



## HMIC Inspection Report

### Merseyside Police

October 2007



*Merseyside Police – HMIC Inspection Report*

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## Introduction to HMIC Inspections

For a century and a half, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has been charged with examining and improving the efficiency of the police service in England and Wales, with the first HM Inspectors (HMIs) being appointed under the provisions of the County and Borough Police Act 1856. In 1962, the Royal Commission on the Police formally acknowledged HMIC's contribution to policing.

HMIs are appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the Home Secretary and report to HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, who is the Home Secretary's principal professional policing adviser and is independent both of the Home Office and of the police service. HMIC's principal statutory duties are set out in the Police Act 1996. For more information, please visit HMIC's website at <http://inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/>.

In 2006, HMIC conducted a broad assessment of all 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales, examining 23 areas of activity. This baseline assessment had followed a similar process in 2005 and has thus created a rich evidence base of strengths and weaknesses across the country. However, it is now necessary for HMIC to focus its inspection effort on those areas of policing that are not data-rich and where qualitative assessment is the only feasible way of judging both current performance and the prospects for improvement. This, together with the critical factor that HMIC should concentrate its scrutiny on high-risk areas of policing – in terms of risk both to the public and to the service's reputation – pointed inexorably to a focus on what are known collectively as 'protective services'. In addition, there is a need to apply professional judgement to some key aspects of leadership and governance, where some quantitative measures exist but a more rounded assessment is appropriate.

Having reached this view internally, HMIC then consulted key stakeholders, including the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Association of Police Authorities (APA). A consensus emerged that HMIC could add greater value by undertaking fewer but more probing inspections. Stakeholders concurred with the emphasis on protective services but requested that Neighbourhood Policing remain a priority for inspection until there is evidence that it has been embedded in everyday police work.

HMIC uses a rigorous and transparent methodology to conduct its inspections and reach conclusions and judgements. All evidence will be gathered, verified and then assessed against an agreed set of national standards, in the form of specific grading criteria (SGC). However, the main purpose of inspection is not to make judgements but to drive improvements in policing. Both professional and lay readers are urged, therefore, to focus not on the headline grades but on the opportunities for improvement identified within the text of this report.

### Programmed frameworks

This report contains assessments of the first three key areas of policing to be inspected under HMIC's new programme of work:

1. Neighbourhood Policing;
2. performance management; and
3. protecting vulnerable people.

Neighbourhood Policing has been inspected not only because it is a key government priority but also, and more importantly, because it addresses a fundamental need for a style of policing that is rooted in and responds to local concerns. The police service must, of course, offer protection from high-level threats such as terrorism and organised criminality, but it

also has a key role in tackling the unacceptable behaviour of the minority of people who threaten the quality of life of law-abiding citizens.

Performance management is an activity largely hidden from public view, although members of the public are directly affected by poor performance on the part of their local force. This inspection has focused on the need for forces to maximise the opportunities for performance improvement. It also posed questions as to whether forces have an accurate picture of how they are doing and the capability to respond to changing priorities. This area was selected for inspection because it is a key factor in delivering good performance across the board.

Protecting vulnerable people covers four related areas – child abuse, domestic violence, public protection and missing persons – that address the critically important role of the police in protecting the public from potentially serious harm. In the 2006 baseline assessment this was the worst performing area and raised the most serious concerns for HMIC and others. As a result, this area was prioritised for scrutiny in 2007.

### **Risk-based frameworks**

In addition to its programmed inspection work, HMIC continues to monitor performance across a range of policing activity, notably those areas listed in the table below.

<b>HMIC risk-based frameworks</b>
Fairness and equality in service delivery
Volume crime reduction
Volume crime investigation
Improving forensic performance
Criminal justice processes
Reducing anti-social behaviour
Contact management
Training, development and organisational learning

While these activities will not be subject to routine inspection, evidence of a significant decline in performance would prompt consideration of inspection. For 150 years, HMIC has maintained an ongoing relationship with every force. This allows it to identify and support forces when specific issues of concern arise. On a more formal basis, HMIC participates in the Home Office Police Performance Steering Group and Joint Performance Review Group, which have a role in monitoring and supporting police performance in crime reduction, crime investigation and public confidence.

HMIC conducts inspections of basic command units (BCUs), also on a risk-assessed basis, using the Going Local 3 methodology. Combining these various strands of inspection evidence allows HMIC to form a comprehensive picture of both individual force performance and the wider national picture.

## The grading process

Grades awarded by HMIC are a reflection of the performance delivered by the force over the assessment period April 2006 to July 2007. One of four grades can be awarded, according to performance assessed against the SGC (for the full list of SGC, see <http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/methodologies/baseline-introduction/ba-methodology-06/?version=1>).

### *Excellent*

This grade describes the highest level of performance in service delivery and achieving full compliance with codes of practice or national guidance. It is expected that few forces will achieve this very high standard for a given activity. To achieve Excellent, forces are expected to meet **all** of the criteria set out in the Fair SGC and the vast majority of those set out in Good. In addition, two other factors will attract consideration of an Excellent grade:

- The force should be recognised, or be able to act, as a 'beacon' to others, and be accepted within the service as a source of leading-edge practice. Evidence that other forces have successfully imported practices would demonstrate this.
- HMIC is committed to supporting innovation and we would expect Excellent forces to have introduced and evaluated new ways of delivering or improving performance.

### *Good*

Good is defined in the Collins English Dictionary as 'of a high quality or level' and denotes performance above the minimum standard. To reach this level, forces have to meet in full the criteria set out in Fair and most of the criteria set out in Good.

### *Fair*

Fair is the delivery of an acceptable level of service, which meets national threshold standards where these exist. To achieve a Fair grading, forces must meet all of the significant criteria set out in the Fair SGC. HMIC would expect that, across most activities, the largest number of grades will be awarded at this level.

### *Poor*

A Poor grade represents an unacceptably low level of service. To attract this very critical grade, a force will have fallen well short of a significant number of criteria set out in the SGC for Fair. In some cases, failure to achieve a single critical criterion may alone warrant a Poor grade. Such dominant criteria will always be flagged in the SGC but may also reflect a degree of professional judgement on the level of risk being carried by the force.

## Developing practice

In addition to assessing force performance, one of HMIC's key roles is to identify and share good practice across the police service. Much good practice is identified as HMIC conducts its assessments and is reflected as a strength in the body of the report. In addition, each force is given the opportunity to submit examples of its good practice. HMIC has selected three or more of these examples to publish in this report. The key criteria for each example are that the work has been evaluated by the force and the good practice is easily transferable to other forces (each force has provided a contact name and telephone number or email address, should further information be required). HMIC has not conducted any independent evaluation of the examples of good practice provided.

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### **Future HMIC inspection activity**

Although HMIC will continue to maintain a watching brief on all performance areas, its future inspection activity (see provisional timescales below) will be determined by a risk assessment process. Protective services will be at the core of inspection programmes, tailored to capacity, capability and the likelihood of exposure to threats from organised criminality, terrorism and so on. Until its full implementation in April 2008, Neighbourhood Policing will also demand attention. Conversely, those areas (such as volume crime) where performance is captured by statutory performance indicators (SPIs), iQuanta and other objective evidence will receive scrutiny only where performance is deteriorating, as described above.

The Government has announced that, in real terms, there will be little or no growth in police authority/force budgets over the next three years. Forces will therefore have to maintain, and in some areas improve, performance without additional central support or funding. This in itself creates a risk to police delivery and HMIC has therefore included a strategic resource management assessment for all forces in its future inspection programme.

<b>Planned Inspection areas</b>
Serious and organised crime
Major crime
Neighbourhood Policing
Strategic resource management
Customer service and accessibility
Critical incident management
Professional standards
Public order
Civil contingencies
Information management
Strategic roads policing
Leadership

## Force Overview and Context

### Geographical description of force area

Merseyside is a metropolitan area covering approximately 160,000 acres bordering Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Cheshire. There are five local authority areas within Merseyside: Liverpool, Sefton, Wirral, St Helens and Knowsley. The city of Liverpool, with its associated seaport and industrial hinterland, lies at the centre.

### Demographic profile of force area

Merseyside is enormously diverse economically, racially and culturally, with a population of just under 1.5 million. This reflects a significant change, given the decline in Merseyside's population over a number of decades. Recent and sustained economic growth means Merseyside no longer qualifies for Objective One status as it has in the recent past. Liverpool will be the European Capital of Culture in 2008, offering further opportunities for regeneration. Coinciding with this is the significant investment in Liverpool city centre to create one of the biggest retail developments of its kind in Europe. The Port of Liverpool, a barometer for the success of the whole of Merseyside, is the largest freeport zone in the UK and the main UK port for container trade with the USA. John Lennon Airport is one of the fastest growing regional airports in Europe.

Merseyside Police is led by Chief Constable Bernard Hogan-Howe, supported by a chief officer group consisting of a deputy chief constable (DCC); four assistant chief constables (ACCs) covering operations, operations support, personnel, and citizen focus portfolios; and a senior police staff member director of resources who is Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) equivalent.

The force has an annual budget of over £344 million, and a budget establishment of 4,457 police officers, plus 2,582 police staff (including police community support officers (PCSOs) for 2007/08. To ensure policing services meet the needs of local communities, the force structure reflects the boundaries of the five local authorities. Basic command units (BCUs) are coterminous with local authority areas with the exception of Liverpool which, due to its size and policing complexity, is divided into two policing areas: North and South Liverpool.

### Strategic priorities

To enable the force to achieve its vision – 'to provide the best police service in the UK' – its Total Policing strategy aims to utilise the total resources of the force and direct them towards three strategic priorities:

- **Total War on Crime** – where opportunities for crime are reduced, the law is robustly enforced and offenders are arrested and successfully prosecuted;
- **Total Victim Care** – where the needs of the victim, witness and law-abiding citizen are at the heart of the service provided; and
- **Total Professionalism** – where an efficient, effective and motivated workforce provides a professional, quality service to all.

The structure of the force reflects its Total Policing strategy. To deliver this strategy a 'one team' approach has been adopted, with four key elements:

- Neighbourhood Policing;
- serious and organised crime;

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- citizen focus; and
- support departments.

In January 2006 the force launched a revised Neighbourhood Policing model in each of its six BCUs. This led to an increase in the number of officers working in local communities, with each electoral ward having dedicated, ring-fenced officers. Members of the extended police family support these dedicated neighbourhood officers.

Complementing the Neighbourhood Policing model, resources are assigned to dealing with serious and organised crime, particularly criminal activity at levels 2 and 3. The Force structure reflects this through its Matrix and force crime operations units.

In June 2006, the Chief Constable created a new chief officer portfolio, citizen focus, headed by an ACC. By bringing together the departments most able to meet their needs, the force has made clear its determination to deliver total care for victims.

The remaining element of Team Merseyside relates to the support departments. Through the respective roles they perform, these departments provide the infrastructure to deliver the Total War on Crime, Total Care for Victims and Total Professionalism.

The Chief Constable's priorities are listed in his *Blueprint for Total Policing*, launched in May 2007. The priorities are:

- blitzing anti-social behaviour (ASB);
- tackling gang-related crime;
- improving road safety;
- improving public satisfaction and confidence;
- using technology to fight crime;
- professionalising the workforce through academy training;
- reviewing the approach to the use of forensics;
- changing the culture of the organisation through the TRUE programme; and
- improving the force estate.

In support of the blitz on ASB, the force has established AXIS, an ASB task force. This brings together officers from all policing disciplines alongside fire officers, investigators and representatives of the Crown Prosecution Service.

## **Force developments since 2006**

Merseyside Police has:

- received Home Office awards in recognition of excellent work in tackling hate crime and drugs;
- exceeded targets for cash seizures and cash forfeiture – in terms of asset recovery, force performance is second only to the Metropolitan Police;
- reduced cash-in-transit robberies over a two-year period from up to four offences per day to as low as one offence per month;
- increased the size of the roads policing department by 40%;
- seized 10,500 uninsured vehicles as part of Operation Tango – the most vehicle seizures per head of population for any UK force;
- reduced levels of robbery, theft from motor vehicle, burglary dwelling, violence and criminal damage to their lowest levels for two years;
- become the first force in the country to join the Institute of Customer Services;
- developed the best automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) capability in the UK;
- opened a purpose-built crime faculty; and

- received police authority approval for an estates strategy which, in its initial phase, will see a £27 million investment in the estate.

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## Findings

### National summary of judgements

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
<b>Neighbourhood Policing</b>				
Neighbourhood Policing	6	14	21	2
<b>Performance management</b>				
Performance management	6	29	8	0
<b>Protecting vulnerable people</b>				
Child abuse	3	17	21	2
Domestic violence	1	13	27	2
Public protection	2	16	23	2
Missing persons	1	21	21	0

### Force summary of judgements

<b>Neighbourhood Policing</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Neighbourhood Policing	<b>Good</b>
<b>Performance management</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Performance management	<b>Good</b>
<b>Protecting vulnerable people</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Child abuse	<b>Good</b>
Domestic violence	<b>Good</b>
Public protection	<b>Good</b>
Missing persons	<b>Good</b>

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## Neighbourhood Policing

GRADE	GOOD
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### National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
6	14	21	2

### National contextual factors

The national Neighbourhood Policing programme was launched by ACPO in April 2005 to support the Government's vision of a policing service which is both accessible and responsive to the needs of local people. It was anticipated that, by April 2007, every area across England and Wales would have a Neighbourhood Policing presence appropriate to local needs, with all Neighbourhood Policing teams in place by April 2008. For local communities this means:

- increased numbers of PCSOs patrolling their streets, addressing ASB and building relationships with local people;
- access both to information about policing in their local area and to a point of contact in their Neighbourhood Policing team; and
- having the opportunity to tell the police about the issues that are causing them concern and helping to shape the response to those issues (Home Office, May 2006).

By focusing on the key areas of resources, familiarity/accessibility, problem identification and joint problem solving, this inspection has identified the extent to which Neighbourhood Policing is being implemented. It has also examined forces' capability and commitment to sustain implementation beyond April 2008.

### Contextual factors

The Merseyside Total Policing strategy focuses the resources and energy of the force towards three strategic priorities:

- Total War on Crime;
- Total Victim Care; and
- Total Professionalism.

One example of working with partners to improve community safety is the creation of AXIS, the joint agency ASB task force. AXIS brings together officers from all policing disciplines, alongside fire officers and investigators, advocates and representatives of the Crown Prosecution Service.

Working alongside neighbourhood teams, AXIS targets local communities that experience persistent ASB problems and is deployed to hotspots to give BCUs more resilience to tackle the most persistent problems. AXIS is supported by the use of the latest technology, including ANPR and CCTV head-cams, to help disrupt ASB. This is underpinned by the youth strategy which aims to help young people in their social development and focus on the three powerful themes of sport, culture, and faith.

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The force has a unique integrated model for policing within neighbourhoods, incorporating dedicated officers, patrols, support teams and the wider extended police family. This model incorporates good practice taken from the national reassurance model. This ensures engagement and working with partners, local people and diverse local communities to establish their policing needs, address their priorities and provide them with feedback.

The Total Policing strategy is delivered through a 'one-team' approach, Team Merseyside, in which the total resources of the force are directed towards the strategic priorities. In broad terms Team Merseyside has four key elements:

- Neighbourhood Policing;
- a focus on serious and organised crime;
- citizen focus; and
- support departments.

The Neighbourhood Policing model is delivered through a series of ward-based teams which are led by a neighbourhood inspector. These teams include:

- neighbourhood dedicated officers;
- neighbourhood patrol;
- neighbourhood support teams and BCU support teams;
- PCSOs;
- Special Constabulary;
- community volunteers; and
- volunteer cadets.

The citizen focus element concentrates on a way of working that recognises and understands the experiences and needs of victims, witnesses and law-abiding citizens, and applies them in decision-making processes and service delivery. Neighbourhood Policing ensures that all communities have good access to policing services, can influence policing priorities in their neighbourhoods, receive interventions through joint police actions with both partners and members of the community, and obtain answers and feedback.

Support departments also contribute to Neighbourhood Policing through elements such as:

- maximising the proactive use in prevention and detection of technologies such as ANPR, automatic vehicle location, mobile fingerprint recognition, mobile data access and recording systems, and in addition exploiting opportunities presented by the internet to engage with the public through online forums and e-mail;
- implementing and investing in a revised estates strategy with a view to establishing an estate that meets the needs of the community and supports officers and staff in their respective roles;
- personnel support departments enhancing the recruitment, people management, health, welfare and development processes; and
- operational support departments supporting the delivery of the Neighbourhood Policing model and the fight against serious and organised crime, and providing expertise in relation to protective services, forensics, air support, mounted policing, dogs, traffic policing, intelligence gathering and dissemination, and planned policing operations.

As part of the inspection process a telephone survey of 100 randomly selected residents was carried out, consisting of six questions about their experiences of and views on how Neighbourhood Policing is being delivered in Merseyside. The responses gave a positive indication of the service provided by the force: five of the six indicators were above the national average range and one was slightly below the range.

## Strengths

The force has worked with the field officer working on behalf of the Neighbourhood Policing programme and an action plan for progressing issues was developed during 2006. The ACC (citizen focus) has actively driven the plan, and as a consequence the force has made excellent progress during the last 12 months in the area of local policing delivery and citizen focus. As a consequence forces are being referred to Merseyside as a 'beacon Neighbourhood Policing organisation'.

In addition, the inspection team was made aware that the force has been visited by a number of organisations – for example, South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire Police and the Police Service of Northern Ireland, to identify good Neighbourhood Policing practice; and the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit. Seminars have also been held on dangerous dogs and their impact on ASB. Furthermore, other forces have shown interest in the force's use of problem-solving techniques and information technology (IT) applications.

The policing ethos and the Total Policing model are being personally promoted by the Chief Constable, both internally and externally with local authorities, partners and opinion formers.

The Chief Constable has introduced Total Policing forums aimed at sergeants, police staff equivalents and above to reinforce his vision of Total Policing within Merseyside and explain what he expects each of them to deliver.

The force has a Neighbourhood Policing programme board which is attended by all BCU operations superintendents. This ensures that there is a corporate approach to Neighbourhood Policing, that progress is challenged and that Neighbourhood Policing is embedded into service delivery at a local level with a strategic drive and overview. The project is managed by a dedicated superintendent who reports to the ACC (citizen focus).

Neighbourhood Policing is an integral part of the current performance framework, which is monitored and reviewed by the ACC (citizen focus) at the citizen focus programme board, and by the ACC (citizen focus) and the ACC (operations) through the force Crimefighters conferences. This joint approach reflects the force's approach to performance management. While the focus of Crimefighters is principally around crime and incidents, the inspection also identified evidence of a shift towards some qualitative indicators around domestic violence and customer satisfaction scores. The performance on ASB was dealt with in terms of quantity but it was acknowledged that there is still some progress to be made on a wider suite of qualitative indicators.

The Merseyside TRUE programme runs alongside the Total Policing model, to ensure that the delivery of services in support of the model incorporates the needs to recognise the rich cultural diversity of Merseyside when planning and implementing service developments.

The force has sought out good practice nationally and implemented a number of initiatives which have improved the working relationships with partners and delivered improved services to the public. Examples include working with the Jill Dando Institute to improve the force's analytical skills, and the introduction of customer service desks, in partnership with KPMG, to improve demand management of calls for service.

The force has enhanced service delivery within neighbourhoods, with patrol officers answering calls for service, dedicated neighbourhood officers providing stability and reassurance, and neighbourhood support officers providing additional resilience to tackle issues and solve long-term problems.

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The force has located its control rooms on each BCU; (Knowsley area control room (ACR) is located at St Helens BCU) to improve integration and connectivity with other policing services being delivered through the Total Policing model. This ensures that control room staff play a part in delivering customer satisfaction and confidence within a defined area, alongside other policing services. The integration with the BCU management structures ensures that control room managers and supervisors are aware of local priorities, local staffing issues and local problems.

Customer service desks have now been introduced in ACRs on BCUs, and have been significant in improving the call-handling capabilities of the force in dealing with lower-priority calls for service. Potential good practice was highlighted through the implementation of third-party reporting of ASB, bullying, weapons and so on, via a web-based system called SHARP. Two appointment cars are provided by each response group on a daily basis to deal specifically with such calls. Priority one calls receive an immediate response, priority two receives a response within one hour and priority three receives a negotiated response within 24 hours.

