

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary



**HMIC Inspection Report**  
**Durham Constabulary**  
**Neighbourhood Policing**  
**Developing Citizen Focus Policing**

**September 2008**



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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 of both the Home Office and 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://inspectors.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 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 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 more probing inspections of fewer topics. 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 is gathered, verified and then assessed against specific grading criteria (SGC) drawn from an agreed set of national (ACPO-developed) standards. 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.

## HMIC Business Plan for 2008/09

HMIC's business plan (available at <http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/business-plan/>) reflects our continued focus on:

- protective services – including the management of public order, civil contingencies and critical incidents as phase 3 of the programme in autumn 2008/spring 2009;
- counter-terrorism – including all elements of the national CONTEST strategy;
- strategic services – such as information management and professional standards; and

- the embedding of Neighbourhood Policing.

HMIC's priorities for the coming year are set in the context of the wide range of strategic challenges that face both the police service and HMIC, including the need to increase service delivery against a backdrop of reduced resources. With this in mind, the business plan for 2008/09 includes for the first time a 'value for money' plan that relates to the current Comprehensive Spending Review period (2008–11).

Our intention is to move to a default position where we do not routinely carry out all-force inspections, except in exceptional circumstances; we expect to use a greater degree of risk assessment to target activity on those issues and areas where the most severe vulnerabilities exist, where most improvement is required or where the greatest benefit to the service can be gained through the identification of best practice.

The recent Green Paper on policing – *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together* – proposes major changes to the role of HMIC. We are currently working through the implications to chart a way forward, and it will not be until the late Autumn when we are able to communicate how this will impact on the future approach and inspection plans. In the meantime, we have now commenced work covering the areas of critical incident management, public order and civil contingencies/emergency planning – which will conclude in early 2009. In consultation with ACPO portfolio holders and a range of relevant bodies (such as the Cabinet Office in respect of civil contingency work) we have conducted an assessment of risk, threat and demand and, based on this, we will focus on those forces where we can add most value. We will also commence a series of police authority inspections in April 2009, which will follow a pilot process from November 2008 through to January 2009.

## Programmed Frameworks

During phase 2 of HMIC's inspection programme, we examined force responses to major crime, serious and organised crime, Neighbourhood Policing and Developing Citizen Focus Policing in each of the 43 forces of England and Wales.

This document includes the full graded report for the Neighbourhood Policing inspection and Developing Citizen Focus Policing inspection.

## Neighbourhood Policing

The public expect and require a safe and secure society, and it is the role of the police, in partnership, to ensure provision of such a society. The HMIC inspection of Neighbourhood Policing implementation assesses the impact on neighbourhoods together with identified developments for the future.

The piloting of the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP) between April 2003 and 2005 led to the Neighbourhood Policing programme launch by ACPO in April 2005.

There has been considerable commitment and dedication from key partners, from those in neighbourhood teams and across communities to deliver Neighbourhood Policing in every area. This includes over £1,000 million of government investment (2003–09), although funding provision beyond 2009 is unclear.

The NRPP evaluation highlighted three key activities for successful Neighbourhood Policing, namely:

- the consistent presence of dedicated neighbourhood teams capable of working in the community to establish and maintain control;
- intelligence-led identification of community concerns with prompt, effective, targeted action against those concerns; and
- joint action and problem solving with the community and other local partners, improving the local environment and quality of life.

To date, the Neighbourhood Policing programme has recruited over 16,000 police community support officers (PCSOs), who, together with 13,000 constables and sergeants, are dedicated by forces to 3,600 neighbourhood teams across England and Wales.

This report further supports Sir Ronnie Flanagan's *Review of Policing* (2008), which considers that community safety must be at the heart of local partnership working, bringing together different agencies in a wider neighbourhood management approach.

### **Developing Citizen Focus Policing**

Citizen Focus policing is about developing a culture where the needs and priorities of the citizen are understood by staff and are always taken into account when designing and delivering policing services.

Sir Ronnie Flanagan's *Review of Policing* emphasised the importance of focusing on the treatment of individuals during existing processes: this is one of the key determinants of satisfaction.

A sustained commitment to quality and customer need is essential to enhance satisfaction and confidence in policing, and to build trust and further opportunities for active engagement with individuals, thereby building safer and more secure communities.

This HMIC inspection of Developing Citizen Focus Policing is the first overall inspection of this agenda and provides a baseline for future progress. One of the key aims of the inspection was to identify those forces that are showing innovation in their approach, to share effective practice and emerging learning. A key challenge for the service is to drive effective practice more widely and consistently, thereby improving the experience for people in different areas.

Latest data reveals that, nationally, there have been improvements in satisfaction with the overall service provided. However, the potential exists to further enhance customer experience and the prospect of victims and other users of the policing service reporting consistently higher satisfaction levels. All the indications show that sustained effort is required over a period of years to deliver the highest levels of satisfaction; this inspection provides an insight into the key aspects to be addressed. It is published in the context of the recent Green Paper *From the Neighbourhood to the National – Policing our Communities Together* and other reports, which all highlight the priorities of being accountable and responsive to local people. The longer-term investment in Neighbourhood Policing and the benefits of Neighbourhood Management have provided an evidence base for the broad Citizen Focus agenda.

### **Statutory Performance Indicators and Key Diagnostic Indicators**

In addition to the inspection of forces, HMIC has drawn on published data in the Policing Performance Assessment Frameworks (PPAFs) published between March 2005 and March

2008 as an indicator of outcomes for both Neighbourhood Policing and Developing Citizen Focus Policing.

The statutory performance indicators (SPIs) and key diagnostic indicator (KDI) that are most appropriate to indicate outcomes for the public and are used to inform this inspection are set out below:

### **Neighbourhood Policing**

- SPI 2a – the percentage of people who think that their local police do a good or excellent job.
- KDI – the percentage of people who ‘agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area’.
- SPI 10b – the percentage of people who think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour in their area.

### **Developing Citizen Focus Policing**

- SPI 1e – satisfaction of victims of domestic burglary, violent crime, vehicle crime and road traffic collisions with the overall service provided by the police.
- SPI 3b – a comparison of satisfaction rates for white users with those for users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided.

Forces are assessed in terms of their performance compared with the average for their most similar forces (MSF) and whether any difference is statistically significant. Statistical significance can be explained in lay terms as follows: ‘The difference in performance between the force and the average for its MSF is unlikely to have occurred by chance.’ A more detailed description of how statistical significance has been used is included in Appendix 2 at the end of this report.

### **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 (described as a ‘strength’) in the body of the report. In addition, each force is given the opportunity to submit more detailed examples of its good practice. HMIC has therefore, in some reports, selected suitable examples and included them in the 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.

### **The Grading Process**

HMIC has moved to a new grading system based on the national standards; forces will be deemed to be meeting the standard, exceeding the standard or failing to meet the standard.

HMIC uses the standards agreed with key stakeholders including ACPO, the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) and the Home Office as the basis for SGC. The

standards for Neighbourhood Policing and Developing Citizen Focus Policing are set out in those sections of this report, together with definitions for exceeding the standard and failing to meet the standard.

## **Force Overview and Context**

### **Geographical description of force area**

Durham Constabulary polices the area of County Durham and Darlington Borough, which together occupy an area of 2,429 sq. km. The area is predominantly rural, with more than half of its residents living in settlements of less than 10,000 people. There are 12 main towns and over 260 small towns and villages, many of which are former colliery villages.

### **Demographic profile of force area**

The population of the constabulary area is estimated to be 585,435 (2001 Census data), of which 1.2% are from ethnic minority groups. Recent national trend of Polish and other European immigrants have been replicated in the area. The minority ethnic population is not evenly distributed across the constabulary area; some wards in the south of the area have a significantly higher proportion of residents from minority ethnic groups.

Recent years have seen an outward migration of young economically active people, changing the age profile of the area significantly with the proportion of residents aged over 60 likely to increase, creating a more mature demographic profile. Over the past 20 years a decline in large scale industry across the area has had a major impact upon the local economy and social status.

Partnership work involving a wide range of professional agencies is now enabling a new industrial base to take shape providing a local economy which has a more diverse structure built upon the manufacturing and service sectors. The decline in the industrial infrastructure has been partly offset by an increase in the number of visitors to the area. Tourism is still a thriving and developing business within the region and County Durham is promoted to tourists as 'The Land of the Prince Bishops', a fitting reminder of its remarkable history. The area's industrial past also plays a key role in the growing tourism industry. Lead mining and other industrial heritage sites across County Durham and Darlington are now fascinating visitor attractions; reinforcing the area as a quality tourism destination.

The Index of Deprivation 2004 has highlighted the fact that the region experiences one of the highest rates of disability and long-term sickness, and educational attainment is well below the national average in some areas. Much has already been done to transform the environment and economy of the county, but the drive for further achievements remains as strong as ever. Over the last 12 months, Durham Constabulary has seen a substantial reduction in the number of recorded crimes and an increased detection rate, consolidating County Durham and Darlington as one of the safest areas to live and work in the country.

### **Force area command structure**

The Constabulary is policed by two area commands, North and South, which are coterminous with local authority areas. The North Area incorporates Derwentside, City of Durham, Chester-le-Street and Easington Local Authorities. South Area includes Wear Valley, Teesdale and Sedgfield Local Authorities, as well as Darlington Unitary Authority. Although this is geographically the larger of the two basic command units, it is predominantly rural and less populated than the North Area. Both North and South Areas

are further broken down into six police sectors with each having their own Neighbourhood Policing team led by an inspector who is responsible for identifying and addressing, at a local level, crime and disorder and the range of 'quality of life issues' that have a negative impact on our communities. The neighbourhood inspectors are supported by designated beat officers, police community support officers, CID, special constables and partners in their endeavour to find solutions to such issues.

### **Force command structure**

The chief officer Mr Jon Stoddart has been in post since 2006. Mr Gary Barnett is the deputy chief constable whilst Mr Mike Barton was recently appointed as assistant chief constable in June 2008 having previously worked in Lancashire. His predecessor temporary assistant chief constable Mr Michael Banks has been seconded to the Government office North East and was present throughout this inspection process. Mr Melia was in post at the time of inspection as the ACO.

There is a supportive, open, and business-like relationship with the police authority. As well as the full police authority meetings there are a number of sub-committees and panels which have executive officer attendance: continuous improvement panel; community safety and engagement panel; finance and audit panel; complaints committee; human resources panel; performance management panel; as well as special meetings of the full authority convened to discuss major issues such as the strategic force review, and any budget issues. There is a liaison meeting between the executive officers and the Chair/Vice-chair, clerk and treasurer of the police authority. Police authority members are also linked to specific departments and areas and regular meetings are held so that there is an understanding of the policing business demands and performance. The police authority is involved in all strategic planning days and is represented on each project and programme board. The executive and the police authority have worked closely together and taken lead roles in developing the County Durham Local Area Agreement.

