



Home Office

Policing in the 21st Century: Reconnecting police and the people



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Chapter 4: A National Framework for Efficient Local Policing

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4.1 Criminals do not stop at police force boundaries. The crime and ASB that play out in our communities and affect our businesses are often related to criminality and threats that start in another part of the country, or even another part of the world. So we need to ensure that we have the right resources in the right place to tackle this. For too long Government has tried to control nationally what is best done locally – but it has not done enough to support forces on issues that go beyond their area or to ensure that the right national capabilities are in place.

4.2 Police and Crime Commissioners will be focusing on holding their local police force to account for tackling crime and protecting the public. We need to ensure that local policing and Commissioners are supported by effective national arrangements. These arrangements need to support Commissioners to ensure their budgets are used to deliver the best possible outcomes and ensure that their local communities are kept safe from criminals who may operate across force or national boundaries.

4.3 Forces will need to find new ways of working that get the best possible value from their resources. By collaborating with other forces, they can make savings from back-office and support functions, and protect the public from serious and organised crime more effectively. And there are some things that need to be done just once, nationally.

4.4 This will be achieved by:

- **Better value for money in local policing** – ensuring sufficient officers and staff are available to the public at the times when they are needed most; and through a review of remuneration and conditions of service for police officers and staff.
- **Better collaboration between forces** to save money on back-office and operational support functions, and tackle serious and cross-boundary criminality more effectively.
- Simplifying national arrangements, including creating a **new National Crime Agency** that will lead the fight against organised crime, protect our borders and provide services best delivered at national level.

4.5 In all of this we want to secure the so-called “golden thread” of policing in this country - the connectivity from local, neighbourhood policing through protective services to international policing. Neighbourhood and local policing informs and supports operational activity to protect the public from serious threats, harms and risks. For example street drug dealing might be a neighbourhood policing priority, but it also provides intelligence about organised crime groups involved in drugs importation and supply. In recent years, community information has proven to be crucial in the countering of a number of terrorist plots and in assisting the police and its partner agencies in their investigations.

4.6 We are not going to create a much smaller number of “strategic forces” operating at regional level through compulsory mergers. The Government has considered and rejected this. Big is not necessarily beautiful or better value for

money. British policing at its best is strongly grounded in local communities. The Government does not support the imposition of structural changes on local forces which will be seen by the public as creating vast and distant conglomerations, weakening their capacity to influence and hold to account those who keep them safe.

Scarce resources in challenging times need to be focused on strengthening front line policing, not bankrolling controversial mergers with little public or political support. Any such changes would in any case take years to come to fruition, and in the meantime provide huge distraction for police leaders from their central mission of cutting crime and maximising value for money.

4.7 So we are not dramatically altering the force structure. But we are making clear that Chief Constables will be responsible for the totality of policing in their area, working with each other in collaboration and with the National Crime Agency, and held directly to account by the public through Police and Crime Commissioners.

Supporting better value for money in local policing

4.8 In order to maintain the service the public receives, we will make significant cuts to central Government and non-departmental public bodies. But the police will have to bear their fair share of the burden. The whole police service will need to show leadership about how to act professionally in more challenging economic circumstances. We need to make the most of every pound spent on policing to maintain and improve the quality of frontline service that the public receives.

4.9 The public want to know that crime and ASB is being dealt with in their neighbourhoods and that the police will be there for them when they need them.

4.10 Commissioners will be responsible for ensuring value for money at the local level and will want to ensure that their force is maximising all opportunities to drive effectiveness. We have for too long been focused on how many officers there are rather than looking at what they are being asked to do. Chief Officers have a clear role to ensure that the entire police workforce is more available than currently and more productive. Local communities will not accept a situation where only around a tenth of police officers are available on the streets at any one time. The police service will need to focus hard on improving this through better workforce management and organisation, and by looking critically at the roles being undertaken by officers in operational and business support functions and removing them from unnecessary administrative duties and routine tasks where their skills and powers are not properly used.

