

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary



HMIC Inspection Report
Northumbria Police
Neighbourhood Policing
Developing Citizen Focus Policing

September 2008



Northumbria Police – HMIC Inspection

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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

Northumbria Police is the sixth largest police force in the UK. It covers an area of 2,150 square miles, which includes the major conurbations of Tyne and Wear and the rural county of Northumberland, with a total population of 1.4 million people.

Force structure

Chief Constable Michael Craik is supported by a deputy chief constable, three assistant chief constables and two assistant chief officers.

Policing is provided through six area commands, which match local authority boundaries, supported by 11 specialist headquarters departments. Each area command is headed by a chief superintendent who works at a strategic level and is supported by a senior management team, with a minimum of two superintendents. Staffing levels range from 440 to just over 1,000, including between 360 and 800 police officers. The force currently employs more than 430 community support officers (CSOs), of whom more than 250 take part in patrol and reassurance duties. Currently 53 (1.3%) of police officers are from minority ethnic communities and 933 (23.3%) of police officers are female.

Strategic priorities

The force vision of 'Total Policing' commits it to delivering a customer-focused service with the capability, capacity and resilience to combat crime and disorder at all levels.

Total Policing encompasses every aspect of the service, enabling neighbourhood officers to work with communities and partner agencies to address local issues, while maintaining the capacity to tackle serious and organised crime that crosses area command and regional boundaries. The aim is to ensure that more crimes are brought to justice, create safer stronger communities and increase public confidence in Northumbria Police.

Northumbria Police has a 2020 Vision 'to build trust and confidence in the community and reduce crime and disorder' delivered through the values of leadership and communication and the strategic aims of people, communities, information and intelligence, justice, partnerships, innovation and technology, sustainable development and value for money.

Force developments

Business Process and Change Management

In February 2007, Northumbria Police embarked upon a programme of change with an assessment of corporate processes at the highest level in the organisation. A corporate decision making review (CDMR) examined decision making structures to ensure they were effective, appropriate to the strategic direction and enable the delivery of business change. The force has developed a programme board structure to drive this change in the organisation.

Communications Strategy

A corporate communications strategy has been developed and covers the areas of internal communications, media relations, external communications, marketing and corporate identity. Individual area commands and departments will each have local communication plans that are aligned to the delivery of the objectives outlined in the corporate communications strategy.

Leadership Strategy

The force has implemented a leadership strategy governing all leadership activity within the force and delivered via specific leadership objectives.

Neighbourhood Policing and Citizen Focus

Neighbourhood Policing is the means by which policing services will be delivered by Northumbria Police and complements the 'Total Policing' concept. The force has 38 sector based neighbourhood policing teams, each headed by a neighbourhood inspector with a team of sergeants, constables, community support officers, special constables and police staff. The force area command boundaries are coterminous with those of local authorities and thus maximise opportunities to adopt a 'neighbourhood management' approach.

The head of communications department has been appointed the strategic lead for citizen focus.

A number of key initiatives have been progressed:

- expansion of the contact management unit and call handling capacity to enhance the single call resolution model;
- introduction of a diary system for non urgent incidents, including neighbourhood officers;
- redesign of public information form used at incidents to include a mechanism to give feedback on service provision;
- enhancement of the consultation unit; and
- development of community engagement and citizen focus strategies that seek to ensure the force develops a 'service' focus alongside a more traditional 'operational' focus.

Protective Services and Collaboration

In March 2008, following a stock-take of its protective services capability, the force developed a protective services capabilities improvement plan. This is the vehicle by which the force will develop its protective services capability in accordance with the ACPO Protective Services Minimum Threshold Standards.

Of the 436 ACPO Protective Services Minimum Threshold Standards, Northumbria Police was performing to an acceptable standard in 389. Of the 47 remaining areas 30 are identified 'high need' (high priority) and 17 identified as 'other' (standard priority). The regional collaboration project that includes Northumbria, Cleveland, Cumbria and Durham Constabulary was established in July 2007. Business cases are well advanced

that will detail operational benefits and efficiency savings in public order training and recruitment.

Force Performance

All crime reduction targets have been met for 2007/08. Total recorded crime fell by 15.4% in 2007/08. Other reductions included criminal damage which fell by 17.6%, vehicle crime which fell by 14.1%, burglary dwelling which fell by 21.3% and violent crime which fell by 18.7%.

Sanction detection rates also improved in 2007/08. The total sanction detection rate increased from 37.5% to 38.4%.

Satisfaction levels improved substantially compared to 2006/07, reflecting the priority that the force has placed on citizen focus. The percentage of users satisfied with the overall service provided has risen by 4.5 percentage points compared to the same period in the previous year and, at 87.3%, has recorded the highest level in the country. There has also been a substantial improvement in satisfaction rates for follow-up, with an increase of 10.7 percentage points. Improvement has also been made in the level of satisfaction for treatment by staff, action taken by the police and making contact with the police.

Neighbourhood Policing

2007/08 Summary of judgement	Meeting the standard
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Exceeding the standard

During this inspection the force was assessed against SGC in a number of key areas of Neighbourhood Policing. To discern between forces, a moderation process has been applied to determine the grading of the force.

While the force is not exceeding the standard, it demonstrated a number of strengths against the SGCs for that grade as shown below.

Strengths

- Northumbria was a demonstration area in the Community Engagement in Policing Project funded from the Invest to Save budget. The force was involved in creating ongoing dialogue with a hard-to-reach community. A number of areas of learning came out of the initiative, with five key outcomes:
 - bringing a community development approach to community beat officers;
 - making beat officers more accessible, increasing communication and the flow of intelligence;
 - empowering local community members;
 - introducing an action planning process to rural communities; and
 - developing a practical tool (beat pack) to aid the transfer of learning.
- Northumbria has won the National Beat Manager of the Year Award on three occasions, which is more than any other metropolitan force and only equalled by Cumbria Constabulary.
- Evidence of engagement with a minority community was provided by the force in the form of work undertaken with the Orthodox Jewish community in Gateshead, the largest such community in the United Kingdom. The community of 350 families lives within an area associated with unemployment, large numbers of private rented properties and high levels of crime and disorder. There is also a strong Muslim community spread evenly across the area. A framework has been established to sustain engagement. In addition, arrangements are in place to improve the management of local festivals and religious events, supported by processes to facilitate the effective use of community impact assessments. The work undertaken by the force has received positive feedback from the public, and a neighbourhood beat manager (NBM) working within the Orthodox Jewish community was awarded third place at the 2007 Community Police Officer of the Year Awards. This scheme of work, which has been fully evaluated, has also been the object of a visit by the Home Secretary, who was impressed by the approach taken.
- The Home Office has recognised the outstanding work undertaken by the force in respect of removing assets from drugs dealers. The Tackling Drugs Supply 2008 Awards commended Northumbria Police for 'best practice in asset recovery'. The

award highlighted the force's ability to tackle people who are well known in their community to profit from crime. The force has undertaken a large-scale enforcement and media campaign – Payback – to raise public awareness of this type of activity within its communities.

- Gateshead Council was among the successful applicants for central government support to set up a pilot for neighbourhood agreements. The Gateshead South area was chosen for the pilot because of what was already in place there, namely a separately funded community team (based at Wrekenton) and an established network involving local residents. The neighbourhood agreements describe what Neighbourhood Policing is about: the identity of the officers on the local Neighbourhood Policing team (NPT); details of what can be expected from the police in terms of service delivery; the circumstances under which that delivery will take place; the responsibilities of local residents; and an outline of relevant information.
- Northumbria Police has made innovative use of private landlord legislation to address the issue of problem families and problem neighbourhoods. There has been effective information sharing through the use of leaflets etc, and good press coverage of the resulting successes, such as evictions. The action taken has resulted in positive feedback from the community.
- The force is working with the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) under the force's Total Policing ethos to tailor an approach to ensuring that the right people are in the right place at the right time to produce a more effective service. The work is focused at a sector level, with the key objective of bringing about the integration of response, investigation and neighbourhood staff within the sector.
- Northumbria Police has many examples of good practice highlighted by the NPIA, including a number of case studies cited on the website. Categories highlighted include innovation, collaborative problem solving, community engagement, partnership working and Neighbourhood Policing. The force has also been recognised through nomination for and receipt of formal awards.

Meeting the standard

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

Neighbourhoods are appropriately staffed (coverage).

Summary statement

The force has plans in place to deploy across all its area commands the right people in the right place at the right time to ensure that its neighbourhoods are appropriately staffed.

Strengths

- The latest Home Office tracking data shows that Northumbria Police has the following uniformed resources dedicated to Neighbourhood Policing: 38 inspectors, 63 sergeants, 319 constables NBMs and 245 community support officers (CSOs). In addition, the force is currently integrating neighbourhood detectives into the teams. Neighbourhood staff equate to approximately 20% of all operational staff. Vacancies for neighbourhood officers, including CSOs, are given a high priority.

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- This Neighbourhood Policing establishment gives supervisory ratios across the force area of approximately one inspector to 1.6 sergeants, and one sergeant to nine NBMs and CSOs. Resources are allocated via the force resource allocation model. The supervisory ratio is monitored and reviewed as necessary.
- All inspectors on South Tyneside area command have written expectations for their role and about how it relates to Neighbourhood Policing. The activities of 24/7 teams and a proportion of criminal investigation department (CID) staff have been integrated into the Neighbourhood Policing framework (some investigators have been retained centrally as a reactive team to deal with serious and series category crime).
- On South Tyneside area command the number of sergeants in the sections has been increased. Each section has three sergeants, with a supervisory ratio of 1:7. The sergeants on each section have portfolios which reflect those of the area command senior management team (crime, criminal justice and partnerships, and quality of life), providing clear lines of responsibility and accountability.
- Neighbourhood boundaries are clearly delineated. The force has identified 38 sectors, which are inspector-led. Neighbourhoods are clearly defined within the sectors, with the number of neighbourhoods within each sector dependent on specific factors. In total, 746 neighbourhoods have been agreed following a detailed review and consultation process with partners and communities. Any future changes will involve similar consultation and agreement.
- Police resources are co-located in a number of areas, with staff located in partner agencies' premises, for example Gentoo offices and local schools. Engagement takes place with a number of organisations, including the private housing sector. Effective interaction is driven by the NBMs working within designated neighbourhoods. Partnership engagement is strong, with a focus on the performance issues relevant to the particular neighbourhood and the agencies involved.
- On Sunderland area command neighbourhood resources (which have now been in place for two years) are deployed from five main stations. However, neighbourhood staff are also located in eighteen other remote bases situated in designated neighbourhoods, including a number of school premises. Evidence of the benefits of this approach is expressed in the activity-based costing returns and the front-line policing measure.
- All neighbourhoods within the Northumbria Police area have a named contact at the NBM/CSO level. Details of staff are readily available from a number of sources, including posters and the force website. The website has contact details searchable by postcode or place name. The site includes details of crime trends and of forthcoming events such as Neighbourhood Watch and engagement meetings. Succession planning for neighbourhood staff is managed in order to maintain appropriate staffing levels.
- Contact details are included in literature published by partners, such as the Safer Sunderland Partnership, that highlights and gives feedback on specific issues raised by the public in neighbourhoods across the area.