### **Strategic priorities**

Durham Police Authority and Durham Constabulary regularly obtain the views of local people about policing and community safety, valuing the opportunity to consult with the people who live and work within County Durham and Darlington, as well as key stakeholders. The police authority holds police community consultative groups (PCCGs) throughout the year, at different venues across the constabulary area, to engage directly with the public the issues arising from the strategic assessment were considered by the police authority in conjunction with feedback from public consultation forums held throughout the year. Together these were mapped against the strategic policing priorities as determined by the Home Secretary. This process identified a list of seven priority areas for the authority to consult upon.

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- improve the efficiency of the force by making better use of available resources;
- make our communities safer through effective neighbourhood policing and tackling anti-social behaviour, working in partnership with other agencies;
- protect our communities from the threat of terrorism;

- protect vulnerable people from serious harm e.g. abuse, assault or injury;
- provide an effective citizen focused approach to our service delivery which is responsive to the needs of the individual, ensuring that we engage with the diverse communities within County Durham and Darlington;
- reduce the harm caused to our communities by organised crime groups; and
- reduce the harm to our communities caused by the effect of alcohol and drug abuse.

### **Consultation process**

Engaging with our communities and a wide range of groups across the constabulary area the consultation process and subsequent discussion between the constabulary and authority identified four key priority areas to be concentrated upon during 2008/2009:

- making our communities safer through Neighbourhood policing and tackling anti social behaviour, working in partnership with other agencies;
- reduce the harm caused to our communities by organised crime groups;
- protect vulnerable people from serious harm e.g. abuse, assault, injury; and
- reduce the harm to our communities caused by the effect of alcohol and drug abuse.

These priorities will be underpinned by a commitment to providing a citizen focused approach to service delivery which is responsive to the needs of the individual, ensuring that the constabulary engage with the diverse communities within County Durham and Darlington. Extensive consultation has taken place between the authority and constabulary to develop a performance matrix to measure against the four local priorities. In identifying specific targets for improvement two indicators have been identified against which specific targets have been set:

Indicator 1 - Percentage of victims satisfied with updates/feedback/follow up.

Indicator 2 - Percentage of domestic abuse incidents resulting in sanction detections.

### **Force developments since 2007**

Over recent years Durham Constabulary has embraced the Governments reform agenda on police reform and workforce modernisation. This has included the provision of more visible and accessible policing services, a workforce modernisation programme, extensive civilianisation of police posts, increased multi-agency working and significant investment on our internal and external IT support systems.

In 2005/06 Durham Constabulary faced a £10 million budget gap across 3 years, over and above Government efficiency savings targets, which were exacerbated by the cap on the police authority precept element within the council tax. Given that Durham Police Authority had the lowest percentage contribution per head of population of any shire force, this situation was set to deteriorate further. Consequently the constabulary entered in to a three year remodelling programme designed to identify areas of service provision which could be modernised without a reduction in the quality of service provided by the constabulary, therefore allowing annual budgets to be balanced and savings to be reinvested in to protective services. This programme of change has seen small reductions in the numbers of police officers and significant increase in the numbers of police staff providing support functions. Year 1 of the remodelling programme has provided savings across the constabulary in the region of £1.5 million and reinvestment of £700k in to protective services, with a similar level of savings predicted for year 2. Examples of outcomes from this

process are the formation of a MOPI review and linking team to service MOPI requirements which will come on line in October 2008 and the establishment of a Diversity Unit within HQ Community Safety Branch.

In addition Durham Constabulary is also engaged in the Workforce Modernisation Project as a national demonstration site. Through this project the constabulary is reviewing pre-arrest and post arrest processes to iron out inefficiencies and instituting workforce modernisation through mixed economy teams. Thus the project will increase efficiency in working practices through creating a suspect and offender management unit, which will enable the effectiveness and quality of service to customers to be improved.

Visible and accessible community based neighbourhood policing teams consisting of dedicated beat officers and PCSO's are now embedded in all communities. Working with partners within the crime and disorder partnerships, they are directed towards providing a visible presence in our communities and in providing long term problem solving solutions to local policing problems.

A dedicated headquarters team based within the community safety department has provided support to Areas in embedding neighbourhood management across all communities. Work streams include support for the setting of neighbourhood priorities and accountability systems and the development of links to CDRPs to streamline tasking and coordination of partnership resources in line with the national intelligence model.

Following the collapse of the force strategic mergers the Home Office has encouraged forces to consider their position in relation to closing the gap in protective service provision. In order to provide the financial head room required to invest in protective services, Durham Constabulary has entered in to a programme of collaboration with Cleveland Police, Northumbria Police and Cumbria Police which seeks to scope common business areas suitable for regional collaboration.

Consequently a small project team consisting of staff from all four forces is based at Durham Constabulary headquarters, each force reporting to their respective deputy chief constables. Since July 2007 the team have examined 101 functions which demonstrated potential for collaboration, of which 27 were considered for closer examination. Proof of concept models and business cases are being examined in detail around provision of public order training, external recruitment, and driver training, whilst other areas of business are being considered for examination.

Additionally, Durham Constabulary and Cleveland Police have received a Home Office grant of £446K to support collaboration as a national demonstrator site in regard to the provision of joint working solutions around firearms interoperability between the two forces. The project aims to review current firearms capacity and capability with a view to establishing standardised firearms policies and operating procedures, tactics, command protocols and equipment. This will allow greater interoperability between the two forces as well as reduce bureaucracy.

Significant business change requirements are also affecting the constabulary. An information department led by a chief superintendent has been created to support compliance with MOPI. This is further supported by a £4 million investment in the development of an information systems data hub which will provide operational officers with a one stop search facility for existing and future information systems. On going work is also being conducted in regard to the introduction of a new crime management system, a review of the existing estate requirement with particular reference to new Area headquarters and custody facilities, and the development of the Citizen Focus programme.

Throughout all of these major challenges, the constabulary has continued to maintain its good level of performance and deliver against its priorities and business change requirements.

## Neighbourhood Policing

<b>2007/08 Summary of judgement</b>	<b>Meeting the standard</b>
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### Meeting the standard

Following the moderation process, Durham Constabulary was assessed as meeting the standard. Neighbourhood policing has been implemented to a consistent standard across the constabulary.

### Neighbourhoods are appropriately staffed (coverage).

#### Summary statement

The constabulary is deploying across both area commands the right people in the right place at the right time to ensure that its neighbourhoods are appropriately staffed.

#### Strengths

- Durham has a total of 132 defined neighbourhoods across the two area commands. Neighbourhoods and their boundaries have been subject to review, with the involvement of partners and the community. The review process has resulted in the creation of 12 dedicated inspector-led neighbourhood teams, which police neighbourhoods and to which partners and local communities can relate.
- The constabulary has a total of 353 members of staff dedicated to Neighbourhood Policing (19 % of the workforce). This is made up of 31 sergeants, 150 neighbourhood officers, and 172 police community support officers (PCSOs), overseen by the dedicated neighbourhood inspectors.
- This gives a ratio of approximately two inspectors to every five sergeants, and one sergeant to every 10 neighbourhood staff. The ratio is seen as appropriate, and it allows effective supervision in respect of community engagement, as well as joint problem-solving activity. That assessment is supported by neighbourhood staff, who were satisfied with the levels of supervision provided to assist them in carrying out their duties effectively.
- As is shown, the constabulary has made a significant investment in Neighbourhood Policing. The structure is based around 12 neighbourhood teams, each with a nominated inspector, who is responsible (and accountable) to the community for service delivery and for addressing community priorities in partnership with other agencies. Neighbourhood officers and PCSOs are dedicated to neighbourhoods and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- Contact details for neighbourhood staff are readily available and are clearly communicated to their respective communities. A campaign – A Name in Every Neighbourhood – has effectively raised awareness of each local neighbourhood team within the community, and has increased its accessibility. The campaign was

complemented by a successful marketing campaign, which included the delivery to every household of a leaflet with appropriate contact details.

- The constabulary website identifies a clear roadmap for contact and communications mediums – for example, the neighbourhood teams are clearly identified, and the procedures for contacting them are clearly accessible.
- For some time now, community forums have been embedded across the North area command to facilitate representation among local communities. The forums present opportunities for the provision of improved co-ordination in the delivery of crime and disorder reduction initiatives and even greater integration with partners. Flexibility allows the definition of neighbourhoods to change – in consultation with communities; arrangements are subject to review and development in partnership with local authorities and other agencies, including the fire and rescue service.
- The constabulary continues to promote named contacts through public interface mediums, such as surgeries, events and meetings.
- Reality checks undertaken as part of the inspection process identified that neighbourhood team staff were known and acknowledged by partners, business representatives and members of the public, demonstrating their integration into day-to-day community issues.
- The constabulary has implemented an abstraction policy at area command level that applies to neighbourhood officers and PCSOs. The policy has a target for staff to spend at least 90% of their time deployed in their respective neighbourhoods. While neighbourhood officers can be abstracted from their areas to supplement response team activity, this occurs after an appropriate needs-based assessment.
- PCSOs are not abstracted from their neighbourhoods, and, in response to community priorities, a significant amount of their deployment activity is allocated to high-visibility patrol.
- A pragmatic approach to service delivery has resulted in the creation of detainee handling units across the constabulary. This has led to organisational efficiency improvements and has reduced the potential for officers to be abstracted from operational duties, including from the neighbourhood teams.
- Neighbourhood Policing staff are deployed in response to neighbourhood profiles, and there is a strong focus on local priorities and demand.
- Neighbourhood activities are appropriately integrated within a partnership framework and follow the National Intelligence Model (NIM) process. Being neighbourhood focused, area command daily management meetings underpin this process. Actions and updates are structured and audited, and there is a clear emphasis on – and a drive to meet – neighbourhood issues.
- Neighbourhood staff believe that their presence within the community is making a difference, with deployments focused on local priorities and demands. For example, Operation Pembroke, a long-term drugs operation in Chester-le-Street, was co-ordinated and driven by the neighbourhood team. This operation, which resulted in significant prison sentences for the main offenders, was followed up by an effective media strategy (which included leaflet drops, etc) to reassure members of the public.

Criminal activity in the neighbourhood fell significantly following the operation, and community feedback was positive (residents applauded the team).

- Operation Harlequin is the constabulary's response to the security service's intelligence requirement regarding the 'rich picture'. This is an ongoing, sustained, proactive community-engagement exercise to introduce counter-terrorism intelligence gathering to all areas in a structured format.
- The constabulary is structured around the implementation of a neighbourhood-focused service delivery that is able to respond to the needs of the community. Neighbourhood Policing teams in both area commands have the skills and the ability to engage in effective joint problem solving. Numerous examples were provided of this, demonstrating an ability on the part of staff to engage effectively with local communities and partners – eg Operation Snowflake Town, which successfully targeted anti-social behaviour in Dean Bank and Ferryhill. Training is delivered on a local basis.
- The constabulary helpdesk is staffed by experienced personnel, who have a detailed knowledge of law and procedures. They adopt sound problem-solving practices to complement the professionalising the investigative process (PIP) training delivered to communications staff, thus significantly enhancing the 'citizen journey' experienced when a user interacts with the constabulary.
- The Aiming for Excellence vision is clearly understood within neighbourhood management structures: leadership, role clarity, accountability for performance and open communication were all evident, and staff were positive about the drive to deliver a service of high quality.
- There is clear evidence of staff regularly receiving formal reward and recognition for their performance, eg staff were recognised for their work on Operation Pembroke. Recognition is underpinned by having good work considered at the area command daily management meetings, Aiming for Excellence meetings, etc.
- The police authority and partner agencies also recognise good work through a number of means, highlighting the work and commitment of staff across a range of disciplines, their contribution to community initiatives, etc.
- Neighbourhood Policing officers receive special priority payments.
- Durham also pays a bounty to special constables, many of whom work in neighbourhoods; this is awarded if a special constable achieves a set number of hours per year. A total of 56 payments were made to Special Constabulary staff in January 2008.
- The constabulary does not have a specific staff-selection policy for Neighbourhood Policing teams. Recruitment is based on general recruitment, selection and lateral-development policies (the latter being particularly important, as it is a requirement for officers and staff to have completed their initial development period before they can apply for appointment to a neighbourhood team). Account is taken of supervisory officers' recommendations and previous Neighbourhood Policing experience (following their recruitment and deployment, all officers undergo an attachment to a neighbourhood team of at least five weeks). It should be noted that, if no candidate

reaches the pre-determined interview pass mark, no appointment is made and posts are re-advertised.