4.11 We should be using police staff for time-consuming functions previously performed by officers. For example, maintaining databases is not a good use of a sworn officer's time. The job could be done by a specialist more effectively and for considerably less money and will free the officer to spend more time on frontline policing. Forces could also consider using the private sector to provide certain services.

4.12 Evidence from the 14 forces engaged in the QUEST programme shows that the removal of wasteful elements of processes and resources across all areas of operational policing (including volume crime, neighbourhood policing and the CJS)

as well as the back office business support function, can achieve significant productivity improvements and better outcomes for the public.

4.13 Forces will need to have a sophisticated understanding of local demand to ensure resources are deployed flexibly and effectively to match that demand, with shift patterns designed to maximise availability. This will reduce the need for spending on overtime across all areas of policing, which will be vital in reducing costs and maintaining service levels. And by maximising the use of available technology forces will be able to increase the time that officers spend on the streets, while saving taxpayers' money.

4.14 Individual forces can also play a role in reducing costs by encouraging greater involvement of the public and voluntary sector. Chapter 5 sets out how the police, and neighbourhood policing teams in particular, have a role in encouraging volunteering opportunities as police staff or special constables, taking part in joint patrols or in neighbourhood watch schemes which aim to deter crime.

4.15 HMIC will play a key role in highlighting for the public and Police and Crime Commissioners how local forces are making best use of their resources to meet local policing needs. It will produce publicly accessible information reflecting the priorities of the community, and Value for Money Profiles that provide rich comparative data enabling the public, Police and Crime Commissioners and chief officers to make detailed comparisons across force areas. HMIC will conduct Value for Money Inspections. These inspections will consider the value for money achieved by local activity; by the use of nationally provided contracts or services; and by collaborative work. Police and Crime Commissioners will be able to call upon HMIC to inspect their force or aspects of its work if they believe that the Chief Constable is unable to make sufficient progress on value for money.

4.16 We also want to spread information on which policing techniques are the most effective at cutting crime across the CJS. We would welcome your views on which agency is best placed to do this.

Review of remuneration and conditions of service for officers and staff

4.17 Expenditure on the workforce accounts for around 80% of police spending. It is therefore important to look carefully at these arrangements. We want to ensure that the remuneration and conditions of service for those that work in policing can support the delivery of an excellent service and provide the public with value for money. As part of the Coalition Programme, we have launched a full review of remuneration and conditions of service for police officers and staff. We have made clear that the review will cover the arrangements for both officers and staff because it is important to look at the police workforce in the round. We will publish the terms of reference and membership of the review shortly.

4.18 The review will complement John Hutton's work on the Independent Public Service Pensions Commission, which will undertake a fundamental structural review of public service pension provision, including police officer and staff pensions. The Commission will make recommendations on how public service pensions can be made sustainable and affordable in the long-term, fair to both the workforce and the taxpayer, and ensure that they are consistent with the fiscal challenges ahead. The

Commission will produce an interim report in September 2010, considering the case for short-term savings within the Spending Review 2010 period, consistent with the Government's commitment to protect those on low incomes. The Commission will produce a final report in time for Budget 2011.

A new approach to collaboration between forces

4.19 For policing functions that are not specifically local in nature, we need to strengthen the approach to how forces can collaborate together and with other partners in order to deliver these more efficiently and effectively. Police and Crime Commissioners will need to play a key role in making this happen across:

- a range of operational and back office support functions for which it is neither sensible nor affordable to adopt 43 different approaches; and
- frontline policing functions to protect the public from serious and cross boundary 'level 2' criminality¹ – these acute protective services (for example the investigation of major crimes such as homicides or dealing with organised crime gangs) can be delivered more efficiently and effectively.

4.20 This is not the same as mergers of forces – having police forces that are local, that the public can identify with and are responsive to their needs is an important principle of policing in England and Wales and one that we ought not to change. So, as stated above, we will not impose mergers on forces. We will consider requests for mergers only where they are voluntary, are supported by a robust business case and have community consent. Forces need to be looking at other options of enhanced collaboration as set out in this Chapter.