- Patrol plans have been put in place for NBM and CSOs, aiming to maximise visibility and community engagement. There remains a need for these to be reinforced by the inclusion of neighbourhood-level intelligence requirements.
- Northumbria Police has a neighbourhood staffing profile which is adhered to. Abstraction rates are measured and the assistant chief constable (ACC) holds managers to account for compliance with force policy. There is clear evidence that the force is allocating resources to the areas of greatest demand, eg challenging neighbourhoods within the Sunderland and Newcastle area commands. There is effective consultation with sector inspectors and area command senior management teams to ensure that the neighbourhood staffing profiles are appropriate.
- The police authority is aware of and monitors the challenges relating to neighbourhood abstractions, and is confident that visibility and accessibility are increasing.
- A total of 38 sector profiles have been completed to a corporate standard, and these now incorporate MOSAIC classifications of residential neighbourhoods and vulnerable localities index information. The profiles are refreshed every six months.
- NPTs across Northumbria are deployed in response to neighbourhood profiles. The profiles have the following aims: to provide a clear understanding of the area; to provide timely information; to help inform area command/crime and disorder reduction partnership (CDRP) strategic assessments; to identify vulnerable communities; and to determine the effectiveness of Neighbourhood Policing. The sector profiles for the area commands show sector footprints in respect of geographical area; key features; contacts; demographics and vulnerability (in terms of deprivation, ethnicity and age profile); crime, disorder and signal offences; and neighbourhood co-ordination (community engagement and problem solving).
- Emerging communities are effectively scoped and identified and are included in the neighbourhood profiles. A dedicated special branch intelligence officer has been allocated to all area commands to aid development of intelligence.
- Staff view the current neighbourhood structure as being appropriate to ensuring more effective community engagement. They work out of local bases, which means they are close to their communities, and are clearly deployed in response to neighbourhood profiles and demand. There is a strong focus on local priorities.
- Business support and business planning processes are seen as being integral to the successful delivery and implementation of Neighbourhood Policing on area commands. Key elements for development have been identified in the following areas:
 - Human resources (HR):
 - the establishment model has been reviewed in light of the requirements of Neighbourhood Policing, using an employee database and with an understanding of tolerance levels.
 - a review has taken place of both operational and non-operational roles on area commands, in order to accommodate restricted and retained officers thereby ensuring their skills are utilised to maximum effect.

- the resource management group works to ensure that the availability of resources is in line with levels of demand, and controls the tolerance levels effectively.
- a review of training profiles has taken place, incorporating a skills audit. The alignment of skills to the requirements of the NPTs is a continuous piece of work and informs succession planning.
- succession planning includes the management of a recruitment plan, an appreciation of skills gaps which is focusing on the content of community profiles, and an understanding of the financial implications.
- staff surveys record feedback about the impact of organisational change and have a focus on continuous improvement.
- Finance:
 - financial planning is concerned with aligning resources to deliver local and partnership priorities.
 - devolved budgets are intended to promote empowerment and devolved decision making, which in turn improve responsiveness to local needs.
 - external funding through the BCU fund and the neighbourhood renewal fund is aligned to neighbourhoods, focused on the delivery of local area agreement (LAA) targets and evaluated in terms of the outcomes being sought.
 - efficiencies are monitored through the business plan.
- Estates and resources:
 - accommodation is being sought which will improve the accessibility of NPTs.
 - the requirements for vehicles are being realigned to support the neighbourhood model.
 - similarly, the availability of specialist equipment is being reviewed to support the neighbourhood model.
 - information technology (IT) is also being reviewed to support localised development.
- Business support:
 - administrative support is being developed with reference to the results of a service delivery questionnaire, and with single points of contact for each of the NPTs.
 - the local communication plan is linked to corporate communications, now supported by the recruitment of a local media manager who heads a local communications unit.
 - business support maintains the performance framework, including activity-based costing. The front-line policing measure is currently 71.27% - May 2008). Information on activity is presented at sector and team level and the current focus is to increase the time spent 'out of the station'.
 - front officers' are being developed with a review of shift patterns, which have now been changed and are being evaluated. Additional training is being provided where improvements in public information are the goal.

- Neighbourhood Policing training was provided to all members of staff in the course of Citizen Focus training delivered during 2007.
- Neighbourhood Policing continues to be featured in all training courses provided through leadership training, with the exception of the custody officer course. Since April 2005, a Neighbourhood Policing input has been provided to all student officers during the protected learning (PL1) phase of their probation.
- The NPIA Neighbourhood Policing workbooks are available to all staff via the force intranet, and a pilot involving these workbooks has been conducted on Newcastle area command. Evaluation has shown that the information contained in the workbooks is presented clearly and in a logical manner, but that the content is at a level more suited to neighbourhood sergeants, NBMs and CSOs, and to partners at practitioner level such as housing officers and neighbourhood wardens.
- In view of this evaluation, and in response to the training needs analysis, a complete neighbourhood team, including partners, was identified and enrolled onto the introductory certificate in neighbourhood management. This training is ongoing, with staff closely supported by a member of leadership training team, and is due for completion by June 2008. Further evaluation of the programme will be conducted in terms of cost/benefit analysis.
- NPTs have the skills and abilities to undertake joint problem solving, and their training is seen as appropriate. Problem solving is seen to be well established and is included within the new Neighbourhood Policing performance framework.
- Training in problem solving and anti-social behaviour (ASB) applications was highlighted as inadequate in the last HMIC inspection. This issue has been addressed through additional training which is now included on inspector, sergeant and CSO courses. In addition, newly appointed student officers receive appropriate training. The NPIA Neighbourhood Policing workbooks include a focus on partnership working, neighbourhood meetings, collaborative problem solving, signal crimes, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs), housing law and community engagement.
- All CSOs complete a five-week structured training course before commencement in the role. Specific self-defence training for CSOs is also provided. In addition to the corporate training, the area commands provide tailored induction courses.
- Best practice in problem solving is promulgated through the neighbourhood practitioners' forum (eg presentation from North Tyneside).
- Reality testing on North Tyneside area command revealed a clearly defined neighbourhood where community, response and investigating officers were briefed together and shared a clear sense of identity with their area. There was evidence of problem solving being linked to the National Intelligence Model (NIM) and of all operational elements being brought together and co-ordinated by the sector inspector and neighbourhood sergeants. Evidence of effective problem solving was provided, with initiatives to deal with the safety issues and ASB associated with young people drinking alcohol visiting the area being highlighted. The elements of prevention, intelligence, enforcement and reassurance were seen to be present, together with multi-agency involvement and process development to ensure sustainability. Relationships between officers and CSOs were strong and fostered

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effective working arrangements. Positive outcomes were shown, an example being the night-time economy patrol plan, which has resulted in a 20% reduction in violent crime.

- In response to a previous area for improvement highlighted by HMIC, the role of CSOs has been amended. Training has been provided to CSO supervisors (sergeants) to improve their management of CSOs. A standard set of powers for CSOs was introduced in December 2007 and training of both CSOs and neighbourhood supervisors has been completed. A national audit of the CSO role is currently being carried out, and once this has been completed and outcomes agreed a benchmark will be set against it and monitored through the business plan. Training has been provided to communications staff to ensure that they understand the role of CSOs, and this will be enhanced by exchange visits. Each radio dispatcher has an aide-mémoire at their workstation which includes a description of the role of CSOs and a list of suitable tasks to which they can be deployed, identified by opening codes. Additional functionality of NPICCS now allows CSOs to be identified by function on the command and control system.
- Field intelligence officers are aligned to neighbourhoods, with sound central co-ordination. This is a recent change as a result of an internal intelligence review, and is perceived to be a significant benefit. The same process has been undertaken in respect of CID staff. These developments have been well received, with improved interdepartmental liaison resulting. Briefing and interaction are good.
- There is evidence of staff receiving rewards (including financial rewards) and recognition for their good work from senior managers, supervisors and members of the public across the force area. Neighbourhood Policing roles are deemed to be specialist posts and attract a significant special priority payment. The force has an annual reward and recognition scheme at which neighbourhood staff have been recognised.
- Northumberland area command has a formal awards ceremony day for all staff and the area commander personally highlights and acknowledges good work. Recognition of good work is a formal element of the area command performance review process.
- During the inspection neighbourhood staff on Sunderland area command commented that they had received a thank-you for good work from a neighbourhood resident the day before the inspection visit, and from the superintendent within the previous few weeks.

Work in progress

- NPTs are now providing seven-day cover thereby enhancing service delivery and quality of service. A review of shift patterns was under way at the time of inspection, with the aim of maximising the availability of resources.
- Northumbria Police has identified a number of problems in respect of the force estate. On Sunderland area command the situation is being project-managed, and this has involved direct consultation with members of staff. The aim is to ensure that all resources, staff, IT, equipment and the estate are in place to support the development of Neighbourhood Policing.

- The Citizen Focus lead was due to present a paper to the force training priorities group in April 2008, outlining the requirements for Citizen Focus and Neighbourhood Policing training as part of the Citizen Focus strategy. This will help provide staff with the necessary skills to ensure a citizen-focused service delivery.

Area for improvement

- The force needs to satisfy itself that there is sufficient resilience within the NPTs. It was highlighted that approximately 50% of incidents are at grade three; however, less than 50% of resources are targeted to this demand. The force needs to satisfy itself that the balance between response and neighbourhood resources is appropriate.

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 force area are actively engaging with their local police force and its partners.

Strengths

- A force community engagement strategy has been developed, complementing the area command engagement strategies. The Northumberland area command strategy outlines three key areas in which it will be delivered: enhancement of police visibility and accessibility; development of an integrated approach to problem solving with statutory and voluntary partners; and effective engagement and communication with the public. Each area command has a community engagement plan, and each sector records details of how the plan is implemented within the sector profiles, including feedback methods and how local priorities are determined. Effectively this provides a structure of governance and accountability at three levels.
- The Newcastle area command engagement plan focuses on the following areas: engagement methods, information giving, information gathering, consultation and participation. The following are examples of approaches within each of these areas:
 - engagement method: local strategic partnership (LSP);
 - information giving: maximisation of feedback opportunities by way of partnership communications;
 - information gathering: consultation with partners in order to identify best methods of engagement so that concerns can be highlighted and fed into the overall community intelligence picture;
 - consultation: consultation at sector level via surveys, community intelligence and resident and public meetings to identify preferred methods of contact and continued engagement; and
 - participation: a partnership involving all agencies in a working group to determine avenues for consultation and feedback. Outcomes of this should then include terms and references so that systems may be developed.

- The Gateshead area command community engagement plan incorporates standards for the use of core processes, with the aim of ensuring a Citizen Focus approach to the way in which resources are used and managed. The plan encompasses an action plan highlighting a number of key elements for effective delivery, including intended outcomes, ownership and timescales. The plan aims to enhance the understanding of community needs, improve working relationships and increase trust and confidence through feedback. The plan has been developed within a corporate framework based on a clear expression of the 'confidence cycle', in terms of what it means and where it fits into the management and development of the organisation. The framework is designed to provide a co-ordinated approach with a strategic overview, a consistent approach to engagement and a balanced approach to consultation, guided by corporate standards to ensure both that every member of the community has the consistent opportunity to express views in a way which will be listened to and respected, and that the whole process is transparent and accessible to all, including hard-to-reach groups.
- Neighbourhood agreements have been adopted by Gateshead area command as a development of the community engagement plan. The agreements constitute an arrangement between service providers and local communities at a neighbourhood level. The agreements clarify who will provide each service; the level of service communities can expect to receive; and how communities themselves can contribute to improving service provision in their neighbourhood. The aim is to make it easier for local residents to be involved at a local level in decision making around service provision, so leading to better engagement.
- The Gateshead area command sector engagement plans are structured around a process which incorporates the following elements:
 - access: this is concerned with identifying issues, and includes the direct involvement of members of the public in establishing local policing priorities;
 - influencing: when a local issue is identified it is assessed by the local neighbourhood management team which decides what action will be taken and how the matter will be recorded;
 - intervention: this is about problem solving and includes the allocation of resources through tasking processes; and
 - answers: when an issue or problem is recorded it is allocated an owner, who is responsible for developing solutions and ensuring that relevant members of the community are kept informed about progress.
- The Northumberland area command community engagement strategy outlines the principles of engagement thus:
 - access: to policing or community safety services through a named point of contact;
 - influence: over community safety priorities in the neighbourhood;
 - interventions: joint action with communities and partners to solve problems; and
 - answers: sustainable solutions to problems and feedback on results.
- The area command looks to build on national guidance and the key principle which states that Neighbourhood Policing 'allows the police service to work directly with the local community to identify the problems that are most important to them, thereby

giving people direct influence over local policing priorities'. The force tests the quality of its engagement tactics against the force and area command strategies focused on the key areas highlighted. There is a clear belief that effective engagement, both formal and informal, will increase not only the force's ability to respond to community needs, but also levels of trust and confidence and the quantity of criminal and community intelligence received (including on counter-terrorist matters). There is an emphasis on visible, accessible and intelligence-led policing, delivered by police officers, police staff and the extended police family.

