

End of Year Report - Decisions and Actions Required

Decisions

1. *Board Members are invited to:*
 - a. *note progress to date on the range of policy interventions agreed for the 2006/7 cycle.*
 - b. *consider areas where further progress remains to be made, as a backdrop and input to discussions in September of Board priorities for 2007/8.*
 - c. *agree, in particular, the proposed approach to an LGA response to the Flanagan review of policing as set out in Section 1 of the attached report. The approach can be reviewed as necessary alongside other priorities in September.*

Actions Required

2. *LGA officers to action as necessary.*

Action by: *LGA Safer Communities team*

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16 July 2007

1. CDRP Reform Programme / Flanagan Review of Policing

CDRP Reform Programme

1. The Board agreed that the main focus of our Safer Communities intervention for this year would be the Home Office's **CDRP Reform Programme**, to ensure that local perspectives and flexibility were built into the emerging regulations and guidance. The Board considered updates on this strand, and offered direction on the way ahead, at its November and March meetings.

2. We can be reasonably pleased with the outcomes to date. The work has focused on production of a set of **National Minimum Standards** – i.e. what makes a good CDRP in terms of membership and leadership, structures, business processes and information sharing – for codification in a set of regulations and accompanying guidance. The Board wanted the regulations to be “light touch” and we have argued this point successfully with the Home Office. In particular, we have persuaded the Home Office that there should be no routine inspection against these input/process-based standards; they will serve instead as a form of diagnostic against which CDRPs can compare themselves as necessary. **Guidance** is due out in September and we continue to work to ensure that this reflects the Board's views on the role of councils and councillors (in their own right and working in partnership) and the particular issues in two tier areas. We will look to engage the Board in clearance of the draft material and in activity to promulgate the guidance.

3. There has been mixed progress on implementation of the Police and Justice Act versions of **Overview and Scrutiny** and **Community Call for Action**. The Board will recall that, on the former, there were issues to resolve around the scrutiny of partnerships versus the scrutiny of individual partners; whilst on the latter, there were differences to be addressed in rollout between the crime and disorder version and the subsequent processes being considered in the Local Government Bill. Safer Communities Board office holders have held a constructive meeting with their APA counterparts to discuss these issues and we had made good progress towards a joint position on them. Both LGA and APA members agreed the importance of a single or aligned set of processes for Community Call for Action and there was agreement in principle about the respective roles of Overview and Scrutiny committees and police authorities in examining performance. The Home Office has now decided, however, in light of the Flanagan Review of Policing (specifically its review of local police accountabilities), to “pause” on implementation. We shall need to consider with partners/CLG what this means for the wider rollout of these initiatives.

4. Work continues to align the new **policing performance framework (APACS)** with the Comprehensive Area Assessment arrangements. Good progress has been made here. The Home Office has acknowledged that its framework – so far as it concerns partnership delivery – will use only those crime and disorder indicators contained within the 200 national performance indicator set. There will be flexibility for local crime and disorder priorities to be taken into account. The Home Office will consult on its crime and disorder indicators in the autumn – we will bring these to the Board's attention when they do so.

Way Ahead

5. There is a short term programme of work here to influence the CDRP Reform Guidance and to argue for alignment of the APACS performance reporting system. We have also engaged

with a Harvard research team (at no cost) looking at linkages between CDRP behaviour and crime reduction. Their findings should be available in 2008 and will provide an opportunity for the Board to review progress in this important area of business. The way ahead on Overview and Scrutiny and Community Call for Action is less clear. But, if the Board is content, we shall continue to encourage councils to work through and pilot schemes with their local partners on a voluntary basis during the remainder of this year.