4.21 There are some areas where the current collaboration arrangements work well, for example around counter terrorism policing where we have regional and national structures which have enhanced the police service's capability. We think there are lessons to be learned here for other areas of policing – specifically our response to organised crime, as recently highlighted by the Metropolitan Police Commissioner. For the most part though, the current collaboration arrangements can be extremely variable in demonstrating improved services or lower costs. In many areas, the governance and accountability arrangements are too weak and decisions over whether or not to collaborate are only reached after protracted debate and negotiation in which self-interest has been allowed to override the greater good.

4.22 Police and Crime Commissioners will cut through this bureaucracy and drive forward the collaborative effort in support of their Chief Officers. We will support them by introducing a strong duty to collaborate that will ensure that forces do this across the widest possible range of policing functions. This will support the police, both to reduce costs and to improve the protection of the public from serious and organised crime. It will enable decisions on collaborative ventures to be reached much more quickly than is currently the case, and will give greater democratic accountability to the delivery of collaborative policing functions. These functions are

¹ The National Intelligence Model (NIM) describes criminality as follows: Level 1 (local criminality that can be managed within a Basic Command Unit (BCU)), Level 2 (cross border issues, usually of organised criminals, major incident affecting more than one BCU), Level 3 (Serious crime, terrorism operating at a national or international level). Closing the Gap, HMIC (2005)

often less visible to the public, but no less important to their protection from harm locally.

4.23 In driving collaboration activity, we will expect Police and Crime Commissioners to hold their Chief Constables to account for:

- **meeting the professional standards for providing protective services set by ACPO**, including through collaboration, so that there is a minimum level of service on which the public can depend across the country, and sufficient consistency between forces so that, in times of crisis and emergency, they can still come together and operate effectively alongside each other;
- **determining the right group of forces to collaborate with**, taking account of existing collaborative infrastructures (for example those for counter-terrorism and for organised crime), providing greater consistency of approach and greater scale of opportunity;
- **identifying the elements of operational and business support services to collaborate on** in order to protect the public and deliver value for money. We would expect ACPO to provide a professional view on what these functions will be.

4.24 HMIC will assess decisions by individual forces and their Commissioners about where to collaborate with others and on the effectiveness of that collaboration in maintaining or improving services at a lower cost. We would expect HMIC to advise Government on the instances where forces and Commissioners have chosen not to collaborate where there are clear benefits for the wider police service. We will take steps to strengthen the current duty to collaborate in order that the Home Secretary can, when advised and it is in the national interest, direct forces to collaborate.

4.25 Within local areas and where it fits with the collaboration needed between forces, there may be opportunities to team up with other partners to provide some services. Collaboration at the neighbourhood level is already happening in some areas through neighbourhood management/partnership approaches. Local collaboration could have the twin benefits of improving efficiency and partnership working. The private sector has the potential to play a key role in the provision of back office transactional services such as HR. We will also want to consider what other functions could be delivered through the private sector on behalf of groups of forces – such as custody facilities.

4.26 We will work with the police service to ensure that legislative opportunities are taken as soon as parliamentary time allows to reduce the bureaucracy relating to collaboration - by removing unnecessary regulations if necessary.

Simplifying the national arrangements

4.27 We want to support Police and Crime Commissioners with effective, clear and co-ordinated national arrangements. We want to improve, rationalise and bring coherence to the way things are done on what can be termed national level policing issues – encompassing both operational and operational support functions.

4.28 Our approach will involve ending the practice of procuring things in 43 different ways when it makes no sense to do so either operationally or financially; and introducing much stronger national coordination in respect of some cross-boundary

operational policing challenges. We will also establish a new National Crime Agency to improve, in particular, our response to organised crime and enhance the security of our borders. As part of the streamlining of the national landscape, we will phase out the NPIA, reviewing how this is best achieved.

An improved law enforcement response to organised crime

4.29 Organised crime² causes significant harm to the UK and its interests, with social and economic costs to the country estimated at between £20 billion and £40 billion per year. Today's organised criminals are nimble, entrepreneurial and no respecters of local, regional or national boundaries. Some have a global reach. But the effects of their criminality are played out on our streets and in our communities on a daily basis.

