accounts.

LOCAL POLICING SUMMARIES

Section 8A of the Police Act 1996 (as inserted by the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005) requires police authorities to produce local policing summaries and distribute them to every household on at least an annual basis.

POLICING PLANS

The Police Act 1996 Section 8, amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006 (6zb) states that;

Before the beginning of each financial year every police authority shall issue a plan (a “policing plan”) setting out—

- the authority’s objectives (“policing objectives”) for the policing of its area during that year; and
- the proposed arrangements for the policing of that area for the period of three years beginning with that year.

Policing objectives shall be so framed as to be consistent with any strategic priorities.

REPORTS BY POLICE AUTHORITIES

The Police and Justice Act 2006 section 6ZC states that the Secretary of State may by order require police authorities to issue reports concerning the policing of their areas. An order under this section may contain provision as to:-

- the periods to be covered by reports, and, as regards each period, the date by which reports are to be issued;
- the matters to be dealt with in reports;
- persons to whom copies of reports are to be sent.

CRIME AND DISORDER

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Section 17 states that “without prejudice to any other obligation imposed on it, it shall be the duty of each authority to which this section applies (which includes police authorities) to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.

The Police and Justice Act 2006 Schedule 9 defines a “local crime and disorder matter as including in particular forms of crime and disorder that involve anti-social behaviour or other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment in the area

represented by the member, or the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in that area.”

Following the Crime and Disorder Act Review in 2006, the Home Office document: “Delivering Safer Communities: A guide to effective partnership working” sets out the regulations defined in the Police and Justice Act 2006 for crime and disorder reduction partnerships which came into effect on 1 August 2007.

The regulations state that the interaction between partnerships and their communities is an important theme running through all the new statutory requirements and the Hallmarks. This is a significant change from previous legislation, now, partnerships are required to seek the participation of communities in their work and there is a tightening of the requirement for partners to share information gained from consultation and engagement activity. This matches the new role under the Best Value duty to “consult and involve” set out in the Local Government White Paper “Strong and Prosperous Communities”.

EQUALITY

The Authority will consult with diverse communities to produce a Single Equality Scheme to comply with all relevant legislation to ensure that fairness and equality in policing is maintained.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Children Act 2004 cites police authorities and chief officers of police as “relevant partners” who have a duty Under Section 10 of the Act to make arrangements to co-operate with local authorities to improve the well being of children and young people.

The Act places duties on police authorities (and the police) as relevant partners in terms of cooperating with the children’s services authority to ensure that their functions are discharged having regard to the need to promote the welfare of children and this should be reflected in their plans.

Every Child Matters guidance has a statutory basis which states that all relevant partners must have regard to it, in exercising functions under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, they have to take account of the guidance and, if they decide to depart from it, must have clear reasons for doing so.

Part 2 s.1 1 of the Act places two specific duties upon police authorities to ensure that:-

- their functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote welfare of children; and
- any services provided by another person pursuant to arrangements made by the person or body in the discharge of their functions are provided having regard to that need.

STOP AND SEARCH

Recommendation 63 of The Lawrence Report stated that police authorities, as the link between the police and the public, should make people aware of their rights when stopped and searched.

The Lawrence Report suggested that police authorities should publicise these new rights to help improve community relations because if people know what is happening and why then they are less likely to feel intimidated or aggrieved. Authorities will involve local communities in scrutinising 'stops' and 'stop and search' so that together discriminatory practices can be eliminated.

Police Authorities have a duty to monitor the impact of recommendation 61 and the use of stops by the force and involve communities in scrutinising and monitoring stop/search and stops data.

POLICING PLEDGE

The police service in England and Wales will support law abiding citizens and pursue criminals relentlessly to keep you and your neighbourhoods safe from harm. We will:

1. Always treat you fairly with dignity and respect ensuring you have fair access to our services at a time that is reasonable and suitable for you.
2. Provide you with information so you know who your dedicated Neighbourhood Policing Team are, where they are based, how to contact them and how to work with them.
3. Ensure your Neighbourhood Policing Team and other police patrols are visible and on your patch at times when they will be most effective and when you tell us you most need them. We will ensure your team are not taken away from neighbourhood business more than is absolutely necessary. They will spend at least 80% of their time visibly working in your neighbourhood, tackling your priorities. Staff turnover will be minimised.
4. Respond to every message directed to your Neighbourhood Policing Team within 24 hours and, where necessary, provide a more detailed response as soon as we can.
5. Aim to answer 999 calls within 10 seconds, deploying to emergencies immediately giving an estimated time of arrival, getting to you safely, and as quickly as possible. We will aim to get to you within 15 minutes.
6. Answer all non-emergency calls promptly. If attendance is needed, send a patrol giving you an estimated time of arrival, and:
 - If you are vulnerable or upset aim to be with you within 60 minutes.
 - If you are calling about an issue that we have agreed with your community will be a neighbourhood priority (listed below) and attendance is required, we will aim to be with you within 60 minutes.
 - Alternatively, if appropriate, we will make an appointment to see you at a time that fits in with your life and within 48 hours.
 - If agreed that attendance is not necessary we will give you advice, answer your questions and / or put you in touch with someone who can help.
7. Arrange regular public meetings to agree your priorities, at least once a month, giving you a chance to meet your local team with other members of your community. These will include opportunities such as surgeries, street briefings and mobile police station visits which will be arranged to meet local needs and requirements.
8. Provide monthly updates on progress, and on local crime and policing issues. This will include the provision of crime maps, information on specific crimes and what happened to those brought to justice, details of what action we and our partners are taking to make your neighbourhood safer and information on how your force is performing.
9. If you have been a victim of crime agree with you how often you would like to be kept informed of progress in your case and for how long. You have the right to be kept informed at least every month if you wish and for as long as is reasonable.

10. Acknowledge any dissatisfaction with the service you have received within 24 hours of reporting it to us. To help us fully resolve the matter, discuss with you how it will be handled, give you an opportunity to talk in person to someone about your concerns and agree with you what will be done about them and how quickly.