Feedback from residents' groups and the police authority identified that delivery of services was improving and that there was less rotation of key staff, which is adding some stability to relationships.

The strength of the Liverpool South Neighbourhood Policing model is seen by the communications centre to be the allocation of a single dedicated officer to each ward, which ensures that there are clearly defined links to the community service desks. This arrangement also ensures that the public receive a more effective and efficient service and that there is a developing accountability across the elements of Neighbourhood Policing, which ensures that the public receives feedback. The developing performance framework captures customer satisfaction data and, together with regular scrutiny from the area support and co-ordination unit (ASCU), provides data on improving performance.

The force has joined the Institute of Customer Services Awards. The force is initially prioritising call-handling to progress through the awards, and will then prioritise other customer-facing roles, subject to the evaluation of the success of the programme. The force is monitoring calls from the public with the aim of providing the best possible service.

Operators are assessed against the National Call-Handling Standards. However, work is ongoing to enhance the call-handling process by directing members of the public to a person who has knowledge of their particular area and who can discuss the issue, rather than simply leaving an email message.

Members of the public contacting the force about a specific problem in their neighbourhood, or resident in areas where specific ongoing police action is being delivered, are informed of police activity such as an AXIS task force working in the area, or of the existence of Section 30 dispersal orders.

The force has identified the size and scope of the Neighbourhood Policing areas within Merseyside and has allocated resources to the different levels of dedicated officers, support teams and patrol officers.

The force has carried out a force-wide resource and demand profile, and as a consequence has made adjustments to the way Neighbourhood Policing resources are deployed to ensure that activity in neighbourhoods is reflected in deployment policy. The profile identified gaps in the response to calls for service and supervision levels. As a consequence the customer service desks were introduced to manage the force's response

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to level 2 and 3 calls, and 52 additional sergeants were deployed into the Neighbourhood Policing function to strengthen supervision.

The force undertakes a bi-annual review of resource allocation across BCUs to identify where any change is required. This ensures that the force is aware of where resources are deployed.

The criminal investigation department (CID) establishment has been reviewed and each BCU is required to maintain 11% of its strength within the CID. This provides resilience within the BCU for crime detection and assists in ensuring that dedicated Neighbourhood Policing officers are not drawn unnecessarily into tasks which are outside their areas of responsibility.

Each neighbourhood has a dedicated neighbourhood inspector. Each BCU has a number of inspectors who are critical incident managers (CIMs), to respond to and supervise live incidents across the neighbourhoods within the BCU. The force has ensured that each ward has a dedicated Neighbourhood Policing constable who manages up to 6 PCSOs.

Inspectors are fully briefed on the different operations taking place within their areas, on the various hotspot areas and on where Section 30 notices are being imposed. This enables each neighbourhood inspector to assess the impact on their area of a displacement notice on an adjoining area and to make necessary adjustments to resource planning.

In addition to neighbourhood inspectors and CIMs, each BCU has an additional team of neighbourhood support officers, led by an inspector and including a number of sergeants and constables, which provides support to the Neighbourhood Policing teams and is tasked through the tasking and co-ordination (T&C) processes to hotspot areas within the BCU. The size of the neighbourhood support team varies with each BCU.

Each neighbourhood inspector produces a burglary and robbery strategy and CID officers actively feed into this process, supporting officers with interviews and evidence-gathering.

Each neighbourhood sergeant is responsible for a number of constables and PCSOs, the actual numbers being dependant on the particular neighbourhood, although minimum standards are prescribed by the force. The force has a commitment to maintain a visible presence in each area, and abstractions are kept to a minimum. BCUs have formal abstraction and deployment policies which are regularly audited for compliance. Where abstractions take place these have to be documented and forwarded to the neighbourhood inspector.

All student officers are posted to Neighbourhood Policing teams. Neighbourhood inspectors have the deployment authority to ensure that student officers are able to meet the competence requirements by posting them either to patrol, as dedicated officers or, eventually, as neighbourhood support team members. All vacancies within Neighbourhood Policing teams are advertised and recruitment and selection take place in accordance with force policy.

Student officers after initial training are posted to neighbourhood teams and are required to identify and log evidence of the competencies they use in dealing with various incidents. This is part of their ongoing personal and professional development and is an integral part of the Student Officer Learning Assessment Programme. The process is demanding and officers are allocated development time to manage this process effectively.

There are currently 450 PCSOs in the force, on contracts ranging from one to three years depending on the funding available. They provide coverage across all Neighbourhood Policing areas. There is an active pursuit of additional funding and an intention on the part

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of the police authority to maintain, and if possible improve on, current numbers. The head of personnel ensures that the police authority is kept updated regarding ongoing commitments around renewal of contacts.

Each neighbourhood has a comprehensive 'profile' which includes data on geography, demography, socio-economic factors, crime and ASB, together with other information, providing a 'rich picture' of the area being managed. The neighbourhood profile is subject to regular review and amendment as circumstances change.

PCSOs are active in neighbourhood-based projects which target unlawful behaviour and raise awareness of support mechanisms available to victims. Examples were given of initiatives to reduce incidents of domestic violence which also involved other agencies such as Jobcentre Plus. Other agencies and support organisations attend events such as coffee mornings offering support to single parents and back-to-work initiatives, and are also involved in support mechanisms including child care facilities. This approach has been particularly effective in reaching hard-to-reach groups.

PCSOs are fully aware of their purpose in providing a high-visibility police presence to the community. They are also active in submitting intelligence which is sampled for data quality. Feedback on data quality and action taken is provided to the PCSO.

There are several well located premises serving the neighbourhood teams, encompassing a mixture of operational bases and contact points, such as Cop Shops and, in St Helens, the Cop/Fire Shop. In addition to the force estate, there are a number of co-located premises delivering local initiatives, such as the Parr Partnership and projects involving police officers and some PCSOs working from local schools.

The Special Constabulary is active on the BCUs and provides a substantial number of patrol hours. Activity within Liverpool South rose from 150 hours per month last year to 750 hours per month this year and the special constables have been awarded the Ferrers Trophy for their endeavours.

Special constables are given the opportunity to be posted to a particular neighbourhood team area. In addition to the normal requirements of patrol and problem solving, the Special Constabulary also has specific responsibilities such as licensing complaints. In Liverpool South, the special inspector is the licensing champion for the area.

Members of the Special Constabulary resource an ASB van which is tasked to attend ASB hotspot areas. This provides some continuity of action, and active participation in and ownership of problem solving by special constables.

Where premises are identified as developing hotspots through the National Intelligence Model (NIM), the Special Constabulary will target them for action. They have developed good relationships with licensees, who provide a representative to discuss and problem-solve issues around complaints or breaches of the licensing laws. Special constables organise licensed premises visits and link into the NIM T&C process by providing intelligence. All visits are linked to the neighbourhood strategy, and supervision, including risk assessment, takes place prior to any engagement.

There is evidence of a good recruitment process for volunteers ranging through the whole age spectrum, from students and volunteer cadets to older people. Each BCU has a dedicated police staff member or officer who co-ordinates the activities of the extended police family. In St Helens there is a dedicated police staff role for the management of volunteers, with 84 volunteers currently active. There have been links established with the local training college through the volunteer cadet scheme and, in addition to students on

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public services courses, the scheme has also attracted other students. The force has used the volunteer cadets operationally for test purchase operations in licensed premises.

There are 405 volunteers in the force who are used by BCUs. Each role identified as suitable for volunteers has an appropriate risk assessment carried out. Volunteers are trained in IT skills and provided with a level of access to force IT systems, according to their role.

Volunteers are used within neighbourhoods to staff contact points for the public and within the BCU to perform a range of administrative functions. They send letters to children and parents/guardians who are subject to stop checks, and to those living within Section 30 areas. They are actively used in crime prevention initiatives such as leaflet-dropping in estates and hotspot areas to raise the awareness of the general public. This does release some operational patrol time to officers.

Volunteers have been used in role-play exercises for the training of student officers and there was a general consensus that they feel valued and that their contribution assists the force to deploy more resources operationally. Volunteers are also used within the Kicks programme for supervision and development of the programme.

Hours committed to the role are recorded and submitted on a monthly basis. There is no minimum number of hours required and volunteers have a specific role to perform when attending at police stations.

The force has a full-time volunteers co-ordinator based in St Helens, a post jointly funded by Homewatch and the force. Currently there are 520 Homewatch leaders who receive information and updates on a weekly basis through the email systems. Four volunteers have progressed to become police officers.

Senior managers and neighbourhood police officers are responsible for communicating the performance messages at their respective local consultation levels. The customer service desks, among other victim-focused units, articulate the emphasis on customer care and feedback in their dealings with the public.

The force has identified improved links with the public and problem solving with feedback to the public through the customer service desk model.

The force internal inspection programmes conducted through ASCU, the strategic development department (SDD) and the operational performance reviews co-ordinate issues, information and progress force-wide. There is evidence of considerable development within the previous 12 months.

The Integrated Neighbourhood Model document details the guiding principles for roles within the force Neighbourhood Policing model. The model sits within the force crime and ASB strategy, 'Beat It'. It is part of the four-stage strategic framework – values, community and partnerships, standards and performance. An operational guide has been issued to all officers.

Each guiding principle in the Integrated Neighbourhood Model document has a number in bold type at the end indicating the relationship to the integrated competency framework (ICF). This assists both officers and supervisors in the performance development review (PDR) assessment process. The ICF skill areas are linked to the performance and behavioural competencies published to officers. This provides officers with a toolkit for achieving evidence towards PDR objectives linking evidence to competence areas.

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The Chief Constable has used meetings with partners and conferences to embed the Total Policing strategy and to enable them to communicate and demonstrate their support for the approach within their own organisations. In addition he organises and attends meetings with the community to listen to their concerns, ascertain what their problems are and learn how the Neighbourhood Policing teams are dealing with their specific issues.

Team TV has been introduced on the force website, following on from the successful intranet messages from the Chief Constable. Team TV is being used by all the force, including support services, to support and promote the Team Merseyside and Total Policing concepts. This will assist in breaking down the perception of units working in silos, and promote a cross-cutting view of how the force works together to provide reassurance.

The force provides opportunities for the public to engage in 'web chats' with designated senior officers from across the force, BCU commanders and support departments. These web chats are publicised in advance; the public is encouraged to ask questions around policing issues and will be provided with an answer. The Chief Constable also takes part in this exercise.

The force communication and marketing department has assimilated Neighbourhood Policing as part of its core business. There are a number of publications which are circulated regularly, as well as updates to the policing plan and identified priorities. These are supported by publications produced locally by the BCU/local media and marketing officers.

The communication and marketing department has its own T&C process which involves the head of the department, marketing staff and local marketing officers from the BCUs as well as the web support team. This process takes cognisance of criminal activity in the force area, for example theft of satellite navigation systems, and promotes crime reduction in the targeted area. This is then evaluated to review the department's own performance in assisting in the reduction of offences. This process is supplemented by quarterly meetings with the ACC (citizen focus).

The head of communication and marketing provides an overview of key messages across the force. Within the force, each BCU has its own dedicated marketing officer who liaises with the neighbourhood inspectors on marketing issues and management of information published on the Neighbourhood Policing area web pages.

Marketing and media is seen as a critical part of the development of overall awareness of Neighbourhood Policing among all staff, internally, and among the public.

The Merseyside Police website contains key messages from the force and provides a level of interactivity for the public in conjunction with the police authority website. The force intranet is used extensively for video messages and internal discussion forums with chief officers.

There is evidence of good use of the force and police authority websites for promoting Neighbourhood Policing and providing the community with contact details of local officers, meeting dates and venues.

Neighbourhood officers are encouraged to promote the use of the website within their communities, and the force is exploring the most effective methods of receiving information from and supplying information to the public using technology. Within the Total Policing strategy contained in the policing plan there is reference to technology being used to engage the public in the shape of internet forums and emails. This is now taking place.

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The head of communication and marketing has consulted with and used the experience of the independent advisory group (IAG) members on methods of communicating with hard-to-reach groups. This has included the expansion of the links to other organisations from the force website, with reciprocal arrangements from those organisations' sites.

The IAG is now invited to professional standards department meetings and is far more aware of some of the issues relating to the force's conduct which are causing the public concern, whether in terms of procedures or of an individual's action. In addition, the force now has an IAG for the Matrix teams. This provides an independent view of force activities and can provide an additional dimension to inform impact assessments both prior to and after operations.

There is an active and positive approach to identifying funding streams and taking advantage of opportunities for raising finance. Partners have adopted a targeted approach for seeking funding using the partnership approach and joint applications, rather than each part of the partnership making individual applications. This ensures a corporate approach and an understanding of each other's contribution.

Local authorities have good working relations with partners, including the local chamber of commerce, and are now developing initiatives which will encourage businesses to relocate to areas with a PCSO funded package for that commercial and business areas.

In St Helens, although the local authority received only a 2.5% increase in budget, their commitment to crime reduction is demonstrated by a £400,000 investment in fixed-site ANPR cameras, which adds value to the force's intelligence-gathering, as well as by local initiatives to manage cross-border offending/criminality.

St Helens Council has reshaped its internal service departments around a joint agenda for young people, which involves closer working between the neighbourhood teams and the youth outreach and youth offending services staff. The council has active response teams (five teams of two) aligned to the neighbourhood areas, to ensure co-ordination and an effective problem-solving strategy, with all agencies working together. Partners have developed an enhanced summer programme targeting the most persistent ASB offenders and areas within St Helens.

St Helens Council is identified as a Beacon Authority. In 2006, St Helens received its best ever Comprehensive Performance Assessment results. The council again proved itself to be one of the top-performing councils in the country, with an award of a prestigious 4 stars – the top rating. St Helens has an excellent record of multi-agency working, with the police, the council and other partner agencies working towards reducing crime and the fear of crime throughout the borough.

The crime and disorder reduction partnership (CDRP) in St Helens has a vulnerable persons strategy which aims to provide support and guidance to those individuals who are in receipt of an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO). The intention is to develop the individual and to use the ASBO as a control mechanism for targeting changes in behaviour.

St Helens Partnership members are supporting up to 50 sites where drug-dependent individuals can be diverted into schemes where they can develop IT and web skills and obtain qualifications including the European Driving Licence.

The Centre Point Project is a town centre premises in St Helens where young people are encouraged to attend and be channelled into voluntary work. This project is supported by the Neighbourhood Policing team and assists in breaking down barriers.

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The City of Liverpool is covered by two BCUs and in order to manage activity an officer is seconded into the Citysafe partnership, fully funded by the police. The local authority is fully supportive of crime prevention initiatives and has invested a total of £1 million into the alley gating scheme, which has also been made available to residential private landlords; both shuttering and alley gating have also been provided to private businesses as a means of securing the long-term commitment of businesses in the area.

The appointment of director-level posts for each neighbourhood management area in Liverpool is seen to have real benefits in the allocation of increased funding to neighbourhood managers. This is seen as evidence of their increased strength and of their role in harnessing all partners around key problem areas.

The transport authorities are engaged with the partnership on reducing ASB and criminal conduct within the transport system. They work in liaison with the local police and target particular routes, with a 'meet and greet' approach for target public service vehicles entering hotspot areas. In order to support the initiative the council has extended the byelaw preventing the drinking of alcohol in public places.

As a result of prioritisation with the education authorities, the force has a safer schools project with dedicated constables embedded in schools across the force area – working within schools, delivering lessons on citizenship and providing a contact point for reporting of bullying and crime-related issues.

The force has linked with Club Frenzy, a commercial enterprise providing disco-type functions where tickets for disadvantaged children form part of an incentive scheme.

Partnership data is being used to inform problem solving and delivery. Data from partners is added to data held within force systems and used to inform neighbourhood action group (NAG) meetings. Merseyside Information Systems is an organisation which enables the sharing of information, with some restrictions, with partners to which the force subscribes.

The force works in partnership with the local authorities, and there is evidence of shared working and the establishment of part-funded posts within the intelligence units. In addition to this, there are a number of other agency staff located within each other's premises, an arrangement which provides not only data access but also shortcuts to interpretation and full understanding of the data sets and their limitations. One example is the social services staff member who works within St Helens police headquarters, providing a service to both Neighbourhood Policing and the protecting vulnerable people (PVP) services.

The officer seconded to Citysafe has internal access to local authority systems to inform problem solving.

The force has secured £100,000 from the Football Foundation to fund coaching specialists to work with young people from Everton and Liverpool football clubs – the Kicks programme. The initiative is targeted at specific ASB, and moves into an area after there has been an AXIS operation to deal with ASB. The initiative links to the neighbourhood inspectors, police constables and PCSOs who work with targeted individuals or areas.

The magistrate's courts in St Helens have made approaches to CDRP for information on partnership priorities which they will use to inform their sentencing. They have received a training input in respect to offences impacting on the vulnerable delivered by the force.

The force has demonstrated a wide range of communication links and engagement with communities. In addition to the formalised links through the local authority ward-based consultation measures and the force's own links through surveys, the force website and the

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Your Voice Counts process, neighbourhoods are creating localised key individual networks (KINs) and action groups.

The principal structures around the BCU are the NAGs and the joint action groups (JAGs). The JAGs are the overarching bodies which sit at local authority level and deal with strategic issues and requests for joint funding. They are linked to the main decision-making levels in the police, other services and the local authority. The NAGs are based at neighbourhood level and are provided with levels of funding to address local problems within the ward(s) making up the neighbourhood team area covered by the neighbourhood inspector. Problems arising from the local KIN meetings which cannot be resolved by immediate action are taken to the NAGs for funding and action by all partners.

Neighbourhood action plans are developed in consultation with communities and officers actively pursue actions to deal with problems in partnership with other agencies where appropriate. Regular updates are provided to the community on the progress of problem-solving activities, which are reviewed by the dedicated neighbourhood inspector. Plans and priorities are accessible through the force website together with updates on progress.

There is an effective consultation and engagement with communities through the KIN meetings, which were reality-checked during the inspection. Members of the public and community representatives were engaged with both police and PCSOs in developing problem-solving initiatives which were evaluated after the event. Good links were made with other agencies, and problems which could not be progressed due to financial issues were highlighted and identified for the NAG meeting. There was a good level of awareness of problem families, problem areas and the actions that dedicated officers had taken.

The Your Voice Counts facility enables residents to feed back their thoughts, comments and experiences of Merseyside Police directly. They can comment on any aspect of Merseyside Police services or employees. The comments are used constructively to improve services so they can be tailored where possible to meet the needs of local communities.

As a result of partnership working and the prioritisation of activities within the neighbourhood management model, St Helens Youth Offending Service has been moved from Children's Services to work alongside the ASB working group. This provides a more flexible and integrated approach to ASB problem solving, and has also changed the Youth Offending Service working hours and deployment activities to times and days of the week where ASB is identified as a problem – ie from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, to weekends and evenings. Over £300,000 has been invested into youth services, including Public Service Agreement Reward neighbourhood renewal funding money. There is evidence of use of restorative justice schemes such as graffiti cleaning, and there are other diversionary tactics which help to engage young people. The fire service runs diversionary activities including mechanics courses, which are also open to parents.

The new Parr Partnership is a good example of the partnership model coming together to regenerate a problem estate which had a poor reputation locally and suffered from ASB, crime problems, poor housing, unemployment and so on. This is a super output region drawing money from numerous funding initiatives, including neighbourhood renewal funding and the Strong, Safer Communities Fund. A neighbourhood manager has been in post for 12 months. The partnership has funded a dedicated police sergeant, constables and PCSOs. There are up to 60 partners engaged in the management of the partnership and all are held to account through a meeting structure and management board. There is a visible appeal to the area, with little litter, well maintained gardens and a neighbourhood management office. The change in the environment has attracted four major building companies into the area which in turn is creating some employment opportunities.

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Liaison with partners is very good, with inspectors being consulted over demographic changes. Neighbourhood profiling takes place on a regular basis and changes, actions and plans are discussed within the NAGs and any BCU-wide issues raised at the JAGs.