- Staff retention is based on satisfactory performance, in accordance with the constabulary's performance-development review system.

### **Work in progress**

- The profiling of communities is in its infancy and is being led through the neighbourhood profiles and the 'rich picture'. Some analytical scoping has been carried out. Defining and understanding the communities of County Durham and Darlington is key to effective engagement. Demographic information is heavily reliant on the 2001 census and cannot be considered accurate, particularly in terms of emerging communities (there has been an increase in the number of migrant workers and asylum seekers moving to the area). The need for effective analysis of vulnerable communities has been actioned within the strategic assessment. Work is being undertaken on community mapping, and authorisation has been received for the purchase of Mosaic to assist in this. This work needs to be prioritised.
- There is an understanding of the need for staff succession planning to ensure a consistency of service delivery; to this end, recruitment protocols have been implemented. For example, the recruitment and replacement of neighbourhood PCSOs has been discussed at executive level, and the proactive recruitment of staff has been undertaken to fill projected vacancies. However, the perception remains among some staff that this is not the case, and the constabulary needs to continue its efforts to overcome this and better inform staff of the reality.
- The constabulary is amending the policy to incorporate the definition of 'abstraction' within the neighbourhood performance-measurement guide. The amended policy will also apply to sergeants and PCSOs.
- The measurement and assessment of harm and threat to communities continues to develop, based on the guidance from the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the NPIA.
- At the time of inspection, PCSO shifts were being reviewed, to allow greater flexibility of deployment (allowing deployment up to midnight).
- The introduction of training specific to Neighbourhood Policing teams is being scoped by the training department. The objective is to ensure that all neighbourhood staff receive training appropriate to their roles.
- The training department is also developing a leadership programme for operational inspectors and sergeants, implementation to commence in September 2008. The programme will consist of a series of modules, and such issues as briefing, tasking, responding to critical incidents and problem solving will be addressed. In order to derive maximum benefit, partners will also be integrated into, and be involved in, the programme.
- The development and implementation of an inspectors' forum has been well received by staff, as it provides opportunities to share innovation and good practice among the neighbourhood teams. The HMIC inspection team attended a neighbourhood inspectors' meeting (chaired by the area commander) in one of the

area commands, at which the focus was on a number of themes, including problem solving.

- Durham is building its neighbourhood management infrastructure, with a strong commitment at the strategic level to implementing an integrated and community-focused neighbourhood management structure to enhance delivery further. The implementation is being piloted at two pathfinder sites (Stanley Green Corridor and Peterlee Edenhill).
- The constabulary is looking to develop appropriate performance indicators that accurately reflect the work undertaken by Neighbourhood Policing teams, based on the neighbourhood performance framework.
- Evaluation has highlighted the fact that the role of Neighbourhood Policing officer is not as attractive to staff as some other specialist roles. The constabulary is working to overcome this and to raise the profile/status of neighbourhood officers. A review of the recognition mechanisms is seen as a way of achieving this, and the constabulary is to be applauded for its approach. Completion is due in December 2008.

#### **Areas for improvement**

- While there is confidence across the organisation in the neighbourhood structures that are in place, there remain differences between the area commands. The size of the geographical areas covered by neighbourhood inspectors and Neighbourhood Policing teams in the South area command are challenging. The constabulary needs to ensure that appropriate structures are in place to support staff in these areas.
- There remain instances of neighbourhood officers being abstracted outside the guidance of the policy. This has an impact and leads to significant challenges at a neighbourhood level. Performance monitoring needs to be strengthened in order to overcome this. The constabulary is seeking to address this by means of appropriate monitoring arrangements. At the present time, the duty management system (DMS) is unable to produce accurate figures, and there is a reliance on paper-based systems. This is an area previously highlighted by the NPIA.
- There remains a need to continue to highlight the benefits of Neighbourhood Policing to the whole organisation, as well as within the community.
- The constabulary's deployment protocol used to stipulate that neighbourhood team staff should be responsible for 20% of all incidents that require a response. The protocol was not embedded and there was a significant imbalance: compliance with the protocol varied substantially between the area commands. Acknowledging the situation, the constabulary has introduced a new set of indicators that are more focused on outcome and that include the percentage of the public suffering from anti-social behaviour, the percentage of the public satisfied with the overall performance and the service provided, etc.
- While deployment protocols are in place for PCSOs, there is evidence that they are not consistently applied. Members of staff highlighted occasions when they have been deployed outside the protocols. There is a need for all staff, including communications centre staff, to be reminded of the protocols and of the reasons for them. Deployments need to be the subject of greater scrutiny by supervisors. The

situation was compounded in the South area command by application of the single staff deployment policy, which is impacting upon service delivery.

- While there was appreciation of the work undertaken by the senior management teams (SMTs) at area command level, the increased visibility of managers would be beneficial to the process of making staff feel more valued.

**Effective community engagement is taking place. Representative communities are being routinely consulted and are identifying local priorities and receiving feedback.**

### **Summary statement**

Neighbourhoods across the constabulary area are actively engaging with their local police and its partners.

### **Strengths**

- The constabulary's StreetSafe reassurance strategy is aimed at harnessing the energies of communities, partners and members of staff to address crime, the fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and those quality-of-life issues that contribute to making people feel vulnerable. StreetSafe has four distinct themes:
  - Theme 1 – Presence in the community: By working effectively with the extended police family, we will maintain high levels of visibility, involving our communities in identifying and solving problems, giving them a voice in (and access to) policing services, in the knowledge that they will be listened to and dealt with professionally.
  - Theme 2 – Environmental and physical factors: With our partners, we will tackle those crimes, incidents and disorders that, when seen or experienced, may act as a warning about the level of security of individuals or communities.
  - Theme 3 – Effective response: We will deal with people in a courteous, honest, empathetic and professional manner, ensuring that they are kept updated and informed of the results of our actions.
  - Theme 4 – Communication and public engagement: Working with our partners, we will engage with the community, consulting at every level, listening to what people say, responding to their problems, creating a real opportunity for the public to influence our delivery of service. We will enhance our internal communications, promoting our objectives in relation to public reassurance.
- The involvement of communities in influencing policing priorities in their neighbourhoods is fundamental to Durham's approach to Neighbourhood Policing.
- Public forums have been established across County Durham and Darlington to enable communities to have a greater say in determining policing priorities for their area.
- The constabulary considers that everything has its roots in neighbourhoods and has made a significant investment in support of this vision. Effective partnership arrangements, together with sound community links, have ensured that priorities and

actions are identified, actioned and fed back to the community. Evidence of this was found during reality checks in Ludworth.

- Chester-le-Street District Council's partnership and efficiency overview and scrutiny panel undertook a review of community partnerships in March 2008. The review report stated: "The police as a service provider have been highlighted in a number of areas of this research for their commitment to communities. The engagement undertaken by the police has improved their own legitimacy as well as providing a boost to public confidence. The police have understood the benefits of community engagement and realise that some of their best intelligence gathering can only be provided by developing and improving such engagement."
- Engagement mediums range from surgeries, multi-agency public meetings and events, to an effective Neighbourhood Watch scheme. As an example, Darlington Borough partnership has held a series of meetings (24) throughout the area, attended by a cross-section of community members. Issues raised spanned a number of agencies, including the police, and covered community challenges and the services required; these are then actioned by a full range of partners. The issues are captured on a partnership database, together with actions, outcomes and improvements. All issues raised are subject to review, and outcomes are fed back to the community and published on the partnership website for wider accessibility within the community.
- The key individual network (KIN) methodology requires neighbourhood staff to identify key individuals within their area, and this is one of the primary methods of formal community engagement. Key individuals occupy diverse roles within their respective communities and carry out a scheduled dip-sampling/questionnaire process to identify neighbourhood issues and priorities. Activity is undertaken in response to issues raised, and feedback is delivered to the community.
- Significant energy has been invested in order to ensure that there is effective engagement with hard-to-reach young people. The establishment of a youth independent advisory group (IAG), the surveying of youth issues across secondary schools, the subsequent tailoring of services and the monitoring of outcomes of initiatives such as that at Eastbourne Academy all point to effective links following the success of engagement.
- This is supported by initiatives such as Operation Marvin Village, in which personal surveys were conducted in all secondary schools, involving questions agreed by the youth focus group. This has resulted in 'advice clinics' being located in schools to deliver an appropriate and tailored service to pupils.
- The HMIC inspection team attended an award ceremony, hosted by the police authority, to recognise the efforts of young people.
- The local criminal justice board has introduced four IAGs on a themed basis: black and minority ethnic (BME); lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT); disability; and youth. The terms of reference have been established for all four groups. The constabulary makes a full and active contribution to the IAGs, under the direction of the Chief Constable, who chairs the criminal justice board. The BME IAG is the best established of the IAGs and it comprises a cross-section of the Sikh, Chinese, traveller, Muslim and Polish communities, Victim Support and independent

members. There is effective provision to the constabulary of critical incident and community impact assessment support.

- There is clear evidence of effective information sharing between communities and Neighbourhood Policing teams. The constabulary undertakes this activity through a range of mediums, including face-to-face contact, surgeries, engagement opportunities in schools, KINs and Neighbourhood Watch.
- A corporate contact-management strategy document, covering a range of areas including incident reporting and voicemail management, has been in place since 2006. A series of actions have been allocated across the organisation via a strategic action plan, including in areas such as internet incident reporting.
- A number of improvements have been made in recent months in respect of engaging with local communities, including the development of the constabulary website (with the facility to search by postcode). Details of neighbourhood staff have been delivered to every household as part of the Name in Every Neighbourhood campaign.
- The constabulary website provides a clear roadmap to the neighbourhood areas, with community events, priorities, news and methods of contact readily accessible.
- Reality checks showed that effective contact arrangements are in place within local communities, eg Ludworth, where the community was very positive about the contact and accessibility of partnership services.
- Durham undertakes quarterly user-satisfaction surveys and annual public surveys, in accordance with Home Office guidance. The constabulary has adopted a pragmatic view of community definition and, in the true spirit of Citizen Focus, canvasses the views of staff members via the Aiming for Excellence surveys, as part of the drive to deliver service improvements.
- The constabulary has conducted user-satisfaction focus groups, surveys and campaigns to ensure that engagement is taking place across its area. For example, the Name in Every Neighbourhood campaign led to in excess of 1,000 visitors to premises in Peterlee over a four-day period.
- Performance-management structures at area command level, together with the link between area command and chief officers, contain user-satisfaction and performance data relating to quality of service, which is intrinsically linked to neighbourhood engagement.
- 'Rich picture' briefings have been delivered to all Neighbourhood Policing teams and community inspectors on at least two occasions within the last 12 months. There is a rolling programme to co-ordinate this delivery, which is underpinned by an accessible and dedicated intranet site, designed to enhance the awareness among neighbourhood staff of the key elements of the counter-terrorism strategy.
- Operation Harlequin is the constabulary's response to the security service's intelligence requirement regarding the 'rich picture'. This is an ongoing, sustained, proactive community-engagement exercise to introduce counter-terrorism intelligence gathering to all areas in a structured format.

