



The Equality Impact Assessment Report Policing in the 21st Century: Re-connecting the police and the people

Background

The **Policing in the 21st Century: Re-connecting the police and the people** Strategy Consultation Document sets out the Government's future vision for policing, including how it will:

- cut crime and protect the public,
- be more directly accountable to the public, and
- offer better value for money.

This will be achieved through:

- the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners;
- reducing Government intervention and bureaucracy;
- greater involvement of communities in how their streets are policed;
- streamlining national arrangements; and
- more professional responsibility and discretion creating a new policing and partnership landscape;
- greater collaboration.

The Strategy focuses on how people can feel safe by getting them involved in how their streets are policed, and reducing bureaucracy and the unnecessary form filling that prevents the police from being out on the streets dealing with crime.

It also sets out how the police service will become more efficient and accountable to the public by giving local communities more information about crime and policing in their area, helping them to become more involved in local policing, so that they can hold their Police and Crime Commissioner to account.

Aims and Objectives

The Strategy seeks to revise and rationalise the policing landscape to support a radical transfer of power moving from bureaucratic to democratic accountability, in particular to:

- increase community involvement and promote greater individual responsibility for keeping neighbourhoods safe, harnessing the Coalition Governments Big Society approach;
- introduce Police and Crime Commissioners who will set local priorities that meet the needs of the public, hold Chief Constables to account for achieving these priorities, set for force budget and precept and appoint – and where necessary, remove – Chief Constables;
- better crime data for the public so they know how their local police force is performing;
- reduce bureaucracy and increase discretion by reducing the amount of time officers spend filling out forms and giving them the discretion to deal with a range of incidents using a proportionate and common sense approach;
- strip out unnecessary Whitehall interference and allow Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners to deliver local policing in conjunction with their communities;
- increase efficiency and obtain better value for money by supporting collaborative working across forces to maximise resource;
- create a new National Crime Agency that will, in particular, lead the fight against organised crime, and deliver on our coalition agreement commitment to enhance the security of our borders and provide services best delivered at national level.

- have a clear focus on public cooperation and getting the public involved in matters that affect them locally;
- empowering individuals and communities, not simply to be able to hold agencies to account, but also to underline that crime prevention is a shared responsibility.

Outcomes

The Strategy seeks to provide the following outcomes:

- police and their partners working collaboratively to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour at a local level;
- a reduction in levels of crime and antisocial behaviour;
- people getting involved in local policing and, through Police and Crime Commissioners, holding their force democratically to account;
- the police are more visible and accountable to the public as a result of stripping out unnecessary bureaucracy;
- increased responsibility of individuals and communities in policing;
- a more streamlined cost efficient service with less meddling from Whitehall;
- the policing landscape is simplified resulting in a more efficient, cost-effective service;
- the service has the right tools to develop of chief officer capability.

The Strategy is intended to canvass views from anyone who has an interest in policing and community safety.

Home Office guidance on Equality Impact Assessments highlights the following Acts as those which need to be considered:

- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Equality Act 2006

As policy develops consideration will also need to be given to how the provisions in the new Equality Act apply, as they come into force.

The Equality Impact Assessment Process is designed to ensure that, as policies are developed and changed, they do not have a discriminatory or negative impact on diverse groups.

This report broadly summarises the potential impacts identified within the **Policing in the 21st Century: Re-connecting the police and the people** *Strategy Consultation Document* on diverse groups. Further individual Equality Impact assessments will need to be undertaken for any policies where potential equality impacts have been identified.

Stakeholder Engagement

Some aspects of policy set out in this document formed part of the Conservative Party's manifesto and were debated widely in the run up to the election. Following the election, the new coalition Government Ministers and officials met with representatives from the following organisations to get their views on the content of the document:

- Association of Chief Police Officers
- Association of Police Authorities
- Serious and Organised Crime Organisation
- National Policing Improvement Agency
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

Conversations were held with the Local Government Association and the Welsh Assembly Government.

Consultation on the Strategy will be administered primarily on-line, which may prevent certain groups, such as the elderly, who may not have access to on-line facilities from responding.

However, a range of stakeholders on individual policy areas have been, and will continue to be engaged and consulted. For each key policy area consultation will be an ongoing process throughout the policy development stage and beyond, into implementation. Consultation will be with a wide range of stakeholders, including those representing diverse groups.

For example stakeholder consultation workshops will take place to gather a range of internal and external views on appointing Police and Crime Commissioners for each force.

A range of additional stakeholders have already been identified and include:

- Police Federation

- Police Staff Trade Unions
- Police Superintendents' Association
- Police National Diversity Staff Support Associations
- The Mayor of London
- Chief Police Officers Staff Association
- External Community Groups
- Other Government Departments eg. Cabinet Office
- Community Safety Partnerships
- Local Strategic Partnerships
- Community and Voluntary Sector organisations

This list is not exhaustive.

Views from the on-line consultation and stakeholder events will be considered in developing policy and the appropriate legislation required to support change.