The force has identified a three-year problem profile which is reviewed to update it in response to emerging issues and risks. This profile informs the formulation of the force control strategy and identifies force and local priorities. These are then translated into BCU and neighbourhood priorities which are managed alongside locally determined actions.

One example of the force's response to the harm to local communities caused by street-level drug dealing and associated crime, and of improving the flow of information between communities, partner agencies and the police, is Operation Hawk, developed on the Wirral BCU.

Operation Hawk works with the public and partner agencies by striking at drug dealers through high-visibility warrants and ANPR. The warrants are issued on the basis of intelligence gained from contacts within local communities and partner agencies. Operations are followed up by targeted local drug agency interventions. Persons arrested are drugs-tested and referred to treatment agencies via the drugs intervention programme (DIP). Those criminals who prove unresponsive to treatment are considered for inclusion on the persistent and priority offenders scheme (the PIER Project) or for further local targeting. This enforcement activity is complemented by a marketing and media campaign created in consultation with the drug and alcohol action team. The campaign includes reassurance messages for local communities together with information about support agencies, Crimestoppers and confidential police numbers. Specialist substance misuse workers are actively involved in providing community drug prevention advice where drug offending behaviour is most prevalent. Communities are also kept informed by the drug crime manager and police inspector, who attend a number of public forums to promote the work of the DIP. The project has been nominated for recognition at the 2007 Home Office Tackling Drug Supply Awards.

The Wirral BCU cut all crime during 2006 by 10%, reducing burglary dwelling by 12%, with a current rate of 4.8 burglaries per 1,000 population. Force confidence tracking surveys have shown that the percentage of those questioned who feel that drug dealing is a major issue on the Wirral is consistently less than that across the whole force area. Operation Hawk has now been extended to every BCU and has resulted in some 191 operations where warrants have been executed.

Within each BCU intelligence unit there are individual analysts identified to service the community intelligence workloads.

There are good partnership arrangements with the chief executives of local authorities, the CDRP and other agencies. There was evidence in both BCUs visited of a good use of resources in liaison between police and agencies, and in use of intelligence to identify hotspot areas for targeting by all agencies. This was supported by the NAG and JAG structures.

The force engages with partners and other agencies and actively pursues cost-sharing and savings opportunities. In some parts of the force, for example within the Gold Zone, police constables are funded by partners.

The headquarters intelligence unit collects community intelligence in order to capture activity and form the 'rich picture' of the force area around key criteria. This is then tasked out to the BCU-based intelligence units for further development. Similarly, BCU-based units

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can provide packages to headquarters intelligence for development around key issues of community intelligence linked to major crime, gun crime or counter-terrorism.

BCU intelligence units are staffed to deal with community intelligence, with some jointly funded partnership analysts in place. BCU intelligence units are also linked to Neighbourhood Policing teams through the development of packages around repeat victims of domestic violence and property-based crimes, which form part of the Total Policing strategy concerning victim care.

The force has an established process for the handling of covert human intelligence sources within dedicated source handling units. They are adequately supervised and there is a tasking process for the deployment of field intelligence development officers (FIDOs) for intelligence development. More usually, this is passed to PCSOs who have become well embedded in communities and are regarded as a non-confrontational link by some communities. An example was given of Liverpool South, where the PCSOs are beginning to make inroads into some hard-to-reach communities which traditionally displayed reluctance to engage with the police service.

Each BCU identifies its priorities such as ASB, domestic violence and citizen focus and includes them within the control strategy. Activity within the respective priorities is subject to a rigorous performance and audit regime which holds people to account for the delivery of performance.

Divisional intelligence unit (DIU) staff were able to give examples of how they linked into the force-wide perspective on serious and organised crime, and then linked back to Neighbourhood Policing.

Specialist officers are aligned to the BCUs and neighbourhoods and conduct both debriefs of police officers and research in areas where there may be issues impacting on counter-terrorism.

Weekly operations review meetings share intelligence regarding counter-terrorism issues, major crime and firearms. The meetings take place every Friday and a representative of each BCU attends. They are also attended by officers on weekend cover, to give them a force-wide perspective of activity and to update them regarding potential threats. Neighbourhood areas affected are informed immediately after the meeting and the analysis is circulated via DIUs for general information.

The force has purchased a software package called ID Partners which is a problem-solving package used by officers to identify issues. Users follow a structured process to analyse emerging problems and deliver solutions. The software tracks action at both the Neighbourhood Policing and partnership levels and outputs are fed into the T&C process to ensure that some priority is given to the issue in question and that relevant resources are allocated.

The ID Partners database is available to partners and the T&C process links into the NAG and JAG structures to identify and deliver effective solutions.

PCSOs are fully engaged with developing the ID Partners software package. They identify problems which are then developed and researched by a problem-solving analyst. If there is a decision to take further action, it is transferred to the ID Partners database for tracking purposes.

St Helens is recognised as a difficult area with up to 70% of the wards falling within the most deprived in the country. Problems are identified and partners look at exception reporting to ensure there is not a knee-jerk reaction to problems which are the norm for the

area. They identify emerging hotspot areas which escalate beyond the accepted levels of behaviour on the estates and then allocate resources to tackle them.

Partnership funds have been devolved down to the NAGs to ensure there is a targeted response to issues. There are joint local area agreements in place and these are being developed further down to neighbourhood area agreements.

The superintendent leading the Neighbourhood Policing project has regular meetings with the head of training, as well as formal links through the Neighbourhood Policing board. This is to be further extended into the citizen focus agenda, which is now linked to the Neighbourhood Policing board.

The Neighbourhood Policing modules from Centrex are encompassed by the training for PCSOs. They are complemented by additional force modules on media and local requirements delivered through a mentorship arrangement once PCSOs arrive in the neighbourhood. Deployment to neighbourhoods is conducted through the human resources (HR) process with resources being deployed in accordance with a NIM demand profile.

The Centrex modules do not contain any training in dealing with the media. The force is developing a media training module entitled 'How to manage the media and how to use the media to enhance reassurance'. This will be a bespoke package designed to be appropriate to each individual role within the Neighbourhood Policing team.

The Core Leadership Development Programme will build on the skills delivered to student officers and PCSOs such as meeting skills (including the chairing of meetings). Those new to the organisation, coming in from transfer, complete an induction course to reinforce the Merseyside vision for Neighbourhood Policing, including the Chief Constable's Total Policing strategy and the TRUE programme.

The training department has many methods of delivery including intranet-based delivery. The Adobe Connect facility enables training to be targeted and the progress of the student to be monitored. This is an improvement on the Ecal system which could not perform a monitoring process.

All student officers are attached to the force crime intelligence unit during their training and this experience is used as a catalyst to raise awareness among their peers within the neighbourhoods.

There is a PCSO mentoring system within the BCUs. This ensures that those new to the role are supported alongside the Neighbourhood Policing officers.

Champions within neighbourhoods are informed of issues which may be impacting on the quality of intelligence, and of common faults in the filling of forms. Their role is to raise awareness and improve effectiveness.

The force has engaged a teacher to develop a programme for 'Training in community and youth engagement', to assist neighbourhood officers in delivering diversions to offending in partnership with other agencies. It is envisaged that the training will involve partners.

The force and its partners identify joint training requirements as part of the workstreams identified and discussed through the NAG and JAG structures, with evidence of focused training and capacity-building at both levels. This is usually organised through available funding, or bid for through the relevant partnership or project boards.

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The force has been working with the Jill Dando Institute and has been developing master-classes for partners and BCU commanders to examine scenarios and consider how the force can work better together in partnership with other agencies.

The force is active in attempting to break down barriers and dispel ignorance regarding faith. It has formed a police and youth encouragement scheme, Plus-faith, which is intended to bring together people from different faiths to discuss and break down barriers. The force has visited Leicester, as this was identified by the national community tensions team as delivering a five-day dedicated course on this issue.

The head of the major incident team is building some reassurance principles into the policy and investigation processes. These will take on board total care for the victim and identify how a well run investigation with a positive result will affect an area and in turn boost public reassurance. This strategy includes the use of PCSO's for door-to-door enquiries and delivery of key messages.

ANPR at fixed locations around the force area is providing a 'ring of steel' and both capturing intelligence and providing positive hits for resource deployment. In order to facilitate a more co-ordinated approach to directing resources to ANPR hits a new control room has been established called Lightning Three. This room is dedicated to managing the intelligence and hits from the fixed site ANPR cameras and CCTV, and will deploy BCU based resources to hits. Lightning Three went live in July 2007.

There are processes for recognising good work and effort. There is a Team of the Year award both within each BCU and force-wide. There have been successful nominations for national awards for Neighbourhood Policing officers, with one officer recently being awarded an MBE and another the Queen's Police Medal for services to the community and Neighbourhood Policing. The force nominated an officer for the Community Police Officer of the Year. There are systems for awarding commendations, culminating in awards evenings to which partners and businesses are invited. The force also won the Public Sector Servants of the Year Award 2006 Uniform Category, and had several nominations reach the final stages of the Jane's Police Review Awards.

## **Work in progress**

The force has now received the national consultation document on the proposals for a performance framework for Neighbourhood Policing. This is being considered alongside the developing roles between the ACC (operations) and the ACC (citizen focus).

The programme board has now been linked to the citizen focus board portfolio managed by the ACC (citizen focus) so that complementary workstreams are generated. Both the ACC (operations) and the ACC (citizen focus) are developing a joint performance review methodology and are developing a means of identifying and addressing common failings around customer satisfaction with BCU processes and systems. This could be triggered by dip sampling, numbers of complaints or feedback from media and press liaison. It would also include examining whether BCUs meet their customer contact target times as advertised on the website.

At BCU level, there was an acknowledgement that while Neighbourhood Policing development was taking place, there was still a requirement to provide an acceptable level of performance against the key crime indicators, which would involve neighbourhood officers being required to provide the same levels of sanction detection as other officers. The performance framework being developed by the ACC (operations) and the ACC (citizen focus) will assist this shift in emphasis and provide a more balanced approach to performance linking in qualitative issues.

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Abstractions were the main issue raised which may hinder the Neighbourhood Policing model from becoming embedded and resilient in each area. To service and support the Total Policing model requires the force to run force-wide, BCU-wide and thematic days of action. In addition to these abstractions, there is the need to service other regular abstractions such as football matches and organised annual events. This inevitably impacts on dedicated officers due to the frequency with which the operations are conducted. The ACC (operations) is to review the frequency of force operational deployments against the intelligence and evaluate their benefits. Neighbourhoods do derive benefits from these joint initiatives as they are focused on intelligence against activities which encompass some neighbourhood priorities.

Divisional and thematic abstractions cause difficulties at peak demand times, and this is exacerbated further with the abstraction of two patrol officers for the appointments car. However, the force believes that the public gets a far better service under this model. This will be evaluated within the performance review framework and performance visits by the ACC (operations) and the ACC (citizen focus).

The recently introduced revision of call grading has improved the system of allocation but there is still some confusion over grades, which results in the customer service desk and/or supervisors regrading priorities once calls have been passed from the call centre. There is a need to ensure that the force ensures that there is clarity of criteria and that feedback is provided in relation to problem areas subject to frequent regrading.

Other agencies are not directly involved in service delivery from customer service desks, but callers are directed to the appropriate agency. However there is no monitoring of the other agencies' performance or the quality of service being delivered.

The location of dispatch on each BCU, accountable to the BCU commander, has improved relationships and accountability between operational officers and call handling staff. Call handling staff are now in a position to play a key role in improving customer satisfaction and confidence as part of the divisional team. Both the ACC (operations) and the ACC (citizen focus) are engaged in joint BCU performance reviews, which include dispatch.

The force has an ageing estate and there is a commitment from the police authority to spend £30 million over a three-year strategy, taking into account the Neighbourhood Policing philosophy and putting a 'footprint' in neighbourhoods. This will include Cop Shops in public and private venues such as supermarkets, partners' buildings etc. Some of these costs will be saving opportunities presented through new developments and partnerships with developers.

Citizen focus data is being generated to inform the Crimefighters fortnightly performance review conferences, alongside the existing crime and incident data. There is an intention, in the next phase of development, to incorporate the customer satisfaction and confidence data into the PULSE performance management alert system which is being rolled out from April 1 2007.

The progress made on St Helens BCU through the volunteers co-ordinator role is being recognised elsewhere within the force. Both Knowsley and Liverpool South BCUs have benefited from the overcapacity of volunteer cadets in St Helens, with the co-ordinator passing details of unsuccessful volunteer cadet applicants to both BCUs because of their proximity.

As the model becomes embedded and student officers are posted to patrol teams, some patrol teams consist of more than 50% student officers, which creates a tension as a result

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of abstractions for completion of SOLAP requirements, often for one week. This is further exacerbated by student officers' inability to drive police vehicles on first posting.

The police authority chair has six-weekly meetings with the local authority leaders and chief executives and is currently progressing an initiative to form a pan-Merseyside crime reduction strategy, one aspect of which will be to challenge senior executives to use their staff, wardens etc to join with the wider police family under a local area agreement.

The force is developing processes to assess the impact of partners on tackling issues. This framework will examine the involvement of partners, how many actions they have carried out, their delivery profiles and their attendance at meetings. Additionally, it will assess how partners feed into the strategic assessment, the Respect agenda and ASB crackdowns.

The police authority has identified reluctance on the part of local authorities to support the employment of PCSOs financially, although local authority wardens are now becoming far more integrated with PCSOs. The chair of the police authority is promoting the success of PCSOs and encouraging partners to assist in funding initiatives.

In Liverpool South, the CDRP is developing strategies to identify local issues and how they can be tackled. The five developing neighbourhood partnership groups will be able to look at Liverpool city-wide issues, and sitting under those will be joint T&C meetings. In addition to the CDRP, a forum is being created to allow all other agencies to feed input into the framework for consideration during the T&C process.

There was concern raised by both police officers and PCSOs regarding the differing levels of support provided to staff when they leave training and begin working in an area. It was felt that there were opportunities for some PCSOs to be designated formally as having a tutoring/coaching responsibility. They perform this role informally but there is no corporacy of approach from such an informal arrangement. The force is progressing this area of development through the ACC citizen focus programme board and through joint inspection activity with the ACC (operations).

In some areas, the current police estates strategy is seen to be slow to respond to the needs of the new Neighbourhood Policing model. On St Helens BCU, opportunities have been developed to allow premises sharing with partners and to locate officers in partnership initiatives. In Garston, there is an intention to move from the existing premises which are neither suitably located nor modern, but lack of finance and opportunity are causing difficulties. The force has recently agreed with the police authority an estate strategy which will see significant capital investment in an improved police estate.

### **Areas for improvement**

The neighbourhood support teams are used in different ways on the BCUs, with some being mainly focused on ANPR work, ASB and crime. Although they have been identified as supporting neighbourhood officers to problem solve they are often abstracted for 'Big Wing Days' or other central priorities. Some clarity around their role needs to be determined and communicated clearly to the neighbourhood inspectors.

PCSOs are used to visit repeat victims to provide reassurance. However, they cannot access the IT systems to research previous incidents, and are thus dealing with victims while being unaware of their previous history. Access to IT systems would allow the necessary research to take place and lead to PCSOs being better prepared. To ensure that a balance between high-visibility patrol and customer service is maintained, the force needs to make sure, either through IT access or otherwise, that PCSOs are equipped with the relevant information.

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The force does not operate a transfers and posting system which would allow for overlap and handovers for officers working on Neighbourhood Policing teams. This is due to financial restrictions and the policing needs of the relevant posts being filled/vacated. However, such a system could have real benefits in ensuring continuity within communities and an effective, controlled handover of responsibilities and relationships.

Succession planning is not yet embedded and posts available are advertised locally. At a neighbourhood level, vacancies for police constables, sergeants and inspectors are slow to fill, with, on occasions, relatively few applicants because of the perception of the roles and the timescales for retention within them.

Due to the uncertainty regarding continued funding some PCSOs are employed on one-year contracts. This policy has an adverse effect on performance as PCSOs on such contracts face some uncertainty as to the future and experience some frustration as the 12-month limit approaches. The force should attempt to offer some reassurance to PCSOs regarding the future funding of their posts.

While the drug strategy is force-wide and not the responsibility of local neighbourhood areas, partners identified issues around where drug dependency services are sited, as their location can impact on the neighbourhood area. The force should examine the possible correlation between the location of drug dependency services and any increase in crime and ASB in the neighbourhoods. This information could then form part of an informed debate on future identified sites of premises to provide these services.

There need to be wider terms of reference for the IAG, as its members feel that much of the work that they would wish to be involved with in developing Neighbourhood Policing is being dealt with at a local level. There is scope for them to provide a strategic overview, particularly in relation to more hard-to-reach groups.

The IAG members feel that their role would be enhanced if the force provided feedback on the impact they have on the culture of the force. Although they are used to examine policies and data, they do not receive any feedback on performance in the areas examined to enable them to ascertain whether their views or advice have had any influence on the outcomes.

ACR staff have identified that encouraging ward-based officers to visit the ACR on a scheduled basis would help to break down barriers, remove obstacles to greater efficiency, and enhance communication and the understanding of each other's roles.

The force should review training provision across the organisation, as issues were identified on one BCU around training being delayed and not delivered to timescales, which impacted on the personal safety certification of some PCSOs and special constables. Beat managers were in some instances supervising a minimum of four PCSOs, but had not received any formal briefing or training on supervisory requirements, and require some clarity around their role. Some special constables identified delays in training on new initiatives, and also felt that after a period of time they would benefit from some form of refresher training.

In the absence of national guidance, the main focus was on delivering sanction detections and numerical targets. There was some evidence that quality-of-service issues were beginning to form part of an enhanced performance framework, but this was not embedded, although there was evidence of recognition of good work in this area.

PDRs of neighbourhood officers have identified force, local and personal objectives, and these are linked to the Integrated Neighbourhood Model, the Total Policing concept and the TRUE programme being championed by the Chief Constable. The acceptance of a more integrated performance framework requires time to develop. In neighbourhoods the

emphasis was on tackling neighbourhood problems identified through the KINs and the JAGs which were linked to quality-of-life issues.

There is no resource monitoring system other than the Computer Aided Resource Management System (CARMS) (which is generally regarded as an out-of-date duty roster) to enable ACR staff to allocate tasks. Invariably CARMS does not give an accurate picture, with some resources being shown on the roster while still at training. Consequently, at peak demand times ACR staff have to ask for any resource available to attend. The ACC (operations) has identified the first step towards effectively resolving the issue, by more effective monitoring of the automatic vehicle location system.

Although the force has a crime allocation model, some dedicated officers are carrying a substantial caseload which in some instances is impacting upon their dedicated role of reassurance and problem solving. The force should review the model, and ensure that it is being proportionately applied to particular roles and that the review into the impact of corporate operations being conducted on behalf of the ACC (operations) takes due cognisance of the role performed by dedicated officers. Supervisors need to be aware and to manage the crime allocation policy more effectively in consultation with those responsible for crime allocation.

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## Developing Practice

**TITLE: Customer service desks – management of calls for service, demand, resources and quality-of-life issues**

**PROBLEM:**

In 2005/06 the force reviewed the established Neighbourhood Policing model in order to develop it continually and to ensure that it was fit for purpose. Three main drivers for this review were the desire to manage calls for service demand, public expectations and quality-of-life issues. Performance required improvement and resource allocation needed addressing: some 500 officers were engaged on the patrol function whereas it was estimated some 900 were required.

**SOLUTION:**

The force developed and launched the integrated neighbourhood model in the form of Total Policing. This increased the numbers of officers on the patrol function to the required number, on the basis of the staff wizard and patrol plan assessment. Support and ring-fenced dedicated functions were established alongside the patrol function. All these functions were allocated neighbourhood officers at a ward-based level, together with extended police family members.