- Area command tactical assessments cover signal crimes, which are used to inform the level 2 assessment. In addition, intelligence from the drugs and alcohol action teams, specific targeting of intelligence requirements (eg prostitution, human trafficking and drug trafficking) and the 'rich picture' are also used to provide an indication of the prevalence and impact of organised crime groups on the community.
- Intelligence is sought and shared with partners and other agencies, including through engagement with minority groups. Evidence includes the following:
  - development of KINs – under the Neighbourhood Policing project, area commands have developed KINs, which provide liaison with key community representation both proactively and reactively.
  - IAGs – corporate development leads on maintaining liaison with minority and hard-to-reach groups through the IAGs.
  - the use of community impact assessments.

### Work in progress

- The development of a joint community-engagement strategy has been led by the police authority. This has only recently been introduced, and delivery remains a 'work in progress'. The development is in response to a perceived lack of central or corporate guidance on community engagement and consultation, supporting the view of the Audit Commission in its report *Connecting with Users and Citizens* (2003), which referred to the importance of consultation and involvement being supported by "cross-organisational structures" such as funding, planning and training.

- The strategy is based on the following engagement principles:

**Transparency:** The engagement/decision-making process will be transparent, with the aim of engendering trust and confidence from communities.

**Accessibility:** Authority and policing services will be accessible through a range of media appropriate to the diverse needs of the communities.

**Responsiveness:** An appropriate response will be delivered and feedback given on issues raised by the community.

**Consistency:** Engagement activities will be structured and scheduled and be of a high standard, while retaining the necessary levels of flexibility to adapt to diverse community needs.

**Timeliness:** Engagement will be undertaken at the earliest opportunity appropriate to the issue, in order to facilitate effective community involvement.

**Impact:** Engagement activities will only be undertaken where the issue being engaged upon affects the community and can be influenced as a result of the engagement.

**Fairness and equality:** All members of the community will be treated with respect and engaged with in a fair and equitable way appropriate to their diverse needs.

**Sustainability:** The authority and constabulary are committed over the long term to engagement with communities and to resourcing these activities appropriately.

**Collaboration:** Where possible, engagement will be carried out in partnership, with the aim of reducing bureaucracy and duplication.

- As a result of inward migration, the definition of minority communities has widened from Asian, traveller and LGBT communities to incorporate 'new' communities, such as the Polish and Latvian. The constabulary has formed a racist incident group (RIG) to monitor hate crime and to provide a focus for policy, strategy and best practice.
- The constabulary aims to be the best at delivering community-focused policing, and has developed a 'mystery shopper' programme to monitor the standard of service it provides across a range of business areas. The results of all 'mystery shopper' exercises carried out will be used to identify any areas for improvement, to ensure that the constabulary is providing the best possible standard of service to the people of County Durham and Darlington.

### **Areas for improvement**

- The constabulary has identified a need to develop the use of key individuals. This includes an increase in the number of key individuals across the whole of County Durham and Darlington and the introduction of a KINs database. These are corporate issues and do not detract from some excellent examples of the use of locally managed KINs within the area commands.
- There remains some disconnect within the IAG structure. While the constabulary has a number of corporate-level IAGs, there are none based within the area commands. This impacts in a number of ways. During the inspection, the lack of clarity surrounding the third-party reporting process of hate-crime incidents was raised, and the constabulary needs to ensure that a robust, victim-focused, auditable system is in place and effectively marketed within the community. In addition, further clarity is required regarding the role of the IAGs in developing and assisting with community-engagement streams, to further enhance their service delivery within the integrated criminal justice framework. Indeed, this issue reaches further than IAGs and extends to the use of volunteers in general.
- The constabulary has identified a need to ensure that it has access to the most relevant and current demographic information, including that relating to vulnerable sections of the community, and to ensure that intelligence from partner agencies and IAGs, as well as from neighbourhood arenas, is available to inform a central profile.
- The identification of vulnerable communities and locations is currently focused at a neighbourhood level and at fulfilling the 'rich picture' requirement. There are currently no products to provide an aggregated overview of communities (authorisation has been received for the purchase of Mosaic to assist in this overview, and within the strategic assessment there is a specific recommendation – which has been actioned – for strategic analysis of vulnerable communities and locations). While there are sound neighbourhood-focused community links in place, the corporate awareness and scoping of this process is in need of review. The positive marketing of activity and results within all the diverse communities is essential, particularly in the context of the move to unitary status within the region.
- At a corporate level, there remains a need to develop a Neighbourhood Policing media/marketing strategy. This, together with further development of the internet and intranet, has been acknowledged by the constabulary and forms part of the Neighbourhood Policing action plan.

**Joint problem solving is established and included within performance regimes.**

**Summary statement**

Joint problem solving involves the police with partners and communities in neighbourhoods across the constabulary area. Problem solving activity is evaluated and demonstrates effective problem resolution at neighbourhood level.

**Strengths**

- The former assistant chief constable (ACC) provided strong leadership and was recognised as the constabulary champion for Neighbourhood Policing and Citizen Focus. The commitment shown was acknowledged across the organisation and within the wider policing environment. This leadership continues under the new ACC, who chairs the Neighbourhood Policing programme and project boards.
- There is clear evidence of active engagement with partners at a strategic level, both at chief officer and area command SMT level. The constabulary is actively engaging with (and driving) partners in a number of forums, supported by similar processes at area command level, where area commanders/SMT members interact effectively with partners across County Durham and Darlington.
- The constabulary can demonstrate where active steps have been taken, and a remedy provided, to address resistance from partners at both a corporate and an area command level. Outcomes include a greater integration of partnership activity, resulting in demonstrable improvements to local outcomes.
- Appropriate processes have been put in place at a strategic level to enable the effective delivery of joint problem-solving activity. This includes:
  - the co-location of staff, which aids the effective briefing and deployment of staff and increases intelligence-gathering opportunities – eg street wardens co-located with police staff at Easington, having access to police Airwave radios; and
  - the introduction of appropriate service level agreements – eg service level agreement with the local authority in relation to the removal of graffiti within 24 hours.
- There are effective neighbourhood problem-solving processes, including effective monitoring of performance across the constabulary. For example, in the South area command, staff develop problem-solving activity in response to community priorities utilising the scanning, analysis, response, assessment (SARA) and problem analysis triangle (PAT) processes. Actions are tracked on a problem-solving database, monitored at neighbourhood supervisory level and the subject of partner and tactical review during the fortnightly tasking and co-ordination group meeting. Examples of such activities are a multi-agency week of action in Darlington, a StreetSafe initiative in West Cornforth to tackle crime and disorder, and the tackling of a crime challenge in a rural village.
- The North area command also utilises the SARA/PAT methodology. In conjunction with the area intelligence unit, neighbourhood analyst action plans are generated, both independently and jointly with partners. Fortnightly crime reduction task-group meetings provide a forum for liaison and discussion with partners around action

plans. The identified priorities, action plans and problem profiles are circulated by the neighbourhood inspectors to the appropriate core response team inspectors for their attention, together with priorities featuring on the daily neighbourhood tasking sheet.

- Actions against each priority are monitored by the appropriate neighbourhood inspector. Problem solving is a standing agenda item at the SMT neighbourhood performance accountability meetings, which are held every three months. Examples of operations considered include: Operation Rollingstone, Operation Raymondcity and Operation Tauntoncity.
- The area commands have NIM principles embedded into their joint problem-solving processes. NIM level 1 includes community priorities as a matter of routine. The Durham North area command has developed a partnership tasking structure that is dependent on the area tasking and co-ordination group process. The meetings are chaired by the partnership sergeant and look at local issues of concern, eg youth nuisance. The South area command has a partnership tasking and co-ordination structure linked to the NIM fortnightly process, supported by a crime and disorder reduction partnership (CDRP)-funded analyst, researcher and data inputter, who work in the area command intelligence unit. There is evidence that an exchange of information is taking place through the partnership tactical tasking meetings, and the intelligence unit can process community intelligence with the aim of targeting partnership resources and addressing pressing issues identified by communities. Neighbourhood inspectors hold a local tasking meeting with representatives from the local authority, fire service and other key agencies on a fortnightly basis, the day following the area command level 1 tasking meeting. The area command daily management meetings support the process.
- Work to develop a new local area agreement (LAA) for County Durham commenced early in 2007. The open and inclusive methodology employed drew heavily on the approach that had been successfully adopted by partners in developing the first LAA in 2006. The LAA was welcomed by partners, being seen as an opportunity to ensure a shared understanding of national priorities and to develop a shared clarity of thinking around local priorities. The agreement was seen as a catalyst for change – setting the scene for a new integrated approach to local service delivery, with more power and influence being given to local people.
- The county community safety strategic assessment has highlighted a number of themes that will underpin priorities determined by the County Durham community safety board: anti-social behaviour and public reassurance; violent crime; town centre violence and the night-time economy; children and young people; domestic abuse; offending and re-offending; and drug and alcohol misuse.
- The neighbourhood approach adopted systematically identifies community priorities in particular areas and informs joint problem-solving activity. For example, in Darlington, Talking Together events are carried out every three months, with neighbourhoods setting priorities and multi-agency activity updates being provided. The community then has an opportunity to sign off the priorities.
- Neighbourhood teams display good visibility within the community, are readily accessible and act on appropriate neighbourhood priorities. For example, during the first two weeks of October 2007, a joint-agency StreetSafe initiative was carried out in the area of West Cornforth. A consultation phase was held throughout September, involving the police, Sedgfield Borough Council, local community groups,

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neighbourhood wardens, PCSOs and the media. The event was publicised through the CDRP website and the *Northern Echo*, and was supported by the MP for Sedgefield. High-visibility patrols were carried out jointly by PCSOs and neighbourhood wardens, utilising a mobile closed-circuit television (CCTV) van. Use was made of local premises for beat surgeries and briefings. A number of police search warrants were executed in the area, with the intention of disrupting criminality, such as the supply of drugs. A co-ordinated clean-up operation was conducted by Sedgefield Borough Council, and the operation was evaluated by the Sedgefield CDRP. Leaflet drops and a walkabout were carried out, in order to inform the community of the outcomes and ascertain any further concerns.