Desk Research

Government reports and consultation papers have been examined to inform the development of the Strategy. These include:

- *Working for the public, productivity framework* – Home Office, 2010;
- *Leading Policing - Tripartite Leadership Strategy*, 2008;
- Value for Money profiles and Police Report Cards, published by HMIC Value for Money statements published by police authorities;
- Race and Faith Inquiry Report – Metropolitan Police Authority – July 2010;
- Assessment of Women in the Police Service – Home Office March 2010;
- Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, Ten Years on – Feb 2009;
- Assessment of Minority Ethnic Recruitment, Retention and Progression in the police service – Home Office 2008;
- Stephen Lawrence Inquiry – MacPherson Report – 1999;
- Safe and Confident Neighbourhoods Strategy – 2010;
- Evaluation of the Protective Services Demonstrator Sites (Matrix; 2008-10) – identified costs and benefits of collaboration, including some of the key issues and obstacles to be overcome;
- HMIC Getting Together (2009);
- Statutory guidance & toolkit on collaboration (2010) – “models and legal implications of collaboration”.
- *Stepping up, Making the move to ACPO* – Hay Group, 2009;

This list is not exhaustive

Assessment and Analysis

Some key policy proposals contained within the strategy document are ground breaking and therefore analysis from which to draw is limited.

Several policy areas have been identified as having potential equality impacts. As a result they will need to complete individual equality impact assessments to ensure equality factors are considered at every stage of policy development.

Individual policy Equality Impact Assessments will evolve as part of the policy development process, taking account of stakeholder views through the formal consultation phase and regular informal stakeholder engagement.

In developing or changing any policy an assessment of the potential impacts on diverse groups must be undertaken, in particular having due regard for issues of race, gender, disability, and age. The main potential equality impacts for each of the key policy areas have been identified and set out below.

Will the proposals have significantly higher impact on a particular group, community, individual or certain police service 'personnel'?

We know that there are a disproportionately low number of BME people and women in key public facing roles for example members of parliament, local councillors, and chief police officers. There is therefore a risk that the range of candidates chosen to stand for election as **Police and Crime Commissioners** will come from a limited pool of individuals. Further consideration of how those from diverse groups can be encouraged to stand and participate in elections is key, in gaining the support from, and understanding the needs of diverse communities. Also people from BME groups are much more unlikely to get involved in influencing local services and voting so it is important that the Police and Crime Commissioner can

represent the views of all local communities effectively. Given that election campaigning for candidates is expensive this may also have a disproportionate effect on those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Any structural changes and efficiency measures, to achieve **Better Value for money** at force level, need to consider potential adverse impacts on BME, women, disabled and older police staff and police officers as well as impacts to services provided to diverse groups.

Measures to reduce bureaucracy and increase officer discretion may have a disproportionate effect, particularly on those from BME communities.

Given the majority of **Neighbourhood Policing** is undertaken by PCSOs, where there is better female and BME representation than for officers, any change in neighbourhood policing will need to take account of potential negative impacts on BME and women PCSOs. Age and disability factors are also relevant.

Any change in approach to **leadership** must take account of potential negative effects on diverse groups particularly BME and women officers who are already under-represented in leadership roles.

In providing local **crime data** consideration will be given to the possible exclusion of certain crime types where they could lead to identification of vulnerable victims. It will also be necessary to ensure that where data is made available, this will not adversely impact on those who are BME, disabled, female, elderly, or gay.

Data Gaps

Several data gaps have been identified on which further work will need to be undertaken:

- we need further data to understand the most efficient model for delivering neighbourhood policing to diverse communities;
- how can we ensure more people can get involved in influencing the way their streets are policed?
- further data is needed to identify which forces have the greatest discrepancy in diversity in proportion to the communities they serve;
- to identify if there are points during progression through the ranks, that BME and female officers are encountering barriers;
- understanding those policing functions on which forces should be collaborating;
- identifying obstacles to collaboration that have been experienced by practitioners;
- further information on the data that the public is most interested in locally;
- understanding how to maximise participation, in terms of both voter turnout and candidates for the first Commissioner election in 2012, particularly those from groups who may be less sighted or engaged.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The core policy themes contained in **Policing in the 21st Century: Re-connecting the police and the people** consultation strategy document will not introduce any discriminatory practices.

We can ensure this by engaging with a wide range of stakeholder groups through the strategy consultation phase.

Further ongoing consultation should be undertaken to ensure a wide range of views are considered in developing more detailed aspects of policy. This should include engagement with diverse groups.

Police and Crime Commissioners will be held publicly accountable for how police forces are performing. Everyone will have the opportunity to get involved and take an active part in making sure their streets are policed effectively.

Policing plans developed by Commissioners must be HRA compliant.

Individual Equality Impact Assessments should be developed for those policy areas where equality impacts have been identified. These assessments should consider the detailed policy proposals as they are developed to ensure any emerging impacts are identified and assessed.

The appointment of Police and Crime Commissioners must consider the diversity of candidates and the ability of candidates to represent their communities effectively.

In striving for efficiency and better value for money all forces should be mindful of the impacts of decisions locally and to remove any potential negative effects on diverse groups, and to promote equal opportunity for all. Equality impact assessments should be undertaken locally where changes may impact on police personnel or the public.

ACTION PLAN

Recommendation	Responsibility	Actions Required	Success Indicators	Target Date	Progress?
Consultation	HO	Stakeholders invited to comment on consultation document	Good level of stakeholder responses	Consultation period to end 20/09/2010	
Consultation	HO	Hold stakeholder consultation events on Police and Crime Commissioners	Good attendance at events Range of stakeholder views collected	Events to be held by 27/08/2010	Event dates and locations under consideration
Consultation	HO	Acknowledgement of responses to consultation	Stakeholders have an understanding of how their views have been taken into account	October	
Policy	HO	Ensure individual equality impact assessments on policy areas are undertaken where necessary	Policy does not have an adverse impact on particular groups	Ongoing	
Legislation	HO	Stakeholder views collated and used to inform legislative requirements	Legislation reflects consideration of stakeholder views	October	