Flanagan Review of Policing

6. *Sr Ronnie Flanagan has been commissioned by the (previous) Home Secretary to review a range of policing issues. He is focusing on four areas:*

- *Reducing police bureaucracy*
- *Embedding neighbourhood policing*
- *Improving local accountability and transparency*
- *Improving police efficiency*

*A fuller extract of the Terms of Reference for the review is attached as an **Appendix (1)** to this report. The review is due to offer an initial report, concentrating on bureaucracy and neighbourhood policing by the end of August and a final report around the end of the calendar year, picking up the other themes.*

7. *It would be useful to have Board guidance on the LGA's response to this review. Some key points of our proposal for the Board to consider are set out below:*

a. the LGA should contribute fully to the review. But given the wide-ranging scope of the terms of reference, we should concentrate our attention on the strands examining neighbourhood policing and local police accountability.

b. on neighbourhood policing, we propose to submit a substantive response to the review team after the Board meeting, picking up points from discussion here and at a well-attended and constructive breakout session at the LGA Annual Conference in Birmingham. Based on that event, the key points for us to make include the need:

- *to embed neighbourhood policing more generally in neighbourhood management approaches. This can mean detuning the emphasis on the leading role of the police and thinking through the benefits of renaming these schemes;*
- *for greater certainty about central funding, and flexibility of local funding, to tailor local responses to local requirements;*
- *to think through the relationship and balance between local authority wardens, PCSOs and police. There isn't a "one size fits all" approach;*
- *to do more to reduce the turnover of uniformed personnel in neighbourhood policing teams. Success is largely dependent on the strength of relationships and local knowledge that are built up over time. This means thinking through career progression paths and patterns of deployment.*
- *to clarify procedures around short notice diversion of resources and particularly manpower to other policing priorities*

- to identify ways of increasing Member involvement in neighbourhood policing issues, through community safety portfolio holders and more generally at the ward level.

c. *The position is more complex on local accountabilities, but we have more time to influence the debate. We should put down some markers at this stage about the importance of local transparency and the role of councils and especially councillors in representing community interests, driving partnerships and holding partners to account for their delivery. And we should make our points here too about Overview and Scrutiny and Community Call for Action. But there are issues to think through in slightly slower time about the role of police authorities and relationship to full council (where we shall want to explore the scope for common action with the APA); about the scope for “double devolution” to community or neighbourhood bodies; about the complexity of the delivery and accountability landscape at the local level; and about the balance between national and local drivers for policing priorities. We also need to think through potential party differences on, for example, the place of directly elected police authorities or police chiefs – do we want to concentrate on strengthening existing mechanisms or look hard at new models? We have agreed to fund jointly research by IPPR around these issues and should look to schedule substantive discussion (at a Board meeting and jointly with the APA) in the autumn – on the back of the interim report and with senior attendance from the review team itself.*

d. *Although not a focus for our effort, we should note on bureaucracy and efficiency that full consultation with the local government sector would be required if it is proposed to transfer any functions to councils (e.g. support for Coroners’ officers). We should also note that some aspects of police bureaucracy contribute to transparency and local perceptions of the effectiveness of police forces – care should be taken if the review proposes to streamline requirements in these areas.*

2. Reducing Re-offending

8. *Our work over the past year on action to reduce re-offending has followed two principal and complementary strands – work through the LGA-led Coalition on Criminal and Social Justice to identify the scope for local solutions to re-offending and, second, lobbying on the Offender Management Bill. The Board can be well satisfied with its impact in both of these areas of activity.*

9. *On the former, the Coalition’s publication Neighbourhood by Neighbourhood on local approaches to tackling re-offending has had an impact beyond our expectations with Government, Parliament and wider stakeholders. We have substantially won the argument in principle that the local level – involving councils and council-led partnerships, not just local branches of the criminal justice system – offers the key to innovative and effective approaches in this area. The Coalition has also allowed us to forge constructive and productive relationships at the national level with partner bodies like the Probation Boards Association, lobby groups like the Prison Reform Trust and third sector providers, including the Prince’s Trust.*

10. *The Offender Management Bill is in the final stages of its passage through the House of Lords. LGA lobbying has won some important concessions. Both the commissioning and delivery arrangements are to be rooted in council and partnership priorities for the local area, through engagement of key probation partners in the LAA-setting process and in subsequent overview and scrutiny activity. The role of councillors on probation trusts has been recognised. And the commissioning model that Government now expects to implement has a much more local focus to it (operating through local probation trusts rather than Regional Offender*

Managers). The process of lobbying around this Bill also offers some pointers for the future, with direct engagement not only with Government Ministers, but also with Conservative and Liberal Democrat spokesmen. This is an approach we shall want to follow again in the future.