- The constabulary has deployed services innovatively in response to the challenges faced within the community. For example, Operation Ellisville involved the pragmatic deployment of tracker devices in support of community concerns regarding caravan thefts during Appleby Fair.

### **Work in progress**

- The lack of a constabulary-wide information technology (IT)-based problem-solving database has hindered the development of a corporate problem-solving approach. The situation is compounded by having local paper-based recording systems in respect of priority setting at the neighbourhood level. In recognition of these issues, the constabulary has taken action, and a prototype database is being developed and is to be introduced in July/August 2008. This is a further example of the significant demands the constabulary has in respect of its IT services, and these need to be addressed. If allowed to, the lack of a corporate process could undermine the excellent work that is taking place at a local level.
- The dissemination of good practice is progressing, promulgated through the neighbourhood inspectors' forum. The development of the problem-solving database can only aid the process.
- The implementation of a neighbourhood management structure is underway at two pathfinder sites – the Stanley Green Corridor and Peterlee Edenhill. The process has been positively received, both within the organisation and by partners. It creates an effective platform for the continuing development of the constabulary's core strengths of delivering continuous improvement in the quality, accessibility and responsiveness of service delivery, in line with the needs and expectations of the community.
- The local government review will undoubtedly present opportunities to develop services for the future; however, the current period is one of change and uncertainty, resulting in concerns at a tactical level. The police authority and the constabulary are mindful of this and are working with partners to mitigate potential difficulties.

### **Areas for improvement**

- The management, structure and briefing of operational staff, in particular the core response patrols, is an area for improvement. Briefings do not effectively reflect neighbourhood priorities, and they create the potential for disconnect in respect of customer service provision. Added to this, the clarity of the roles of neighbourhood and core inspectors can become blurred as the tasking and accountability for ongoing community solutions lies increasingly with the neighbourhood teams.

- There is no corporate problem-solving training delivered at neighbourhood team level to either internal staff or partners. The constabulary has identified this gap and is addressing it during 2008/09. Training is to be provided in two strands: general Neighbourhood Policing/Citizen Focus training, and specific problem-solving training for Neighbourhood Policing teams. A learning needs assessment has been prepared in respect of the general training for approval by the training user group. While progress has been made in respect of problem-solving training, including the involvement of the ACC in delivering the training, work needs to be expedited if the target date of December 2008 for implementation of the training is to be met.

**The outcomes of Neighbourhood policing are being realised by the surveyed public.**

	SPI 2a		KDI		SPI 10b	
	Percentage of people who think that their local police do a good or excellent job		Percentage of people who 'agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area'		Percentage of people who think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour	
	Difference from MSF (percentage point pp)	2005/06 to 2007/08 change	Difference from MSF	2005/06 to 2007/08 change	Difference from MSF	2005/06 to 2007/08 change
<b>DURHAM</b>	<b>+4.8</b>	<b>+0.7</b>	<b>+6.2</b>	<b>+1.3</b>	<b>+1.1</b>	<b>+1.2</b>

**Summary statement**

The SPI/KDI data shows that Durham’s performance is not significantly different to the average for the MSF.

The SPI/KDI data also shows that the constabulary’s performance is unchanged compared with two years ago.

**Context**

The SPI and KDI statistics are obtained from the PPAFs to March 2008. These figures are survey based and have been analysed for statistical significance, which can be explained in lay terms as follows: ‘The difference in performance between the constabulary and the average for its MSF is unlikely to have occurred by chance.’

Note: When comparing the constabulary’s performance with previous years, year-on-year statistical significance is explained as follows: ‘The difference in constabulary performance between the years compared is unlikely to have occurred by chance.’

There is a summary of how statistical significance is used at Appendix 2 at the end of this report.

As part of the BCS, approximately 1,000 interviews are undertaken in each force area in England and Wales. Included in the survey is the individual’s assessment of whether the local police are doing a good job, whether the police are dealing with anti-social behaviour

and crime that matter in their area, and whether anti-social behaviour in their area is a problem.

**SPI 2a – percentage of people who think that their local police do a good or excellent job.**

52.4% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 think that their local police do a good or excellent job, which is not significantly different to the average for the MSF.

Constabulary performance was unchanged in the year ending March 2008; 52.4% of people surveyed think that their local police do a good or excellent job, compared with 51.6% in the year ending March 2006.

**KDI – percentage of people who ‘agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area’.**

53.8% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 ‘agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area’, which is significantly better than the average for the MSF.

Constabulary performance was unchanged in the year ending March 2008; 53.8% of people surveyed ‘agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area’, compared with 52.5% in the year ending March 2006.

**SPI 10b – percentage of people who think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour.**

19.8% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour, which is not significantly different to the average for the MSF.

Constabulary performance was unchanged in the year ending March 2008; 19.8% of people surveyed think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour, compared with 18.5% in the year ending March 2006.

**Force-level and local satisfaction/confidence measures are used to inform service delivery.**

**Summary statement**

The constabulary fully understands the needs of its communities. Identified service improvements are made to improve local service delivery.

**Strengths**

- The area policed by Durham Constabulary continues to be one of the safest areas of the country in which to live.
- Since June 2006, the constabulary has consistently exceeded its most similar forces (MSF) average-user whole-service satisfaction levels.
- While any data relating to the satisfaction of BME service users must be treated within the context of the sample size, the constabulary has consistently delivered above-average performance, with a significant three-year improvement taking

satisfaction levels to 91.4%. Durham is currently the best-performing force in England and Wales in respect of this indicator.

- Constabulary and area command quality processes increasingly form part of the performance-management culture, with scrutiny of hate-crime incidents provided at SMT level, to ensure that the Aiming for Excellence ethos is appropriately applied in all cases.
- Data currently identifies a satisfaction gap between white and BME users, with white users consistently less satisfied. Further data will continue to be scrutinised carefully, and the management of customer and community expectations, together with the delivery and implementation of the community-engagement strategy, will be essential tools to enhance this area of service delivery.
- Neighbourhood policing team performance is included in performance-management processes as a matter of course. The process is complemented by the daily management meetings undertaken in the area commands, which have a focus on community issues.
- Reality checks showed there to be widespread awareness of community issues, including an understanding of how police and partnership activities influence satisfaction levels.
- Durham carries out quarterly user-satisfaction surveys to Home Office standards. The constabulary has an embedded survey, which links local and national issues and examines the outcomes of Neighbourhood Policing. Durham has adopted a pragmatic view of community definition and, in the true spirit of Citizen Focus, canvasses the views of staff members via the Aiming for Excellence surveys, as part of the drive to deliver service improvements.
- Complementing this corporate activity, a range of methods are employed to identify user views within the community – eg the Winston community survey focusing on traveller activity.
- Reality checks showed evidence of effective informal community feedback being acted on – eg street drinking in Ludworth.
- Darlington Borough partnership holds meetings throughout the area that are well attended by a cross-section of the community. Issues raised include community challenges and services required; these are then actioned by a full range of partnership groups. The issues are then captured on the partnership database, together with actions, outcomes and improvements. They are reviewed, fed back to the community and published on the partnership website for increased accessibility. In addition, the areas of most challenge are identified and screened at partnership level, and priorities are actioned accordingly. For example, the partnership has identified 11 of the most deprived areas, outlined their priorities, targeted activity and fed back results to the community.
- The constabulary has identified complaints, trends and corporate issues that emerge as a result. Data on causes and trends is produced and scrutinised as part of the performance regime. Furthermore, this is effectively communicated across the organisation and to the police authority, which undertakes independent scrutiny to ensure probity.

### **Work in progress**

- At a time when crime levels were down by 11% (for the year 2007/08) and detection rates were up, the percentage of people who felt safe within the community fell. Durham is aware of this and is focusing on improving reassurance; this includes the increased visibility of staff in rural areas.
- The move to neighbourhood team performance data has been well received by staff and is starting to become effective in the performance-review process. The constabulary is moving away from traditional, target-driven performance measures towards a balanced performance framework, with the inclusion of confidence and satisfaction data.
- User-satisfaction data is not yet available at the neighbourhood level, and this is being addressed.
- The constabulary has introduced an internal inspection process, which will underpin the emphasis on quality and performance. The process will focus on a range of issues (eg partnership integration), as well as on performance delivery.
- As part of the remodelling process, the constabulary is adopting a pragmatic approach to improving service delivery. Following customer feedback and consultation, it has scoped and identified the top five service-delivery challenges and is now adopting a problem-solving model to enhance the quality of service provided. One example of this is the integrated partnership approach to the management of people who are repeatedly reported as missing from home.
- Durham has identified the need to improve processes to evaluate and make use of information obtained through KIN surveys. At present, the process is inhibited by the lack of IT support. Work is in hand to address this.

### **Area for improvement**

- The organisation has developed an effective Neighbourhood Watch network, stretching across the rural communities that make up the area. However, effective communication, including keeping people informed, is an area for improvement. The situation creates the potential for a loss of support from some of the constabulary's most positive community members. The development of an appropriate IT support system is seen as a way forward.

### **The constabulary demonstrates sustainable plans for Neighbourhood Policing.**

#### **Summary statement**

The constabulary and the police authority have shown how they plan to ensure that Neighbourhood Policing will be sustained beyond April 2008.

### **Strengths**

- In order to release savings for reinvestment in key areas of policing, the constabulary has implemented a strategic remodelling programme, which focuses on Neighbourhood Policing, response policing and protective services. Elements of the programme are national demonstration sites around the areas of offender

management and demand management. Both elements are seen as essential in maintaining community confidence and in delivering an effective and integrated service in response to local priorities. The programme has co-ordinated the planning and implementation of a large number of projects and smaller action plans to deliver significant organisational changes over a 3–5-year period. Significant change has already resulted. Activity to date has been overseen by a dedicated programme board, chaired by the Chief Constable; however, the board is to be replaced by individual project boards in order to move to the next level.

- The strategic budget allocation contains full provision for salary and other costs associated with the employment of PCSOs employed by the constabulary.
- Partners (particularly local authorities) are supporting and sustaining Neighbourhood Policing in a number of ways – eg by ensuring that the area forums and the unfolding priorities are actioned and supported; by targeting available finance on local issues; by supporting CDRP bids as appropriate for neighbourhood problem solving; by being alive to public events and ensuring that the safety advisory group (SAG) is fit for purpose; and by linking on key licensing issues that cause community problems.
- The constabulary has appropriate processes in place to respond to and address areas for improvement identified in external and internal inspections and assessments, including NPIA/HMIC assessments/inspections. There is chief officer commitment to the process, with evidence of improvements made.
- The constabulary Neighbourhood Policing action plan is focused on outcomes and addresses the areas of media/marketing, training and development, problem solving, personnel issues, workload monitoring, KINs, volunteers, Neighbourhood Watch, the Flanagan Report and police reform, and neighbourhood management.
- The police authority is actively involved at programme board level. The authority is on both the service delivery programme board and County Durham CDRPs.
- The Shaping Futures initiative is the police authority's vision document and focuses on priorities such as neighbourhood management and protecting vulnerable people.
- The authority places an emphasis on continuous improvement and performance management through processes such as the quarterly performance panel. In addition, priorities at a community level are being tackled locally, with some local forum work under way.
- Police authority representatives have visited enquiry counters to dip-sample customer experiences and have complimented the constabulary on the improvement in this service-delivery medium – eg by ensuring that local priorities and objectives are clearly displayed.
- Effective community consultation is delivered through a range of processes, including police community consultative groups, annual priority-setting events, precept-setting meetings, website consultation, and public events and meetings. Activities are monitored through the community safety and engagement panel.
- Complaints are reviewed by the police authority and steps are taken by it to resolve appropriate matters arising.