- Each area command has completed a self-assessment looking primarily at community engagement and engagement with key individuals. Action plans have been put in place.
- On the area commands a number of methods are used to capture and share information. For example, Northumberland area command makes use of local priority setting groups, resident groups, public forums, neighbourhood surgeries, neighbourhood panel members, Neighbourhood Watch, school meetings, faith groups and informal meetings.
- On South Tyneside area command, community area forums (CAFs) at ward level are attended by the local inspectors, with two CAFs in each sector. The meetings are also attended by officials from other agencies, including the local authority. The police supports the South Tyneside Council campaign We Asked, You Said, We Did.
- There has been a major relaunch of Neighbourhood Watch, with a representative in each area. The force is looking at a messaging system to support the scheme.
- The recruitment of a corporate communications manager was part of a transformation from media services to a new corporate communications section. Media officers are in place on all area commands. Their role includes:
 - developing and maintaining contacts with key journalists and proactively engaging with the media to promote a positive image of Northumbria Police to as wide an audience as possible;
 - formulating and implementing media input for area command and departmental initiatives and marketing campaigns, to ensure that corporate brand guidelines are maintained and communicated effectively both externally and internally;
 - sourcing and producing copy for internal and external publications, including the force intranet and website, and liaising with partner organisations when appropriate to ensure joined-up communications on key issues; and
 - contributing to the delivery of local area command and departmental internal communication strategies and plans to ensure corporate and effective internal communications.
- There are good local links with the media, and the support given by a media professional to the area command management teams is seen to add value. Sunderland area command engages with the media through the LSP as a part of the city's approach to reputation management. There is a regular article in the *Sunderland Echo* called 'News from the Nick' which is usually 85% about Neighbourhood Policing. Additional coverage is provided by Sun FM radio. The *Sunderland Echo* has been involved in training neighbourhood inspectors and sergeants on its premises.

- Northumbria Police makes effective use of independent advisory groups (IAGs). On Sunderland area command there are IAGs in existence for key areas of vulnerability, including older people, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities and younger people. A number of the IAGs are long-established. In addition, the area command is supported by the local authority diversity team.
- On a visit to the Benwell neighbourhood management initiative, the local neighbourhood staff were well known. Generic contact details for emergency and non-emergency services are publicised, for example on fridge magnets that are provided free.
- Sunderland area command has a corporate youth strategy and is delivering advice and guidance on knife crime to all schools in the area. This will inevitably increase engagement with a hard-to-reach section of the community.
- On Sunderland area command 24/7 teams cover set neighbourhoods. Staff are satisfied that they are fully briefed regarding the relevant community issues and believe that they are well informed about local issues. There are strong links with the intelligence and community units. Staff spoken to had a clear understanding of the community engagement strategy and a good awareness of the key issues: the local multi-agency problem-solving approach; the use of surgeries; the pilot area for the circulation of 'news from your neighbourhood' every three months via email; contact details and information on who we are and what have we done, etc. Briefing is seen to be effective.
- Across Northumbria, neighbourhood residents' surveys have identified the issue of teenagers hanging around the streets as their number one priority. The force has introduced a targeted campaign to address this.
- Northumbria Police employs a number of feedback methods including one-to-one meetings, forums/groups, contact with key individuals (councillors etc), the media (including radio), Neighbourhood Watch newsletters, email and the internet.
- NPT members gave clear evidence that members of the public are able to identify and contact their local NBM and CSOs and that information sharing is effective. Information and contact details have been widely publicised (eg on the force website, in newsletters and on posters) and all neighbourhood staff have business cards with their name and contact number. Contact management works well in supporting engagement. Call-handling staff put telephone callers in direct contact with neighbourhood staff or take details and email messages.
- Northumberland area command makes use of a community engagement pad to record community issues, with data inputted via the Recording of Community Issues System (RoCIS).
- The feedback loop to the community is being driven by the variety of different contact/information-sharing initiatives, such as neighbourhood teams and the contact management unit. On Newcastle area command there was evidence of community engagement practices and recording processes in place and regular feedback loops to inform the public of action taken.
- In respect of engagement with emerging communities, joint agency working, access to data and information-sharing protocols (eg with the Borders and Immigration

Agency) are in place. These processes enable environmental scanning of emerging communities. One situation identified and addressed was the criminalisation of members of the Polish community for taking a metro train without a ticket. In Poland tickets are obtained on the train and individuals did not know that they were committing an offence. A programme of informing the community was introduced to address the issue.

- The Nunsmoor Centre in Newcastle provides a safe environment for council-funded pre- and post-school activities for children and daytime activities for adults. Employees there spoke highly of the visibility, accessibility and support of local police neighbourhood staff. They confirmed regular informal contact with the local beat manager and other neighbourhood staff. Council street wardens remarked on the benefit of having dedicated, familiar points of contact through neighbourhood staff, which aid information sharing and maximise opportunities to increase community intelligence.
- The North East of England has a number of asylum seekers. Neighbourhood teams meet and welcome new arrivals, and staff are proactive in managing the gateways into the area. Work is undertaken in partnership with the Borders and Immigration Agency, housing associations and community support workers, who are important in providing consistency. Quality and performance units feed information into the community impact assessment processes, frequently providing the means to rebut rumours.
- A key priority in the area command business plans is to manage public perception and expectations. There has been a shift in emphasis towards 'how people feel', and the old performance notice boards around the police buildings have been taken down and replaced with items of correspondence from members of the public giving feedback about their experience of contact with the organisation. A significant amount of the feedback comes from call-back surveys undertaken across the force area.
- The key messages of the force's communications plan are as follows:
Internal:
 - Neighbourhood Policing is about policing teams working together to focus all our resources on the needs of the people we serve at a very local level. It is not just about the work of NBMs and CSOs.
 - Neighbourhood Policing delivers far greater access and accountability than we have ever achieved so far. Staff should be readily identifiable and accessible to the public and fully accountable for policing in their neighbourhoods.
 - Neighbourhood Policing makes us firmly focus on the problems identified by the people living or working in the neighbourhood, and allows the public to identify what things they want us to deal with in order to make them feel safer.
 - Neighbourhood Policing is about being even more intelligence-led at a local level and taking more joint action with partner agencies and the public itself to tackle identified local priorities.
 - Neighbourhood Policing is about building on our good work to date and further improving the quality of service we provide; and, delivered properly, Neighbourhood Policing delivers results.

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External:

- we have dedicated and flexible NPTs comprising NBMs, response officers, detectives, intelligence officers, CSOs and special constables.
 - our NPTs are accessible through a number of means, such as telephone, website, police and community forums, ward committee meetings and local councillors.
 - we want to understand the issues that affect the community and deal with the things that matter most to people.
 - we want to involve people more in decisions about policing in their area and understand that people want to influence what happens in neighbourhoods.
 - we will work closely with partners and the public to deliver intelligence-led solutions to problems and provide feedback on the outcomes.
- The following methods of evaluation will be carried out to determine whether communications activity has achieved the objectives set out:
 - a force-wide neighbourhood residents' survey – the consultation section within the corporate development department issues a residents' survey every 18 months (with plans to move to an annual or possibly a rolling survey); the results reflect public opinion of the force and public awareness of its priorities and actions; and
 - engagement with partners – at the end of the communications plan period, an evaluation of the initiatives in which the area command worked with partner agencies should be undertaken; the results of the evaluation should identify the most successful outcomes and establish best practice.
 - The force has developed public consultation at a local level: every six months, a small, representative sample from each sector will be given a paper-based questionnaire to determine its awareness and understanding of Neighbourhood Policing. Every twelve months, a larger sample will be selected and given the same questionnaire. It is proposed that two return options should be offered to the respondents: freepost or collection by hand by a CSO who can then talk with the respondent if they wish.
 - The results from the above three evaluation methods will be collated to determine the effectiveness of the annual communications activity. This analysis will then assist in the creation of the 2009/10 communications plan and direct activity for the next financial year.
 - On area commands, neighbourhood staff have been briefed by special branch regarding counter-terrorism and 'richer picture' intelligence issues. A dedicated special branch intelligence officer has been allocated to all area commands.
 - On area commands, intelligence requirements are set by the control strategy, approved by the senior management team via the strategic assessment, and promulgated to neighbourhood teams and partners. Dynamic appraisals occur via daily management meetings and the tactical tasking and co-ordination group (TTCG), both of which review requirements regularly. The intelligence requirement is tailored to units, for example to neighbourhoods. Briefing includes the control strategy and intelligence requirement. Default tasking patrol directions are provided to staff.

- Neighbourhood officers are full engaged in the production of community impact assessments. This was evidenced on Sunderland area command during the course of a number of murder investigations, when NPTs put together and managed community impact plans.
- Evidence of community impact assessment and risk analysis was also provided in the form of the assessed impact on the Jewish community in Gateshead of a bomb attack in Jerusalem in which a school was targeted. Contact was made immediately with the local Jewish community and a leader was consulted. The process followed an established format which incorporated:
 - the parameters of the assessment;
 - the scope of consultation;
 - internal consultation;
 - external consultation, including with vulnerable groups, members and leaders of the community, Gateshead central neighbourhood management team, the community cohesion officer, the council warden service and local elected representatives;
 - an assessment framework;
 - supporting evidence;
 - predictive events;
 - the risk assessment management plan;
 - the implementation plan; and
 - plans for reviews.

Work in progress

- The force has responded to an HMIC recommendation from a previous inspection by introducing a force engagement strategy with the following objectives:
 - Northumbria Police will improve its understanding of the needs, priorities and preferences of the various communities it serves.
 - Northumbria Police will further develop the means to engage in dialogue with all sections of the community, sharing information about policing and community safety issues.
 - Northumbria Police will work with partners to increase the scope and effectiveness of engagement.
 - Northumbria Police will become more responsive to local needs and concerns by ensuring service delivery is influenced by the results of the engagement activity.
 - Northumbria Police will provide feedback when and where appropriate to encourage further engagement and build trust and confidence.
 - guidance will be produced to support the strategy and there is a commitment to develop a joint strategy with the police authority.
- On South Tyneside area command Police and Communities Together has been introduced in one sector on a trial basis, and the early results have been encouraging.

- Neighbourhood staff engage effectively with a range of partners, including local street wardens; however, engagement with hard-to-reach members of the community, such as the significant and growing Czech Romany community, is proving more challenging. A longer-term approach is being pursued to win the confidence and trust of hard-to-reach groups.
- On Northumberland area command, sector community engagement processes will be reflected in the neighbourhood profiles. Neighbourhood teams will identify local communities, in addition to area command-wide hard-to-reach groups. IAGs will be important partners in identifying issues and resolving problems. Issues highlighted through community engagement activity will be discussed with the community panels and key partners.
- While there is evidence that CSOs attend a wide range of meetings of groups of adults and young people, there is less evidence that such engagement is used formally to identify community intelligence and problem-solving priorities. CSOs are forming strong community links and are delivering an improvement in the throughput of information; however, this remains work in progress. The public perception that they are not police officers is seen to be of benefit, and staff look to gain trust in order to generate intelligence. Neighbourhood Policing is increasing intelligence streams and filling what was seen a significant intelligence gap. Intelligence relating to core community offenders is very much dependent upon the community concerned, with some communities being more willing to engage than others.
- Crime information and NPT contact telephone numbers feature in the latest edition of the local community newsletter (*New Deal News* – Newcastle area command). However, the lack of public notices in areas such as community centres represents a missed opportunity to publicise ways of contacting NPTs.
- A community relations unit was set up in Newcastle in April 2003. The area command has undertaken a review of the efficiency and effectiveness of the unit to ensure that its operation underpins and supports the objectives of Neighbourhood Policing. The review has made a number of recommendations.
- The community cohesion unit (CCU) caters for all strands of diversity and attention is given to any incident involving issues of disability, age, gender etc. The aims of the CCU are to improve the trust and confidence of minority ethnic communities in policing, in line with the Chief Constable's vision of a new era of Total Policing and in order to achieve aims and objectives set out in the local policing plan for the area command; and to promote and enhance community cohesion by monitoring repeat victimisation, racial tension, far-right extremist activity, youth issues and any other matters that may affect special population groups.
- A number of targets and priorities have been set:
 - to improve the confidence of the community to report race and other hate incidents to the police;
 - to increase the number of investigations of race and other hate incidents that are concluded positively, by engaging with hard-to-reach groups;
 - to increase the number of investigations of race and other hate incidents finalised within the 14-day deadline;

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- to increase the amount of community intelligence collected, so as to maximise the force's ability to assess community tensions accurately and improve its response to Neighbourhood Policing issues;
 - to improve the service provided to victims from minority groups, in line with the principles of Citizen Focus; and
 - to ensure compliance with Home Office guidance on information sharing with statutory agencies regarding asylum seekers and refugees.
- The CCU is responsible for the organisation of statutory quarterly IAG meetings at area command level, and the facilitation at short notice of critical IAGs following incidents which may have a significant impact on local communities. Concerns have been raised about the composition of these groups, and the need for IAGs which represent the different strands of diversity has been highlighted. Work needs to be undertaken to achieve broader representation across communities and different interest groups, to provide advice and expertise in relation to specific policing issues in those communities. The community engagement department has reviewed the IAG process following recent Home Office national guidance. There is also a project ongoing at headquarters, using Home Office/Criminal Justice Board funding to look at more representative consultation at a very local level: this may influence future thinking on community engagement.
 - The national focus upon knife crime in 2007 coincided with a series of local stabbings involving young people as both victims and offenders. This was highlighted by the press in a manner that caused negative community impact. The harm reduction unit delivered a force response to the issue with a number of objectives: tackling offending behaviour; facilitating a change in attitudes among young people towards the carrying of knives and enabling them to take responsibility for their behaviour; and tackling the perception among young people that up to 25% of their contemporaries carry knives. Priority was provided via the Youth Justice Board list of secondary schools. This was distilled in order to focus on the most challenging schools, utilising the Merseyside grading process which includes factors such as exclusion rates and deprivation. Initially the focus is being placed upon the highest-risk age range of 15–16 years, with the aim being to develop the work to include additional age categories. The work is being delivered by neighbourhood staff who are trained via the *Tooled up for School* DVD-based package. This process will enable the development of improved community intelligence links to hard-to-reach groups, for example excluded youths.
 - On area commands, CSOs are given a half-day input on the intelligence unit. Regular updates and sightings of offenders inform the analytical and intelligence picture; however, more work is required to develop this into a more dynamic process. Community intelligence is very much a gap that is being addressed.