11. Set against that focus on influencing Government and Parliament about the national/local framework, our current emphasis is on how we can raise the profile of these issues in councils themselves. A research project is currently underway (along the lines of the survey proposed by the re-offending task group) to identify council activity in this sphere; examples of best practice; and potential barriers (and solutions) to council engagement. Results are beginning to come in and we shall bring its findings back to the Board in the autumn.

Way Ahead

12. The Board will want to consider future activity in this area alongside other priorities in its September meeting and away-day – and decisions on a forward programme should wait until then. But there are a number of strands we could conceivably pursue, subject to Board views on their relative priority:

- joint work with the Children and Young People's Board on **youth justice issues**. Our focus to date has been mainly on adult offending, but there is an opportunity with the formation of the new Department Children, Schools and Families (hosting the Youth Justice Board and the Respect team) to make progress in this important area. The separate agenda item on the Children in Trouble project is relevant here.
- approaches to tackle the large number (around 50,000 a year) of **prisoners on short sentences** of less than 12 months. There is a role for councils both in helping to manage the transition from prison to society as well as co-ordinating community-based alternatives to prison. There is a potential linkage here (looking at schemes for example in Gateshead) to the Government's recent announcements on local participatory budgeting.
- the role of councils in wider **community justice initiatives**, building on experience in North Liverpool and Salford.

3. Community Cohesion and Tackling Extremism

13. The main focus of our work has been engaging with and supporting the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, established in August 2006 under the chairmanship of Darra Singh, Chief Executive of Ealing Council. The Commission published its final report, *Our Shared Future*, on 14 June. The full report is available on the Commission's website www.integrationandcohesion.org.uk

14. The report presents four key principles that the commission feels underpin a new understanding of integration and cohesion: the need for a sense of shared futures; a new model of rights and responsibilities; a new emphasis on mutual respect and civility; and the need to deliver visible social justice. It also proposes a new definition of an integrated and cohesive society and a typology of five types of local community based on the three factors found to have the most influence on cohesion - deprivation, rate of change, and rural/urban context. These points are set out in a little more detail in the attached **Appendix 2**.

15. There is much to welcome here. Many of the Commission's 60 or so recommendations are of direct relevance to councils and the LGA. Almost all its recommendations offer encouragement to do different things according to the needs and circumstances of the local

area – local solutions work best. And the Commission has avoided being prescriptive in how councils should meet these challenges. These local approaches need to be balanced, however, by a ‘shared national vision’ with clear leadership from central government. The report also provides recommendations for some national policy initiatives.

16. It would be useful to gauge Board reactions to the Commission’s report and views on how we can best ensure that its positive recommendations are embedded in the local government sector’s approach to cohesion. The LGA will be discussing these recommendations over the summer with its new advisory group for community cohesion, extremism, migration and equalities. As part of the September round of priority-setting meetings, we will make proposals to the Board (and to the Community Wellbeing Board) about ways to take these issues forward. We expect that this will include a formal local government response to the Commission, a programme of work to help spread best practice, and an emphasis on the distinctive leadership and representative role of elected members. We shall continue to build on our close relationship with the IDeA in this area.

Tackling Violent Extremism

17. The LGA continues to engage with CLG and the Home Office on the role of councils in preventing violent extremism. We have achieved some success in helping central Government to think through the tensions between the need to take visible action to prevent terrorist attacks and the impact that measures aimed only at Muslim communities can have on wider questions of cohesion. We can welcome the more measured and responsive approaches that are now being adopted. We shall want to engage afresh with new Ministers on these questions. This should be a continuing area of activity – albeit handled on a discreet basis.