### Work in progress

- The police authority has worked with the constabulary to develop a community-engagement strategy and a youth strategy, both of which are recent developments. The youth strategy is based on the five key themes of *Every Child Matters* – ie ensuring that all engagement, contact and work with young people is aimed at assisting them to be healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution; and achieve economic well-being.
- The existing local authority partnership structure of nine local strategic partnerships (LSPs) presents a challenge for the authority in aligning its services effectively. The forthcoming move to a unitary status of local authority partners will present opportunities to enhance this alignment.

## Developing Citizen Focus Policing

<b>2007/08 Summary of judgement</b>	<b>Meeting the standard</b>
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**A Citizen Focus ethos is embedded across the constabulary, establishing an initial baseline.**

### **Summary statement**

Durham Constabulary fully understands the needs of its communities. Identified service improvements are made to improve local service delivery. The constabulary communicates the National Quality of Service Commitment standards, the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime standards and the constabulary corporate/accessibility standards to its communities.

### **Strengths**

- The constabulary has shaped its service delivery through the Aiming for Excellence philosophy. The philosophy is understood by staff across the organisation, and they relate to it. Aiming for Excellence is based on four key principles: leadership at all levels within the organisation; role clarity; accountability for performance; and open communication. These principles provide the mechanisms by which the constabulary delivers its vision of being the best in community-focused policing and which describe the way in which its people are led, organised, managed, developed and consulted.
- The constabulary has set out in its vision for policing what needs to be delivered over the coming years to provide a service that is focused on, and responsive to, community needs and expectations, and that contributes to the creation of safe, healthy and prosperous communities.
- The framework of core values defines the style in which staff will operate, and places the citizen at the heart of all constabulary activities – “a citizen-focused service will come first”.
- Aiming for Excellence defines the organisational philosophy of Durham Constabulary. It underpins how the constabulary delivers policing services and drives the performance of all staff towards excellence in service delivery.
- The overarching theme of ensuring that staff at all levels of the organisation are focused on service delivery and are supported and empowered in what they do has been central to the constabulary’s success over a number of years.
- A history of refining its service in response to community challenges in order to improve customer confidence is clearly demonstrated through the StreetSafe reassurance strategy. The strategy is aimed at harnessing the energies of communities, partners and members of staff to address crime, the fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and those quality-of-life issues that contribute to making people feel vulnerable. The strategy was introduced to address the imbalance between the low actual crime rates and the fear of crime within the community.

- Durham Constabulary has a tradition of delivering community-focused policing, which is acknowledged by bodies such as the NPIA and HMIC, and which has seen good practice being cited on the NPIA website. This and front-line operational response – often overlooked as an engagement tool – are two of the key strengths of the constabulary.
- The constabulary has been cited in the Home Office Community Safety Accreditation Scheme's good-practice guide.
- The area of County Durham and Darlington continues to be one of the safest areas of the country in which to live. The focus on quality has been delivered within the context of improved detection rates, a reduction in crime and an increase in customer satisfaction levels.
- In order to release resources for reinvestment in key areas, the constabulary has implemented a strategic remodelling programme that is focused on Neighbourhood Policing, response policing and protective services. Key achievements have included having elements of the programme being accepted as a demonstration site, ie offender management and demand management. Both elements are seen as essential in maintaining community confidence and in delivering an effective and integrated service in response to neighbourhood priorities.

**Service users' views are sought and are used to improve service delivery.**

**Strengths**

- Durham Constabulary enjoys close partnership links within its communities, and a neighbourhood-focused service emphasises the link to community priorities.
- It carries out quarterly user-satisfaction surveys to Home Office standards. The constabulary has an embedded survey, which links local and national issues and examines the outcomes of Neighbourhood Policing. Durham has adopted a pragmatic view of community definition and, in the true spirit of Citizen Focus, canvasses the views of staff members via the Aiming for Excellence surveys, as part of the drive to deliver service improvements.
- Complementing this corporate activity is a range of methods employed to identify user views within the community. For example, Darlington Borough partnership has held 24 meetings throughout the area, which are well attended by a cross-section of community members. Issues raised include community challenges and services required, and these issues are then actioned by a full range of partnership groups. They are then captured on the partnership database, together with actions, outcomes and improvements. They are reviewed, fed back to the community and published on the partnership website for broad accessibility within the community. In addition, the areas of most challenge are identified and screened at partnership level, and priorities are actioned accordingly. For example, the partnership has identified 11 of the most deprived areas, outlined their priorities, targeted activity and fed back results to the community.
- KINs methodology requires neighbourhood staff to identify designated key individuals in their area, and is one of the primary methods for formal community engagement. The key individuals occupy diverse roles within their respective communities and conduct a scheduled dip-sampling and questionnaire process

within the community to identify neighbourhood issues and priorities. Activity is then undertaken in response to these priorities, with feedback delivered to the community.

- Youth engagement is an area of increased focus for the constabulary. For example, in Operation Marvin Village, personal surveys were conducted in all secondary schools, with questions agreed by the youth focus group. This has resulted in ‘advice clinics’ being located in schools to deliver an appropriate and tailored service to pupils.
- Durham’s workforce modernisation project seeks to reduce the demand placed on front-line officers on response and Neighbourhood Policing teams (including the reactive criminal investigation department (CID)) in the investigation of volume crime. There are two streams to this – pre-arrest and post-arrest. Pre-arrest: an assessment of the current demand profile for high-volume/high-priority incidents and crime-related activity and associated administrative/back-office tasks has been conducted. This focuses on the top five volume-crime types and incident types that are resource intensive in terms of officer time. The intention is to realign tasks and identify a better workforce mix, with the creation of a number of new roles around team-level administrative support for front-line teams. The time freed up for front-line officers will enable them to spend more time on a citizen-focused response and investigation of volume crime and incidents. The aim is to improve performance in terms of crime reduction, detection and customer satisfaction. Post-arrest: this part of the project looks at those elements of demand associated with detainee-handling processes.
- In year 1 of the remodelling programme, a number of specialist PCSOs were appointed to roles that related to the Citizen Focus agenda and that did not require police powers. These included Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators (eight – roles previously carried out by police staff); hate crime officers (two – previously undertaken by police officers); youth engagement service staff (one – previously filled by a police officer); and community safety officer (one – previously a police officer).
- In addition, the process resulted in the recruitment of a professional diversity manager (previously the role of a police officer), giving even greater emphasis to the equality and diversity agenda. The civilianisation of these and other posts resulted in significant savings, which were reinvested into growth, primarily in support of protective services; however, resources were also allocated for an additional communications inspector; an increase in the overtime budget for communications; seven posts in witness care, in preparation for the increased demands of the Witness Charter; and funding in support of demographic-profiling software to assist the organisation in better understanding its communities (pending). Remodelling of the community safety arena also allowed for the introduction of a partnership team and a diversity unit.
- A corporate contact-management strategy document, covering a range of areas including incident reporting and voicemail management, has been in place since 2006. A series of actions have been allocated across the organisation via a strategic action plan, including in areas such as internet incident reporting. The constabulary assesses the effectiveness of the arrangements via its performance-management process and through dip-sampling processes, eg voicemail usage.

- The constabulary has made a significant investment in Neighbourhood Policing. The structure is based around 12 neighbourhood teams, each with a nominated inspector who is responsible and accountable to the community for service delivery and for addressing community priorities in partnership.
- The Name in Every Neighbourhood campaign effectively raised awareness and accessibility of the local neighbourhood team within the community. The campaign was complemented by some successful marketing, which included the delivery of a leaflet to every household in County Durham and Darlington.
- The constabulary website provides a clear roadmap to neighbourhood areas, with community events, priorities, news and methods of contact readily accessible.
- Reality testing undertaken during the inspection found that effective contact arrangements are in place within local communities. This was demonstrated on a visit to Ludworth, where the community was extremely positive about the contact and accessibility of partnership services, and where the inspection team heard that services were the best they had been for 20 years.
- The development and implementation of witness care units has complemented the effective partnership-working arrangements that are in place with the Crown Prosecution Service. This is leading to a more effective and improved service delivery to victims and witnesses as part of the priority to deliver simple, speedy and summary justice in partnership.
- The police authority is actively involved across the constabulary at programme board level. As an example, representatives are members of the service delivery programme board and the County Durham CDRPs.
- The Shaping Futures initiative is the authority's vision document and focuses on priorities such as neighbourhood management and protecting vulnerable people.
- Through processes such as the quarterly performance panel, the police authority places an emphasis on continuous improvement and performance management. In addition, priorities at a community level are being tackled on a local basis, with some local forum work under way.
- Police authority representatives have visited enquiry counters to dip-sample customer experiences and have complimented the constabulary on the improvement in this service-delivery medium, eg by ensuring that local priorities and objectives are clearly displayed.
- Effective community consultation is delivered through a range of processes, including police community consultative groups, annual priority-setting events, precept-setting meetings and website consultation. Activities are monitored through the community safety and engagement panel.
- Complaints are reviewed by the police authority, and steps may be taken by it to resolve matters. For example, a standard letter sent to a complainant was deemed inappropriate and resulted in the authority intervening.

## Work in progress

- The development of the joint community-engagement strategy has been led by the police authority. This development is in response to a perceived lack of a central or corporate steer in relation to community engagement and consultation, supporting the view of the Audit Commission in its report *Connecting with Users and Citizens* (2003), which referred to the importance of consultation and involvement being supported by “cross-organisational structures” such as funding, planning and training.
- The strategy is based on the following engagement principles:
  - Transparency:** The engagement/decision-making process will be transparent, with the aim of engendering trust and confidence from communities.
  - Accessibility:** Authority and policing services will be accessible through a range of media appropriate to the diverse needs of the communities.
  - Responsiveness:** An appropriate response will be delivered and feedback given on issues raised by the community.
  - Consistency:** Engagement activities will be structured and scheduled and be of a high standard, while retaining the necessary levels of flexibility to adapt to diverse community needs.
  - Timeliness:** Engagement will be undertaken at the earliest opportunity appropriate to the issue, in order to facilitate effective community involvement.
  - Impact:** Engagement activities will only be undertaken where the issue being engaged upon affects the community and can be influenced as a result of the engagement.
  - Fairness and equality:** All members of the community will be treated with respect and engaged with in a fair and equitable way appropriate to their diverse needs.
  - Sustainability:** The authority and the constabulary are committed over the long term to engagement with communities and to resourcing these activities appropriately.
  - Collaboration:** Where possible, engagement will be carried out in partnership, with the aim of reducing bureaucracy and duplication.
- In light of the retention of Durham Constabulary’s status as an independent force, the increasing financial pressures and the need to meet the requirements outlined in the *Closing the Gap* report for investment in protective services, a remodelling programme board was established in 2006. The aim was to bring together the area commands and departments, creating a structured forum for the development, implementation and oversight of the process. The process considered both savings and growth proposals, resulting in a joined-up approach to resource management, which has been managed as a corporate programme in order to benefit from the well-established programme-management processes across the organisation.
- The programme board also enabled greater connectivity to be made between the numerous pieces of work being carried out in respect of modernising the organisation and developing organisational capability and capacity, including in areas such as offender management, demand management, collaboration, and protective services.