To manage the calls for service a new graded response policy was introduced in line with National Crime Recording Standard and National Standards for Incident Recording. This included the new national grades one through to four. A customer service desk was created and piloted on the Liverpool South BCU. All calls were assessed and graded; grades one and two received deployment from the patrol function within the target times. Grade three calls were managed through an appointment system that was customer-driven via the desk, a suitable appointment time being agreed with the member of the public. A system of ring-fenced nominated officers from the patrol function was utilised for these appointments. These officers then had the time to deal in detail with the incidents, resolving them effectively and utilising any community intelligence appropriately. Incidents that did not require police attention received appropriate attention from partner agencies, such as environmental services. Quality-of-life issues and repeat victims were identified and dealt with, then passed directly to neighbourhoods and dedicated officers for a more detailed problem-solving approach. Proactive calling by the police was introduced for repeat callers to pre-empt demand and resolve incidents before they arose. A comprehensive performance structure was put in place, encompassing daily exception reports, performance figures and linkage to the CIMs. A dip-sample process was introduced to quality-assure all activity. Finally a twice-weekly meeting between the superintendent (operations support), the control room inspector and the CIM was held. This managed performance, resources and operational issues. Demand and resources were thus effectively managed.

**OUTCOME(S):**

Performance has been achieved for all grades. Public satisfaction rose to 90% of those using the desk. The pilot has now been rolled out to the remaining five BCUs. Four are achieving targets, with the fifth improving. Officer time has been released for more proactive patrol and officers freed up for other functions.

**FORCE CONTACT:** Superintendent Labdon – 0151 777 5108 or 07802 948594

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**TITLE: Anti-social behaviour task force**

**PROBLEM:**

ASB and quality-of-life issues are key priorities for Merseyside Police. The Chief Constable initiated the joint task force as a means of robustly addressing these issues on a partnership basis centred on enforcement and prevention.

**SOLUTION:**

In partnership with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and the Crown Prosecution Service, a joint task force incorporating 130 dedicated staff has been created to deal with ASB and minor crime.

Based around the NIM, the task force identifies hotspot areas for the force and works with local authorities and partner agencies. A force-level governance group provides a strategic focus based on analysis, and the task force feeds into force strategic and tactical assessment. Local community intelligence is gathered through dedicated officers and community support officers from both the task force and BCUs. This is then fed into the T&C meeting to build a picture.

The preferred business tool for problem solving is ID Partners, which provides an audit trail for information and analysis and attempts to resolve issues around vulnerable victims, locations and offenders. It is fully automated and available for viewing by all members of the force, and partner agencies where relevant, helping them to achieve their enforcement and prevention aims by targeting offenders through any lawful means. The resources are ring-fenced in terms of ASB and contribute to the Neighbourhood Policing model, supporting actions already being taken and developing new approaches to resolution.

The community is involved at all stages through area forums, dedicated messages being passed through task force and area staff. Focus groups of community members have been held to disseminate results and seek feedback on actions taken.

**OUTCOME(S):**

Since its inception, the task force has removed 60 tonnes of illegal fireworks, has worked in four hotspot locations and has seen a reduction of 55% in ASB-type activities within deployment locations.

Over the mischief/bonfire night period, traditionally a hotspot time for the force, ASB fell by 15% on 2005 figures, and the force has successfully reduced the number of ASB incidents.

During a recent operation (Respect, 2 February 2007) a total of 14 agencies enforced legislation within a small area, resulting in arrests for possession of firearms, handling stolen goods and possession of drugs, as well as utility disconnections, house seizures and the detection of truancy offences. This former gold response hotspot area has now been downgraded to a silver response, and much positive comment has been received from the community.

**FORCE CONTACT:** Superintendent John Myles – 0151 777 5431

October 2007

**TITLE: Operation Hawk – tackling street-level drug dealing within local communities**

**PROBLEM:**

Combating the harm to local communities caused by street-level drug dealing and associated crime. Improving the flow of information between communities, partner agencies and the police.

**SOLUTION:**

Operation Hawk works with the public and partner agencies by striking at drug dealers through high-visibility warrants and ANPR. The warrants are identified through intelligence gained from contacts within local communities and partner agencies. Operations are followed up by targeted local drug agency interventions. Persons arrested are drugs-tested and referred to treatment agencies via the DIP. Those criminals who prove unresponsive to treatment are considered for inclusion on the persistent and priority offenders scheme (the PIER Project) or further local targeting. This enforcement activity is complemented by a marketing and media campaign created in consultation with Wirral drug and alcohol action team. The campaign includes reassurance messages for local communities together with information about support agencies, Crimestoppers and confidential police numbers. Specialist substance misuse workers are actively involved in providing community drug prevention advice where drug offending behaviour is most prevalent. Communities are also kept informed by the drug crime manager and police inspector, who attend a number of public forums to promote the work of Wirral DIP. The project has been nominated for recognition at the 2007 Home Office Tackling Drug Supply Awards.

**OUTCOME(S):**

Wirral has cut all crime by 10% during 2006, cutting burglary dwelling by 12%, with a current rate of 4.8 burglaries per 1,000 population. Wirral will surpass its crime reduction and treatment outcomes. Force confidence tracking surveys have shown that the percentage of those questioned who feel that drug dealing is a major issue on the Wirral is consistently less than that for the whole force area. Operation Hawk has now been extended to every BCU and has resulted in some 191 operations where warrants have been executed.

**FORCE CONTACT:** Inspector Ian Shaw, Upton Police Station – 0151 777 2440 or 07764 959679

## Performance Management

GRADE	GOOD
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### National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
6	29	8	0

### National contextual factors

There is no single accepted model of performance management across the police service but any such model or framework must be fit for purpose. Ideally, forces should demonstrate that individuals at every level of the organisation understand their contribution to converting resources into agreed delivery, and know how they will be held to account. On a daily basis, first-line supervisors monitor, support and quality assure the performance of their teams. At the other end of the spectrum, chief officer-led performance meetings – often based loosely on the American Compstat model – are a vehicle for accountability and improvement. Robust leadership, a commitment to improvement and reliable, real-time information systems are all critical factors in effective performance management.

There is no mechanistic link between overall force performance and the grade awarded in this framework. The grade is based on the quality of the force’s processes that enable it to identify and react to changes in performance.

### Contextual factors

The Merseyside Policing Plan for 2007/08 was formulated, with the police authority, following comprehensive analysis and consultation with communities. Using the local perspectives gleaned from local authorities, CDRPs, voluntary organisations and criminal justice partners, the force gains a wider understanding of community safety needs. Operational intelligence gathered throughout the year also feeds into the planning process. Using the feedback from internal and external agencies’ audit and inspection reports, the force and the police authority discuss the impact of the findings through the inspections subcommittee formed in July 2006. Supporting the planning process is the development of the strategic risk register which informs the risk management group meetings between the force and the police authority. This is now, in turn, supported by an operational risk register which identifies the issues and risks appropriate to each BCU and department. National perspectives on policing are also contained within the planning process, not least those contained in the National Community Safety Plan 2006–09 and the Home Office Strategic Objectives and Public Service Agreements.

The force then produces the three-year local strategy plan and the annual local policing plan which identifies the priorities for that year and against which the force performance frameworks hold BCUs and departments accountable for delivery, in conjunction with the police authority, CDRPs and criminal justice partners. At the BCU level, commanders and partners apply the local interpretation of these plans and have the ability to target delivery down to a neighbourhood level through the JAG and NAG structures.

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The strategic priorities for 2007/08, encompassed within the Total Policing strategy, have been identified as follows.

<b>Strategic priority</b>	<b>Total Policing area</b>
Blitzing ASB	War on crime
Tackling gang-related crime	War on crime
Improving road safety	War on crime
Improving our use of forensics	War on crime
Improving public satisfaction and confidence	Victim care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the victim satisfaction levels of black and racial minority groups</li> </ul>	Victim care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the way in which we deal with traffic collisions</li> </ul>	Victim care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the way in which we keep victims informed</li> </ul>	Victim care
Using technology to fight crime	Professionalism
Professionalising our workforce through academy training	Professionalism
Developing the TRUE programme	Professionalism
Improving our estate	Professionalism

The introduction of a new drive towards citizen focus, linked to the existing performance management structures, puts the force in a strong position to build on the performance successes of the previous 12 months.

## **Strengths**

Local Strategy Plan 2006 – 2009 and Local Policing Plan 2006 - 2007

'Merseyside Police Authority and Merseyside Police are pleased to present this Local Strategy Plan 2006–09 incorporating the Local Policing Plan 2006/07. The Plan reflects our commitment to delivering the best police service in the UK and our commitment to Neighbourhood Policing, a model of policing we have employed since 2001 and one that has become the accepted norm nationally.'

### ***Local Strategy Plan 2006–09 and Local Policing Plan 2006/07***

In January 2006 the force revised and adapted the Neighbourhood Policing model. The new model continues to take account of public concerns but also supports the philosophy of Total policing, a philosophy that restates the force's principal responsibility for law enforcement and total war on suspects, and for total victim care. Fundamentally, it is about using the totality of HR and other resources to improve both performance and, very importantly, the policing service provided to communities and visitors to the force area.

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The plan provides a comprehensive understanding of the strategic priorities that the force intends to address in the coming years, together with the performance targets that have been set by the police authority. The police authority, through its committee structures, which involve open public meetings, will hold the force and the Chief Constable to account by requiring the Chief Constable to demonstrate how the force is meeting the commitments set out within the plan. Through scrutinising and supporting the work of the force, the police authority aims to reassure the public that Merseyside Police is working in an effective way to becoming the best police service in the UK.

The processes followed to formulate the three-year policing strategy and the annual policing plan are outlined clearly in the published policing plan which is available on the force and police authority websites. The planning and monitoring systems are identified within it and the force and police authority have developed a range of scrutiny and performance monitoring processes which provides an appropriate framework within which each can discharge their responsibilities in a focused way.

Within the 2008/09 efficiency plan, the force has identified £2,242,000 to support additional officers and to increase front-line policing.

The ACCs' portfolios have been realigned around the strands of the Total Policing agenda, with links to how each other's responsibilities impact on the corporate performance and success of the Total Policing agenda. All activity within the force is aimed at both strategic and local priorities, with NIM feeding into the Merseyside intelligence 'rich picture' which includes both internal and external sources.

The support departments within the force are included within the overall strategic planning processes. The chief officer group and business management group meetings provide the forums, which are underpinned by nominated ACCs and chief officers managing the performance frameworks and steering groups which surround delivery. The Chief Constable's Total Policing strategy clearly identifies what their inputs to delivery will be.

At the Crimefighters performance meetings chaired by the ACC (operations), in addition to examining performance during the previous month and year to date against the previous year and target, predictive analysis is used to identify emerging and approaching risks. MSF and most similar BCU comparisons are made to provide context and there are opportunities to visit better-performing BCUs.

Within the Crimefighters performance meeting there is a focus on the spread of good practice and encouragement to all BCUs to take on good practice from those BCUs working within the Respect agenda (Knowsley, Liverpool and Wirral). This was reality-checked during the inspection.

Wirral BCU has been identified as exhibiting national good practice in developing a process to ensure that the victim care code is being addressed. The BCU has linked in with the multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) to improve victim care in line with the Total Policing strategy.

Prior to the meeting, emerging (or continued) risks are identified and tactical inspection activity undertaken around specific crime categories; this includes checking NIM meetings, processes and accountability frameworks. Front-line officer understanding is checked through visits to shift briefings and personal interviews. Compliance checking and quality assurance of investigative activity are also carried

out through dip sampling of crime files, and forensic scene examination results and forensic package management are also scrutinised.

The Crimefighters meeting is underpinned by the ACC's quarterly inspection visits which follow a clear agenda, including command team updates on the previous quarter's action plan along with current and anticipated performance risks. Presentations from and interviews with key staff and focus groups inform the findings from the day as well as preparing staff for genuine Going Local 3 (GL3) inspections.

The development of PULSE, a software package delivering real-time performance statistics, will allow commanders the flexibility to make assessments of performance on a daily basis. It will allow their own parameters to be developed seasonally on a risk basis, and will provide a more dynamic overview of performance and an understanding of why fluctuations in performance take place. It will prevent knee-jerk reactions to fluctuations.

The performance regime is complemented by quarterly BCU reviews built around the GL3 framework. A pre-inspection self-assessment, using questions taken from the GL3 handbook, is tested by an inspection team, through attendance at key meetings, briefings and interviews.

Real-time operational reviews are also undertaken, involving plain-clothes staff patrolling the crime areas at key times, to audit policing activity visually from a community impact perspective.

Quarterly reviews are undertaken by the ACC (area operations). The findings from the inspection are produced in the format prescribed in the GL3 handbook, 'positive' and 'area for improvement' bullet points being captured within the relevant domains. There is a requirement for the BCU to develop an improvement plan, which informs the basis of the following review.

There is analysis taking place of a range of indicators including crime, ASB, criminal damage and robbery; this is being overlapped to form a 'rich picture' which is being used in the decision-making process for the deployment of the ASB task force (the AXIS team).

Where the results of reviews indicate that performance is not meeting identified targets, remedial action is taken. In addition, the force's performance across the range of statutory performance indicators is monitored by the force and the police authority to ensure the force achieves the performance targets set by the police authority.

The performance management framework continues to develop. There have been significant reductions across all key crime categories compared to the same period last year, including the lowest all-crime and violent crime figures for over two years. However, a significant benefit has also been that the framework has generated a new approach to understanding performance at BCU level. Greater scrutiny is applied to examining those activities which influence performance (at individual and team level), as well as a much higher awareness and degree of quality assurance and compliance checking by the BCUs themselves, across reduction and investigative activity.

The focus on performance has been underpinned by the development of a corporate performance booklet aimed at BCU commanders and their teams. This has been complemented by specific guidance from the ACC (operations) about his

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expectations of the detail and preparation required for relevant performance meetings.

The force uses a process for ensuring compliance with process and service delivery standards. Each critical incident manager (at inspector level) has to examine a range of incidents, custody records and crime reports to ensure compliance. The results of these incidents are also subject to further scrutiny.

Data quality is an area of inspection for the force and is a standing item at management meetings. ASCU has completed data quality checks and inspections. The force is aware of the risks to data quality and the fact that there must be a corporate standard backed up by national standards.

The force, in conjunction with the police authority has set targets to monitor reductions in ASB as follows:

- SPI IO b Perception of ASB – 2007/08 target = 15.7%. This measures the percentage of people who think that ASB is a problem in their area. Performance for 2006/07 is predicted at 22.9%, so this target requires a 32% reduction in perception levels.
- LPI 2 Incidents of ASB – 2007/08 target = 110,106. Performance for 2006/07 is forecast at 125,554 incidents. Achieving this target would represent a 12% reduction in the number of incidents.
- LPI 4 Incidents of domestic violence (repeat victimisation) – 2007/08 target = to reduce the numbers of repeat victims to 39% of all incidents

The police authority members, as a means of enhancing awareness, have been to operational units to ask officers their views on what performance means to them. This has provided the authority with a baseline view from staff and assists it in developing strategies with the force to ensure that performance has an identified outcome in enhancing quality-of-life issues rather than being a matter of pure statistics. This process has helped the authority to become more sophisticated when setting targets, with analysis enabling it to set more achievable but stretching targets, which are much more specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely.

The police authority is now starting to examine the activity and contributions of support services and how they help to increase performance across the BCUs. This will involve a police authority member attending the performance meetings in relation to support services and being able to correlate their activity to outcomes at a BCU level.

The police authority has a realistic view of what the force is delivering and how it can improve performance. Although it supports the Chief Constable's vision of being the best force in the country, it is also clear that it wants the best possible service for the people of Merseyside.

The police authority has a good relationship with the force and is well informed of performance. This is achieved through a variety of methods, including analysis of information and data supplied by ASCU and SDD, and personal contact with senior and operational officers within the force. This allows the authority to review performance targets continually throughout the year. The force makes the skills of staff available to the police authority for issues which the authority requires researching.

There is considerable evidence within the force of joint formulation of priorities with partners through the JAG structures. This results in shared targets and

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accountability for delivery, with much evidence being provided from discussions with partners throughout the inspection into Neighbourhood Policing. This joint prioritising had also developed to the point of joint resourcing of structures to deliver on key activities, for example at St Helens where finance and personnel had been realigned in both police and partner organisations to deliver the identified outcomes. This was also increasingly evident in Liverpool South with the revised neighbourhood management structures.

The Merseyside Criminal Justice Board (MCJB) identified the need to provide a single performance meeting for all criminal justice agencies during which critical criminal justice indicators/processes could be monitored and addressed on a cross-agency basis.

The MCJB, under the chairmanship of the Chief Constable, introduced the Quantum meeting which consists of a scrutiny panel comprising the chief officers of the police, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Her Majesty's Courts Service (HMCS), the probation service and the prison service, along with local authority chief executives. The other participants in the meeting consist of inter-agency staff in four teams, one for each local delivery board area within Merseyside, who answer questions in respect of their performance posed by the scrutiny panel.

The meeting is provided with a comprehensive dataset and analysis; this is given to the local delivery boards with a list of proposed questions prior to the Quantum meeting, thereby allowing the local delivery boards to provide adequately prepared responses.

Actions generated from the meeting are tasked to appropriate multi-agency resources from among the attendees.

Outcomes from the new arrangements have been:

- process improvements;
- improved process compliance;
- a greater inter-agency team approach to process improvement and problem solving;
- greater inter-agency co-operation and cohesiveness;
- the instigation of new projects in respect of key areas identified by the data provided (eg the Race and Hate Crime Project); and
- greater control over end-to-end criminal justice performance.

Further examples of this shared approach and accountability were evident in the structures surrounding all aspects of PVP, with co-located staff and funding to deliver on priority outcomes, particularly around mental health.

The force finance department actively tracks partnership funding, is aware of the costs contribution received through a variety of partnership and funding arrangements with local authorities, and could react quickly should these funding opportunities come to an end.

The force, supported by the finance department, engages with partners and other agencies and will actively pursue cost sharing and savings opportunities. In some parts of the force constables are funded by other partners, for example within the Crosby Gold Zone.

The force currently uses two forensics suppliers to provide some resilience and competition in bidding for services.

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The force continues to invest in the resources and processes which support the witness care programme. Although external funding for the scheme has now stopped the force took the view that this was an essential part of the investigation process and appropriate finance has been directed to maintaining its effectiveness.

The public protection unit (PPU) seeks to ensure that it works to maximum strength and that there are no long delays in filling vacancies. The force previously struggled to recruit detectives, which led to vacancies within the unit and savings.

The increased investment of resources in the PVP area of public protection has driven changes in the operating structures of both the PPU and the family crime investigation units (FCIUs). These units are now working together rather than as separate units, with intelligence being shared across the strands of vulnerability. This shared intelligence will enhance the early identification of vulnerability and provide a more proactive approach. This initiative has also seen the development of hate crime teams and converter teams.

The force conducts a bi-annual review audit of resource allocation across BCUs, showing where people are. This ensures that the force is aware of where resources are deployed and that there is an accurate reflection of where resources are invested in relation to performance.

The force makes excellent use of ANPR and is the most successful in the country in developing and using ANPR in the fight against the criminal. In addition the Proceeds of Crime Act 2004 is seen as a developing tool in the investigation process.

Big Wing Days are mounted following intelligence information of current or emerging problems, and their deployment is based on priorities within the force control strategy and consultation with commanders.

Big Wing Days have been successful in focusing volume resources at existing or emerging problems throughout the force. They are being used as an opportunity for officers to develop their planning and leadership skills in risk assessment and achievable target setting.

The policing ethos and Total Policing concept are being promoted by the Chief Constable through the website and podcasts and also through the face-to-face forum which the Chief Constable attends, speaking to all personnel within the force. This forum is supplemented by internet forums where members of the force can question the Chief Constable and others on police issues, procedure and other matters.

The force provides opportunities for the public to engage in 'web chats' with designated senior officers from across the force, BCU commanders and support departments. These web chats are publicised in advance; the public is encouraged to ask questions around policing issues and will be provided with answers. The Chief Constable also regularly takes part in this exercise.

Team TV has been introduced on the website, following on from the successful intranet broadcasts from the Chief Constable. Team TV will be used by all the force, including support services, to support and promote the Team Merseyside and Total Policing concepts. This will assist in breaking down the perception of units working in silos and promote a cross-cutting view of how the force works together to provide reassurance.

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The communication and marketing department has its own T&C process which involves the head of department, marketing managers, BCU marketing officers and the web support team. This process takes cognisance of criminal activity in the force area, for example theft of satellite navigation devices, and then promotes crime reduction in the targeted area. This is then evaluated to review the department's own performance in assisting in the reduction of offences. This process is supplemented with quarterly meetings with the ACC (citizen focus) to deal with longer-term issues.

