



# HUMBERSIDE

POLICE AUTHORITY

## A STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING CONFIDENCE IN POLICING

## Introduction

The government has recently set a single target of public confidence for each police force and developed the 'policing pledge' as the main vehicle for achieving that aim.

The greatest determinant of confidence that the Police Force has control over is, *how policing is delivered* and in particular those aspects which are contained within the policing pledge. As the Chief Constable has responsibility for the direction and control over policing, it is apparent that performance against the single confidence target, will be a reflection of the effectiveness of the Force.

As Humberside Police Authority has statutory duty *to secure an effective Police Force*, it is essential that a clear commitment is documented to establish how the Authority will discharge that duty, for this specific area of business.

This document sets out that commitment, although it must be accepted that there are many areas of work under development, many of which may impact upon how the Authority discharges its duty e.g. the 'policing pledge', changes to processes within the Authority, development of the governance and delivery of the citizen focus program of work.

**Aim:** to ensure that the policing service delivered throughout the Humberside Policing area is effective, when assessed in relation to public confidence.

### Principles:

- Humberside Police cannot deliver outstanding policing, unless the public it serves are confident in that service,
- the Police Authority has a critical role in ensuring that the public are confident and its role is distinctly different to that of the Humberside

Police,

- the statutory role of a Police Authority is to secure an efficient and effective police service and this is core to this strategy,
- members and officers of the Authority can add real value to improving public confidence and failure to secure improved confidence will be a reflection on the Authority,
- raising public confidence is an important part of delivering an effective policing service, but there are other aspects of policing which are of equal importance i.e. counter terrorism, tackling local criminals, protective services, policing of the roads

### **Critical issues**

Public confidence relates to perceptions of the quality of policing, whereas satisfaction is the opinion of someone who has received a service. However, the latter will clearly impact upon the former. Members and officers have considered which areas seem to be of most concern to the public and therefore have a significant impact upon their confidence in local policing. The issues have emerged from; a thematic panel in December 2008; MRUK survey; public meetings; and from elected members contact with constituents; and the key issues appear to be:

- potential fall in the effectiveness of call handling, both timeliness and quality,
- response times to calls for service,
- young people related anti social behavior,
- public perception in Hull of the costs of using the 0845 telephone number,
- visibility and accessibility of neighbourhood staff,
- lack of feedback to the public e.g. telephone calls, problem solving, victims,
- information on local crime and disorder issues.

A number of these aspects are contained within the 'policing pledge'.

The Force is currently undertaking research to try to establish what the factors are which directly influence public confidence. The results of this work will be reported to the Authority in late spring.

In summary, there is no clear empirical evidence as to what issues impact upon public confidence, but as the public have already 'spoken' to the Authority about what they are most dissatisfied with or where their greatest concern lies, it is important that the Authority ensures that the Force is responding to this 'intelligence picture'.

### **What will the Force and the Authority be judged upon?**

Although all policing can impact upon public confidence, the following performance measures **directly** relate to public satisfaction and confidence, and targets have already been set by the Authority for 2009/10:

- SPI 1.1 Satisfaction with service delivery (Police)
- SPI 1.2 Comparative satisfaction with service delivery (Police)
- SPI 1.3 Satisfaction with service delivery (racist incidents)
- SPI 1.4 Satisfaction with service delivery (CJS)
- SPI 2.1 Understanding local concerns (agencies)
- SPI 2.2 Dealing with local concerns (agencies)
- SPI 2.3 Residents perception of police performance
- SPI 2.4 Effectiveness of the CJS
- SPI 2.5 Fairness of the CJS

As stated above, the other aspect which will influence the judgement of effectiveness will be progress against the 'policing pledge' attached at Appendix A.

### **So what tools can the Authority use to discharge its duty?**

Many elements of the core roles of the Authority can be applied either to oversee the Force's delivery of policing or support its work:

***Scrutiny:***

- oversight of neighbourhood policing, call handling and response including 'reality checks', monitoring progress against the above targets,
- oversight of delivery of the citizen focus programme of work, including 'reality checks', mystery shoppers, discussion with staff,
- oversight of Force activity relating to the 'policing pledge',
- identify the key blockages and successes impacting upon confidence,
- oversight of the quality and quantity of information provided by the Force to the public,

***Consultation***

- gathering, collating and analysing information from public contact e.g. surveys, meetings, elected members,

***Communication***

- engaging with the public through the media, at public meetings or at targeted events, both providing feedback and listening to views,
- lack of visibility in policing

***Partnership working***

- monitoring actions of partners which impact upon those aspects of Local Area Agreements affecting public confidence, consultation and engagement e.g. provision of youth related activities, neighborhood management,
- work with partners where community safety activity is being subject to scrutiny e.g. calls for action,
- along with partners, anticipate, identify and challenge misconceptions

appearing in the media,

- along with the Humberside Criminal Justice Board and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, coordinate and oversee work to raise confidence in the criminal justice system,

### **How will the Authority actually apply these 'tools'?**

Many of these 'tools' are applied during the 'normal business' of the Authority. However, due to the importance of public confidence it is important that the Authority states explicitly who is to do what, by when and how. Furthermore as public confidence currently has such a high priority, both nationally and locally the Police Authority must retain oversight over how this strategy and associated plan is being implemented.

It would be inappropriate for the Authority to coordinate delivery of the activity and therefore a specific committee or group will be tasked to develop and implement an action plan, but to report exceptions and its impact on a regular basis.

The nominated committee or group will be required to develop an action plan and ensure that the elements are delivered. However, due to the 'cross cutting' nature of certain aspects, different committees maybe be required to take ownership of specific actions e.g. performance committee being responsible for oversight of the 'policing pledge', communities and partnership committee responsible for oversight of the impact of neighbourhood policing.

It will be the responsibility of the Strategic Development Manager – Communities and Partnerships to develop the action plan and present to the Police Authority in June 2009. However, in the meantime the following core responsibilities will apply:

- Communities and Partnership Committee – oversight of the 'policing pledge', citizen focus work programme and neighbourhood policing; public consultation: partnership activity,
- Performance Committee – oversight of call handling,

## **Summary**

One could argue that public confidence in policing has become the most high profile 'political' measure for judging the effectiveness of a Police Force. As the Police authority has the statutory duty to secure effective policing, it is essential that Humberside Police Authority has a strategy for how it will undertake that duty. In addition, it is essential that an action plan is developed which will implement the strategy.

Due to risk that the Force and the Authority could receive a poor outcome when judged against this area of policing, the Authority will retain oversight of this strategy, but task one of its sub-ordinate committees to develop, implement and report progress.

This strategy cannot be 'fit for purpose' until it is further developed following work on the 'policing pledge', Force survey and approval of the Authority's Corporate Plan. However, to avoid procrastination a basic plan is set out above, allocating responsibility for specific work streams to both the Performance and Communities and Partnership Committees.

**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** is, 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. In urban areas, we will aim to get to you within **15** minutes and in rural areas within **20** 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. Your local arrangements can be found below.
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.

**We want to do our best for you but if we fail to meet our Pledge we will always explain why it has not been possible on that occasion to deliver the high standards to which we aspire and you deserve.**