Areas for improvement

- Partners expressed the view that community engagement takes place around themes. There is a belief that the extent to which communities have a genuine and consistent opportunity to engage with service deliverers is questionable. Local multi-agency problem solving (LMAPS) groups are seen to be structured in a way that covers the themes and suits the agencies, and therefore to be self-fulfilling. IAGs service the established themes.

- On some area commands, while profiles have been produced for each neighbourhood, they are not shared with partners and therefore do not serve any clear purpose. Some demographic information is based on Census 2001 data and lacks reference to new and emerging communities. There is little evidence that profiles drive strategic, multi-agency approaches to reducing crime and ASB.
- There is also little evidence that sector profiles are used to provide NPT staff with a better understanding of their neighbourhoods; or that NBM or CSOs feed information into the process of compiling or updating sector profiles.
- Community engagement forums are not representative of the breadth of diversity that exists in the neighbourhoods. Newcastle area command has a rich and developing mix of migrant workers with whom there is little if any formal engagement. The difficulty is that they either have no particular desire to engage (eg the Polish community, who merely want to get on with their work) or are actively unwilling to engage. While neighbourhood staff clearly acknowledge the diversity of their areas, there is no evidence of direction, training or good practice to promote engagement with these hard-to-reach groups.
- The review of the CCU made a number of recommendations in respect of performance management relating to race and other hate crime policing:
 - that the CCU should handle all revisits to improve area command performance and customer satisfaction;
 - that an additional personal performance indicator should be introduced for CCU staff in relation to collection of community intelligence;
 - that the intelligence unit should create sector-based community intelligence CIS records which should be checked daily by local intelligence officers and community inspectors;
 - that performance information relating to race and other hate incidents should be included in the body of the tactical assessment under Citizen Focus, in order to raise the profile and perceived importance of these issues; and
 - that the CCU should attend tasking and co-ordination group (TCG) meetings to follow up on tasking.
- The review also recommended closer collaboration between the CCU and Agencies against Racist Crime and Harassment (ARCH), in particular in relation to the development of the community intelligence model and a Newcastle city-wide community tensions temperature gauge. It recommended that the CCU should establish a weekly meeting process with ARCH to enhance information exchange and develop joint initiatives.
- Briefing remains an area for improvement. Staff require up-to-date information and intelligence in relation to trends, incident profiles, community initiatives, etc.

Joint problem solving is established and included within performance regimes.

Summary statement

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

Strengths

- A joint problem-solving model has been established through the LMAPS groups. This involves robust performance monitoring at a neighbourhood level. The model focuses on the following topics: strategy/theme, name of perpetrator/location of hotspot, description of issue/problem, victim, lead agency, update of action taken/progress/results, agreed action for next meeting, and lead agency or officer for action. Attention is given to the key areas of enforcement, prevention, intelligence and communication.
- The joint planning and tasking system (JPaTS) multi-agency problem-solving management tool has been rolled out across the force, providing co-ordinated activity focused on the resolution of significant problems which require a response at agency level. JPaTS is supported by the Government Office for the North East (GONE). In addition RoCIS has been developed to support the recording and management of neighbourhood-level problem-solving activity.
- JPaTS provides the means of managing and communicating the 'bigger' problems which require a co-ordinated multi-agency response. Tasks are communicated by email to those responsible for delivering solutions, including partners. RoCIS provides the means of tracking lower-level (ie neighbourhood-level) problem solving. The escalation path is from RoCIS to JPaTS through the multi-agency panels at sector level. The local authorities employ area managers responsible for areas coterminous with police sectors. Systems are effectively supported by an electronic engagement planner, seen on Northumberland area command.
- On area commands there is evidence of joint resource deployment to deal with what are seen as shared issues. Partnership involvement and understanding of the issues continue to develop. In 2007, the joint response on South Tyneside to 'Mischief Week' achieved a 50% reduction in the number of incidents compared with the same period in the previous year. Measures put in place effectively reduced vulnerability during that period. A further example of effective joint work was the action taken to deal with a pattern which emerged from the analysis of 90 incidents of racist graffiti in the South Tyneside area. Samples were taken, the graffiti was removed by the local authority before the incident had time to impact on community reassurance, and the person responsible was arrested and convicted, with vulnerable victims being supported.
- In Sunderland area command there is strong support for Neighbourhood Policing through the Safer Sunderland Partnership (broken down into suitable smaller areas, eg Sunderland West). The area command also receives excellent support from the Children's Trust where for the first time the police has a primary enforcement role specifically stated in action plans. The police

actually plays a small part in the overall plan, which is underpinned by the urban play strategy, a longer-term plan for the city focused at providing facilities. Effectively this is about mapping opportunities for young people in terms of geography and the work of a number of agencies.

- The Wear Kids initiative is active within six sectors. It is intended that the initiative will move towards targeted youth support. There is an integrated support plan with a multi-agency response and effective information sharing.
- CSO surgeries take place. Gentoo joint surgeries take place with neighbourhood staff in addition to effective daily dialogue. Environmental surveys are also used. Gentoo is looking at its ASB policies and procedures.
- Operation Gryphon is an ASB initiative aimed at young people. The process involves a series of written warnings, leading to a scale of interventions incorporating acceptable behaviour contracts, diversionary opportunities and ASBOs. The Youth Offender Service and other partners are fully engaged in the operation.
- The Northumberland area command performance review ensures effective performance monitoring and evaluation at sector/team level. Use is made of the INFORM geographic performance survey and the organisational performance survey, with a strong focus on problem solving. In addition a grading system is in use in respect of standards.
- Operation Goldfinch provided the framework for Gateshead area command's targeted problem-solving activity. The operation involved two weeks of intense multi-agency activity in terms of both enforcement and community engagement aimed at a number of outcomes: reduction in crime and disorder, local environmental improvements, public service improvements, increased reassurance and public involvement, better-informed residents, the development of neighbourhood plans and increased buy-in from partner agencies. The operation was focused on a clearly defined area containing priority neighbourhoods. Evidence of the effectiveness of the approach was provided by the force in the form of a review of the operation in Chopwell, an area associated with mixed ownership and rental occupancy, ASB, alcohol and substance misuse, violence, criminal damage and fly-tipping. There was an underreporting of incidents in the area which tended to reflect poor confidence in public services. The outcomes associated with the operation included:
 - 651 households surveyed (a 53% return rate);
 - excellent local engagement – the operation won the Home Office's Take a Stand award;
 - better reporting and improved intelligence;
 - the development of the neighbourhood plan;
 - follow-up action on many issues; and
 - supporting evidence for selective landlord licensing.
- The force also provided evidence of Goldfinch operations with positive outcomes in Winlaton and Blaydon. The operations incorporated elements which were aimed at achieving sustainable improvement. A follow-up survey

was used as a means of monitoring improvements made and learning lessons for the future.

- On Newcastle area command more than 60 local schoolchildren have enrolled as junior wardens to patrol their local area with adult street wardens, aiming to identify environmental hazards and participate in community clean-up operations. Participants are trained and uniformed and their views help to determine action to make their local environment cleaner and safer.
- The NPT works closely with the Benwell neighbourhood management initiative at both strategic and tactical levels. The governance structure includes the neighbourhood inspector and strategic objectives are aligned to local area command priorities, ie crime reduction and making people feel safe. At a tactical level there is abundant evidence of effective multi-agency problem solving to tackle crime and ASB, in which the local NPT and street wardens are key players. Partners spoke well of the visibility, accessibility and support of NPT staff and of their commitment and contribution to local problem solving.
- Staff on Sunderland area command highlighted that performance monitoring is now quality-driven. Neighbourhood Policing is sector-based and integrated with force intelligence officers, CSOs and the CID to address local problems in local communities. Community engagement is seen to be strong.
- ARCH is a multi-agency group based within Newcastle whose purpose is collaboratively to combat racist and homophobic incidents in Newcastle. ARCH has a service level agreement with Newcastle area command to provide third-party reporting via its own IT system to Northumbria Police. This is particularly important in view of the fact that victims may be reluctant to report incidents directly to police as a result of fear or mistrust (the 2001 British Crime Survey (BCS) suggested that only one in four race and other hate crimes are ever reported). It is helpful to have a robust system of third-party reporting that fulfils both the obligations placed on the police for partnership working under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the recommendations of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report of 1999 which states that ‘all possible steps should be taken by police services at a local level in consultation with local government and other agencies and local communities to encourage the reporting of racist incidents and crimes.’
- There is active chief officer engagement with partners at a strategic level across a range of disciplines. There is evidence of the force working with partners and having effective processes in place to enhance service delivery and outcomes. This was clearly evidenced within the area commands.
- Sunderland area command operates within the framework of the Safer Sunderland Partnership (the city’s CDRP). In April there was a joint marketing campaign in relation to Neighbourhood Policing, which fitted in with Keeping the Promise. The CDRP has undertaken a strategic marketing campaign called Not in Our City. The LSP community cohesion group is very supportive of the Neighbourhood Policing agenda. The Institute of Community Cohesion is involved in the city strategy and provides an extension of problem-solving activity at the strategic level. GONE is involved in this process. The city council is currently involved in long-term planning for the next ten years.