A citizen focus portfolio has been created and is managed by an ACC. This demonstrates a commitment to putting the needs of victims, witnesses and law-abiding citizens at the heart of the criminal justice system. The ACC (citizen focus) now holds the responsibility for customer focus, NICHE, contact management and Neighbourhood Policing policy.

The ACC (citizen focus) chairs all misconduct panels and identifies areas where the force may not be having the desired impact on the areas of customer satisfaction and customer service, which may be generating complaints from the public. Where there is a theme, this is identified and fed back into the organisation for positive action through training, policy change and so on.

The citizen focus steering group provides a focus and has carried out a strategic assessment of citizen focus issues. As a consequence the steering group has identified six strands or priorities for action. Each strand has a nominated lead and satisfaction levels are compared in each of the offence categories.

Call centre operators' standards of delivery to callers are assessed against the National Call-Handling Standards. However, work is ongoing to enhance the call-handling process by directing members of the public to a person who has knowledge of their particular area and who can discuss the issue, rather than simply leaving an email message.

Customer service desks have been established to deal with level 2 and 3 (non-immediate response) calls. They can resolve an issue on the telephone or arrange an appointment to suit the caller. The service provided by the customer service desk is being monitored for quality of service delivery.

The head of communication and marketing accompanies the ACC (citizen focus) on BCU performance visits, examining in detail the strategies that each BCU uses to enhance citizen focus. This involves offering professional advice on how the strategies could be improved.

The force engages in a continuous cycle of community consultation to ensure that community and service users' views influence the decision-making processes. There is a programme of checking back with communities to validate the decisions made.

Annually the force produces a leaflet summarising the policing plan and requests feedback on priorities from every household in Merseyside. Responses to the 2006/07 leaflet showed that over 95% of respondents agreed that tackling ASB should be a priority. In addition, over 92% of respondents agreed that improving confidence and satisfaction should be a priority. The results of the survey have informed the priorities for 2007/08. The same survey is being used to validate the 2007 policing plan summary.

The police authority holds a number of forum meetings and consultation events throughout the year across the whole of the Merseyside area. The force regularly

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engages with communities, particularly through Neighbourhood Policing and through residents' meetings.

From the community engagement and consultation exercises, the overwhelming message is the need to tackle ASB. Although other issues have been identified, tackling ASB is a key priority and this has an emphasis within the policing plan.

Through regular public meetings, surveys and questionnaires, the police authority and force monitor satisfaction and confidence levels of both victims and the wider communities served by the force. This information is used to guide decisions on policing priorities and assist in identifying those areas where there is a need to improve.

It is apparent that there is a determined effort to put the citizen focus agenda alongside the emphasis on performance, and to make changes to the performance culture, from a focus on pure numbers to a more holistic view of performance and service delivery. This process was reality-checked during the inspection.

Members of the public contacting the force regarding a specific problem in their neighbourhood, or residents in areas where specific ongoing police action is being delivered, are informed of police activity such as an ASB task force working in area, and of the existence of Section 30 dispersal orders and so on. This emphasises the fact that the force is taking positive action in response to identified community concerns.

The force has documented and embedded systems for recognising good work, ranging from national awards to commendations and specific bravery awards. The former bureaucratic process for commendations has been shortened considerably, and the presentation of such awards has been increasingly publicised through internal and external media. Awards ceremonies and gala-type evenings have taken place recently. The development and recognition of good work is supported through the Total Policing strategy.

Quarterly inspection reviews are conducted on each BCU, which has assisted in seeking out performance opportunities. The inspection regime is being developed into a more sophisticated approach, including both operational, qualitative and citizen-focused areas, to provide a more rounded view of the service provided to the public which is not based merely on performance statistics at an operational level.

The performance regime is complemented by quarterly BCU reviews built around the GL3 framework. A pre-inspection self-assessment, using questions taken from the GL3 handbook, is tested by an inspection team, through attendance at key meetings, briefings and interviews.

The force has worked with KPMG to examine the available, deployable time of resources within the force by comparing demand with available resource time and allocation. The force has identified that arrests are up by 14% from 2006 and that this success is impacting on the time available for deployment. Any delays within custody may also be exacerbating the reduction of available resources. The force is currently working through the custody processes to reduce the abstractions identified, and has carried out self-assessment processes against the NPPT templates and the GL3 BCU self-assessment frameworks to identify any gaps.

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## Work in progress

Officers identified abstractions from core policing roles as an obstacle to full functionality of the Neighbourhood Policing model. Big Wing days and associated operations were seen to distract from the Neighbourhood Policing model, particularly on Fridays and Saturdays when ASB was at peak demand for service. The force intends to review the effectiveness of such operations and their impact on individual officers and on operational policing practices. The force believes that such operations have significantly contributed to the improvements in performance evidenced across the force. The use of large numbers of officers in such operations, beyond the resources available within individual BCUs or neighbourhoods, to address policing problems identified from intelligence from neighbourhood officers and the community, is an effective way of dealing with the problems. The actual level of abstraction will continue to be monitored by ASCU.

Although PULSE will identify crime trends and exception reports, there is the possibility for the computer programme to include some financial data to identify trends and provide alerts.

The Crimefighters conference could be enhanced, and performance put into context, through analysis in relation to customer satisfaction levels based on a NIM model.

The Crimefighters meeting is supported by both ASCU and SDD. SDD prepares the performance analysis. ASCU undertakes reality checking within the BCUs as well as supplementing the performance analysis with additional operational data. There is a potential for duplication and lack of clarity of data. To prevent duplication of effort the force is reviewing the activity of both departments to identify where the crossover areas may be with a view to addressing them.

The force is looking at rationalising the areas of devolution to ensure that those charged with delivery of services will be given resources commensurate with the appropriate safeguards and accountability structures. An example was given of some of the headquarters support structures.

There is a need to work effectively with community safety partners in redefining processes to meet customers' needs and, where appropriate, attempting to provide choices in respect of the service provided. This will include not only how the force deals with the initial call for assistance, but also how it provides support and keeps victims and witnesses informed of progress.

The force is examining how each department working within the Total Policing principles impacts on customer satisfaction and reassurance. This work will ensure that one department is not having an adverse effect on work that another department or BCU may be doing and thereby jeopardising the efforts of that department or BCU. Although the force is performing well in relation to public satisfaction and confidence, and in many categories is the best-performing when compared to its MSF group, it is developing an improvement agenda involving all BCUs and departments.

The way the force deals with Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) was identified as failing in the area of customer satisfaction, and in consequence the force has made a decision to recentralise the back room and administration functions, taking them back from BCUs. The rationale is that BCUs do not have RTCs as a priority, and the intention is to develop and provide customer service standards consistently across the force.

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The force has joined the Institute of Customer Services. The development has been initially prioritised for all call handlers but will be extended to other customer-facing roles if the evaluation proves successful. The force is monitoring calls from the public with the aim of providing it with the best possible service.

The force is considering a more co-ordinated approach to the handling of prisoners through delays in the 'airlocks', the overall times taken to process detainees, and the assessment prior to release of the opportunities for capturing offences taken into consideration. It is also looking at the reporting of missing from home (MFH) procedures, including performance data regarding scenes visited, and is reviewing the attendance criteria at high-, medium- and low-risk categories.

The ACC (operational support) has responsibility for the PPU and the policies and strategies which support its role. The ACC (operations) has the operational responsibility for ensuring the delivery of performance around child protection, MFH, sex offender management and Domestic Violence (DV), and that the PPU strategies are supporting the Neighbourhood Policing delivery in areas. In order to ensure there is some linkage the two ACCs plan to meet weekly to discuss PVP and assess the current risks to the force.

Currently there are 450 PCSOs in the force, on contracts ranging from three years to one year. Short contracts do cause some insecurity among PCSOs, particularly when the end of a contract is looming. The head of HR ensures that the police authority is kept updated regarding ongoing commitments in renewal of contacts.

In Knowsley the force has agreed to meet with partners to look at how each of them can contribute towards each agency's performance indicators. This cross-cutting approach and shared problem solving will lead to joint performance indicators for the partnership.

The head of the force major investigation team is building reassurance principles into the policy and investigation processes. He is incorporating total care for the victim and identifying how a well run investigation, with a positive result, will impact on an area and in turn boost public reassurance. This strategy includes the use of PCSOs, in particular for door-to-door enquiries and the delivery of reassurance messages.

'Golden hour' (opportunities for securing evidence) training has been delivered, as it was recognised that this was a critical area for the force and that this was affecting performance.

Engagement with other forces in joint procurement initiatives is providing opportunities where a shared resource could bring additional savings. One such area is around finance, where a regional finance management structure could release savings.

The police authority acknowledges that the Neighbourhood Policing model needs to become embedded and that, while it requires the force to continue with its current performance levels, there is a need to look at the more qualitative aspects of service delivery.

### **Areas for improvement**

The force should evaluate the impact of training and skills provision on the overall performance framework. There is no mechanism for assessing how training contributes to improved performance. There is the potential for this to be evaluated during the performance reviews carried out by the ACCs. Area training panels make

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assessments as to BCU needs; however there appears to be a gap between looking at what areas the BCU may be failing in and how training can improve those results.

The PDR system is not routinely being used to maximise opportunities for improved performance. Training and development are required to enhance the ability of supervisors to use the PDR to drive performance, to identify skills gaps and take responsibility for ensuring that they are addressed. Supervisors should receive appropriate development to enable them to apply the models for learning principles, look at a problem and propose an action plan to resolve the problem within their team.

The ACC (operations) chairs the performance meetings around BCU activity within which the delivery of performance around MFH and DV is discussed. Other operational units and support departments are held to account through a similar departmental performance meeting chaired by the DCC. The ACC (operations support) is responsible for policies around public protection, without a clear connection to the ACC (citizen focus) portfolio, which links to victim confidence and satisfaction. The force should ensure that the links between the ACC's portfolios are clear and auditable so that impact and activity in one portfolio area can be risk-assessed against other linked responsibilities.

Other agencies are not directly involved in the service delivery from customer service desks, but callers are directed to the appropriate agency. However there is no monitoring of the other agencies' performance or the quality of the service being delivered by them.

The force could significantly improve its approach to customer focus and service delivery by recognising good practice and promoting a quality-of-service ethos through the commendation and awards procedures. Accepting that the commendation process has been made less bureaucratic, the force should ensure that the quality of service delivery is recognised as well as the quantitative aspects of the service.

## Developing Practice

### **TITLE: BCU performance management framework**

#### **PROBLEM:**

It was identified that the force, while monitoring BCU performance regularly, was not really able to identify and understand those policing activities that might be influencing performance, and thereby focus activity on improving it. Additionally, there was very limited identification and sharing of good practice.

#### **SOLUTION:**

At the end of the month every command team attends a performance meeting, chaired by the ACC (operations). In addition to examining the performance for the previous month and year to date against the previous year and target, predictive analysis is used to identify emerging and approaching risks. MSF and most similar BCU comparisons are made to provide context and there are opportunities to visit better-performing BCUs. Prior to the meeting, emerging (or continued) risks have already been identified and tactical inspection activity has been undertaken around specific crime categories; this includes checking NIM meetings, processes and accountability frameworks. Front-line officer understanding is checked through visits to shift briefings and personal interviews. Compliance checking and quality assurance of investigative activity is also carried out through dip sampling crime files; forensic scene examination results and forensic package management are also scrutinised. Real-time operational reviews are also undertaken, involving plain-clothes staff patrolling the crime areas at key times, to visibly audit policing activity visually from a community impact perspective.

At the middle of each month a themed performance meeting is held, again with the same membership and chair.

This performance regime is complemented by quarterly BCU reviews built around the GL3 framework. A pre-inspection self-assessment, using questions taken from the GL3 handbook, is tested by an inspection team, through attendance at key meetings, briefings and interviews.

The ACC's inspection day follows a clear agenda, including command team updates on the previous quarter's action plan along with current and anticipated performance risks. Presentations from and interviews with key staff and focus groups inform the findings from the day as well as preparing staff for genuine GL3 inspections.

The findings from the inspection are produced in the format prescribed in the GL3 handbook, 'positive' and 'area for improvement' bullet points being captured within the relevant domains. There is a requirement for the BCU to develop an improvement plan, which informs the basis of the following review.

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**OUTCOME(S):**

The performance management framework continues to develop. There have been significant reductions across all key crime categories compared to the same period last year, including the lowest all-crime and violent crime figures for over two years. However, a significant benefit has also been that the framework has generated a new approach to understanding performance at BCU level. Greater scrutiny is applied to examining those activities which influence performance (at individual and team levels) and there is a much higher awareness and degree of quality assurance and compliance checking on the part of the BCUs themselves, across reduction and investigative activity.

This thrust and relentless focus on performance has been underpinned by the development of a corporate performance booklet aimed at BCU commanders and their teams. This has been complemented by specific guidance from the ACC (operations) about his expectations in terms of the detail and preparation required for relevant performance meetings.

**FORCE CONTACT:** Superintendent Mike Edgley, area support and co-ordinating unit, headquarters – 0151 777 8149

**TITLE: Citizen focus strategic assessment**

**PROBLEM:**

Citizen focus is a newly created portfolio both within the force and nationally. While a number of performance measures exist, a single assessment across all issues had not previously been carried out. The aim of this assessment was to identify key areas of risk within the portfolio and links between them.

**SOLUTION:**

The force completed a strategic assessment of citizen focus in September 2006. This involved assessing the issues around public confidence in the police and determining the factors which impact upon that confidence. A clear link with Neighbourhood Policing was evident, particularly around community engagement and neighbourhood priorities. This assessment, together with the analysis of current performance, identified six key areas of risk/areas for improvement.

A citizen focus programme board was established, consisting of senior managers from BCUs and key departments. The priorities for action, together with the proposed recommendations, were agreed by the board. Each key theme was assigned to a lead manager to develop an action plan. Action plans are now in place and progress is reported monthly to the programme board. The strategic assessment was due to be updated in March 2007 (after six months) to assess the full impact of the action plans.

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**OUTCOME(S):**

A number of initiatives have been implemented, including customer service desks on each BCU to standardise customer service activities and hate crime investigation units on each BCU to improve the quality of investigation. Response times continue to improve significantly month on month for all graded responses following the implementation of proof of concept principles introduced force-wide, as do calls for service, with indicators currently achieving or exceeding targets. Other initiatives such as Your Voice Counts have had a positive impact on satisfaction and follow-up, although these activities by their nature will take longer to show a direct impact on performance.

**FORCE CONTACT:** Anita Pattinson, Force Principal Strategic Analyst, strategic development department – 0151 777 8410

**TITLE:** Merseyside Criminal Justice Board Quantum meeting

**PROBLEM:**

The MCJB was required to improve criminal justice processes and performance in respect of end-to-end process across a number of criminal justice agencies. The aim was to provide a single performance meeting for all criminal justice agencies during which critical criminal justice indicators and processes could be monitored and addressed on a cross-agency basis.

**SOLUTION:**

The MCJB, under the chairmanship of the Chief Constable, introduced the Quantum meeting as described above. The meeting includes a scrutiny panel comprising the chief officers of the police, the CPS, HMCS, the probation service and the prison service, along with local authority chief executives.

The remainder of the participants in the meeting consist of inter-agency staff in four teams, one for each local delivery board area within Merseyside, who answer questions in respect of their performance posed by the scrutiny panel.

The meeting is supported by the provision of a comprehensive dataset and analysis; this is given to the local delivery boards with a list of proposed questions prior to the Quantum meeting, thereby allowing the boards to provide adequately prepared responses.

The meeting consists of a review of the minutes and matters arising from them, followed by a presentation of the dataset during which questions are asked of the board teams.

Actions generated by the meeting are tasked to appropriate multi-agency resources from among the attendees.

**OUTCOME(S):**

Outcomes consist of:

- process improvements;
- improved process compliance;
- a greater inter-agency team approach to process improvement and problem solving;
- greater inter-agency co-operation and cohesiveness;
- the instigation of new projects in respect of key areas identified by the data provided (eg the Race and Hate Crime Project); and
- greater control over end-to-end criminal justice performance.

**FORCE CONTACT:** Chief Superintendent Michael Baines, corporate criminal justice department – 0151 777 5480

## Protecting Vulnerable People – Overview

### National contextual factors

The assessment framework for Protecting Vulnerable People was first developed in 2006 as part of HMIC's baseline assessment programme. It replaced two existing frameworks – Reducing/Investigating Hate Crime and Crimes against Vulnerable Victims – which focussed on hate crimes (predominantly racially motivated), domestic violence and child protection. Following consultation with practitioners and ACPO leads, a single framework was introduced with four components – domestic violence, the investigation and prevention of child abuse, the management of sex and dangerous offenders, and vulnerable missing persons. Although the four areas are discrete, they are also linked and share a common theme – they deal with vulnerable victims where there is a high risk that an incident can quickly become critical, and where a poor police response is both life-threatening and poses severe reputational risks for the force.

This year's inspection has been carried out using similar assessment standards as those in 2006. These highlight the importance of leadership and accountability; policy implementation; information management; staffing, workload and supervision; performance monitoring and management; training; the management of risk; and partnership working.

The work carried out by forces to protect the public, particularly those most vulnerable to risk of serious harm, is complex and challenging. No single agency, including the police, has the capacity to deliver the required response on its own. Success is therefore, dependent on effective multi-agency working and there are a number of established partnerships, involving a wide range of services and professionals, aimed at ensuring that an integrated approach is adopted to protecting those most vulnerable to risk of serious harm.

### Contextual factors overview

The force has developed a comprehensive structure and processes for implementation of all National Centre for Policing Excellence (NCPE) doctrine.

An implementation project manager and lead ACC are appointed for each doctrine.

If a formal project is required to bring about the required changes, there are Projects in Controlled Environments 2 (PRINCE2) trained project advisers within the force's SDD who can provide assistance, for example with project planning and templates.

All high-risk doctrine implementation projects, including DV, child abuse and missing persons (MISPER) report to a programme board chaired by the DCC. Lead ACCs manage the implementation of their own doctrine via project boards/steering groups.

There is a dedicated NCPE co-ordinator within SDD, who works with the force single point of contact to ensure doctrine is implemented in a structured manner and linked in to policy and other relevant activity such as risk management.

Since the DV, child abuse and MISPER doctrines were received in early 2005 they have been managed through this process and subject to NCPE health check scrutiny.

Following a review of the approaches to dealing with victims, particularly those classed as vulnerable, the force placed responsibility for the development and overview of sex offender management, child protection issues, MFH and DV onto

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the PPU under the superintendent (force crime operations unit). This was to bring force-wide cohesion and corporacy to the management and delivery of services to vulnerable victims. The review of force staffing and structures which took place towards the end of 2006 provided additional resources to ensure that the PPU is always working at full strength and that there are no delays in filling vacancies.

The concept of caring for victims is embedded within the Chief Constable's Total Policing strategy and is a major area of focus within the new PPU.

The police authority has fully supported the developments within the force and is reviewing its internal scrutiny and performance systems to align itself within the new focus on victims.

## **Strengths**

The ACC (operations support) has the portfolio for public protection involving sex offender management, while the ACC (operations) has the day-to-day responsibility for performance around MFH and DV. The ACC (citizen focus) is now part of the delivery agenda with a focus on improving victim and customer satisfaction and confidence.

The force has increased investment in protecting the public. The PPU and FCIU are now working together as opposed to being separate units, with intelligence being shared across the strands of vulnerability. There has also been the complementary development of hate crime teams and converter teams.

The structure of policy and procedural overview and monitoring from the headquarters-based PPU against BCU-based delivery units strikes the appropriate balance of ownership and accountability to deliver effective operational responses.

The development of PULSE and the use of Corvus software (data management ) provide the ability to monitor performance and outcomes on a daily basis. The systems will allow a more dynamic overview and an understanding of why fluctuations in performance take place.

BCUs carry out peer assessment of PVP cases to ensure there is integrity and transparency in the audit process. This provides a scrutiny role and assists in spreading good practice throughout the force. This process could be developed further and extended to include partners in the scrutiny role.