- Importantly for the future of the organisation, the programme seeks to ensure that the needs and expectations of individuals and local communities are reflected in police decision making, service delivery and practice.
- Key work streams are: improving the experience of those who have contact with the police; rolling out a Neighbourhood Policing approach across all forces by 2008; effective community engagement – which includes consultation, marketing and communications, and public involvement; public understanding and local accountability of policing; and organisational and cultural change to bring about increasingly responsive services, where feedback from front-line staff and the public is used to continuously improve them.
- The main resources considered relevant to the Citizen Focus agenda are those of neighbourhood teams, witness care units, communications centres and diversity, although it is accepted that the agenda is much broader and, in respect of quality of service, reflects on all members of the organisation.
- Further community accessibility measures are being implemented to enhance the opportunities for the customer contact experience. For example, the introduction of a diary car.
- Staff training, including the delivery of PIP training to communications staff, is enabling the provision of a more integrated customer service process. While there remains some concern regarding the single 0845 contact number, there is clear evidence that the experiences of both external and internal customers have improved significantly.
- In addition to the engagement strategy, the police authority is working together with the constabulary to develop a youth strategy that is based on the five key themes of *Every Child Matters* – ie ensuring that all engagement, contact and work with young people is aimed at assisting them to: be healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution; and achieve economic well-being.
- The existing local authority partnership structure of nine LSPs presents a challenge for the police authority in aligning its services effectively. The forthcoming move to a unitary status of local authority partners will present opportunities to enhance this alignment, and the authority is encouraged to be at the forefront of this process and to engage strategically during the change process in order to facilitate the consistent delivery of service to the communities that it represents.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Profiling of communities is in its infancy and is being led through the neighbourhood profiles and the 'rich picture' process. Some analytical scoping has been carried out to assess vulnerable communities, and the inclusion of this, as well as the work of the IAGs, is included in the constabulary's strategic assessment. There are difficulties in identifying emerging communities due to a lack of dynamic demographic information and of products that provide an aggregated overview of communities. Authorisation has been received for the purchase of Mosaic to assist in this overview, and within the strategic assessment there is a specific recommendation for strategic analysis of vulnerable communities and locations that has been actioned.

- The corporate engagement with emerging communities is focused on proactive campaigns (such as those relating to road safety) and effective individual neighbourhood links, rather than on a pragmatic, informed and structured corporate approach to the views of the diverse communities that the organisation serves. While this issue must be taken in the context of the strong and sustained levels of customer satisfaction within the BME community, effective profiling and corporate integration should be prioritised as part of the drive to further enhance service delivery.
- The constabulary has identified the need to develop the use of key individuals. This includes an increase in the number of key individuals across the whole of County Durham and Darlington and the introduction of a KINs database. These are corporate issues and do not detract from some excellent examples of the use of locally managed KINs within the area commands.
- Corporate branding is an integral part of the engagement-strategy process; however, it is governed by the fiscal conditions currently in place across the organisation. During reality checks, the inspection team did find evidence of a neighbourhood team base within the community that had no branding or public contact-point information. The inspection team was reassured that this was an isolated instance; however, while some members of the community were clearly aware of the engagement methods via surgeries and personal contact, the increased utilisation of community deployment bases and surgeries means there is a need for a clear and integrated marketing and branding process to effectively support the neighbourhood team strategy.
- Customer satisfaction with service and standards is dependent upon the provision of a clear and effective outline of expectations, delivered from the outset, which is critical to customer confidence and satisfaction outcomes. While the engagement strategy is being developed, progress needs to be driven, and there needs to be a key measure aimed at developing the organisation's clear community strengths in order to further improve satisfaction levels.
- To date, the authority has had limited engagement with the Tees Valley comprehensive area assessment pilot. This is seen as a missed opportunity.

**Quality of service complaints are dealt with effectively.**

**Strengths**

- Citizen Focus standards are communicated both internally to staff and to the public so that standards can be improved. This includes the National Quality of Service Commitment (NQoSC) and the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.
- Data on trends and causes is produced and scrutinised as part of the corporate performance regime. The constabulary identifies complaints, trends and corporate issues emerging as a result. Furthermore, issues are effectively communicated across the organisation, including to chief officers and area command teams and to the police authority, which undertakes independent scrutiny to ensure probity.
- Data on trends and information inform training delivery at a constabulary level and complement the thread of quality that runs through all input streams.

### **Work in progress**

- The constabulary is working with the police authority at a corporate level to review current practice and processes and to deliver them in a more corporate and targeted manner.
- The Victims' Code presents an opportunity for service improvement, with the Crime Management Unit review under way and predicted to deliver an essential element of this process. While neighbourhood team community links are strong, and are complemented by effective witness care unit service delivery, the effective mapping and increased corporate awareness of vulnerable community groups will assist in this process.

### **The constabulary is monitoring its compliance with the National Quality of Service Commitment.**

#### **Strengths**

- Durham Constabulary's compliance with the NQoSC is monitored by the police authority's performance panel, which meets quarterly.
- While statistical compliance is measured centrally, each area command is responsible for practical implementation of the NQoSC requirements – eg improved care of victims and witnesses is driven by the area command witness care units, monitored by the area command quality and performance units.
- Quality-of-life indicators linked to the NQoSC are being built into performance packs, which form the basis of the accountability meeting between neighbourhood inspectors and their respective SMTs. The data informs the accountability meeting between the area commanders and chief officers (primarily the ACC).
- The constabulary has a detailed corporate risk register, and there is appropriate focus on standards and the delivery of an effective service.

#### **Work in progress**

- The constabulary has adopted the NQoSC's key principles of making it easy to contact them; providing a professional and high-quality service; dealing with initial public contact; keeping the public informed; ensuring that the public voice counts; victims of crime; and other service commitments in respect of freedom of information, data protection and complaints.
- A total of 305 individual actions were identified within the constabulary project plan; most of these actions have been successfully completed. The remainder relate largely to the estates strategy and are the subject of a long-term implementation plan, or to the communications and contact-management strategies, which require a number of software issues to be finalised prior to implementation.
- Enquiry counters across the constabulary area are being redeveloped, with quality of service data to be displayed in accordance with a corporate standard that is currently being developed. In order to ensure high levels of staff awareness of customer service issues, this standard will also cover internal notice boards.

## Areas for improvement

- Victim focus, consistent clarity of service delivery and performance are seen as the next phase of the performance-improvement process. There is a requirement for a sustained, structured and co-ordinated approach to services such as crime investigation progression updates to match the service-delivery enhancements achieved in other areas, eg witness care units and Neighbourhood Policing team implementation. This phase of service improvement will provide a platform for driving customer satisfaction performance to the next level.

**The constabulary has integrated Citizen Focus and operational activity, such as contact management, response, Neighbourhood Policing, investigation and thorough criminal justice processes.**

## Summary statement

The constabulary has planned to implement corporate service standards expected of all staff when dealing with the public. Satisfaction and confidence performance is integrated into area command and constabulary performance management processes.

The constabulary is striving to ensure that it provides a positive experience to every person with whom it has contact.

## Strengths

- The corporate embrace of the Citizen Focus agenda has been personally driven by the deputy chief constable. The constabulary enjoys a strong public brand, which it has developed through the StreetSafe public service charter and the Aiming for Excellence ethos.
- The constabulary philosophy is focused on Aiming for Excellence, and the branding of Citizen Focus is integrated within this. The constabulary has clear and accessible strategies in place to deliver this philosophy, eg the contact-management and information-management strategies. These are accessible on the constabulary website and are communicated to the public accordingly. In relation to both staff and communities, this means:
  - our Aiming for Excellence philosophy informs the way in which we deliver our actions and is the driving force behind providing a better quality of service for our communities;
  - we value and support our staff, and are fully committed to developing them in order to deliver our vision for policing;
  - we recognise, respect and value the diversity within the organisation and our communities;
  - every member of staff plays a key role in shaping and improving the service delivered by Durham Constabulary;
  - we have a clear vision for the organisation underpinned by our core values; and
  - our staff understand what they need to deliver and the standards we expect of them.

- Durham's contact-management strategy was introduced in 2006. A number of activity lines and action plans emerged from it, including in areas such as voicemail availability and utilisation.
- The constabulary website identifies a clear roadmap for contact and communications mediums – eg the neighbourhood teams are clearly identified, with contact processes clearly accessible.
- Performance is managed corporately and includes a range of activity, including the monitoring of staff use of the voicemail facility, quarterly user-satisfaction surveys and annual public surveys. Additionally, dip sampling of this service takes place at area command level to ensure the delivery of an effective service.
- Reality checks undertaken as part of the inspection process identified that neighbourhood team staff were known and acknowledged by partner representatives and members of the public, demonstrating their integration into day-to-day community issues.
- The Aiming for Excellence ethos has resulted in a quality message being woven through the delivery of all training courses. Training is evaluated to ensure that standards are achieved. This will be further enhanced as part of the strategy to ensure that the quality thread is delivered to a 'golden standard'.
- The 'citizen journey' provides the focus for the priority of service delivery of the PIP training given to all staff, including those located within the communications centres.
- Conduct and regulations training is now delivered to staff and includes an appropriate focus on customer satisfaction and service issues.
- The implementation of the neighbourhood team approach across the constabulary, together with the marketing campaign that supported and promoted it, has complemented the existing positive brand images.
- The constabulary website reinforces the corporate branding and features a video webcast of a member of the executive personally delivering a community priority and service message. This is regarded as an innovative approach.
- There is clear evidence of staff receiving formal reward and recognition – eg commendations by the Chief Constable and area commanders. The constabulary can cite numerous instances of such recognition, including one example where staff were recognised for their work on Operation Pembroke, a successful neighbourhood-based operation targeting the supply of illegal drugs.
- The formal process is underpinned by having good work considered at area command daily management meetings. This was witnessed at first hand during the inspection.
- The police authority and partner agencies also recognise good work in a number of ways, highlighting the work and commitment of staff across a range of disciplines, for their contribution to community initiatives, etc.