- At area command level, partners were very positive about relationships which have developed with the police over time. On Sunderland area command, for example, there are LMAPS groups in each of the seven sectors (with A1 sector having two LMAPS groups covering the city centre and the nearby residential area of Millfield), and local councillors have been introduced to them. The groups provide evidence of continuous development. Structures in place have been built from the ground upwards. LMAPS groups meet on a five-weekly basis within each sector. Above the LMAPS groups, the CDRP business support group provides the opportunity for problems to be escalated to a strategic level, eg in relation to bus shelter damage which was prevalent right across the city. LMAPS groups are aligned to wards and serve to bring together concerns, targets and problems. Core membership includes the police, children's services, fire and rescue services, registered social landlords and the city council. The groups are being reorganised into a two-tier structure, with the top tier involving the core partners and the next tier extended to include the voluntary sector.
- A joint strategic assessment has been completed and the Home Office-defined hallmarks of effective practice are used to establish standards of working for the CDRP. A joint performance management framework is seen as the next step.
- Local partners are represented at pre-TCG meetings, and there is higher-level local authority representation at the TCG meeting itself. As previously stated, a multi-agency problem-solving management tool, JPaTS, provides a co-ordinated approach to the resolution of issues which require a response at agency level.
- NIM principles are used in problem solving, with staff deployed to community priorities through the tasking process. An example of this is the Alcohol Watch 2 initiative, targeting off-licence premises in the West End of Newcastle. The initiative has a clear link to youth disorder across a number of beat areas, and has the co-operation and engagement of approximately 80% of premises.
- Support is being provided to tackle key offending individuals in the community. Activity is driven through the TCG with NPTs supported by area command support teams where appropriate. The TCG applies a prioritisation matrix to real, potential and emerging challenges. For example, theft of lead is a real issue. The level of partner intelligence is increasing, enabling a more holistic understanding of ongoing community challenges.
- Citizen Focus is now integrated within area command TCG processes that have become more neighbourhood-focused. Positive moves have taken place at a strategic level to ensure that good performance is built upon by identifying the top ten aggravators within communities. These must be agreed with partners. This was evidenced in a problem-solving approach adopted on Newcastle area command to a family which posed a major challenge to the community, which wanted action to be taken.
- ARCH is currently involved in the development of a community intelligence model which will be facilitated through the safe neighbourhoods action and problem solving (SNAPS) process, which has been rolled out across Newcastle and will provide the basis for partnership problem solving of crime and disorder issues at a neighbourhood level, in line with current thinking on Neighbourhood

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Policing and Citizen Focus. The intention is to produce a city-wide temperature gauge which will monitor community tensions, as well as to develop a comprehensive network of community contacts which will provide detailed and timely community intelligence which can be actioned. This general community intelligence would also be of great benefit in the formulation of tactical and strategic assessments, and enable a greater adherence to the principles of the NIM, which relies on comprehensive background information upon which detailed actions can be decided. There is already an information-sharing agreement (ISA) between the CCU and ARCH, and others between the various SNAPS groups and Northumbria Police. In theory, these agreements allow detailed information to be shared between agencies; however, problems still exist with the sharing of personal data, which could be utilised to enhance service provision to victims of racist and other hate crime, among other areas. Negotiations are ongoing with ARCH to resolve these problems and ensure compliance with current data legislation. The accumulated knowledge and expertise of the CCU and ARCH can be best used through a closer collaboration in all aspects of their dealings with identified victims and representatives of identified minority groups.

- The force has invested in analytical capability, with a total of 12 new members of staff dedicated to working within the area command intelligence units, from an overall increase in capacity of 32 posts (30 to the intelligence and information department (FIID) and two to the professional standards department (PSD)). The service improvement has been tested, particularly in relation to Neighbourhood Policing, and the results have been positive.
- In addition, as part of the delivery plan, a full IT package was created for every post in conjunction with the information systems and technology department. A full individually tailored training plan is in the process of delivery to every member of the force analytical service, in order to develop, enhance and improve the service delivered to all service users, at both level 1 and level 2. To ensure that performance is heavily weighted to the needs of the service users, formal service review meetings are held quarterly with the key stakeholders across the area commands and within the crime department (the crime operations and major incident teams). The first meeting with Gateshead area command was held in March 2008 and evidenced that the service had become markedly better, that the senior analysts' participation was very valuable and that the area command felt that it was good to see such a high level of engagement with its needs on the part of the FIID.
- The force is moving towards neighbourhood management, following the multi-agency approach highlighted in the Flanagan Report. On Northumberland area command this involves the introduction of local priority-setting groups to agree community priorities. The process involves action team meetings and the use of JPaTS. Results of actions taken are formally signed off by the community on completion.
- Northumbria Police is actively involved with its communities and there is evidence of activity being led by local people – for example, the Newcastle New Deal for Communities (West End), which has initiated over 100 projects tackling a range of issues including health, housing and crime. The initiative has made investment in its own neighbourhood policing team and an ASB co-ordinator for the area, supporting the neighbourhood wardens. All activity undertaken is initiated and signed off by local people. In support of the targeted activity over

60 'junior wardens' have been appointed to detect and report environmental issues. Two young volunteers have been honoured at a regional Young Achievers Award ceremony in recognition of their Byte Size Project, which teaches computer skills.

- The Improving Croft and Cowpen Quay (ICCCQ) initiative is a Better Together dedicated multi-agency team and resident-led approach to neighbourhood management. The initiative has a core team supported by a number of secondees working to a partnership board. The initiative is focused on crime and community safety, health issues, housing issues, education and employment, community development and engagement, advocacy and problem solving. The initiative has worked to develop effective communication strategies, monitoring, evaluating and establishing a robust local evidence base. ICCQ operates within national and regional policy frameworks aimed at developing and implementing tools for improvement, action and engagement. This is achieved in part through dedicated weeks of action. The outcome of such activity is subject to formal evaluation by a number of means, including crime trend analysis, national surveys and community feedback. Local people's comments on the activity include 'Every community should have one of these' and 'You come here and you don't just get advice, you get help.'
- Newcastle area command has introduced SNAPS in support of safer neighbourhoods. The roles of core partners are:
 - in accordance with the information-sharing agreement, to maintain the confidentiality of the information discussed at the meeting;
 - to complete all actions agreed during the meeting;
 - to ensure that key messages are fed through the appropriate channels to relevant officers or members of staff;
 - to bring intelligence and information to the group;
 - regularly to monitor and maintain the secure website (Quickplace) for Safer Neighbourhoods;
 - to ensure that clear communication is undertaken through all appropriate channels, internal and external, to publicise what Safer Neighbourhoods is and what SNAPS groups do;
 - to attend all relevant working groups and feed any intelligence or information to the SNAPS group;
 - to delegate an appropriate officer to attend in the case of the usual representative's absence, of equal seniority or of appropriate seniority to deal with issues raised and to direct resources;
 - to ensure that the SNAPS group meeting dates and times are scheduled in advance, maintaining the four-weekly cycle;
 - to destroy all paperwork associated with SNAPS that is no longer required; and
 - to ensure that any SNAPS papers, documents, etc that need to be kept are stored securely.

- Additional responsibilities specific to core members' roles are as follows:

Police Inspector:

- to chair meetings;
- to remind partners of their responsibilities under the ISA at the start of every meeting;
- to lead on problem-solving activity using the scanning, analysis, response, assessment methodology;
- to ensure that all appropriate information is directed to the relevant sergeants, NBMs, police constables and CSOs;
- to task actions required to appropriate officers; and
- to ensure that any feedback is brought back to future SNAPS meetings;

Ward co-ordinator:

- to bring community intelligence and local knowledge to SNAPS meetings;
- to develop links between the work of the SNAPS group and that of the ward committees, and between their underpinning structures;
- to liaise with local business and other forums, with community and voluntary sector agencies and with officer working groups;
- to lead on the community engagement activity of the SNAPS group;
- to co-ordinate multi-agency working groups to feed into SNAPS;
- to update the Safer Neighbourhoods website with action points from each SNAPS meeting, clearly indicating when each action point has been completed;
- to liaise with colleagues regarding issues that may be of relevance to their ward or their line of work; and
- to remain a key link with elected members in the ward and to relay any information or intelligence to them in their absence;

Elected member:

- to feed key messages back to community groups, residents and constituents;
 - to ensure that any feedback is brought back to future SNAPS meetings; and
 - to bring information and intelligence from residents and constituents to the SNAPS meetings.
- Partnership training has been undertaken, involving area command staff, in conjunction with the Centrex neighbourhood improvement workshops. Partners were invited to attend and participated in the training.
 - The force has an induction package for police officers and staff working on NPTs which was developed by partners to educate new staff as to the processes, remit and aspirations of the CDRP. Partners have also had input into the training of police officers, for example on the inspectors' training programme.
 - Joint training with partners, eg training of local authority wardens with NPTs, continues to deliver results.

Work in progress

- While there are examples of good partnership working between NPTs and other agencies at a tactical level, partnership commitment and contribution to problem solving remain variable. Staff within the force believe that problem-solving activity is only effective when it is police-driven.
- The introduction of a formal youth strategy will ensure added value by integrating existing good work and developing good practice, for example the Newcastle United ASB contracts.
- The force arrangements under the NIM were under review at the time of inspection with the aim of ensuring that problem solving is better represented. Force tasking processes are effective and risk management is in evidence. Intelligence development in high-risk areas such as firearms and high-risk offenders is strong. The force NIM review board is building Citizen Focus and neighbourhood considerations into its work.
- On area commands, at the time of inspection four joint strategic assessments had been completed and two were in progress.
- The appointment of senior analysts to the area command intelligence units should help with the commissioning of profiles.
- Northumbria Police has completed a knife crime problem profile. The profile is new and has appropriate links to the homicide reduction plan, for example alcohol and knife crime.
- Area commands have partners sitting on level 1 TCGs, except in Gateshead where a sector-based TCG process involves partners. Citizen Focus issues have been a standing agenda item for some time; however, the force has completed a review and adjustments have been made to take greater cognisance of non-crime and non-subject material. These areas are now developing in terms of participants' understanding and contributions and therefore of their impact.
- The accountability of beat managers to members of the public provides a platform for greater engagement and force accountability, with the requirement to deliver an effective strategy that underpins it to enhance confidence and reassurance. Furthermore, there is a requirement for the public to be provided with greater opportunities to set and sign off community priorities.

Areas for improvement

- There is no formal intelligence requirement for Neighbourhood Policing. The force relies heavily on strategic assessment and business planning at force and area command level as the means of communication. Locally, the intelligence units highlight intelligence gaps and tasks are allocated accordingly. Action days are used to deal with the backlog of intelligence. Communicating what community intelligence is about is seen as an area for development. The level of community understanding of the nature of community intelligence has an impact on intelligence development at neighbourhood level.

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- Intelligence development at local level is unco-ordinated, depending largely on the strength of personal relationships. Generally there is a low level of understanding of properly focused neighbourhood-level intelligence, and yet there is no intelligence requirement and no performance management framework for intelligence development in this area.
- Post-training evaluation remains an area for development.

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

FORCE	SPI 2a Percentage of people who think that their local police do a good or excellent job		KDI Percentage of people who 'agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area'		SPI 10b 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
Northumbria	+7.2 pp	+2.7 pp	+11.5 pp	+6.9 pp	-1.7 pp	-2.6 pp

Summary statement

The SPI/KDI data shows that force performance is significantly better than the average for the MSF.

The SPI/KDI data also shows that force 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 force and the average for its MSF 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.

58.4% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 think that their local police do a good or excellent job, which is significantly better than the average for the MSF.

Force performance was unchanged in the year ending March 2008; 58.4% of people surveyed think that their local police do a good or excellent job, compared with 55.7% 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’.

62.2% 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.

Force performance significantly improved in the year ending March 2008; 62.2% of people surveyed ‘agree local police are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in this area’, compared with 55.3% in the year ending March 2006.

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

17.0% 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.

Force performance was unchanged in the year ending March 2008; 17.0% of people surveyed think there is a high level of anti-social behaviour, compared with 19.6% in the year ending March 2006.

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

Summary statement

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

Strengths

- The force has conducted a Neighbourhood Policing survey as part of its commitment to consult with the residents of Northumberland and Tyne and Wear. The purpose of the survey was to uncover variation in policing performance between sectors, identifying sectors whose results were relatively good or poor compared to the force average, and to report any good practice that could be shared across the force. Importantly, the survey also aimed to provide useful information at a local level in order to help the NPTs who deliver sector policing to address residents’ priorities.
- The survey, conducted between November 2007 and February 2008, saw 32,500 households contacted and over 17,000 returns received (53% response). The data from the survey has been analysed to ward level and informs the sector profiles. Sectors are being organised into family groups and analysis is being conducted to

find the discriminating variables. Deprivation is seen to be a key consideration. Communities are being mapped in terms of themes and geography, and there is an opportunity to link this work to work that supports LAAs. The response rate was comprehensive and sufficient to make representative conclusions at force, area command and sector levels. An average of 455 responses was received per sector, ranging from 222 in E6 (Newcastle Central) to 801 in A5 (Sunderland North). The analysis has provided a series of findings that may contribute to consideration of potential areas for action:

- Residents' confidence in the local police is related to:
 - their satisfaction with any recent contact with the police;
 - their perception of the level of ASB;
 - the frequency with which they see local officers; and
 - their knowledge of how to contact local officers.
- Residents' confidence in the local police is only weakly linked to their knowledge of who the local officers are.
- Residents are far more likely to know local officers within the rural sectors than in the rest of the force area.
- While there is a large variation between sectors in fear of crime and in perceptions of ASB, this is mostly explained by the level of deprivation within each sector; and
- For many sectors the ranking of priorities is fairly similar, though there are some significant differences which become greater when analysed at the ward level.
- For some problems there is a relationship between their ranking by residents and the level of deprivation of the local area, which in the case of burglary runs counter to the incidence of the problem.
- A local fear of crime survey is carried out in partnership with the CDRP on a twice-yearly basis. This is a comprehensive survey and involves 6,000 households. It provides valuable information about communities, and helps with mapping and the development of the neighbourhood profiles. The information provided is linked to geographical and demographic information. The CDRP has commissioned two additional pieces of work specific to Muslim and emerging communities.
- Throughout the development stages of Operation Goldfinch on Gateshead area command the need for medium to long-term sustainability following this operation was recognised. This has been catered for by the introduction of a secondary operation, Operation Skylark, which seeks to address issues identified during Goldfinch with a view to achieving sustainability and meeting the community expectations which will have been raised. Operation Skylark examines those issues identified by officers and members of the public which require longer-term interventions and also looks at working practices with a view to sustaining and developing provision. Officers managing service delivery in the Gateshead area have developed a joint action plan for Operation Skylark which the community inspector and the neighbourhood management area co-ordinator are overseeing.
- On Newcastle area command activity focused on engaging with emerging communities includes a performance review of every race incident on a fortnightly

basis. Surveys in the form of process maps are delivered to measure community feel-good factors.