4.30 Despite some improvements, and genuine successes against some criminal groups, our law enforcement response has lagged behind this threat. There are assessed to be around 38,000 individuals engaged in organised crime impacting on the UK, involving around 6,000 organised criminal groups. The harsh reality is that law enforcement is impacting on far too few of these criminals.

4.31 We will publish, later this year, a new overarching strategy for tackling organised crime from the very local to trans-national levels, which drives joined-up action by law enforcement and across Government, and raises public and private sector awareness. Ahead of that strategy, but in a move we see as being central to it, we are proposing an important change to the operational law enforcement landscape. We believe that we can have a more rational, better coordinated approach to organised crime than at present, providing a more effective and efficient response, and which can address the perceived lack of clarity and accountability in the current governance arrangements. Learning the lessons from our response to international terrorism, the intention is to link the responsibilities of local Chief Constables, and their Police and Crime Commissioners, with regional policing capabilities – under stronger national coordination and strategic direction.

A National Crime Agency

4.32 We will create a powerful new body of operational crime-fighters in the shape of a National Crime Agency. This should harness and build on the intelligence, analytical and enforcement capabilities of the existing Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) and the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre. But the new Agency should better connect these capabilities to those within the police service, HM Revenue and Customs, the UK Border Agency and a range of other criminal justice partners.

4.33 We propose that the National Crime Agency will be led by a senior Chief Constable. It should be responsible for:

- **improving what we know about the threat from organised crime.** Building on existing work, we see the Agency having responsibility for mapping details of the individuals and organised crime groups operating in and against the UK. Its job

² Organised criminals are defined as “those involved, normally working with others, in continuing serious criminal activities for substantial profit, whether based in the UK or elsewhere”.

will be to build a more comprehensive picture of actionable intelligence – the lifeblood of our response to the threat – subject to robust safeguards;

- **providing effective national tasking and coordination** of police assets. We see this as a logical extension of proposals already being developed by the UK's law enforcement agencies to better coordinate the response to organised crime. In particular, we see the Agency bringing coherence to the activities of the range of what are presently uncoordinated regional policing capabilities.³ The Agency will depend for its success on the effectiveness of these capabilities, but also on those within local police forces, with local identities, who have the trust and confidence of the local communities they serve. We are clear that our national safety and security begins with having safe and secure neighbourhoods. We see these new tasking and coordination arrangements being subject to an agreed, transparent operational protocol between chief constables and the new Agency;
- **ensuring more law enforcement activity takes place against more organised criminals, at reduced cost.** This means prioritising available resources in a more efficient and effective manner: targeting the most serious criminals for hard-edged enforcement but ensuring more lawful interventions take place to disrupt the activities of a much larger number of other criminals involved in organised crime groups – along the lines of the High Volume Operating Model devised by SOCA;
- **strengthening our border policing arrangements,** to enhance our national security, improve immigration controls and improve our response to organised crime – most forms of which involve commodities, assets or people crossing the UK border at some point, in many cases illegally.

4.34 We envisage the new Agency being made up of a number of operational 'commands' under the leadership of the Chief Constable in charge – comprising, for example, an organised crime command; a border policing command; and (potentially) an operational support command. As explored below, there may also be other national issues for which responsibility could logically sit with the new Agency.

4.35 There will need to be clear, revised robust governance and accountability arrangements for the new National Crime Agency, recognising its intelligence-led operational focus. These will need to be more public facing than existing arrangements and must link to the important role which Police and Crime Commissioners will play in relation to individual police forces and collaborative ventures. We envisage, for example, Commissioners being under a duty to collaborate, not just with each other, but also with other bodies such as the new Agency. We recognise that it will be important for the public to have a clear line of sight in terms of the accountability of the new Agency, including its progress in achieving specific outcomes.