4. Fire Suppression and Sustainable Buildings

18. At a private sprinkler seminar at the House of Commons on 26 February, the Minister for Schools, Jim Knight MP announced a change in the Government’s position on sprinklers in schools. In his speech the Minister said that “the Government had introduced a new policy regarding the fitting of sprinklers in schools. New schools or those which undergo a major refurbishment using public funds will have to complete an analysis using a risk assessment tool to determine whether they should be fitted with a sprinkler system.” He stated that “it is the Government’s expectation that in the majority of cases this process will lead to sprinklers being fitted. The Government has begun a programme to replace or refurbish all secondary (for children aged 11 and older) schools, at a cost of £45 billion over 15 years. Most of these schools will now be sprinklered. Combined with other fire safety measures, British schools will be as safe from fire as is reasonably practical”.

19. This announcement followed LGA lobbying the Minister and DfES officials about the provision of sprinklers in schools. On 26 March the Minister formally announced, through a Parliamentary Written Answer, that it is now the Government’s expectation that all new schools will have fire sprinklers installed, and that the new risk assessment and cost benefit analysis tool being prepared by the DfES should be used in decision-making on this issue.

20. The LGA welcomed this as a major step forward for fire safety in schools and offered any assistance to the DfES in communicating the new policy to local authority officers and members. Although the announcement itself does not go as far as the task group’s stated objective, “that all new and major refurbished schools should have sprinklers”, it defers to a risk assessment methodology, it is a good start and one that we can build on.

21. *The LGA has subsequently raised some important points of detail on the risk assessment tool which are being taken forward by LGA officers with officials from the DfES. The task group believe that a rigorous risk analysis, looking at the true benefits of preventing such fires, would support the installation of sprinklers in every single school building.*

Research

22. *The task group will be monitoring closely the impact of this tool on the number of new and refurbished schools that have sprinklers installed; and we will be conducting our own research to seek to quantify the wider socio-economic costs of fires in schools.*

23. *NFER have commissioned to conduct a research study project into the broader social and economic costs of fire in schools. A survey of Local Authorities and Fire and Rescue Services will also begin shortly, to identify attitudes and barriers to the provision of sprinklers in schools.*

Next steps

24. *The results of the research study and survey and the wider work of the Fire Suppression and Sustainable Buildings task group on Stage 1, fire suppression in schools will be discussed at the Fire Forum on Friday 19 October. A promotional event to publicise this work will take place in the autumn.*

25. *Stage 2 of the work of the task group is fire suppression in residential accommodation for vulnerable people and Stage 3 is sustainable buildings. The task group will consider the best way of progressing these stages at the next meeting on 25 July. Meanwhile, LGA officers are continuing to identify appropriate target premises/risks for residential sprinklers to support the next stages of the work.*

5. LACORS report

26. *Following recent reporting on our key work areas in 2006, LACORS continues to lead on a series of projects to help modernise, transform and improve Regulatory Services.*

27. *The LGA's Transforming Regulatory Services policy intervention is being led on behalf of the LGA by LACORS and has been built around a number of thematic areas within the organisation*

(i) The Hampton and Better Regulation Agenda

(ii) Improving Regulatory Services and leading the debate on its future

(iii) Raising the Profile of Regulatory Services and addressing recruitment and retention issues

The Hampton and Better Regulation Agenda

28. *LACORS will, on behalf of local government, work with the Better Regulation Executive to influence what the LBRO will look like and try to ensure that this new Government body adds value and not unnecessary bureaucracy to local government regulatory services. LACORS has identified and addressed a series of key lobbying points including the retention of key regulatory services within local Councils and a risk based approach by Council regulatory services that focus enforcement on the businesses that put the public, consumers, workers and the environment at greatest risk.*

29. *LACORS are currently leading on the following work streams to address this thematic area;*

- *Preparing a detailed, national response on the regulatory and enforcement sanctions bill. LACORS will be coordinating responses from colleagues in councils and have already engaged with Group Leaders from the Safer Communities Board who have seen and agreed the outline position.*
- *Currently undertaking a consultation on the regulatory compliance code.*
- *Handed over the trading standards risk assessment model to the Office of Fair Trading to ensure it is given equal status as other regulatory risk assessments.*
- *Working with Defra to revise the animal health framework agreement which will incorporate better regulation principles.*
- *Working with The Food Standards Agency to move their performance measures and enforcement strategy away from inspection orientation and towards a focus on compliance issues.*