There is evidence of good communication between the FCIU and the Neighbourhood Policing teams in managing risks within the neighbourhoods. All officers working within the units are Risk Matrix 2000-trained. A risk assessment of the nominal is made, and the identified levels of risk and how the offender is going to be managed are discussed with the neighbourhood inspector. Any escalation of risk is immediately brought to the attention of the command team and neighbourhood teams.

Information markers relating to individuals which can be identified by ANPR are placed on the Police National Computer (PNC). This provides officers performing a vehicle stop check with a means to access PNC for details of the driver, alerting them to any criminal conduct (eg young child in car being driven by a registered sex offender). This provides a useful intelligence link and aids in any future profiling of the nominal.

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The force works in partnership with the local authorities and there is evidence of shared working and part-funded posts within the intelligence unit. Intelligence is shared and there is a joined-up approach to problem solving.

All information is passed to an analyst who has access to all PVP systems, COMPACT (MISPER), Protect (DV) and command and control (C&C), and can research incidents, modus operandi circumstances or named individuals. This information can be further developed by a FIDO if there is indication of a developing risk.

BCUs take opportunities to raise awareness of PVP issues through attachments to the units. This gives officers an awareness of the complex nature of their work and how the four strands of DV, child abuse, MISPER and the management of registered sex offenders link together. It allows them to return to their group with a greater awareness to assist less experienced officers. Having obtained this experience, officers are identified as champions who will continue to provide a link to the FCIU.

Champions within neighbourhoods are informed of issues which may be impacting on the quality of intelligence, and of common faults in the filling of forms. Their role is to raise awareness and improve efficiency. This provides ownership of problems down to neighbourhood level and is breaking down the silo approach to resolving issues, which may have been impacting on efficiency.

Force policy is that all student officers are attached to the FCIU during their training, and this experience is used as a catalyst to raise awareness among their peers within the neighbourhoods. The 29-week training programme places great emphasis on PVP issues.

The FCIU uses a gold, silver and bronze process to categorise at-risk individuals or groups, and this is supported by a range of measures to safeguard the individual. These include cocoon watch with dedicated officers for liaison purposes. Gold victims are flagged on C&C and there is a minimum standard of response and support to these victims, which is monitored on a daily basis at management meetings.

The FCIU is a fully resourced unit dealing with all the core issues of family crime in a structured and policy-led way. Units will respond to identified risks within each of the BCUs identified through neighbourhood profiling and crime pattern analysis. The force has identified an issue in respect of abuse of the elderly and has set up a pilot project focusing on the dedicated investigation of the abuse of elderly and vulnerable adults; other parts of the force focus on mental health issues and so on. The pilot, when reviewed, has the potential to go force-wide, as the complexity of cases and the potential harm to victims require a sophisticated response – for example in the investigation of fraud, embezzlement by relatives and other such offences.

Each strand within the PVP framework has dedicated officers who are not abstracted for other duties. Although all staff, including supervisors, are aware of each other's roles and responsibilities, they are not routinely abstracted for other duties or for mainstream CID cover.

The system runs effectively and the four strands do have linkage through the various leads and supervisors within PVP. There is good communication within the unit, built on personal relationships and understanding of each other's roles and how each impacts on another. This has been achieved built on the stability of staff ratios and continuity.

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There is evidence of a developed communication strategy with partners, with discussions taking place on a daily basis with staff from partner agencies. The force places great emphasis on partnership data and intelligence and an identified member of staff within the intelligence units is responsible for researching and analysing partnership data.

BCU intelligence units have a force-wide perspective on serious and organised crime which is linked into Neighbourhood Policing together with the analysis of activity and information generated by both PCSOs and Neighbourhood Policing officers. Intelligence is used as a development tool to link community intelligence into the force's analysis of organised crime.

The force deploys appropriately skilled resources to PVP issues. FIDO units are used increasingly to develop intelligence on vulnerability issues, particularly child exploitation and serious DV.

Structured debriefs are carried out on a regular basis on areas of activity. Common concerns are identified across each of the PVP areas. This involves all agencies engaged in the investigation and serves as a development activity and for the identification of good practice. Structures are then put in place to close any gaps.

Intelligence units have a structured meeting process involving all areas of activity within the department. These meetings are held every six weeks to ensure that all intelligence is being captured and read across the disciplines which each section has responsibility for. This is providing some resilience and is being used as an agent for learning and development.

Force intelligence units capture intelligence from both internal and external sources and view community intelligence as a valuable resource to capture activity and help form the 'rich picture' of the force area. This is particularly important in dealing with the threat of terrorism and in the identification of extremist activity and behaviour.

The structure of the intelligence units is driving activity, and the units are developing a more business intelligence-focused delivery with a wide range of information sources being dealt with. While there are the normal NIM-based T&C processes, the staff were aware of the linkages from all intelligence sources which when fully analysed identify a developing risk.

### **Work in progress**

The superintendent (force crime operations unit) undertook a full review of the PVP function in December 2006.

A thematic review of DV was carried out in November 2006 by ASCU. The report aimed to review the DV process of Merseyside Police from start to finish, from the reporting of an incident to the management of a file for the CPS, taking into consideration the findings from a number of external inspections. The review identified 61 issues that need to be resolved in order for the DV process to be more efficient and thereby create a more robust service for victims and Merseyside Police employees.

These reviews have been developed into a new strategy for PVP to bring all its strands together. This document is at the consultation stage but many of the actions within the document have already been implemented.

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There is a pilot running at Knowsley, bringing all the disciplines together under the supervision of the detective inspector. The structure will be reviewed and evaluated to assess the impact on performance and efficiency.

### **Areas for improvement**

The force should consider a review of the impact of the recently introduced duty system for officers engaged within the area of criminal investigation. There was evidence that the new shift system was having a detrimental impact on the time available to conduct investigation and on officers' ability to carry out investigations. This impacts on continuity and victim care and may have a detrimental impact on the Chief Constable's commitments to total care for victims and total professionalism.

Supervisors cover for each other at times of leave and occasional absences. Although this approach may provide a temporary cover it should not be relied upon to cover for long-term absences through sickness and so on. The force should ensure that the process for providing temporary supervisory cover is explicit and linked to time limits where appropriate.

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**Protecting Vulnerable People – Child Abuse**

GRADE	GOOD
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**National grade distribution**

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
3	17	21	2

**National contextual factors**

The Children Act 2004 places a duty on the police to ‘safeguard and promote the welfare of children’; safeguarding children, therefore, is a fundamental part of the duties of all police officers. All police forces, however, also have specialist units which, although they vary in structure, size and remit, normally take primary responsibility for investigating child abuse cases. Officers in these units work closely with other agencies, particularly Social Services, to ensure that co-ordinated action is taken to protect specific children who are suffering, or who are at risk of suffering, significant harm. The Children Act 2004 also requires each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). This is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in each local area will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in that locality, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

Membership of LSCBs includes representatives of the relevant local authority and its Board partners, notably the police, probation, youth offending teams, strategic health authorities and primary care trusts, NHS Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts, the Connexions service, Children and Family Courts Advisory and Support Service, Secure Training Centres and prisons.

**Contextual factors**

Child protection officers within the FCIU investigate (in co-operation with social services):

- all allegations of child sexual abuse, child emotional abuse and child neglect where the offender is known and has some element of care, custody or control over the victim which may amount to a safeguarding concern for any child;
- all allegations of child sexual abuse where the victim is now an adult person but the abuse occurred when they were a child, and where there are current child safeguarding issues; and
- all allegations of child physical abuse where the offender is within the family or extended family, or has some element of care, custody or control over the victim which may amount to a safeguarding concern for any child.

The FCIU must also be informed of and (together with social services and area staff) be involved in the investigation of:

- all occasions where police protection powers are exercised;

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- all cases of sudden, unexpected death in infancy;
- all cases of forced marriage;
- all allegations of sexual exploitation of a child;
- all reports of abandoned babies; and
- all child homicide cases.

The unit is managed by a detective inspector. The unit has two detective sergeants, one for child protection and one for DV, with specialist officers within each of these disciplines. The FCIU also contains officers who specialise in dealing with vulnerable adults. Officers share similar skills and are able to transfer skills for resilience; however, they each have a dedicated area of work.

The FCIU is BCU-based with operational accountability and control devolved to BCU commanders but with strategic and policy responsibility retained centrally, along with force-level intelligence gathering and analysis informing force and area-level activity and investigations.

### **Strengths**

Force policies for dealing with PVP identify links between the four PVP areas. As an example, the DV policy and accompanying investigative procedures policy states that 'Domestic violence should be a consideration when dealing with other investigations such as child abuse, vulnerable adult abuse, sexual offences or missing persons.' DV is also an issue when dealing with domestic homicide, forced marriages or any form of 'honour-based' incident.

The FCIU deals with all gold victims, repeats and Section 47 assaults to ensure that the correct emphasis is placed on investigation and case preparation and that the victim receives the appropriate support throughout the criminal justice process.

The force has good partnership arrangements with local hospitals and has a 'rainbow' at Alder Hey – a centre of excellence for child abuse victims. This extends to the force having full use of the video interviewing facilities and support systems. All child abuse cases are thoroughly investigated and examinations are carried out together by a paediatrician and a force medical examiner.

The CPS has issued guidance to police officers and lawyers as to best practice in evidence gathering in DV, sexual and child abuse cases. It gives detailed information regarding special measures. In addition the CPS has input into police training courses to reinforce the best evidence rules and explain what the CPS requires to make a decision and what are the common faults to avoid.

Probation officers and partner agencies can initiate an 'alarm meeting' if there are concerns regarding an individual's behaviour or an identified developing situation. A meeting could be triggered by a series of incidents, or information received from an officer. Alarm meetings are called to identify the issue quickly, categorise the risk and if appropriate take necessary action.

Effective communication with officers through champions on neighbourhoods provides the link to ensure that officers are informed of issues which may be impacting on the quality of intelligence being submitted, and of common faults in the filling in of forms. Their role is to raise awareness and improve efficiency.

The locating of units can enhance the effective delivery of services and a more cohesive approach to the identification of developing risks. In Liverpool South the

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FCIU and the intelligence unit are located on the same landing. This provides for both formal and informal communication of intelligence products.

The units throughout the force comprise 6 detective superintendent and 29 detective constable posts. Staffing rationales are generated within specialist departments and signed off at six-monthly intervals by command teams. The central public protection unit monitors workloads. Current staffing levels were determined as a result of an internal review and national guidance. Structures and resources are reviewed bi-annually.

Probation officers receive an input from the embedded social worker at briefings to raise their awareness of child abuse and DV issues, including what to look for and what behaviour to observe. Officers have a risk assessment document to complete and there is an understanding of the link with the identified risk.

Child abuse investigations are recorded on paper-based forms generated at the site of the incident which are then entered onto a dedicated force IT system, Protect. There is a separate crime recording system for investigations; however, event diaries and text updates on investigations are also recorded on Protect, as well as court results of investigations.

There is a structured mechanism for monitoring performance and compliance with force strategy: fortnightly area-based PVP meetings are attended by the detective chief inspector and representatives of partners, eg the safeguarding children board (SCB). Monthly meetings are held at headquarters, chaired by the superintendent (force crime operations unit) and attended by the divisional detective chief inspector, the detective inspector (intelligence) and the detective inspector (PPU). Sex offenders are managed by the detective inspector with responsibility for intelligence.

The FCIU now regards itself as a mainstream part of the CID, as opposed to previous years when it was seen as ancillary to core policing. Correspondingly there is support for carrying out occasional night shift cover and weekend working alongside CID colleagues. On night shift FCIU officers deal with all crime issues. At weekends, because of numbers, they carry out their primary FCIU role. This policy was reviewed recently and the force is satisfied that it does not impact on core policing.

Champions are identified within the neighbourhoods to work with the FCIU. This provides them with an awareness of the complex nature of the FCIU's work and how the four strands of DV, child abuse, MISPER and PPOs link together. It allows officers to return to their group with a greater awareness to assist less experienced officers and encourage good practice.

The force has a comprehensive suite of courses delivered by the training department and aimed specifically at PVP issues.

All student officers are attached to the FCIU during their training and the experience gained is used as a catalyst to raise awareness among their peers within the neighbourhoods. This attachment forms part of a 29-week training programme in awareness of PVP issues also being delivered as part of the training of student officers.

Officers within the FCIU are subject to an annual PDR process and their performance is discussed at regular supervisory meetings where both performance and welfare issues are considered. All role profiles are up-to-date and accurately reflect the role and its skills requirements.

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All PPU and front-line members of staff have received in-house training. In addition joint courses are undertaken and investigators are trained under the Initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme (ICIDP).

The force, together with Lancashire Constabulary, has developed a specialist child abuse investigators' course which all children and vulnerable adult investigators are to attend. The training involves a distance learning module and computer-based exam prior to attendance. All staff are achieving best evidence (ABE) trained.

All child protection officers must complete the ICIDP and ABE training as well as joint agency and video interview training. Specialist Child Abuse Investigator Development Programme( SCAIDP) training is also being rolled out across the force. Officers receive multi-agency and in-house training. Centrex modules are programmed to be rolled out across the force.

There are tutor detectives within the units who make assessments and tutor and coach new staff. Supervisors coach and assess staff in regard to the ICIDP.

There is an involvement with the police at all levels through the SCB and there is more of an emphasis on prevention of harm. The detective chief inspector sits on the subgroup of the SCB and this assists with providing resources to particular issues. This is enhanced by the embedded social worker within the FCIU who can cut through bureaucracy and bring about speedy preventive action, looking at incidents and children at risk, even if they are not directly involved in the incident being attended. This approach should be encouraged throughout the BCUs.

Operation Shield is a Merseyside partnership initiative with the SCB. This is an enhanced service which identifies vulnerability through an intelligence and reporting network, covering both children and other vulnerable persons. If any concerns are raised the vulnerable person is interviewed by a police officer from the FCIU and a member of social services.

A social worker, funded by the local authority, sits within the FCIU structure, and this role has been particularly effective in breaking down barriers between the agencies involved. It has also provided an enhanced service to victims by dispelling their fears about each agency.

The FCIU use a gold, silver and bronze process to categorise at-risk individuals or groups, who are supported by a cocoon watch with dedicated officers for liaison purposes. Gold victims are flagged on C&C and there is a minimum standard of response and support to these victims, which is monitored on a daily basis.

### **Work in progress**

MARAC meetings are being developed and will look at the strands of PVP, in particular MISPER and DV, to gather intelligence and consider links between the strands and with child sexual exploitation identifying actions to reduce potential harm and risk to the individual.

The work of the FCIU could be enhanced by a more structured approach to attachments and awareness training. Although there are attempts to raise awareness, the various strategic operations and the limited availability of neighbourhood officers do limit opportunities

## **Areas for improvement**

The force should review officer training in video interviewing, as often cases are delayed by the lack of suitably trained officers. The force is extremely proactive in raising awareness of and encouraging positive action on DV, and appropriate training for nominated officers on the duty group would enhance the speed of action and the support provided to the victims and their families.

There remain some misguided views of the work of the FCIU and this may be causing some reluctance to apply for attachments or transfers to the unit. Advice should be sought from the communication and marketing department and used to publicise the work of the unit, as there may be a perception in the force that the unit's work is less operationally challenging than that of other parts of the organisation. There is no succession plan for the filling of vacancies and this should be examined through the HR process.

Referrals from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) provide a demand which is outstripping the capacity of the unit. In addition, abstractions from the child imaging unit to work on a murder incident had an impact on the effectiveness of the unit to deal with CEOP requests and on subsequent investigation of images. As the referrals from CEOP are increasing, the force should consider what systems should be put in place to ensure that there is some analysis of activity within the force, and research should be undertaken to identify trends, hotspots and intelligence feeds.

There is an issue about the links between the high-tech crime unit and the investigation process (currently part of Force Crime Operations Unit). As registered sex offenders (RSOs) use more sophisticated technical methods to avoid detection, the skills invested in the high-tech crime unit may have more impact within the forensics function of the force. This would make them more accessible to the wider issues surrounding criminal activity.

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**Protecting Vulnerable People – Domestic Violence**

GRADE	GOOD
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**National grade distribution**

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
1	13	27	2

**National contextual factors**

There is no statutory or common law offence as such of ‘domestic violence’; the term is generally used to cover a range of abusive behaviour, not all of which is criminal. The definition of domestic violence adopted by ACPO does, however, take account of the full range of abusive behaviour as well as the different circumstances in which it can occur:

*‘any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 18 and over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality’.*

As with the investigation of child abuse, responding to and investigating domestic violence is the responsibility of all police officers. Again, however, forces have dedicated staff within this area of work, although their roles vary. In some forces staff undertake a support/liaison role, generally acting as a single point of contact for victims and signposting and liaising with other agencies and support services; in others, staff have responsibility for carrying out investigations.

Irrespective of who carries out the investigation in domestic violence cases, an integral part of every stage is the identification of risk factors, followed by more detailed risk assessment and management. In 2004, HMIC, together with HMCPSI, published a joint thematic inspection report on the investigation and prosecution of domestic violence. At that time, risk identification, assessment and management were in the early stages of development throughout the service. Since then, there has been considerable progress in developing formal risk identification and assessment processes and - in a number of forces - the implementation of multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs). Other improvements include the introduction of specialist domestic violence courts and the strengthening of joint working arrangements.

**Contextual factors**

Force policy states that ‘Domestic violence should be a consideration when dealing with other investigations such as child abuse, vulnerable adult abuse, sexual offences or missing persons. Domestic violence is also an issue when dealing with domestic homicide, forced marriages or any form of ‘honour-based’ Violence.’ Policy is subject to regular audit and inspection by ASCU.

Force policy also states that ‘Merseyside Police views domestic violence as unacceptable in all forms. Domestic violence is any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 18 and over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender and sexuality. Family members include mother,

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father, son, daughter, brother, sister, grandparents, whether directly related, in-laws and stepfamily.’

The force has structures and processes to deal with DV supported by sufficient dedicated resources within the FCIU. Dedicated DV co-ordinators (sergeants), DV investigators, DV office managers and DV champions for neighbourhood contact points ensure that there is a rigorous process not only to detect offences but to be proactive in dealing with an emerging risk.

The dedicated DV staff undertake management of DV incidents and intervention strategies. In addition, officers complete criminal investigations concerning Section 20 assaults and above. Units link with and investigate other domestic offences. They form part of the BCU FCIU.

FCIU units are managed by a dedicated detective inspector who is assisted by two detective sergeants. Each sergeant has a dedicated responsibility in child protection and DV, with responsibility for specialist officers within each of the disciplines. The FCIU also contains officers who specialise in dealing with vulnerable adults. Officers share similar skills and are able to transfer skills for resilience; however, they each have a dedicated area of work.

The FCIU consists of BCU-based units with operational accountability and control devolved to BCU commanders but with strategic and policy responsibility retained centrally, along with force-level intelligence gathering and analysis informing force and area-level activity and investigations.

The force routinely gathers performance management information for DV as follows:

- SPI8a the percentage of domestic incidents with a power of arrest where an arrest was made relating to the incident;
- SPI8a the percentage of partner-on-partner violence;
- the percentage of repeat victims in the 12-month period compared to the number of incidents in same period;
- the percentage of incidents accurately identified as domestic (including dip sampling for accuracy and completeness);
- the percentage of crimes accurately identified as domestic;
- the percentage of referral forms completed compared to domestic incidents (including dip sampling for accuracy and completeness); and
- the percentage of victim personal statements and completeness of files.

## **Strengths**

The force undertook an audit and inspection of the area of DV in November 2006. The report aimed to review the force’s DV process from start to finish, from the reporting of an incident to the management of a file for the CPS.

The review identified 61 issues that need to be resolved in order for the DV process to be more efficient, thereby creating a more robust service for victims and Merseyside Police employees. These areas for improvement are being progressed by the superintendent (force crime operations unit), and many of them have already been implemented.

The resources dedicated to DV within the FCIU consist of 6 detective sergeants and 32 detective constables. These are dedicated officers; however, because of similar

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skills and training in the units they can pick up other investigations when required, although this is usually by exception only. All force detectives are included on the night BCU CID rota; however, as it covers the whole of the force this requirement is minimal. There is also some requirement to provide cover at weekends, although officers are able to carry out their own role unless called in to assist with an investigation.