## Work in progress

- The integration of a range of constabulary strategies within a corporate Citizen Focus strategy is being developed; rather than concentrating on the disparate individual elements, the focus is clearly on the 'citizen journey' through service engagement and delivery.
- As part of the developing corporate approach to delivering a citizen-focused service, a quality and customer satisfaction course is being developed for input across the organisation. Furthermore, customer-care training, linked to a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), is being tailored for delivery to communications centre staff.
- The constabulary has identified a gap in the provision of training to a corporate standard in respect of Citizen Focus and Neighbourhood Policing training. This is to be addressed during 2008/09, and an ILN has been prepared in respect of the general training, for approval by the training user group.
- Developments are at an embryonic phase, with considerable focus being placed on the consistent delivery of a first-class policing service that meets the needs of individuals and of the community and that provides a service that people value.
- The corporate drive is to create an environment that converts a satisfied customer into one who is delighted with the service experienced. Integral to these aims are the vision and values that have been the cornerstone of the quality of service delivered by Durham Constabulary and that are inextricably linked to the organisational culture and community satisfaction levels that it has delivered.
- The constabulary has acknowledged the need to move the organisation away from a performance-target culture to one that favours a balanced scorecard of community priorities and satisfaction in respect of the service provided. Essential elements will be the road-mapping of services and a focus on such areas as marketing, training, target setting and the use of surveys. There is a requirement for effective processes and technology to support this.
- The foundations are in place to assist in the process – eg the constabulary has decided to introduce a 'mystery shopper' programme to monitor the standard of service it provides across a range of business areas. The results of all 'mystery shopper' exercises carried out will be used to identify any areas for improvement, in order to ensure that the constabulary provides the best possible standard of service to the people of County Durham and Darlington.

## Area for improvement

- While there was appreciation of the work undertaken by the SMTs at area command level, the increased visibility of managers would be beneficial to the process of making staff feel more valued.

**Performance processes include local satisfaction measures, and locally established priorities.**

**Strengths**

- Neighbourhood Policing team performance is routinely included in performance-management discussions and is supplemented by the daily management meetings conducted at area command level, which have a focus on community issues and priorities.
- Reality testing that was undertaken showed there to be an awareness of community satisfaction issues and of their relationship both to the police and the partnership performance processes. Staff at different levels had an understanding of the disconnect between falling crime levels (11% reduction in 2007/08) and the decline in the percentage of people who feel safe in the local community.
- Effective partnership arrangements, together with sound community links, have ensured that priorities and actions are identified, actioned and fed back to the community. Corporate user-satisfaction surveys, focus groups and links through KINs and IAG complement this process.
- The constabulary has deployed services innovatively in response to the challenges faced within the community – eg Operation Ellisville involved the pragmatic deployment of tracker devices in support of community concerns over caravan thefts during Appleby Fair. The impact of such activity on local people is fully understood.

**Work in progress**

- User-satisfaction data is available at area level, and this is being expanded through the quarterly surveys to provide information at a Neighbourhood Policing inspector level.
- The move to neighbourhood team performance data has been well received by staff and is now becoming effective as part of the performance-review process.
- While traditional performance measures are not being abandoned, the development of a corporate inspection process will help drive the increased focus on quality of service and partnership working.
- The move to unitary status on the part of the district authorities within County Durham creates additional challenges in respect of the continuity of effective partnership delivery. The police authority and the constabulary need to work to address this.

**Areas for improvement**

- User-satisfaction and confidence data are the bedrock of the community impact of citizen-focused policing. While effective processes are in place in neighbourhoods such as Bowburn, there is no effective corporate mapping of service delivery, leading to potential inconsistencies in the quality of service provided. Community feedback is dependent on the neighbourhood arrangements in place, and there is insufficient corporate support.

- The need for improved marketing of success and the promotion of good-news messages within the community remain areas for improvement. Such activity will help address the disconnect between the service delivered and the community perception (or fear) of crime.

**The constabulary can demonstrate that the relevant SPIs remain stable as a minimum.**

	SPI 1e Satisfaction with the overall service provided		SPI 3b Satisfaction of users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided	SPI 3b Gap – comparison of satisfaction for white users and users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided
	Difference from MSF (percentage points – pp)	2005/06 to 2007/08 change	2005/06 to 2007/08 change	+/-pp
<b>DURHAM</b>	+1.1	+2.2	+19.2	-10.8

**Summary statement**

The SPI data shows that constabulary performance is not significantly different to the average for the MSF.

The SPI data also shows that constabulary performance has significantly improved compared with two years ago.

Satisfaction of users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided is significantly improving.

There is a satisfaction gap between white users and users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided. Users from minority ethnic groups are 10.8 percentage points more satisfied.

Where there is a gap in satisfaction with service delivery between white users and users from minority ethnic groups, the constabulary has evidenced that it is taking action to understand and narrow the gap.

**Context**

The SPI statistics are obtained from the PPAFs to March 2008. These statistics are survey based and have been analysed for statistical significance, which can be explained in lay terms as follows: ‘The difference in performance between the constabulary and the average for its MSF is unlikely to have occurred by chance.’

Note: When comparing the constabulary’s performance with previous years, year-on-year statistical significance is explained as follows: ‘the difference in the constabulary performance between the years compared is unlikely to have occurred by chance.’

There is a summary of the statistical analysis methodology at Appendix 2 at the end of this report.

Victims of crime and users of police services are surveyed using Durham Constabulary's own user satisfaction surveys, which comply to national standards and thus allow comparison with other forces. Surveys are based on a sample size of 600 interviews per BCU.

**SPI 1e – satisfaction with the overall service provided.**

81.2% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 were satisfied with the overall service provided, which is not significantly different to the average for the MSF.

Constabulary performance significantly improved in the year ending March 2008; 81.2% of people surveyed were satisfied with the overall service provided, compared with 79.0% in the year ending March 2006.

**SPI 3b – comparison of satisfaction for white users and users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided.**

Durham's performance significantly improved in the year ending March 2008; 91.4% of users from minority ethnic groups were satisfied with the overall service provided, compared with 72.2% in the year ending March 2006.

There is a satisfaction gap between white users and users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided. Users from minority ethnic groups are 10.8 percentage points more satisfied.

**Strengths**

- The Durham Constabulary quality ethos – 'It's what we do and what we have always done' – displays a clear focus on developing effective community links and delivering quality service to its customers in order to inspire confidence in local policing. The sustained high levels of customer satisfaction are evidence that this is working.
- Since June 2006, the constabulary has consistently exceeded its MSF average-user whole-service satisfaction levels, with a significant improvement, resulting in a 1.1 point increase above the MSF average.
- While any data relating to satisfaction among BME service users must be treated within the context of its sample size, Durham Constabulary has consistently delivered above-average performance, with a three-year improvement of 19.2% – taking satisfaction levels to 91.4%. The latest data shows the constabulary to be the best-performing force in England and Wales for this indicator.
- Constabulary and area command quality processes increasingly form part of the performance-management culture, with scrutiny of hate-crime incidents provided at the SMT level, to ensure that the Aiming for Excellence ethos is appropriately applied in all cases.

### **Work in progress**

- While performance has been delivered to a high standard, there is a need to ensure that the IAGs are fully utilised. This is particularly relevant in respect of emerging community groups; the effective scoping of such groups is essential as the constabulary seeks to further enhance performance.
- Data currently shows a satisfaction gap between white and BME users, with white users consistently less satisfied. The gap has been narrowing, with a 3.8% improvement to September 2007. Further data will continue to be scrutinised carefully, since the management of customer and community expectations, together with the delivery and implementation of the community-engagement strategy, is an essential part of enhancing performance delivery.

## Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

### A

ACC	assistant chief constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
APACS	assessment of policing and community safety
ASB	anti-social behaviour

### B

BCS	British Crime Survey
BME	black and minority ethnic

### C

CDRP	crime and disorder reduction partnership
CID	criminal investigation department
CCTV	closed-circuit television

### D

DMS	duty management system
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### G

GONE	Government Office North East
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**H**

HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HR	human resources

**I**

IAG	independent advisory group
ISA	information-sharing agreement
IT	information technology

**K**

KIN	key individual network
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**L**

LAA	local area agreement
LGBT	lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
LSP	local strategic partnership

**M**

MSF	most similar family
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**N**

NCRS	National Crime Recording Standard
NIM	National Intelligence Model

NPIA National Policing Improvement Agency

NPT neighbourhood policing team

**P**

PPAF Policing Performance Assessment Framework

PSD professional standards department

**Q**

QoSC quality of service commitment

**S**

SAG safety advisory group

SMT senior management team

SPI statutory performance indicator

**T**

TCG tasking and co-ordination group

TTCG tactical tasking and co-ordination group

## Appendix 2: Assessment of Outcomes Using Statutory Performance Indicator Data

### Context

The HMIC grading of Neighbourhood Policing and Citizen Focus for each force takes performance on the key SPIs as a starting point. These are derived from the PPAF and are survey based.

The survey results come from two different sources:

- **Neighbourhood Policing**  
Results come from the BCS, which questions the general population. The annual sample size for the BCS is usually 1,000 interviews per force.
- **Developing Citizen Focus Policing**  
Results come from forces' own user satisfaction surveys. The annual sample size for these user satisfaction surveys is 600 interviews per BCU.

### Understanding survey results

The percentage shown for each force represents an estimate of the result if the whole relevant population had been surveyed. Around the estimate there is a margin of error based on the size of the sample surveyed (not on the size of the population).

This margin is known as a **confidence interval** and it will narrow or widen depending on how confident we want to be that the estimate reflects the views of the whole population (a common standard is 95% confident) and therefore how many people have to be interviewed. For example, if we have a survey estimate of 81% from a sample of approximately 1,000 people, the confidence interval would be plus or minus 3 and the appropriate statement would be that we can be 95% confident that the real figure in the population lies between 78% and 84%.

Having more interviewees – a larger sample – means that the estimate will be more precise and the confidence interval will be correspondingly narrower. Generally, user satisfaction surveys will provide a greater degree of precision in their answers than the BCS because the sample size is greater (1,000 for the **whole force** for the BCS, as opposed to 600 **for each BCU** for user satisfaction).

### HMIC grading using survey results

In order to **meet the standard**, forces need to show no 'significant' difference between their score and the average for their MSF or against their own data from previous years. Consequently, force performance could be considered to be 'exceeding the standard' or 'failing to meet the standard' if it shows a 'significant' difference from the MSF average or from previous years' data.

HMIC would not consider force performance as 'exceeding the standard' if SPI data were travelling in the wrong direction, ie deteriorating. Likewise, credit has been given for an upward direction in SPI data even if performance falls below the MSF average.

## Understanding significant difference

The calculation that determines whether a difference is statistically significant takes into account the force's confidence interval and the confidence interval of its MSF.<sup>1</sup> The results of the calculation indicate, with a specified degree of certainty, whether the result shows a real difference or could have been achieved by chance.

This greater level of precision is the reason why a difference of approximately two percentage points is statistically significant<sup>2</sup> in the case of the user satisfaction indicator, whereas a difference of around four percentage points is required for the BCS indicators. If the sample size is small, the calculation is still able to show a statistically significant difference but the gap will have to be larger.

[Produced by HMIC based on guidance from the NPIA Research, Analysis and Information Unit, Victoria Street, London.]

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<sup>1</sup> The BCS results are also corrected to take account of intentional 'under-sampling' or 'over-sampling' of different groups in the force area.

<sup>2</sup> It is likely that there is a real, underlying difference between data taken at two different times or between two populations. If sufficient data is collected, the difference may not have to be large to be statistically significant.