Improving Regulatory Services and leading the debate on its future

30. *In early 2006 LACORS commissioned the Tavistock Institute to look into the current and future improvement challenges for local authority regulatory services. The rationale behind this exercise was to determine the major issues that LACORS and the regulatory services we support would need to consider and address to ensure they deliver high quality services to a growingly diverse set of public protection needs.*

31. *LACORS are currently leading on the following work streams to address this thematic area;*

- *LACORS has identified a series of high level strategic agendas that will be critical for regulatory services to engage with in the future improvement environment. These agendas include the developing national-local improvement strategy and local area agreements. We have begun to engage more closely with both relevant government departments and LGA boards including a range of papers to Safer Communities and Improvement Boards.*
- *During 2007 LACORS have provided a range of guidance papers for local services on the impact and importance of LAA's. We have commissioned a research paper that outlined the impact on regulatory services of LAA's and the involvement of those services in the negotiation and implementation of their LAA.*
- *As part of our Regulation for Excellence strategy, LACORS will visit between 75 and 100 councils between August and November 2007, allowing us to better identify their performance against the identified characteristics in the Tavistock report of competent, excellent and poor regulatory services. The data collected from this research programme will allow us to better define our improvement strategy during 2008*

Raising the Profile of Regulatory Services and addressing recruitment and retention issues

32. *LACORS has successfully promoted the role of regulatory services through a series of high profile articles in national publications such as the MJ and LGC on a range of issues including better regulation and Local Area Agreements.*

33. *LACORS are currently leading on the following work streams to address this thematic area;*

- *Promotion of good practice from councils visited as part of Regulation for Excellence strategy. Examples have included the promotion of innovative work undertaken in the East of England region on psychometric testing for regulatory officers and succession planning to address future leadership challenges.*

- *Delivered joint conference with IDEA and CIEH on recruitment and retention challenges for regulatory officers.*
- *Undertaken a series of high profile events including an improvement conference and a successful year-ahead conference on trading standards and environmental health.*
- *Mapping out of current recruitment and retention initiatives being developed across the service to identify a strategy for moving this agenda forward across the sector. LACORS are investigating the possibility of a skills audit with colleagues in IDEA to determine the future strategic direction for the regulatory services sector.*

34. A substantial element of our work within the 'Transforming Regulatory Services' intervention including our recent work with Tavistock has a direct overlap with Wales and partially with the other UK devolved administrations .

Extract from Flanagan Terms of Reference

The police service has never been larger and has never been better resourced, but the challenges facing the service are significant and fast moving. I have set out some of these challenges in my statement of common values and I have now identified four specific areas where I would like to ensure further progress and new ideas. There is, of course, a separate equally important on going programme of work in such areas as counter- terrorism and addressing the protective services 'gap'.

First, how can we reduce bureaucracy and promote better business processes in the service?

What is the true level of bureaucracy in the police service, particularly that bearing the front line? Where does necessary record keeping finish and unnecessary red tape begin? How do police officers interpret the requirements from government and criminal justice system and are there steps we can take to clarify and/or empower officers to act 'smartly'? What are some of the specific remedies that could be applied to remove any unnecessary burdens (from whatever source) and free up officers for front line tasks? What are the best examples of efficient business processes from other parts of the public and private sectors and from around the world? How can we ensure that the right people are doing the right jobs and that warranted officers are, wherever possible, free to do the job they joined to do?

Second, how can we sustain and mainstream the excellent progress that has been made on neighbourhood policing?