4.36 The establishment of a National Crime Agency and collaborative approaches would align with the work being led by ACPO to improve what is referred to as the 'interoperability' of the police service. In essence, this is about ensuring that different police units and personnel can work together seamlessly when required (such as in response to a terrorist incident; organised crime investigation; or large scale public

³ Made up of Regional Asset Recovery Teams; Regional Intelligence Units; and Regional Organised Crime Units.

event). For some distinct aspects of policing, this requires, for example, common standards of professional practice and equipment; compatible communications systems; and clarity about who is in charge of what.

4.37 Our starting proposition is that the focus of the new National Crime Agency should be on improving the operational response to organised crime and improving the security of our borders, since we judge these areas to be the most pressing in public protection terms.

4.38 But there are other cross-boundary crime challenges in which the new Agency might play an important role. For example, the Government has set out a commitment to strengthen the work of tackling serious economic crime, and we will consider how this would relate to a National Crime Agency. This will depend on the outcome of work on how to tackle economic crime. We will consider any possible implications for counter terrorist policing in due course and after full consultation. Counter terrorist policing already has effective national structures.

4.39 A large number of 'national' policing units have also emerged, over time, with a variety of responsibilities. The overall picture is now confusing and cluttered. And the public accountability for the activities of some of these units is, at best, opaque. Some of these national units reside in individual forces (such as the Police Central e-Crime Unit within the Metropolitan Police Service). But a number of others come under the banner of ACPO – such as the Police National Information and Coordination Centre (PNICC), which is responsible for coordinating, when necessary, the national mobilisation of police resources. As ACPO repositions itself in a re-balanced tripartite, it may be that responsibility for some of the functions presently being carried out by these national units could be brought under the ambit of the National Crime Agency.

4.40 It is possible that – as we review the NPIA's functions - some of them could also come under the ambit of the National Crime Agency, through establishing a distinct support command. But we would want to ensure that this did not detract from the new Agency's operational focus. Over time, further additional responsibilities could be added.

4.41 The Strategic Defence and Security Review is currently considering organised crime within the context of the overall national security prioritisation process. The proposals outlined above will be developed in line with the Strategic Defence and Security Review and its consideration by the National Security Council consideration.

Strengthening our borders

4.42 The Coalition Programme for Government includes a commitment to establish a Border Police Force to enhance national security, improve immigration controls and crack down on the trafficking of people, wildlife, weapons and drugs. Currently, there are too many agencies working disjointedly on border controls and security which has led to gaps in process and communications, different lines of reporting and accountability, and no streamlined process, oversight or strategy about how goods and people move through checks and controls.

4.43 We propose that the Chief Constable who leads the National Crime Agency should be responsible for a Border Police Command. This new Command will work to a national strategy, including an assessment of risk and priorities and a programme of multi-agency operational activity. As part of these arrangements the new Command will have responsibility for co-ordinating and tasking those border enforcement operational staff who together will form the new Border Police capability. Legislative requirements will be taken as soon as parliamentary time allows. Steps to introduce the new arrangements on an incremental basis will commence immediately.

The National Policing Improvement Agency

4.44 The NPIA has done much to bring about welcome changes to policing. In particular it has acted as a catalyst for identifying areas for efficiency gains within forces, encouraging greater collaboration and identifying where economies of scale can be realised through national procurement frameworks. It has succeeded in the first stage of rationalising a number of different agencies responsible for supporting police forces. But now is the right time to phase out the NPIA, reviewing its role and how this translates into a streamlined national landscape.

4.45 We will look at what aspects of the NPIA's functions are still needed and if so, how they might best be delivered in a new landscape, including alternative funding models. Some of its support functions are clearly critical to successful policing such as the provision of essential national police infrastructure, like central databases. We will look at options for how the NPIA's critical national infrastructure and value for money support functions are best taken forward. There might be an enhanced role for the Home Office in terms of the latter functions. Responsibility for the former could move to a distinct support command within the new National Crime Agency – provided that it did not detract from its operational focus.