- The force Neighbourhood Policing performance framework was agreed in November 2007 and has now been rolled out across the organisation.

Work in progress

- The Neighbourhood Policing agenda for the force is about the integration of different services, putting the right assets in the right configuration to deal with an appropriate response to the issues. This process takes account of partnership considerations.
- Northumbria Police is now looking to provide positive communications and messages direct to the community, rather than focusing on the media. Area command media officers are focused on internal and external communications.
- Internal good practice sharing and development remain work in progress, with some notable exceptions, for example the e-newsletter. Internal sharing of good practice is predicted to rise now that area command media officers have been appointed.
- There are concerns over the way in which issues which affect Neighbourhood Policing performance are recorded. At present, positive interventions are recorded in the same way and given the same inference as negative reports of issues such as ASB. This can skew the data, giving a false impression. Improvement in this area is constrained by national recording standards; however, the force is working to highlight this as an issue and develop a workable solution.
- Work is being undertaken towards a common assessment framework.

The force demonstrates sustainable plans for Neighbourhood Policing.

Summary statement

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

Strengths

- Northumbria Police has sustainable plans and strategies for the continued delivery of Neighbourhood Policing, based on the National Centre for Policing Excellence/Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) document *Professionalising the Business of Neighbourhood Policing*. There is evidence of this on area commands, eg Northumberland's Neighbourhood Policing plan and reassurance strategy.
- The area command Neighbourhood Policing plans have a focus on access, influence, interventions and answers.
- The chief officer lead is the chair of the project board, which continues to be supported by a dedicated project team. The project team will continue to provide a corporate overview of Neighbourhood Policing, ensuring that strategic plans provide the necessary focus around finance, HR and so on. The area command self-

inspection framework is based on that developed by the ACPO Neighbourhood Policing programme and has been completed in all area commands.

- The force has a detailed process to address areas for improvement identified in previous HMIC/NPIA inspections and assessments or in response to internal self-assessments. This is seen as a key strength of the force.
- Northumbria Police engaged consultants from KPMG to help develop the force's 2020 Vision, a focus of which was the need to work effectively across portfolios on cross-cutting themes and develop a citizen-focused approach within the organisation.
- The force's 2020 Vision statement is 'To build trust and confidence in the community and reduce crime and disorder'.
- Northumbria Police's values are defined as follows: 'Effective leadership and communication at all levels of the organisation will ensure that every member of staff continues to build on our strength in delivering effective, efficient and professional policing services, by:
 - embracing the Total Policing philosophy, to ensure that Northumbria Police maintains its pre-eminent position as one of the highest performing police forces in the UK; and
 - taking pride in all that we do, putting the perspective of the citizen first and applying the principles of integrity and high quality service delivery enshrined in our six ethical principles:
 1. attentive – by listening to communities;
 2. responsive – by responding to the needs of communities;
 3. reliable – by not letting people down;
 4. skilled – by having staff with the right tools and abilities to do the job;
 5. polite – to the public; and
 6. fair – at all times in carrying out our duties.'
- The force has eight strategic aims, including:
 - people: by creating a culture which promotes empowerment, innovation and continuous personal development to ensure we maintain a diverse, responsive and flexible workforce;
 - communities: by working with individuals and communities to deliver accessible local policing services, which identify and respond to local policing priorities and provide support during major incidents; and
 - partnerships: by promoting opportunities for effective partnerships, ensuring alignment of service delivery and shared accountability.
- The police authority is actively engaged in the governance and scrutiny of Neighbourhood Policing. Members take an active interest both at a corporate level and, more significantly, within the area commands, with regard to local policing services, public engagement, quality of service and performance.

- The police authority Citizen Focus committee oversees activity in respect of Citizen Focus, including Neighbourhood Policing, and meets on a quarterly basis. The committee comprises all police authority members. The force is represented on the committee at ACC level. A member of the police authority was a member of the force Citizen Focus project board from its introduction.
- Newcastle area command has a communications plan to assist in embedding Neighbourhood Policing as core business and to develop a greater understanding of how the area command and its partners serve and support communities. The communications activity reaches both internal and external audiences, using proven methods to inform staff and gain the trust and confidence of local people. The plan builds on the force 2020 Vision.
- Communications objectives are as follows:
 - Internal:
 - to ensure that all staff understand the concept of Neighbourhood Policing and its essential role in achieving area command, force and national policing requirements;
 - to ensure that all officers and staff are involved in Neighbourhood Policing and know what they are expected to do;
 - to ensure that all officers and staff across the area command and force are aware of how their adherence to the ethical principles of Total Policing positively impacts on the success of Neighbourhood Policing; and
 - to build a framework for effective knowledge sharing and the sharing of best practice across the area command.
 - External:
 - to enhance the identity of the area command and the services it provides to communities;
 - to ensure that local communities and individuals within those communities can highlight neighbourhood issues to police and partners and be involved in tackling them;
 - to ensure that partners and other external stakeholders are fully engaged and understand the importance of their role and the benefits that success will bring them;
 - to communicate the force and partner commitment to Neighbourhood Policing and to manage expectations; and
 - to ensure that all external audiences are aware of the successful action taken by police and partners in tackling neighbourhood issues.

Work in progress

- A force Neighbourhood Policing forum is being developed, based on the model operated by West Yorkshire Police. The intention is to develop this into a commissioning group. Feedback on the early stages of development has been very positive.
- One of the strategic aims supporting the 2020 Vision is 'Communities'. The strategic lead for communities is the ACC (local policing and operations). Neighbourhood

Policing is the style of policing that the force will use to achieve this aim and the force has agreed plans to increase its establishment of front-line staff in order to support this.

Developing Citizen Focus Policing

2007/08 Summary of judgement	Meeting the standard
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Exceeding the standard

During this inspection the force was assessed against SGC in a number of key areas of Developing Citizen Focus Policing. To discern between forces, a moderation process has been applied to determine the grading of the force.

Northumbria demonstrates that it meets the standard, and in addition it evidences innovation in Citizen Focus implementation. The force is also performing significantly better than the average for its MSF in a number of SPI/KDIs, namely satisfaction with the overall service provided and satisfaction of users from minority ethnic groups with the overall service provided.

The force demonstrates innovation in developing Citizen Focus policing.

Strengths

- The force's 2020 Vision is supported by the Total Policing strategy and aims to build trust and confidence in the community and reduce crime and disorder. The core values of the 2020 Vision state that through effective leadership and communication at all levels of the organisation, the force will ensure that every member of staff continues to build on its strength in delivering effective, efficient and professional policing services, by:
 - embracing the Total Policing philosophy, to ensure that Northumbria Police maintains its pre-eminent position as one of the highest-performing police forces in the UK; and
 - taking pride in all that it does, putting the perspective of the citizen first and applying the principles of integrity and high-quality service delivery enshrined in its six ethical principles, namely to be attentive, responsive, reliable, skilled, polite and fair.
- All force activity within the 2020 Vision has been designed with service delivery in mind; however, of particular note are the aims with respect to people and communities, which explicitly demonstrate the force's commitment to providing a citizen-focused service.
- Responsibility for developing Citizen Focus issues, including Neighbourhood Policing and strategic partnerships, is now held by the chief superintendent in charge of the communications department. Citizen Focus is a key driver to developing a professional level of service delivery fit for the 21st century. This includes embedding Neighbourhood Policing; delivering accessible local policing services which identify and respond to local policing priorities into a neighbourhood management approach; and partnership working. The response, Neighbourhood Policing and investigation functions are fully integrated in the Neighbourhood Policing model and the force is piloting further developments under the workforce modernisation project.

- Performance indicators regarding the quality of service commitment (QoSC) and the Victims' Charter are discussed and addressed at the strategic management board, which is attended by chief officers, area commanders and heads of department.
- A new Neighbourhood Policing performance framework has been implemented, based on the findings of the NPIA national pilot.
- The force strategic assessment has a strong emphasis on Citizen Focus and uses survey data in the priority matrix.
- Area command 'dashboards' include details of performance on Citizen Focus measures. A new corporate business plan will include the Citizen Focus performance measures.
- There is a strong emphasis on having the right people in the right place at the right time to produce a more effective service. This approach is being tailored at a sector level. Northumbria Police is working as an NPIA lead in this area, under the Total Policing ethos. Key objectives are the integration of response, investigation and neighbourhood functions within the sectors.
- Northumbria Police is able to provide a number of examples of activities, roles and units it has developed which are aimed primarily at improving the quality of service it provides to its communities. These include the primary contact quality assurance unit; the use of the Aspire dip-sampling quality-assurance tool; the deployment model; slow time response; the call management unit; the witness care unit; and the critical incident manager role.

Meeting the standard

Following the moderation process, Northumbria was assessed as meeting the standard for developing a citizen focus.

A Citizen Focus ethos is embedded across the force, establishing an initial baseline.

Summary statement

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

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

Strengths

- Northumbria Police has introduced a detailed local policing survey aimed at identifying users' views in order to make service improvements. A number of measures are analysed so as to drive the service improvements sought.
- Extensive neighbourhood surveys have been conducted to obtain customer feedback concerning confidence, fear and worry. Activity is focused at sector level and sub-sector level. The information gained provides a more focused level of feedback to the area command.

- Dissatisfaction reports from Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) user satisfaction surveys have been developed to highlight victims that were surveyed who were completely or very dissatisfied with the service that they had received. The resulting one-page reports are forwarded to area commands for local action. The lack of follow-up is the most frequent complaint, and as a result of action taken the force has seen satisfaction with follow-up increase for six quarters in a row.
- The Citizen Focus strategy links into the Chief Constable's ethical principles and has the following objectives:
 - to be attentive to the needs and priorities of local communities through effective engagement, and to use the information obtained to inform policy and service decisions;
 - to consult with service users and staff and use the information obtained to improve the quality of future service provision;
 - to seek to manage public expectations of service delivery to ensure that they are realistic, and to influence public perceptions of the force to address the 'confidence gap';
 - to provide accessible and reliable policing services that are responsive to local needs;
 - to ensure that service users experience one seamless process from first point of contact to resolution;
 - to ensure that all the force's staff have an understanding of what their responsibilities are in relation to Citizen Focus and that appropriate accountability mechanisms are in place to support its delivery;
 - to ensure that the force's staff are skilled, polite and fair in their dealings with the public; and
 - to use technology to improve key processes which support delivery of citizen-focused services.
- Following a review of media services, a media officer has been allocated to each area command management team and headquarters department. The reassurance benefits of operational activity can now be optimised and service user views captured more effectively through activity such as reviewing media articles and environmental scanning.
- Area commands have introduced a number of initiatives specifically aimed at supporting vulnerable groups, including a framework of clearly stated responsibilities in relation to the recording and management of hate crime/incidents; local training to achieve a clear understanding of expectations; CREST; and the use of surveys to get a better understanding of barriers to cohesion.
- On Sunderland area command, a fear of crime survey is commissioned by the CDRP on a six-monthly basis. Four such surveys have been completed so far, and they inform the strategic direction of activity. The Not in Our City campaign was a result of this process. In addition, a fear of crime survey has been carried out specific to young people: the results showed direct similarities with issues raised by adults.
- On area commands LAA targets, while covering the hard performance issues, have been developed to include in addition more qualitative measures such as

perceptions of ASB. Safety perceptions measures from the national indicator set are now featured in local surveys.