How do we successfully mainstream Neighbourhood Policing so that it will always be a core part of effective and 'joined-up' policing? What are the principal barriers to making this happen? How can Neighbourhood Policing build on its successes in improving confidence and reassurance, engaging with communities, and building a completely appropriate role or roles for the PCSO? How should Neighbourhood Policing be integrates with other forms of policing, such as response policing, specialist squads and combating terrorism and domestic extremism? What should effective training for neighbourhood officers look like, and how do we deliver this? How do we secure more and better commitment to Neighbourhood Policing from local community safety and other partners? Where are local partners already working well with Neighbourhood Policing?

Third, how can we ensure that the public are helping to drive local policing priorities and how can we improve local involvement and accountability?

What means would allow local people to have a greater say in decisions on policing and remedying any dissatisfaction in performance while maintaining the importance of operational independence? What can be learnt from other public services, for example the NHS or schools? What should be the role of police authorities in delivering accountability to local people in the future? What should be the role of local councillors? What would be the benefits or possible drawbacks of separately elected officials being the accountable body for policing locally? What lessons can be learnt from elected Mayors in areas such as London or Middlesbrough?

Finally, how can the police service manage its resources effectively to deliver on the challenges of the coming years?

Which forces and areas are effectively tackling this challenge now? What are the most effective levers and incentives for the achievement of greater efficiency and productivity? What lessons can be learnt from other contexts and how can they be linked to your recommendations on bureaucracy and business processes? What measures should be taken locally to drive efficiency and productivity and what decisions might more usefully be taken on a national or regional level? How can the use of consistent management data and the exploration of best practice most effectively be made more useful to senior officers? How can joint procurement between forces be expanded to encourage greater value for money? To what extent should funding be tied to performance? Are there alternative mechanisms to the police precept which should be considered in respect of police funding?

The Commission on Integration and Cohesion – Findings and Recommendations

The Commission published its final report 'Our Shared Future' on the 14th June, based on four key principles:

- The sense of **shared futures** binding local communities together, whatever their histories; key recommendations include:
 - A national shared futures programme from 2008-2012 – leading from the European Year of Intercultural Education to the Olympics – this would be a positive campaign about what it means to belong productively to local areas, and how difference has inspired creativity and innovation.
 - Every local area should mainstream integration and cohesion into their Sustainable Community Strategies, LSP management and wider service delivery.
- An emphasis on a **new model of rights and responsibilities** - one that is fit for the 21st century and sets out a shared understanding of both the rights and responsibilities of individuals and communities; key recommendations include:
 - A new programme of voluntary service for young people expressly linked to local citizenship;
 - Consideration of an expansion of citizenship ceremonies to include all young people – perhaps linked to the completion of the Citizenship GCSE
 - a new independent national body to manage the integration of new migrants
 - New innovative ways to deliver ESOL provision – including asking large employers of new migrants to contribute to the cost of ESOL provision.
- A new emphasis on **building mutual respect and civility** – that argues that to build integration and cohesion properly, there needs to be a wider commitment to civil society, and respect for others; key recommendations include:
 - Faith Communities to work with central Government and the LGA to develop a programme to help increase religious literacy on the part of public agencies
 - That the current Review of Policing in England and Wales by Sir Ronnie Flanagan underlines the importance of Neighbourhood Policing on integration and cohesion.
- **Making social justice visible** – which involves a commitment to equal and fair treatment, combined with a transparency and fairness to all communities; key recommendations include:
 - Local Authorities should develop myth busting strategies aimed specifically at established communities and that they should work with the media to actively rebut myths and misinformation, in between and during election periods

- *A nationally sponsored 'Community week' with a focus on celebrating all communities and inter-community engagement.*
- *A national school linking programme – nationally co-ordinated through a new website*
- *Large employers to consider allowing employees 3 days paid leave a year for participation in voluntary and community activities.*

Alongside the four principles; the report also includes:

- **A new analysis of what influences integration and cohesion**
- **The adoption of a new definition of integration and cohesion**
- **A new typology of local areas** – where targeted action on integration and cohesion might be needed
- **A recommendation that the Government develops guidance to assist local authorities and other on making decisions about:**
 - *The appropriateness of **translating written material** into other community languages*
 - *The appropriateness of **single community funding***