

STRATEGIC POLICING POLICY NETWORK

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

1. The aim of this report is to update Members on the key regional and national issues from both the APA (Association of Police Authorities) and Regional Strategic Policing Policy Network meetings. It is requested that Members of this committee discuss the key issues in order to influence future discussions regionally and nationally, as well as determining any local action required at this time.
2. This report covers the issues raised at each meeting in chronological order in order to outline the flow of discussion from initial issues raised nationally, through regional discussions and the feed into discussions nationally.

BACKGROUND

3. The first meeting of the APA Strategic Policing Policy Network was held on 4 November 2008. Following this meeting, the Regional Strategic Policing Policy Network met for the first time on 10 February 2009 at West Yorkshire Police Authority (WYPA). The second meeting of the APA Strategic Policing Policy Network was held on 18 February 2009, at which views from the regional meeting were fed into the discussion.

NATIONAL MEETING ON 4 NOVEMBER 2008

4. There were a range of topics discussed at the APA Strategic Policing Policy Network Meeting on 4 November 2008, including:
 - Membership issues: including the need to ensure full Counter Terrorism Unit (CTU) and Counter Terrorism Intelligence Unit (CTIU) representation.
 - Vetting: individual police authorities vetting policies and practices as part of APA work to develop guidance.
 - Prevent: what would a coherent Prevent Strategy look like? Limited evidence of coherent programmes at present. There was an action to contact police authorities to gain a position statement in respect of Prevent.
 - APA Guidance: review of guidance for police authorities around performance management of protective services, serious and organised crime, strategic roads policing, major crime and counter terrorism. It was agreed that this guidance may not apply to all police authorities all of the time.
 - Dialogue with SOCA (Serious Organised Crime Agency): clear wish for dialogue with the network.
 - Olympics: several groups that have an involvement in some of the Business Plan topics, e.g. Airports/Olympics/CT Oversight.

REGIONAL MEETING ON 10 FEBRUARY 2009

5. Members of Humberside Police Authority were unable to attend the first regional meeting due to the Development Day taking precedence. However, it is suggested that Members of this committee discuss the issues raised at the regional meeting, in order to feed back their views and influence future debates as appropriate.
6. There were a range of topics discussed at the Regional Strategic Policing Policy Network Meeting on 10 February 2009, including:
 - Terms of Reference: new networks are in their infancy and there was an agreement to review Terms of Reference in several months time.
 - Business Arrangements: regional network would consider papers for the national meeting and provide a regional perspective, with Members pushing forward items nationally which were felt important. All meetings would be hosted at WYPA.
 - Olympics: need to look at regionally with a co-ordinated approach and parameters which protect local services.
 - Security Services: briefing provided with a view to arranging future briefings from Security Services and SOCA.
 - JPAC issues: need to continue momentum for the Joint Police Authorities Committee (JPAC) in developing a Regional Policing Strategy and expanding the areas of harmonisation.
 - Vetting: there is a clear disparity in respect of elected and independent Members. The need for a national policy was seen as mandatory.
 - Prevent Guidance: the overall guidance was viewed as vague and measurement was an issue, with a need for better success criteria.
 - Counter Terrorism (CT) Oversight: agreement that a regional report to future meetings would be of significant benefit.
 - Protective Service Reviews by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC): there was concern with the individual draft reports, clear regional issues and a need to consider the views of the chief constables (see elsewhere on this agenda for local views).
 - HMIC Briefing on Subsidiarity Scoping Exercise: there was a lack of clarity expressed around the proposals and a feeling that the proposed top-down model had not been thought through.
7. In respect of the subsidiarity scoping exercise, there were a number of questions asked at the meeting and the following was supported:
 - The need for a regional strategy to support collaboration in order to assist police authorities and chief constables to make informed choices based on cost efficiencies and risk reduction around services that are or could be delivered above a local level.
 - Request to look in more detail at workforce modernisation.
 - The proposed national collaboration model did not fully utilise the knowledge within police authorities and was too 'conceptual'.
8. The meeting also covered a number of other issues outside of the remit of the Protective Services Committee, including DNA retention rulings and expansion in the use of taser.

NATIONAL MEETING ON 18 FEBRUARY 2009

9. Issues raised at the national meeting on 18 February 2009 included:
- Prevent: the APA survey of police authorities 'position' in respect of Prevent was discussed. Tania Eagle from the APA spoke about the APA draft guidance and that this would address the findings from the survey. It was noted that the new APA Lead (Jonathan Charlton) commenced work at the APA in early March 2009 and would be developing implementation guidance for the APA AGM in September 2009, followed by a series of workshops.
 - Vetting: there was a response from all police authorities to the survey. There was an urgent need to agree a national minimum standard and this would be taken forward along with the Home Office to identify agreement on a vetting baseline.
 - Collaboration and subsidiarity: Dennis O'Connor from HMIC discussed the need for a strategy and 'responsible body' to assist forces and police authorities with the process of collaboration. HMIC and the Home Office proposed that increased collaboration was necessary to ensure more effective tackling of level 2 policing and efficient use of the £12.5bn spent on policing annually. HMIC asked for views in advance of a report to the Policing Minister in late March 2009. There were a number of issues raised by APA representatives including the limited scope of the review (due to short timescales) and that collaboration was not the only means to savings. It was agreed that there was a need for a strategy to support and inform future collaboration arrangements, in order to assist police authorities and chief constables to make informed choices based on cost efficiencies and risk reduction around services that could be delivered above the local level. It was also agreed that the APA should be involved in advising any new structure.
 - Protective Services Planning: the APA requested assistance with forthcoming guidance.
10. The meeting also covered a number of other issues including information assurance and the strategy around policing equality, diversity and human rights.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11. The financial implications will need to be considered as the issues around collaboration develop.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

12. The Policing and Crime Bill developments around collaboration will be monitored by the Police Authority Secretariat and reported back to the Police Authority as necessary.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

13. None identified at present.

CHILDRENS ACT 2004

14. None identified at present.

CONCLUSION

15. This report clearly identifies a number of issues including collaboration, Prevent and vetting which are developing. It will be important that the Police Authority inputs to these debates at future regional and national meetings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

16. It is recommended that Members:
- (i) Discuss the issues raised in the report;
 - (ii) Ensure views on the key issues are used to influence future discussions regionally and nationally;
 - (iii) Determine any local action required at this time; and
 - (iv) Receive further updates to a future meeting of this committee.

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Background Papers: Meeting Notes from the Regional Strategic Policing Policy Network on 4 November 2008
Minutes of the Regional Strategic Policing Policy Network on 10 February 2009
Draft Minutes of the APA Strategic Policing Policy Network on 18 February 2009