

# Policing Green Paper “From the neighbourhood to the national” – LGA On-the-Day Briefing

17 July 2008

## SUMMARY

### LGA Key Messages

- The LGA supports the principles behind the Policing Green Paper of empowering local people by giving them a stronger voice in police decision-making, and greater freedoms and discretion for the police to concentrate on local policing priorities. We also welcome the recognition of the vital role councils play in the fight against crime and anti-social behaviour. **However we do not believe the Green Paper’s proposals will give local people a stronger voice, and fear they will undermine the many good working relationships the police and councils have built up.**
- The police cannot tackle crime on their own. It is universally accepted that partnership working is the key to reduce crime rates. **Bringing in directly elected crime and policing representatives to sit on police authorities and chair the new police boards will undermine many successful local partnerships.** A better solution would be to increase the involvement of local authorities in police accountability at a force level and for the new police boards to be chaired by council leaders where they are not chaired by directly elected mayors.

### Green Paper Key Proposals

- **Creation of directly elected crime and policing representatives.** The Green Paper proposes the creation of directly elected crime and policing representatives who will form the majority on police authorities, and will also be the chairs of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) and Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). In those areas with a directly elected mayor, the mayor will automatically become the crime and policing representative. Police authorities will remain similar in size to their current form meaning that local authority representation on police authorities will be significantly reduced.

#### LGA View

**We oppose the replacement of councillors on police authorities by directly elected crime and policing representatives.** *Councillors and councils already have a direct democratic mandate to represent local people. Creating parallel local democratically elected posts will result in competing electoral mandates, and the risk that successful partnership work between the police and local authorities are undermined. If the government is seeking to strengthen local accountability and partnership working local authorities should have a greater role in holding the police to account.*

- **The establishment of community safety funds.** The paper proposes taking the funds from the existing Basic Command Unit Fund and using this to provide small pots of funding for crime and policing representatives to use to address local crime issues in the areas they represent.

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LGA View

*While we support giving local communities greater resources to tackle crime and policing issues in their area, we are concerned that allocation of funds to crime and community representatives in this way could result in pet projects being funded without public support and at the expense of other initiatives the police currently or plan to undertake. There is also the risk that these projects will stand alone rather than complement existing schemes.*

- **Extending the responsibilities of CDRPs and CSPs to cover reducing re-offending.** This proposal would extend the remit of CDRPs and CSPs to not only reducing crime and disorder but also to reducing re-offending. It would also see probation services brought properly into CDRPs and CSPs as responsible authorities.

LGA View

*We welcome the extension of the remit of CDRPs and CSPs to consider reducing re-offending and with it the inclusion of probation as 'full' members of CDRPs and CSPs. As the Green Paper points out increasing amounts of work by the partners in CDRPs and CSPs is focused on reducing re-offending, and it is sensible to include reducing re-offending as a statutory duty.*

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## **CHAPTER SUMMARIES**

### **Chapter 1: Improving the connection between the public and the police**

- Ring fencing of funding for neighbourhood policing and PCSOs to last for a further three years, with PCSOs integrated into neighbourhood policing teams or deployed to directly support neighbourhood policing teams.
- Greater standardisation in PSCOs powers, training and uniforms.
- Work to integrate neighbourhood policing and neighbourhood management to be delivered locally by police forces, the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA), the LGA, IDeA and the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs).
- The Home Office and CLG working with volunteer police forces and local authorities will pilot Community Safety Participatory Budgets in 2008.
- The addition of probation services to the list of responsible bodies under a duty to cooperate to tackle crime in CDRPs and CSPs, with CDRPs and CSPs having a duty to reduce re-offending.
- Policing pledge setting out what the public can expect from the police nationally and at a local level.
- Views are sought on whether the Councillor Call for Action provisions relating to crime and disorder matters compliment the proposals in the rest of the section.
- Reform of police authority membership so they have a majority of directly elected representatives by 2010 provided by Crime and Policing Representatives, with the independent members being retained along with at least one councillor.
- Crime and Policing Representatives to be elected on the basis of CDRP/CSP boundaries although in some places they would have to be divided or combined, and to chair each CDRP or CSP.
- Where there is a directly elected mayor they will automatically become the Crime and Policing Representative.
- Creation of Community Safety Funds (from the Basic Command Unit Funds) to allow Crime and Policing Representatives to address local needs and priorities.

#### **LGA view**

We welcome the commitment to further funding for neighbourhood policing and PCSOs, and for work to better integrate neighbourhood policing with neighbourhood management is led by the police and local authorities. We also welcome the extension of CDRPs and CSPs to include probation services and have responsibility for reducing re-offending. However we oppose the introduction of directly elected members on to police authorities and as the chairs of CDRPs and CSPs as we believe the competing electoral mandates between them and local authorities could be damaging to partnership work needed to fight crime. A better solution would be for council leaders to chair CDRPs and CSPs as well as represent local authorities on police authorities where there is no directly elected mayor.

#### **Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6:**

- Chapter 2 relates to reducing bureaucracy and developing technology the use of technology within police forces.
- Chapter 3 relates to defining roles and leadership in the police service.
- Chapter 4 relates to the development and deployment of police as a workforce.
- Chapter 5 deals with setting out a set of principles to enable views to be taken on which level decisions are best made at.
- Chapter 6 looks at how greater collaboration between police forces can be ensured.

#### **LGA view**

Most of these chapters relate to how the police work in the future through reductions in bureaucracy, the early identification of future leaders within the police services, and the use of police personnel. We have no views on most of these issues which remain ones for the

police, but regret that the issue of abstractions from neighbourhood teams which was referred to in the Flanagan Review of Policing receives little consideration.

### **Chapter 7: Improving performance in policing**

- Move to a position where the police are held to account much more at a local level through the policing pledge and directly elected Crime and Policing Representatives.
- Work to raise the capacity of police authorities including introducing independent inspection of police authorities from April 2009 and regulations to address under performance by police authorities.
- Continued support from the Home Office for CDRPs and CSPs in driving up their performance, and to ensure that LAA targets are met.
- A refocus of the Home Office's role on strategic issues, with top-down targets for individual forces being ended.
- The Assessments of Police and Community Safety (APACS) framework will remain, but there will no longer be graded assessments under it.
- One national target will remain with the Home Office setting targets for the police and partners on increasing public satisfaction with their performance on crime and anti-social behaviour issues.

### **LGA view**

We welcome the commitment to refocus the Home Office's role around strategic issues and to substantially reduce all top-down national targets. This will enable the police and their partners, such as local authorities, to concentrate much more on local policing priorities. If the government can extend these freedoms and responsibilities to the police, the government should be looking to meet its commitments on devolution of greater freedoms to local authorities in a similar fashion. Given the Home Office's acceptance of sector-led improvement in integrating neighbourhood management and neighbourhood policing we regret the continued stress on Home Office support for CDRPs and CSPs in performance improvement, and will be looking to ensure that there is a greater role for the police and local authorities in driving performance improvements.

For further information on anything contained in this briefing, and on the LGA's work on the Policing Green Paper, please contact Mark Norris [mark.norris@lga.gov.uk](mailto:mark.norris@lga.gov.uk) / 0207 664 3241.