The force has dedicated resources for dealing with DV issues, working within the FCIU. They are not routinely abstracted and provide cover throughout the evening, seven days per week, to deal with and advise officers on domestic violence issues.

Within the FCIU DV issues are overseen and supervised by a dedicated detective sergeant. The process is supported by DV administrative officers, with four dedicated DV investigators, all accredited detective constables. A dedicated social worker is located within the unit at St Helens on a permanent basis.

There is a structured approach to the management of performance and the monitoring of compliance with force strategy. Area-based PVP meetings are held at fortnightly intervals, attended by the detective chief inspector and representatives from partner agencies, eg the SCB. Monthly meetings are held at headquarters, chaired by the superintendent with responsibility for PVP and attended by the divisional detective chief inspector, the detective inspector (intelligence) and the detective inspector (PPU). Sex offenders are managed by the BCU detective inspector (intelligence).

A quarterly review of all units within the PVP area is required to be completed by supervisors. This includes 24 areas ranging from resourcing, vacancies, and training to policy adherence.

The CPS has issued guidance to police officers and lawyers as to best practice in evidence gathering in DV, sexual and child abuse cases. It gives detailed information regarding special measures. In addition, the CPS has an input into police training courses to reinforce best evidence rules, and explain what the CPS requires to make a decision and what are the common faults to avoid.

The force has arranged presentations on the Merseyside procedures to both magistrates and judges, delivered by a local trainer. This has provided all partners within the criminal justice system with an oversight and understanding of the strategy being adopted by the force and the commitment being invested in PVP issues.

A Liverpool DV protocol has been agreed between Merseyside Police, the CPS, HMCS, the probation service and the voluntary sector. It sets out arrangements for the support of victims and the handling of criminal proceedings arising from incidents of DV in Liverpool.

A DV co-ordinator and social worker, both funded by the local authority, are co-located within the FCIU on St Helens BCU. This provides a sharing of data between the two agencies and a more co-ordinated approach to support mechanisms.

Champions who will work with the FCIU are identified within the neighbourhoods. This provides them with an awareness of the complex nature of the FCIU's work and how the four strands of DV, child abuse, MISPER and PPOs link together. It allows them to return to their group with a greater awareness to assist younger officers. Champions within neighbourhoods are informed of issues which may be impacting on the quality of intelligence, and of common faults in the filling of forms. Their role is to raise awareness and improve efficiency.

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The force works with Independent Domestic Violence Advisors, which is a Home Office-sponsored scheme introduced to support victims. This is supplemented by a dedicated DV court.

The Operation Goodwill initiative encourages the reporting of DV. The theme for 2007/08 is building relationships with hard-to-reach groups. The success of the campaign has been the increased reporting of DV and the positive action taken by the criminal justice system. Operation Goodwill is recognised throughout Merseyside's DV network as a productive joint agency initiative which has resulted in a joined-up approach.

The force maximises opportunities for IT solutions to manage data collection. Corvus will assist in identifying locations and persons involved in previous reports of DV. Corvus will automatically download certain types of data and forward them automatically to the IMPACT Nominal Index; the remainder will go into force performance systems.

DV incidents are flagged on the force C&C system using National Incident Category List codes for DV and location of interest (LOI) markers for higher-risk addresses. LOI markers are recorded on the force C&C system with domestic categorisation, with -specific action plan drop-down prompts for staff to obtain/provide information. ACRs have read-only access to the Protect system. There is also out-of-hours access within the central Phoenix Bureau.

The force Protect system is used to capture incidents of DV and incidents where there is an identified but non-specific risk – for example, incidents involving people with a psychiatric illness which does not attract a control process from partners or the police, or people diagnosed as having a personality disorder. In such cases the incidents are entered on the Protect system and a HRAM meeting is organised to include all partners, including the housing department and so on.

Details of bail conditions, injunctions etc are provided to staff responding to incidents of DV through LOI markers on the C&C system, the force briefing system and the inclusion of relevant information on Protect.

Victims identified as being vulnerable or assessed as at risk of further attacks are identified as having gold status, and this is flagged on the C&C system Altaris. The tagging of an individual or location requires the officer attending to provide more than the minimum attention.

The FCIU uses a gold, silver and bronze process to categorise at-risk individuals or groups, who are supported by a cocoon watch with dedicated officers for liaison purposes. Gold victims are flagged on C&C and there is a minimum standard of response and support to these victims, which is monitored on a daily basis.

The force is committed to the delivery of the relevant modules of the NCPE training package 'Responses to Domestic Violence'. DV training is being delivered to student officers, investigative officers and those staff in control rooms with whom victims may have initial contact.

Job descriptions for all staff working within the FCIU are up-to-date and reflect their current roles. All staff are subject to an annual PDR and skills audit. Training needs are identified throughout the year and are addressed both at a local level and through the centre.

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Officers within the FCIU provide 9am to 9pm cover, seven days per week. All DV officers are ICIDP trained and have received multi-agency training.

There is a delivery plan and targets for increased performance. Within the delivery plan for DV an objective is Unit Target 10 – the number of repeat victims of DV to be reduced by 20% by March 2008. This will be measured by comparing the Merseyside Police Protect system total for 2007/08 (projected reduced figure to be determined) with the total for the baseline year 2004/05 (to be determined).

In one BCU the FCIU dealt with 750 DV offences with an 86% conviction result.

At command morning briefings all DV logs are reviewed in respect of timeliness of response and standard of investigation. This includes the quality of evidence gathering which has taken place. Where there are issues regarding the standards of investigation an email is forwarded to the officer and their supervisor with a request for an explanation. Any recurring problems from the same officer prompt a more robust approach.

The force uses a three-tier risk assessment for incidents of DV: SPECSS, custody, and FCIU. Merseyside is currently piloting in one BCU a university research-based risk assessment. The initial assessment is usually carried out by the attending officer, then the custody sergeant, then FCIU DV co-ordinators. The risk assessment is initially recorded on the paper-based form, which is then transferred to Protect, the dedicated force IT system, along with intervention level strategies. There is a separate crime recording system for investigations; however, event diaries and summarised free text updates on investigations are recorded on Protect as well as court results of investigations.

The FCIU deals with all gold victims, repeats and Section 47 assaults to ensure that the correct emphasis is placed on investigation and case preparation and that the victim receives the appropriate support throughout the criminal justice process.

It is part of the risk-assessment process to identify if children are present at incidents. Child protection officers are part of the FCIU and there is good practice in one BCU of having a dedicated social worker on site for advice and support when conducting child risk assessment.

Intelligence units provide a monthly breakdown of DV incidents to BCU commanders to enable performance to be monitored. DV is contained within control strategies on each BCU.

***Extract from draft policing plan 2007/08, ratified on 1 April 2007***

**PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE**

'Merseyside Police is committed to protecting those in our communities who are the most vulnerable. The Public Protection Unit within the Force Crime Operations Unit of Merseyside Police has responsibility for setting of strategy and policy for the organisation in this area of policing. Delivery of service falls to Basic Command Units. Delivery is subject to regular review and quality assurance to ensure that the highest standards are maintained. The Public Protection Unit has the capability to undertake operations to manage the risk posed by more serious offenders.'

## **Work in progress**

The CPS is of the opinion that there would be an improvement in the percentage of successful prosecutions for rape and other serious sexual assaults if the force had a dedicated referral site. The CPS has already met with the Chief Constable and raised this as a concern. The sexual assault referral centre steering group is progressing this proposal within the force and with partner agencies.

## **Areas for improvement**

Although the way the force deals with DV issues has become more effective there still remain some instances of officers failing to identify a file as a DV offence and the file thus not being dealt with through the agreed protocols, leading to delays and reduced timeliness. This is an area where supervisors could have an impact.

Monthly meetings take place with the CPS and the head of criminal justice to discuss performance issues and ways of improving service delivery and support to victims. The ACC (citizen focus) could be included within the feedback structure, as mistakes made in the prosecution process have a direct impact on customer satisfaction. This is particularly relevant around the area of discontinuance.

The force should quality-check files being submitted to the CPS and ensure that the investigation is providing the CPS with the best available evidence to inform its decision making. On occasions photographs are not with the advice file, neither is video evidence obtained.

Where there are problems or issues with files the CPS will contact the head of the responsible department directly. However, as this is often done on an informal basis the faults are not captured to inform future learning.

There is evidence that in some parts of the force CID officers have a link to a neighbourhood and routinely speak with the neighbourhood inspector on crime-related matters: this should be encouraged throughout the six BCUs.

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**Protecting Vulnerable People – Public Protection**

GRADE

GOOD

**National grade distribution**

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
2	16	23	2

**National contextual factors**

The Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000 led to the formation of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements, commonly known as MAPPA, requiring the police and probation services to work together as the Responsible Authority in each area of England and Wales to establish and review the arrangements for the assessment and management of sexual and violent offenders. Subsequent legislation brought the Prison Service into the Responsible Authority arrangements and also requires a range of social care agencies to co-operate with the Responsible Authority in the delivery of the assessment and management of risk in this area. These agencies include health, housing, education, social services, youth offending teams, Jobcentre Plus, and electronic monitoring services.

Under MAPPA, there are three categories of offender who are considered to pose a risk of serious harm:

Category 1 – Registered Sex Offenders (RSOs)

Category 2 – violent and other sex offenders

Category 3 – other offenders (with convictions that indicate they are capable of causing, and pose a risk of, serious harm).

To be managed under MAPPA, offenders must have received a conviction or caution. However, there are some people who have not been convicted or cautioned for any offence, and thus fall outside these categories, but whose behaviour nonetheless gives reasonable ground for believing a present likelihood of them committing an offence that will cause serious harm. These people are termed Potentially Dangerous Persons (PDPs).

Following risk assessment, risk management involves the use of strategies by various agencies to reduce the risk, at three levels:

- Level 1 offenders can be managed by one agency;
- Level 2 offenders require the active involvement of more than one agency;
- Level 3 offenders – the ‘critical few’ – are generally deemed to pose a high or very high risk and are managed by a multi-agency public protection panel (MAPPP).

In 2003, the Home Secretary issued MAPPA guidance to consolidate what has already been achieved since the introduction of the MAPPA in 2001 and to address a need for greater consistency in MAPPA practice. The guidance outlines four considerations that are key to the delivery of effective public protection.

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- defensible decisions;
- rigorous risk assessment;
- the delivery of risk management plans which match the identified public protection need; and,
- the evaluation of performance to improve delivery.

### **Contextual factors**

The force has dedicated sex offender managers, located within the sex offender units situated on each BCU, which are part of the BCU intelligence units. These officers deal with RSOs and other sex offenders. Violent offenders and other multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) nominals are dealt with by the most appropriate department (eg area CID or neighbourhood Inspector). There is also a strategic force PPU providing an overview.

The structure consists of BCU-based units, with operational accountability and control devolved to BCU commanders but with strategic and policy responsibility retained centrally. The management of sex offenders has been devolved to BCU commanders. Each BCU has a sex offender unit which is managed on a day-to-day basis by the BCU detective inspector (intelligence), who reports to the BCU detective chief inspector. Force-level intelligence gathering and analysis takes place, informing force-level and area-level activity and investigations. There is a co-located MAPPA co-ordinator from Merseyside probation service, who is jointly funded by the police and the probation service. He sits in the force PPU.

The process of multi-agency working under the umbrella of MAPPA is well established within the force. The purpose of MAPPA is to exchange information about dangerous offenders and to manage the risk they present to local communities.

### **Strengths**

An ACC has dedicated lead and responsibility for public protection and has a daily overview of activity and intelligence in respect of public protection arrangements and current identified risks.

The force has developed a comprehensive structure and processes for implementation of all NCPE doctrine.

An implementation/project manager and lead ACC are appointed for each doctrine. If a formal project is required to bring about the required changes, there are Prince 2-trained project advisers within the force's SDD who can provide assistance, for example with project planning and templates.

Policy and guidance are available through the force intranet and are frequently reviewed and updated. There are policy guidance and procedure notes to inform and guide officers dealing with all aspects of PVP.

All high-risk doctrine implementation projects, including DV, child abuse and MISPER, report to a programme board chaired by the DCC. Lead ACCs manage the implementation of their own doctrine via project boards/steering groups.

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On BCUs there is a manageable workload of 140 RSOs between three dedicated PPU officers. These officers are not routinely abstracted and do not work shifts. There is dedicated supervision, regular workload checks in respect of category of offender and particular emphasis on welfare issues, with opportunities to visit the occupational health unit. On occasions the occupational health unit has attended at the district to ensure there is ease of access to facilities.

There are 17 dedicated sex offender managers – all full-time. Most of the staff complete high-visibility patrols and some assist the intelligence units with weekend cover.

A sergeant is embedded within the prolific offender unit and liaises with neighbourhood inspectors to update them on issues.

BCU commanders determine staffing levels. These are reviewed on an individual basis. Force-wide review of staffing rationales has identified imminent changes to staffing levels within each of the sex offender units.

Sex offender officers are trained in Risk Matrix 2000 and the Violent and Sex Offenders Register (ViSOR), and the majority have undertaken CEOP training courses in 'Understanding sex offenders' and 'Interviewing sex offenders'.

Home visits are undertaken by the dedicated sex offender managers. Visits are recorded on the activity page on ViSOR. If specific intelligence is obtained it is recorded on specific pages and the forms section of the risk assessment page. Specific intelligence is also recorded on the force intelligence system.

The PPU has a dedicated MAPPA co-ordinator within the building. He has access to the probation service Offender Risk Assessment System (OASys) and can risk-assess potential threats using their systems. He can cut across bureaucracy and target the agency, holding it to account over a specific issue.

The prompt and accurate identification of relevant offenders under MAPPA is managed by the MAPPA co-ordinator. All high-risk offenders are assessed for MAPPA eligibility on BCUs. A MAPPA database is in development.

Once a relevant offender has been identified, MAPPA meetings are called according to the risk level, and a multi-agency risk management plan is devised. The attendance is as follows:

- level 1 – single agency;
- level 2 – multi-agency (detective sergeant level); and
- level 3 – multi-agency (detective inspector level).

MAPPA meetings are held at least every three months, while very high risk meetings can be arranged immediately depending on need.

ViSOR went live in February 2005. All RSOs are recorded on ViSOR. Category 2 offenders were to be recorded when probation went live, but due to problems with the system this has been put on hold. Access to ViSOR is provided to all detective chief inspectors, intelligence detective inspectors, sex offender managers, selected PPU officers and selected PNC bureau staff.

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Inputting new offenders onto ViSOR is the responsibility of the Quest team, which receives the initial notification and creates a ViSOR nominal. Updating existing ViSOR records is the responsibility of sex offender managers, who update ViSOR periodically when new information comes to light. A form F14 is submitted to update the force intelligence system, marked 'flagged of interest to sex offender unit'.

In addition to a dedicated ViSOR systems administrator, systems administrators have been recruited for both the COMPACT system, dealing with force MFH cases, and Protect, looking at DV.

All back records have been converted onto ViSOR and there are effective data integrity auditing mechanisms owned by the systems administrator. There has been a data cleansing process conducted and there are no duplicate records. ViSOR access is currently being rolled out to the probation service.

Further information on an identified offender, when required, can be obtained by non-specialist staff through direct contact with the sex offender unit or out-of-hours contact with the PNC bureau, which has access to ViSOR.

There is a dedicated MAPPA co-ordinator, jointly funded by the probation service and the police, who is embedded within the PPU. The MAPPA co-ordinator has developed a network of initial exchange of information and protocols to enable those engaged with the MAPPA process to exchange information and intelligence more rapidly, leading to quicker identification of the need for early intervention in emerging suspicious behaviour.

The DIU inspector attends MAPPA meetings. Violent offenders are discussed at MAPPA meetings but not put on ViSOR. All FCIU officers are trained on Risk Matrix 2000.

MAPPA meetings are chaired by either the police or the probation service. There is an excellent relationship between the two, and a collective partnership response to dealing with identified areas of risk.

Offenders falling outside MAPPA criteria are managed in liaison with the MAPPA co-ordinator by referral to a local area risk management meeting or health risk assessment meeting. These offenders are the responsibility of BCU commanders. They are identified and prioritised through DV risk assessment processes raised by the MAPPA co-ordinator or through prison referrals, and BCU resources are allocated through the BCU T&C process.

The force contributes to the MAPPA process by adhering to the business protocol which has been developed to help clarify the role and function of the process and the responsibilities of the respective agencies. This involves working on a day-to-day basis with a multi-agency approach, in particular with the probation and prisons services, with oversight from MAPPA meetings held at local level. The appointment of a MAPPA co-ordinator, who is co-located with the police, will streamline and improve working practice in this key area of activity.

The probation service currently manages 3,500 offenders and use OASys risk management software to categorise risk. This system is thought to be more advanced than the Risk Matrix 2000 system used by the police. However, intelligence and risk assessment are exchanged between the agencies to ensure that the appropriate risk is attached to an individual or circumstances.

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Changes in risk are notified by sex offender managers to the detective inspector (intelligence) and raised through the NIM process. ViSOR is updated with changes in risk assessment after agreement with the detective chief inspector.

Mental health work within the criminal justice arena with Community Psychiatric Nurses working within custody suites. There are five mental health practitioners working within Liverpool, with one embedded within the PPU.

Risk assessment meetings take place prior to MAPPA meetings to risk-assess those individuals who do not fit inside the MAPPA process, including those who have not been convicted, are on bail and so on. This provides an extended risk assessment process and ensures that all agencies are aware of potential risks within the community. Appropriate strategies are decided to manage the risk proportionately.

Those mental health patients who may be a potential risk, but have not been convicted are managed by the high risk assessment management (HRAM) process. This identifies potential risks within the community and ensures that strategies are in place and that intelligence supports any action to reduce the risk of harm to the community, the individual and those engaged in their care.

Incidents are risk-assessed, and if they involve mental health issues information is forwarded through the dedicated mental health professional working within the PPU to Careline, a Liverpool-based mental health support scheme. A detailed reporting form has been developed which is forwarded to Careline and is passed to the community psychiatric nurse.

'Alarm meetings' have been introduced, which allow the force and partner agencies to examine emerging issues and collectively collate intelligence around a particular family or individual, make a risk assessment and put strategies into place to minimise the risk.

Three mental health trusts are located within the force area, and each BCU has a liaison officer responsible for liaison between the force and the institutions within its geographical area. This formalised process ensures that specific individuals have responsibility for updating intelligence systems and that there is a single point of contact within both the BCU and the institution.

Ashworth Hospital, a secure mental health hospital situated within the force area, houses some of the most dangerous offenders in the country. There are effective processes to ensure that the force has a good overview of the risks within the force area and that the necessary systems and communication channels are active in managing the risk.

An officer within the PPU is the mental health liaison officer. A social worker is embedded within the FCIU at St Helens. Mental health professionals are also linked to each custody suite and work closely with the two mental health professionals working within the probation service.

Partners involved with vulnerability in the community have had the opportunity to contribute to the national team looking at safer custody handling processes.

Activity around the area of PVP is reviewed as part of the T&C strategy and is a standing agenda item.

Registered sex offenders are subject to T&C briefings and the BCUs are identifying gold victims and target offenders to prevent re-offending. All sex offenders are

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tagged on the Altaris and Intel systems. The force intelligence systems identify potential dangerous offenders and the force make good use of Sexual Offence Prevention Orders to manage the risk.

If a potentially dangerous offender is identified through MAPPA as residing within a neighbourhood, an owner or manager is identified – usually the neighbourhood inspector. The details are placed on Corvus and actions are planned to manage the risk.

The FCIU uses a gold, silver and bronze process to categorise at-risk individuals or groups, which is supported by a cocoon watch with dedicated officers for liaison purposes. Gold victims are flagged on C&C and there is a minimum standard of response and support to these victims which is monitored on a daily basis.

Neighbourhood inspectors are aware of RSOs resident within their neighbourhoods, and only the high-risk offenders are communicated to officers working in that particular area.. Neighbourhood inspectors made the comment that there is a misconception among the public regarding RSOs, and not all sex offenders are paedophiles.