- A Sunderland-based quality of service questionnaire is sent out, with the returns being managed by students from Edinburgh University.
- The inspection found innovation and engagement links used on area commands to be effective. For example, Newcastle area command makes use of drop-ins, community events, environmental scanning, local media, one-on-one contact, directed publicity and educational establishment links to help build trust and confidence. Socialising, shopping and business activities are targeted for engagement, with messages tailored appropriately. Effective third-party reporting processes are in place.
- A review of all department and area command business plans is carried out by the Citizen Focus lead, in order to identify common themes where a central approach could be provided and to pinpoint gaps.
- The force has undertaken a review of the 24/7 shift pattern aimed at increasing the number of staff available at key times and thereby improving service delivery.
- The development of the contact management unit has had a significant impact on customer satisfaction across the force area, particularly in relation to follow-up action. The unit has also contributed towards the releasing of suppressed demand, and performance improvement outcomes in relation to SPI 1c can also be attributed to its introduction.
- With regard to corporate communication, Northumbria Police is taking action to ensure that its services are more citizen-friendly through:
 - the introduction of the 0345 number (in response to public comments);
 - the replacement of the original CID88 leaflet in May 2007 with a new contact details and advice (CDA) leaflet, to make it easier for the public to contact the police and to improve the professional image of the force (in the spirit of continuous improvement, and as a result of feedback received, the CDA leaflet was subsequently replaced with an improved *Contact details and our commitment to you* leaflet in April 2008;
 - the carrying of contact details in all literature in the same format;
 - new signage approved for all police buildings (roll-out ongoing during 2008); and
 - e-newsletters for specific neighbourhoods (piloted in Sunderland and currently being rolled out to all area commands in a phased approach).
- Northumbria Police can provide numerous examples of how it has taken action to make its services more citizen-friendly by addressing areas identified by the public via engagement activity. Examples include extended front office opening hours; the inclusion of victim/family support input in homicide debriefs; increasing the opening hours for the media unit to be more customer-focused; and the introduction by the criminal justice department of a system to allow the viewing of photographs of speeding motorists to help reduce not guilty pleas and speed up the process. A new consultation framework (development of which is pending) will set out the force's co-ordinated approach to consultation to ensure that information collection, analysis

and reporting meet the organisation's needs. It will emphasise the importance of re-engineering processes as a result of feedback to improve the way services are delivered and therefore received.

- The force's umbrella strategy for Citizen Focus encompasses diversity. The strategy is about recognising service user needs, providing a bespoke service, and accommodating all the differences between communities. The current position evolved from the national quality of service impact assessment in 2004 through to the establishment of the force Citizen Focus project board in 2006. Northumbria Police took part in the national quality of service benchmarking exercise. Citizen Focus considerations featured in a corporate decision-making review which took place in February 2007, supported by the consultants KPMG. Issues were further developed during the strategic visioning days and the ongoing review of the force 2020 Vision:
 - communities will have confidence in the policing they receive as it will be delivered competently and fairly by staff responding to public needs and concerns; this aim will be supported by the influencing of public perceptions, the managing of access to services and delivery, and the raising of public awareness through Citizen Focus.
 - service delivery will be integrated with a wider partnership approach intrinsic to community problem solving; the force will work closely with all its statutory and voluntary partners to provide a cohesive and holistic solution to community issues and concerns.
 - this strategy will be delivered in three key areas: enhancing of police visibility and accessibility; the development of an integrated approach to problem solving with statutory and voluntary partners; and effective engagement and communication with the public.
- The development of the force Citizen Focus strategy led to a review, which resulted in the strategic leadership for Citizen Focus, Neighbourhood Policing and strategic partnerships being overseen by the communications department. Crime and harm reduction issues became the direct responsibility of the crime department. While area commanders have autonomy in respect of community engagement, development at a corporate level is co-ordinated through the senior business leaders' meetings and through the strategic management board, which quality-assures policies and strategies. The Citizen Focus strategy is aimed at providing a seamless service.
- Investment in infrastructure has taken place to ensure that the governance and accountability mechanisms are in place to manage the shift towards the citizen-focused policing effectively. New communication structures have been put in place, with cross-cutting areas of responsibility for chief officers and managers, breaking down the traditional functional silos. The challenge for the force, as with other forces throughout England and Wales, is to understand Citizen Focus fully and ensure staff are aware of what it means to them in terms of their individual responsibilities.
- One foundation for change was the review of media services and the subsequent development of the communications strategy and the management of expectations and perceptions externally. An example of this is the change in the process for slow-time response. As part of this change, the CID, scenes of crime officers and NBMs are moving towards a diary response system. Work on the development of front

counters is an extension of the process. A change in customer expectations is required, to encourage members of the public to take up appointments.

- Northumbria Police has adopted the principles of QUEST. A diary car is a standing resource and work is allocated on an appointment basis. This arrangement has been effective in reducing demand and the public response has been positive.
- Sunderland area command has introduced a third-party hate incident-reporting structure, with IT support, modelled on ARCH. The process is managed by the city council. A similar scheme is operating in Newcastle.
- On area commands, Citizen Focus is delivered through Neighbourhood Policing. On Gateshead area command, a review has been undertaken in order to accommodate this arrangement. Core teams, NBMs, CSOs, the CID and special constables have been co-located. Response officers have been aligned to sectors and funding is allocated at that level. Management team responsibilities have been aligned to Neighbourhood Policing arrangements.
- The development of citizen-focused policing on Gateshead area command is organised into four strands: communication, engagement, delivery and performance. Key characteristics are as follows:

Communication:

- the area command communication plan is managed by the business manager.
- there is a Citizen Focus action plan with clearly defined areas of responsibility.
- the action plan and development issues around Citizen Focus are managed through senior management team meetings, daily management meetings and tasking and co-ordination processes.
- the police public contact areas have been a focus for improvement – particularly the front counter area, where more and better community information is available.
- the senior management team gives out consistent key messages on professionalism, performance and Citizen Focus.
- supervisors have been provided with training on all these issues.

Engagement:

- area command and sector community engagement plans are in place.
- a diversity forum and an IAG are in place.
- there are specifically enhanced links with the Jewish community in the area.
- specific arrangements are in place in the form of a local TCG and a community engagement forum.
- Operation Goldfinch represents the area command approach to dealing with high-priority community issues.
- independent surveys are carried out in the area and the results are used to inform service delivery.

- community intelligence processes have been developed and support all these arrangements.

Delivery:

- delivery is monitored and managed through TCG processes.
- local problem-solving processes are in place, supported by reviews.
- the Neighbourhood Policing teams are the focal point for delivery and are being developed as such.
- area command and sector reassurance plans are in place.
- the Citizen Focus action plan is about making the customer perspective more influential in the way in which delivery takes place.
- the community engagement plans are aimed at achieving a meaningful interpretation of the customer perspective.

Performance:

- there remains a focus on crime and disorder reduction.
 - continuing sanction detection improvements remain on the agenda and are seen to be important.
 - satisfaction results from the BCS are used to assess performance.
 - the BCS is used in conjunction with linked local Neighbourhood Policing surveys.
 - criminal justice process management issues are taken into account.
 - the performance management framework sector reviews are used as the key tool for driving delivery.
- Across Northumbria Police, communication is one strand of the Citizen Focus delivery strategy and involves a cradle-to-grave decision-making process.
 - Northumbria Police takes a wide-ranging approach to improving quality of service, including the following initiatives:
 - work has been undertaken to increase the identification unit's capacity and reduce the amount of time taken to show witnesses. Electronic improvements, giving ready access to the relevant information, have reduced the time spent travelling around the force area by both victims and witnesses and have also freed up officer time.
 - the criminal justice department sponsored a review by the local criminal justice board of the end-to-end experience of victims and witnesses. This identified some duplication of effort, which has been removed by an agreement to extend both the victim bureau and the witness care unit.
 - the witness care unit will satisfy all the recommendations of the No Witness, No Justice final review plan, and it is intended that the force should become a market leader, driving victim and witness care to a new level. The unit has been built to deliver the full requirements of the witness charter.
 - witness and victim experience survey data is used to assess the quality of service provided to witnesses and victims, and the force's performance is currently strong. The data gives a good indication of how the force is

perceived by the public and the areas in which it could improve. Satisfaction rates have improved to 92% as a result of improvements already made.

- MG10 (witness attendance) has been streamlined, and MG11 (contact details) has been improved and the force's ability to identify vulnerable people enhanced as a result.
 - improved bail management, further non-court disposals and centralised warrants have been introduced to speed up the process.
 - the Victim Support referral system has been automated, which has led to a marked improvement in results, with referrals increasing from 28% to 80% of all victims and still rising.
 - the force is to purchase a community messaging system as part of its Neighbourhood Watch programme, in order to improve communication with the public. The force is also considering acquiring a Bluetooth messaging system to give bespoke messaging capability in certain areas.
- A fundamental review by the area command business managers of front-office service provision considered and addressed the following key areas:
 - a corporate protocol in relation to opening hours, staff training and conduct;
 - appearance of buildings and visitor flows;
 - the adoption of five standard categories of front office; and
 - a standard approach to signage and web-based information on public opening hours.
 - The force has made innovative use of private landlord legislation to address issues of problem families impacting on entire neighbourhoods: Newcastle area command provided clear evidence of such use, with resulting success including evictions and positive feedback from the community.
 - Northumbria Police is an active partner with other criminal justice agencies, and there is strong evidence of effective criminal justice community engagement initiatives such as harm crime panels and 'inside justice' weeks.
 - The police authority is fully engaged and involved in the governance of citizen focus activity. Members are kept updated about public engagement, quality of service and performance.
 - The authority Citizen Focus committee meets on a quarterly basis. The committee comprises all police authority members. The force is represented at the committee at ACC level.
 - A member of the police authority was a member of the force Citizen Focus project board from its introduction.
 - The police authority has regular meetings with the PSD to monitor trends and dip-sample complaints. The force intends to introduce a tactical assessment for complaints.

Work in progress

- Northumbria Police has identified that its consultation framework requires further development. The force is developing a consultation unit within the corporate development department in order to enhance its understanding of the survey work undertaken and maximise opportunities offered.
- The Neighbourhood Policing survey is being reworked in collaboration with the GONE. The force is developing relationships as a part of a move towards integration of survey services with partner agencies.
- In order to improve service delivery, the force is to introduce a new website by autumn 2008 and is developing additional web-based services. Work is also ongoing to implement the corporate communications strategy at a local level and to implement more targeted marketing campaigns responsive to local needs.
- Newcastle University has undertaken research on behalf of the force to identify the diverse mix of communities within the Benwell and Arthur's Hill areas of Newcastle; to ascertain community perceptions of the police and the reasons for them; and to consider barriers to communication. Results will be used to improve communication and engagement.
- A number of black and minority ethnic (BME) focus groups have been held in order to investigate BME satisfaction gaps further and thereby inform improvements in service to the community.
- On area commands, awareness and understanding of the roles of neighbourhood staff is developing among response officers. There is, however, a belief that the good work undertaken by neighbourhood staff can on occasions be undermined by response officers. This was confirmed by partner agencies, eg the youth-focused Patchwork Project in Newcastle, whose constructive relationship with local neighbourhood staff has on occasions been undermined by insensitive response policing.
- Evaluation processes are integrated into the training for the Tooled up for School initiative. Evaluation includes questionnaires and incident and crime measurement processes, with a focus upon youth perceptions and confidence to inform future delivery. Feedback on best practice will use and be promulgated by way of existing forums.
- Newcastle area command has a draft children and young people strategy, aimed at presenting a comprehensive vision of how it will deliver a range of responses to the issues facing children and young people.
- Northumbria Police is developing its use of 'mystery shopper' techniques in order to test the customer experience in terms of quality of service and to inform improvements to the service provided. Volunteers will be engaged in the process to maximise its validity.
- Internal and external Citizen Focus consultation and change processes are seen as work in progress. However, the force is satisfied that it is moving in the right direction in terms of meeting customer requirements and delivering a more customer-focused service.