4.46 We will work with the NPIA, wider police service and other partners and reach decisions about which of its functions should be delivered where, by the autumn this year. We envisage the NPIA being fully phased out by spring 2012.

4.47 We will seek to make the legislative changes to enable the creation of the new National Crime Agency as soon as parliamentary time allows. In doing so, we will work with the devolved administrations to establish the appropriate jurisdiction for the Agency. Our ambition is for the Agency to come fully into being by 2013, with key elements of its functions being operational before then as part of a transitional period.

Driving a new national approach where it is needed

4.48 As well as rationalising and strengthening some of our existing national assets through the establishment of the National Crime Agency, we need to develop new national approaches in a small number of instances where it is in the national interest to do so. This is not about fettering the judgement of Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables locally in how they allocate resources to tackle local priorities – but instead about supporting them to get the best value for every pound spent.

4.49 The Government will therefore specify the contractual arrangements to be used by the police service to procure equipment and other goods and services. In many cases these will be arrangements put in place by central government, local government or other public bodies. In some cases where there is a need specific to the police service, where it will often be important to ensure the capability for interoperability between forces, or no suitable contractual arrangements exist, new ones will be put in place.

4.50 A national approach is under way (the Information Systems Improvement Strategy) to ensure that the IT systems in all 43 forces can come together and 'talk to each other', that there are national arrangements for buying hardware and software and that there is a rationalised approach to IT support staff.

4.51 We will legislate at an early opportunity to ensure a coherent basis for the Home Secretary to specify procurement arrangements to be used by the police service, and to drive the convergence of IT systems. In the meantime, in order to ensure that savings are made as soon as possible, we will take forward proposals for regulations under existing legislation to specify certain contractual arrangements to be used by the Police Service. We are publishing a more detailed consultation alongside this one on the regulations for the mandation of goods and services.

4.52 In addition some policing functions can most sensibly be organised nationally. For example the police service is working to put in place a National Police Air Service. We will consider the case for further nationally organised services taking into account business planning being led by the police service.

The Association of Chief Police Officers

4.53 We want to professionalise the police at all levels. ACPO needs to play its role in this by repositioning itself as the national organisation responsible for providing the professional leadership for the police service, by taking the lead role on setting standards and sharing best practice across the range of police activities. ACPO's focus on professional standards means they should also play a leading role in leadership development, including some training programmes, while ensuring effective support and challenge from other providers. ACPO will continue to play a key role in advising Government, Police and Crime Commissioners and the Police Service on strategy, best practice and operational matters. Strategic policy will be set locally by Police and Crime Commissioners and nationally by the Government.

4.54 We will expect ACPO to play a leading role in ensuring that Chief Constables drive value for money, and have the capability to drive out costs in their forces. We will revoke the previous Government's planned creation of a Police Senior Appointments Panel.

4.55 ACPO itself recognises the need to increase its accountability for what it does and for the public funding it receives. It will need to have a governance structure which makes it accountable to those who fund it and have an elected mandate – both directly and indirectly – for policing; in short, the rebalanced Tripartite which will, in future, include a key role for Police and Crime Commissioners. We are working with ACPO to agree the most appropriate structure for achieving this, with accountability and transparency the key conditions.

Consultation questions:

1. What policing functions should be delivered between forces acting collaboratively?

2. What are the principal obstacles to collaboration between forces or with other partners and how they can they be addressed?

3. Are there functions which need greater national co-ordination or which would make sense to organise and run nationally (while still being delivered locally)?

4. How can the police service take advantage of private sector expertise to improve value for money, for example in operational support, or back office functions shared between several forces, or with other public sector providers?

5. Alongside its focus on organised crime and border security, what functions might a new National Crime Agency deliver on behalf of police forces, and how should it be held to account?

6. What arrangements should be in place in future to ensure that there is a sufficient pool of chief officers available, in particular for the most challenging leadership roles in the police service? Is there a role for other providers to provide training?

7. How can we rapidly increase the capability within the police service to become more business-like, with police leaders taking on a more prominent role to help drive necessary cultural change in delivering sustainable business process improvement?