The detective inspector with responsibility for sex offender management or the detective inspector (FCIU) attend all MAPPA meetings. In respect of MAPPA for mental health, the neighbourhood inspector or one of the aforementioned officers will attend.

Good working relationships have been established with Adullam Homes, which works with the probation service, finding accommodation for RSOs returning to the community from hostel accommodation. Each new resident is discussed within MAPPA and a risk assessment and a community impact assessment are made prior to relocation, with the views of all MAPPA agencies being obtained.

Protocols are in place to allow the sharing of information between the probation service and the force. Those displaying any psychological disorder are identified and placed on the Intel system. Warning markers can be placed on the Altaris C&C system to alert officers to potential risks associated with a person suffering mental health problems.

In addition to internal meetings structures, the force has developed an external process with partners, in which structured meetings allow for a formal process of exchange and challenge on performance issues. For example the detective inspector (PPU) meets monthly with the chief executive at Ashworth Hospital to gain intelligence on current inmates and the potential risk to inmates of new arrivals.

Sex offender managers delivers training to student officers and they are provided with an aide-memoire regarding what to look for. The sex offender manager is fully trained and conversant with ViSOR. Any incidents of note are placed on the 24-hour briefing log for the attention of the command team.

Champions are identified within the neighbourhoods to work with the FCIU. This provides them with an awareness of the complex nature of the FCIU's work and of how the four strands of DV, child abuse, MISPER and PPOs link together. It enables them to return to their group with an increased awareness and so to assist younger officers. Champions are informed of issues which may be impacting on the quality of intelligence, and of common faults in the filling in of forms. Their role is to raise awareness and improve efficiency.

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As part of their training student officers are attached to the FCIU. The experience they gain is used as a catalyst to raise awareness among their peers within the neighbourhoods.

Staff working within the PPU are aware of developing trends and of the lengths RSOs and others may go to to ensure that they evade detection (eg offenders parking outside internet cafés and tapping into wifi systems), and they have received awareness training in this respect..

There is a structured approach to the management of performance and the monitoring of compliance with force strategy. Area-based PVP meetings are held at fortnightly intervals and are attended by the detective chief inspector and representatives from partner agencies such as the safeguarding children board. Monthly meetings are held at headquarters, chaired by the superintendent with responsibility for PVP and attended by the divisional detective chief inspector, the detective inspector (intelligence) and the detective inspector (PPU). Sex offenders are managed by the BCU detective inspector (intelligence). The force has four dedicated staff performing a compliance audit, looking at both force and partnership compliance. There is an intelligence wing and a systems administrator for ViSOR. An abusive images unit is established and has good links with the high tech crime unit.

A detective inspector chairs meetings with sex offender managers and with detective sergeants on a DV steering group. Strategically, there is a well structured meeting and an oversight process which links together all areas of the organisation.

The review into the resourcing of PVP identified some resilience issues in respect of supervision within the units. This has now been addressed by the investment in four dedicated sergeants for the units.

### **Work in progress**

The force is currently researching the activity of the most dangerous and violent offenders while in prison. It is attempting to develop an intelligence process which allows the prison service to feed details of the activity of dangerous offenders in prison into the force systems. This will give the force an effective monitoring process for such activity and enable a more focused risk assessment to be made at MAPPAs meetings near release date. Previously, when a prisoner went to prison the intelligence stopped.

The superintendent (force crime operations unit) has introduced monthly PVP meetings to ensure that the meetings are managed and attended by the appropriate rank and to signify the importance and potential risk of PVP to the force and community.

The detective inspector (PPU) sits on a MAPPA quality assurance panel and all level 1, 2 and 3 MAPPA meetings are monitored for attendance from the agencies. Information is passed back to ACC (Operational Support) and the heads of the probation and prison services. The quality control processes are also fed into the PVP monthly meetings chaired by the superintendent (force crime operations unit).

A newly developing neighbourhood management structure aligned to Neighbourhood Policing provides a focus on the problem-solving model for all agencies. It was identified that difficulties in accessing very senior finance and policy managers in Liverpool Council were soon to be overcome with the appointment of

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director-level posts for each neighbourhood management area. The allocation of increased funding to neighbourhood managers was seen as evidence of their increased strength and their role in harnessing all partners around key problem areas.

The force is seeking to develop a scrutiny process for PVP, looking at the four strands and involving other agencies to share intelligence and information, including Barnardo's, social services and local authorities. This process will replace the alarm meetings. The part of the meeting where sex offenders are discussed will be held in camera.

The force has identified an area of risk in terms of people who are identified as having a personality disorder but who do not fit into the behaviour category which would allow sectioning. These individuals are being managed by the relevant health authorities. However, certain individuals are so volatile that they require frequent medication administered by visiting health service practitioners. The force is aware of the impact on communities of individuals suffering from such conditions, and ensures that officers are aware of potential risks.

### **Areas for improvement**

There is a well developed MAPPA structure to assess the levels of threat posed to the community. High-risk offenders are managed by a well structured process; however, there is a feeling that the lower levels, 1 and 2, do not have a similar priority for some agencies.

There was some concern regarding the attendance of officers at MAPPA review meetings. On occasions police officers do not attend for operational reasons, and this is identified as a gap in the process as certain actions cannot be agreed.

Adullam Homes is an organisation which arranges accommodation for RSOs returning to the community. Premises are selected carefully and an assessment is made of the impact on the community. On occasion police action has taken place which compromises the safety of the RSO and renders the premises unusable, for example a raid on the premises with officers carrying out computers, children's toys etc. On one occasion a block of four dwellings was rendered useless. The force should look at the process for securing evidence and executing warrants in premises occupied by RSOs; although a dynamic intervention cannot always be prevented, due to the risk involved, more planning could reduce the impact on the neighbourhood and the availability of premises.

The PPU's capacity for surveillance is restricted, and more resources trained to level 1 surveillance could provide additional resilience and a more proactive approach to the unit's effectiveness. This would avoid competition for surveillance resources at level 2 tasking.

There was some concern raised regarding the levels of training given to those officers engaged in the MAPPA process, and it was felt that they would feel more confident in chairing such meetings and in action planning, with more training in this area.

MAPPA cases have increased over the last two years from 194 to 270 cases subject to discussion on a monthly basis. This rise is creating a massive increase in demand, which places some risk on the ability to react quickly to identified issues.

The force should review the performance processes used in the recording of visits to RSOs. In addition, the force should review the process used to identify the numbers of RSOs (MAPPA category 1) and violent and other sex offenders (MAPPA category 2) by risk category. This will assist in determining appropriate resourcing structures and provide the requisite information to commanders to make necessary decisions surrounding levels of risk in communities.

**Protecting Vulnerable People – Missing Persons**

GRADE

**GOOD****National grade distribution**

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
1	21	21	0

**National contextual factors**

Each year, thousands of people are reported to police as missing. Many have done so voluntarily and are safe from harm, whether or not they return home. But a number are vulnerable, because of age or health concerns, and the police service has developed well-honed systems to respond swiftly and effectively to such cases. For obvious reasons, missing children arouse particular concern, and many forces deploy 'Child Rescue Alert' to engage the media in publicising such cases. Key good practice in this framework are early recognition of critical incident potential, effective supervision of enquiries, the use of NIM problem profiles and other intelligence techniques to analyse repeat locations (eg, children's homes), and the use of an IT-based investigation tracking system such as COMPACT.

**Contextual factors**

The MISPER policy has been reviewed and published to coincide with the introduction of a corporate IT MISPER recording system, COMPACT, which captures all MISPERs on a networked database. All officers have received training in its use and the new processes which have been introduced.

The force policy states:

'Merseyside Police is committed to protecting those in our communities who are the most vulnerable. The Public Protection Unit within the Force Crime Operations Unit of Merseyside Police has responsibility for setting of strategy and policy for the organisation in this area of policing. Delivery of service falls to Basic Command Units. Delivery is subject to regular review and quality assurance to ensure that the highest standards are maintained. The Public Protection Unit has the capability to undertake operations to manage the risk posed by more serious offenders.'

The force has reviewed its approach to the management of MISPER enquiries. A revised policy has been implemented which is supported by COMPACT. This system is designed to ensure effective management of such cases.

There is a dedicated ACPO champion in place, with responsibility for chairing the steering group and programme board in relation to all work strands.

**Strengths**

The force has introduced a corporate IT system, COMPACT, for the recording of all MISPER investigations.

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MISPER co-ordinators are located within each BCU FCIU, and there are timely meetings to ensure corporacy regarding how MFH cases are being dealt with and inputted onto the COMPACT system. The MISPER co-ordinator reviews the MISPER logs daily on COMPACT. MISPER is a standing agenda item on daily briefings.

The MFH co-ordinator sits within FCIU and has access to force systems including COMPACT. This maintains a record of actions and outcomes relative to each MFH case and has replaced stand-alone systems within each BCU. Analysis of the system takes place daily to identify trends. Any risk identified is brought to the attention of the detective inspector (FCIU).

Policy and procedures are in accordance with NCPE guidance and doctrines. The MISPER policy has been subject to a capability assessment.

Training in the COMPACT system has been delivered to staff, and a campaign was launched throughout the organisation to publicise the launch of the new system. A manual has been devised to assist staff on BCUs and reinforce training. Each BCU has nominated all staff for classroom training.

The force intelligence unit has developed a regional MISPER intelligence profile to examine MISPER cases in detail and link them to organised crime groups and human trafficking.

Subject to the risk assessment, BCU patrol teams retain ownership of any MISPER investigation for the first 72 hours. Throughout this period the duty inspector will make reviews of the circumstances and ongoing enquiries and provide a daily update to the BCU management team.

If there is no senior investigating officer involvement in the case after the initial 72 hours have expired, the file will be reviewed by the BCU MISPER co-ordinator in conjunction with the BCU critical incident manager.

After review and thorough risk assessment, consideration will be given to identifying the incident as 'critical' and seeking the advice of police search advisors. Other considerations dependent on the circumstances may draw in other resources from the CID, and a family liaison officer.

The analysis of the COMPACT system will be used to inform BCU management teams of trends or hotspot areas where MFH cases are being reported, and where the individuals are eventually found. This will enable a proactive approach to be developed, involving other agencies and the service of harbouring letters on occupants of premises being frequented by young people.

MISPER reports are analysed to identify reasons for leaving, where found and activity while absent. Those MISPERs identified as at risk cause a multi-agency strategy meeting to be convened to discuss a strategy plan to reduce or remove the risk.

Monitoring of performance and compliance with force strategy takes place at fortnightly area-based PVP meetings attended by the detective chief inspector and partners such as the safeguarding children board. Monthly meetings are held at headquarters, chaired by the superintendent (force crime investigation unit) and attended by the divisional detective chief inspector, the detective inspector (intelligence) and the detective inspector (PPU). MISPERs are an agenda item at morning management meetings.

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Champions are identified within the neighbourhoods to work with the FCIU. This provides them with an awareness of the complex nature of the FCIU's work and of how the four strands of DV, child abuse, MISPER and PPOs link together. It enables them to return to their group with an increased awareness and so to assist less experienced officers.

When missing children return they are visited jointly by social services and the MISPER co-ordinator from the FCIU to identify any additional risk and to gather intelligence.

MISPER logs are kept open until the person is found and a satisfactory explanation given to enable the log to be closed. On each occasion the person who was the subject of the report must be seen and interviewed. Any open logs are reviewed daily by a CIM.

Inter-agency MARAC meetings are being developed and will look at the strands of PVP, in particular MISPER and DV, to gather intelligence and consider links between the strands, with child sexual exploitation and actions to reduce potential harm and risk to individuals.

The AIM meeting is a MAPPA meeting involving the MISPER co-ordinator, the Runaways Project manager and social services. It is convened to deal with people, both adults and children, identified as being at risk. Strategies are decided at the meeting with each agency taking on actions.

Numerous protocols have been developed with partners and other agencies, including mental health services, Connexions and so on.

There is a joint protocol with the three health trusts on persons missing from psychiatric units or hospitals.

Each strand of the diversity policy has a communication and accountability structure which identifies specific roles with areas of responsibility. The MISPER strand of the PVP strategy is scrutinised at both local and force performance meetings.

### **Work in progress**

Probation MARAC meetings are being developed and will look at the strands of PVP, in particular MISPER and DV, to gather intelligence and consider links between the strands, with child sexual exploitation and actions to reduce potential harm and risk to individuals.

The force is seeking to employ a full-time systems administrator for the new COMPACT system. This will ensure that the integrity of the system is constantly reviewed and that data is cleansed.

## *Developing Practice*

**TITLE: Operation Goodwill**

**PROBLEM:**

Research conducted on Wirral BCU over a two-year period identified a marked increase in DV incidents over Christmas and New Year, when there was also a lack of support available

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for victims.

**SOLUTION:**

An advertising campaign was developed in order to encourage victims to report incidents. The campaign used one contact number, that of the charity Worst Kept Secret. The campaign used various methods of publicity, including local radio, television and newspaper coverage, and poster messages. The 2003 campaign resulted in a 130% increase in calls to Worst Kept Secret compared to the same period in 2002.

Operation Goodwill is an annual campaign which is adapted according to the target audience. In 2004/05, offenders were informed that they 'had no place to hide'. In 2005/06, children were advised 'Don't live in hell – tell', and a package was developed for use in primary schools across Merseyside. Work on the current campaign began in 2006, when it was decided to target black and other racial minority (BRM) groups. In order to inform the campaign and to develop a problem profile, a consultation meeting was held which representatives from various BRM groups attended. As a result, the aims of the campaign were changed to include the need to educate offenders that DV is not acceptable. It was also established that the traditional methods of awareness raising may not be successful and it was suggested that a multi-agency leaflet/newsletter should be produced in various languages for dissemination within BRM communities. This continues to be an ongoing project.

**OUTCOME(S):**

The success of the campaign has been the increased reporting of DV and the positive action taken by the criminal justice system. Operation Goodwill is recognised throughout Merseyside's DV network as a productive joint agency initiative which has resulted in a joined-up approach.

**FORCE CONTACT:** Detective Sergeant Dave Stubbs, PPU – extension 74525

**TITLE: Operation Oculate**

**PROBLEM:**

Operation Oculate involves the investigation of a dangerous and violent offender who for several decades has targeted, intimidated and sexually abused young males across the North West area.

The subject was due to be released from prison and measures were required to risk-manage him in the community and protect the public. The subject is an extremely high-risk violent sex offender but he had never been convicted of a sexual offence. He has previous convictions for violent offences, harassment and witness intimidation.

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**SOLUTION:**

A risk management plan was devised under level 3 MAPPA. The PPU researched the criteria necessary to apply for a Sex Offence Prevention Order (SOPO) on an offender who did not have a conviction for a sexual offence.

Such an application is possible if the offender has convictions for certain violent offences, which the subject did. Enquiries throughout the country revealed that a SOPO would usually only be obtained in these circumstances on conviction. However, no reasons were found as to why an order could not be applied for through the civil courts.

An application was prepared using extensive evidence from police records and from other agencies. The conditions applied for were intended to prevent the subject from committing sexual offences against his target group. All methods of monitoring the subject, including technical and intrusive methods, were explored.

**OUTCOME(S):**

An interim SOPO was obtained and a date for a full hearing has been listed. The order contains stringent conditions, including exclusion zones, specific restrictions to prevent contact with potential victims and prohibition from driving a vehicle.

In addition the SOPO requires the subject to sign the Sex Offenders Register and therefore be monitored by the local sex offender unit.

To date the subject has been compliant with his SOPO and is not known to have committed any further offences.

Positive feedback has been received from previous victims who feel protected by the initiative.

**FORCE CONTACT:** Detective Sergeant Lisa Mahon. PPU – extension 74502

**TITLE: Wirral family safety unit**

**PROBLEM:**

Research conducted during 2004 highlighted that Wirral BCU had a lack of provision in the following key areas:

1. multi-agency intervention and support for victims of domestic abuse and violence; and
2. the recording of all DV incidents across the Wirral area.

**SOLUTION:**

The family safety unit was set up to provide a co-located, multi-agency point of access for individuals experiencing domestic abuse and violence and their children, with the following principles:

- to help victims gain safety from domestic abuse and violence; and
- to co-ordinate appropriate agencies to meet the need of the individuals.

The unit comprises a manager, two caseworkers/independent advisers, two

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seconded police officers (providing intelligence gathering and investigative support) and an administrative support officer.

Victims are provided with a package of care consisting of advice, caseworker support, specialist counselling services, legal services, access to housing providers, refuge provision, target hardening and collection of evidence.

Individuals experiencing domestic abuse and violence are provided with an immediate range of support services at a single referral point ('one-stop shop').

Access to the service is by contacting the unit, or via referral by a statutory or voluntary organisation.

A web-based inter-agency monitoring database alerts all agencies to high-risk cases that require referral and immediate intervention. High-risk cases form the business of the monthly MARAC, where interventions are reviewed and quality-assured.

Wirral FCIU and the family safety unit use the same checklist for risk indicators, as recommended by Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse, and gold and silver risk cases are referred to the unit.

The unit has recently rented a property which provides accommodation for victims of acute DV, identified through the risk assessment process.

Two midwives and a general practitioner have been seconded to the unit from the Wirral Primary Care Trust, enhancing the support package and providing additional opportunities at ante and post-natal appointments to identify victims who may be reluctant or unable to report incidents.

Wirral's specialist DV courts ensure that victims receive a premium service while cases are progressed through the criminal justice system.

**OUTCOME(S):**

1. In the 16 months since the unit was introduced, more than 420 high-risk victims have been supported.
2. The unit, unique in Merseyside Police, has been invited by the Government Office for the North West to become the second National Centre of Excellence for Domestic Violence. The unit was also invited to present at the Tackling Violent Crime Programme (Regional) Conference in March 2007 and has been recognised as using 'best practice' by the Government Office for the North West.
3. Victims of DV who utilise the services of the unit suffer only a 6% rate of repeat victimisation.
4. From April to December 2006, Wirral BCU had an average detection rate for domestic assaults (all categories) of 53%, against a general violence detection rate of 41%.

Very positive feedback concerning the unit has been received from victims.

**FORCE CONTACT:** Chief Inspector Holmes, partnership development officer, Wirral BCU – 0151 606 5488

## Appendix: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

### A

ABE	Achieving best evidence
ACC	Assistant chief constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
ACR	Area control room
ANPR	Automatic number plate recognition
ASB	Anti-social behaviour
ASBO	Anti-Social Behaviour Order
ASCU	Area support and co-ordination unit
AXIS	The anti-social behaviour task force

### B

BCU	Basic command unit
BRM	Black and other racial minority

### C

C&C	Command and control
CDRP	Crime and disorder reduction partnership
CEOP	Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre
CID	Criminal investigation department
CIM	Critical incident manager
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service

### D

DCC	Deputy chief constable
DIP	Drugs intervention programme
DIU	Divisional intelligence unit

DV Domestic violence

**F**

FCIU Family crime investigation unit

FIDO Field intelligence development officer

**G**

GL3 Going Local 3

**H**

HMCS Her Majesty's Courts Service

HMIC Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

HR Human resources

HRAM High risk assessment management

**I**

IAG Independent advisory group

ICIDP Initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme

IT Information technology

**J**

JAG Joint action group

**K**

KIN Key individual network

**L**

LOI Location of interest

**M**

MAPPA	Multi-agency public protection arrangements
MARAC	Multi-agency risk assessment conference
MCJB	Merseyside Criminal Justice Board
MFH	Missing from home
MISPER	Missing person
MSF	Most similar force(s)

**N**

NAG	Neighbourhood action group
NCPE	National Centre for Policing Excellence
NIM	National Intelligence Model

**O**

OASys	Offender Risk Assessment System
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**P**

PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
PDR	Performance development review
PNC	Police National Computer
PPU	Public protection unit
PRINCE2	Projects in Controlled Environments 2
PVP	Protecting vulnerable people

**R**

RSO	Registered sex offender
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**S**

SCB	Safeguarding children board
SDD	Strategic development department
SOPO	Sexual Offence Prevention Order

**T**

T&C            Tasking and co-ordination

**V**

ViSOR            Violent and Sex Offenders Register