- Northumbria Police has a number of workstreams pending that are aimed at improved quality of service delivery, including:
 - soft skills training for all staff in order to enhance customer service; this is designed to enable staff to better address the needs of the citizen, rather than those of the process-bound system;
 - work undertaken to allow victims and witnesses to receive updates via the internet;
 - the creation of a website detailing the criminal justice experience, tailored to the force area, which will allow witnesses to view the layout of actual courts online;
 - a number of technical changes, including developments of LIBRA (the magistrate's court system), COMPASS and Bichard7. Changes to LIBRA will enable automated updates onto CIS. Bichard7 will be implemented by March 2009, and will enable the courts to update the Police National Computer directly;
 - further use of media opportunities to reduce the confidence gap between public perception and reality (for example the fact that 87% of all people charged receive a conviction); and
 - continued development of the Neighbourhood Policing model to increase integration of staff. Recent developments include a greater integration of CID.
- In addition, the following developments have already been implemented:
 - the diary system has been enhanced, with a new computer system allowing greater flexibility of use and a staged implementation plan which will bring NBM and CSOs into the existing system. It will also create the potential to make appointments at locations such as police stations or community access points. Other resources can be added at a later date as the system becomes embedded.
 - an eight-week call-handling course has been established to replace the previous three-week course and incorporate some of the softer skills training that has benefited the 101 trained staff.
 - a call-handling quality-control tool called Aspire has been introduced to assist in quality assurance within the communications department.
 - a new force response shift system has been implemented to improve the match of resources to demand profile, and an evaluation of the remaining area command and support function shift patterns has commenced – including NBM/CSO and CID patterns.
- The establishment of meaningful strategies and buy-in from stakeholders are seen as key building blocks in developing the Citizen Focus approach across Northumbria – for example development of the contact management strategy. There is an emerging desire to integrate service delivery, and a will to drive this forward. A challenge for the force is to get consistent buy-in from key leaders and achieve a corporate environment in which organisational understanding can emerge and grow from differences of opinion.
- The force is looking to develop its technology to the point where systems are in place that make it difficult to get things wrong. Work is ongoing on customer relations

management systems to provide the 'front end' to the force's information systems. Mobile data is being examined to improve service delivery.

- Citizen Focus issues within the criminal justice arena are being examined with the Crown Prosecution Service. The force is considering the introduction of post-charge witness care units incorporated within contact management units in order to achieve economies of scale. (At present witness care units are embedded in local criminal justice units, and additional victim care is provided by local offender managers who keep victims informed of progress.) A dedicated unit will deal with specialist crimes such as homicides.
- Northumbria Police has introduced Operation Enterprise as the vehicle by which the force will harmonise its effort and activity to deliver change, manage resources, identify efficiencies and generally assure the business development of the organisation. A fundamental aspect of this will be the development of citizen-focused service delivery across the force area.
- There remains a need to improve both internal and external communications, to deliver positive messages of the force's and area commands' successes. The appointment of dedicated media officers to the area commands will assist this, but it remains work in progress.

Areas for improvement

- The first contact customer survey is not informing improvements and developments effectively. There is a need for the data to be broken down into individual roles, eg call handlers. This issue was highlighted by the fact that call performance satisfaction was higher south of the Tyne than north, showing that the issue is one of area command service delivery, since the call system delivers a single service that is not geographically limited. Advanced dip sampling of calls will be delivered by control room supervisors; however, the IT infrastructure does not support this effectively.
- Resource configuration remains an issue for the force. The matching of resources with delivery boundaries is understood; however, the aim is to build boundaries around the problem. This could form the basis for a future neighbourhood management style and future restructuring.
- The force website could be further improved. Staff report that electronic feedback forms etc are not readily accessible and are difficult to locate. This has the potential to inhibit customer feedback. This issue is acknowledged by the force and improvements will be made during 2008.
- There is duplication of some effort involving the CMU and the victim bureau. There is an opportunity for integration and efficiencies that will improve processes under the communication remit.

Quality of service complaints are dealt with effectively.

Strengths

- On area commands, dissatisfaction issues are managed locally within a corporate framework. The resultant information is at the early stage of being analysed for trends and lessons to be learnt which can be used inform future service delivery.

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- In acknowledgement that dissatisfaction often arises from witnesses not being properly informed, quality standards are applied to information fed back to victims and witnesses. In addition there is a central victim bureau which informs victims about progress on reported crime via a written form after 20 and 56 days.
- Process maps have been delivered to area commands to ensure corporacy in service development and improvement.
- There is a focus on giving consistent messages to customers, supported by an appropriate media campaign. This includes corporacy of signage, publicity in respect of Neighbourhood Policing format and e-policing news, and encompasses communication with vulnerable groups.
- Messages in respect of quality of service are focused on neighbourhoods, with guidance taken from the area command.
- Northumbria Police makes effective use of quality of service complaints, having a strong focus on service improvement. Service and direction and control complaints are dealt with in accordance with national guidelines and in line with Independent Police Complaints Commission requirements. Any such complaints are recorded and co-ordinated.
- The force ensures that learning opportunities are derived and communicated to the wider organisation. Staff throughout the organisation have a good knowledge and understanding of corporate standards.

Work in progress

- Northumbria Police is focused on reducing crime and disorder and providing reassurance to the community through a citizen-focused process that informs the public about what the organisation is doing and why. However, the strategic communication of standards remains work in progress.
- Marketing campaigns are now tailored to community issues and priorities. For example, the campaign highlighted at the time of inspection was focused on criminal damage. Different campaigns for each area command are planned as pilots for September 2008 and will focus on area command-specific issues.
- The force has identified the need for the satisfaction survey to be brought in-house in order to facilitate service recovery and improved quality of service.

The force is monitoring its compliance with the National Quality of Service Commitment.

Strengths

- Area command quality and performance units have a role which encompasses all aspects of quality, including National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) compliance, diversity, hate crime, crime records, performance returns, freedom of information and so on. The units apply quality of service standards to all these areas, in addition to functions such as supervisory screening of a number of core systems. Opportunities are sought for early intervention to improve quality of service, increase performance and reduce vulnerability. Improvements in data quality prevent poor

tasking as a result of poor information. Area commands such as Sunderland are moving towards quality-based targets. The Sunderland quality and performance unit is currently under review with the aim of building workforce modernisation considerations into its operations.

- Northumbria Police completed an impact assessment in November 2004, which identified the areas in which the force was already compliant with the QoSC. The following areas were covered by specific guidance issued elsewhere and as such were not incorporated into the action plan:
 - other service commitments;
 - freedom of information;
 - complaints – direction and control; and
 - complaints – inappropriate conduct.
- Where gaps were identified, it was found that either the best value review of communications or the victims and witnesses pilot were addressing these areas. An implementation plan was therefore designed to improve the level of service offered by the force in the following five areas:
 - dealing with initial enquiries;
 - keeping the customer informed;
 - making it easy to contact the force;
 - victims of crime; and
 - Your Voice Counts.
- The police authority approved the implementation plan in April 2005, with the aim of taking the force to compliance by November 2006. Through this reporting process, it became clear that a lot of work was taking place elsewhere in the force in support of quality of service and the Citizen Focus agenda. In order to draw all these disparate workstreams together and to avoid duplication or contradiction of effort, a Citizen Focus project board was established in May 2006.
- In May 2006 the QoSC became one of the key strands of work within the Citizen Focus project board, to facilitate tracking of progress and monitoring of compliance. It was discharged from the project in March 2007, as the force was in a position to demonstrate full compliance with the actions laid out in the implementation plan.
- Northumbria Police took the considered view that all the workstreams would come to fruition in April 2007, so that a joined-up, cohesive message could be released internally to members of the force, and externally both to partners and to the public. This was intended to tie together the key messages behind the new call-handling policy and plan (released in March 2007), the creation of the contact management unit, the new incident grading and deployment criteria, the rollout of Citizen Focus training to the entire force, and more.
- To ensure continued momentum, the performance improvement unit in the corporate development department was tasked in March 2007 with ensuring that actions in support of the commitment and its philosophy were included and monitored within the area command and department business plans for the financial year 2007/08.

- The approach taken with the 2007/08 business plans has evolved, and a specific QoSC category will be included in the 2008/09 plans, to allow benchmarking, continuous improvement and sharing of good practice.
- The Neighbourhood Policing survey provides confidence and satisfaction data down to ward level. Data is circulated to all senior management team and sector inspectors and action plans are developed in response to the results.
- Performance in respect of QoSC and the victims' charter is reviewed at a strategic level at the force strategic management board.
- The force strategic assessment has a strong emphasis on Citizen Focus and uses survey data in the priority matrix.
- A Neighbourhood Policing performance framework has been introduced, based on findings from the national pilot.
- Northumbria Police has a strong focus on providing quality of service to the public, and this is assessed in a variety of ways, including by means of a call-back function.
- The National QoSC has been incorporated into the force corporate planning process from April 2008.
- The new corporate business plan includes a number of Citizen Focus performance measures. The force has introduced additional indicators developed as part of local business plans.
- The force also has:
 - local management indicators, which are performance indicators developed locally to measure performance against force objectives. Departments were asked to propose indicators in January 2008 – these were then presented to the police authority and approved in February; and
 - local policing indicators developed to populate the local domain within the assessment of policing and community safety (APACS). Essentially these are indicators which the executive board felt were strong enough and relevant enough to be included in the local domain for APACS.
- These indicators can all be used to monitor Citizen Focus actions within business plans. An example is the introduction of an indicator in the communications department business plan to measure the delay for resource recorded on grade three incidents.

Work in progress

- The force identified the need for a more robust monitoring system, which is being implemented via the 2008/09 business planning process. A review of all area command and department business plans has been undertaken by the Citizen Focus lead.

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The force has integrated Citizen Focus and operational activity, such as contact management, response, Neighbourhood Policing, investigation and through the criminal justice process.

Summary statement

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

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

Strengths

- The Ready to Patrol initiative is being monitored in terms of the proportion of deployable resources which are routinely 'State 1' or not available. When the initiative commenced, the average proportion of resources in one of the categories was approximately 25%. This figure has now fallen to approximately 13%, with the target being to reduce it further to single figures at any given time. Daily management meetings monitor open incidents as a matter of course. Demand management has increased the proportion of category three incidents which are allocated directly to NPTs.
- The inspection visited the Gosforth Customer Service Centre in the Newcastle area. This is a clean, modern public building with a high footfall in which the local NPT has office space with access to force information systems. Names and contact details of local officers and CSOs are displayed on a small poster beside a police suggestions box; however, the display is indistinct and there are no photographs. There are facilities for officers to meet privately with members of the public, and there was evidence from centre staff that NPT officers attend on a regular basis. Centre advisers are conversant with arrangements.
- Northumbria Police strives to ensure that customers have a positive experience, and has implemented and communicated its corporate standards in a number of ways, including the strategic assessment of November 2007, the strategy plan for 2008/11– and the area command plans for 2008/09. The force has continued to demonstrate its strategic commitment to citizen-focused policing in key publications. The force strategic assessment, produced jointly by the corporate development and force information and intelligence departments, is designed to support and underpin the key messages in the 2020 Vision and provides chief officers, senior managers and the police authority with a review of emerging issues, risks and threats under each of the strategic aims. The assessment also contains a list of issues for consideration as part of the control strategy, providing an opportunity to combine operational and organisational priorities. A list of activities to address priority areas has been produced following consultation with the police authority.
- Agreement of the control strategy and resulting actions were part of the preparation for the 2008/11 strategy plan. This three-year plan is predicated on the 2020 Vision. The area command plans for 2008/09 have also been drafted and delivered within the framework of the 2020 Vision.

- As part of the chief officer team's commitment to maintaining effective dialogue with senior leaders, and in order to build on the success of the strategic visioning days, senior leaders are now invited to attend bimonthly half-day meetings with the full chief officer team. The meetings include updates from chief officers on key issues, such as phase two of the corporate decision-making review, and provide an opportunity to raise and discuss other areas of force business. A number of meetings have concentrated on Citizen Focus and its integration into service delivery. These meetings gave an opportunity for all senior leaders to have an input into the force Citizen Focus strategy, its objectives, and how these objectives will be managed via the business planning process.
- The lead for Citizen Focus has held a series of meetings with superintendent and chief inspector representatives from all area commands and departments to discuss the Citizen Focus strategy during the course of its formulation.
- A draft Citizen Focus strategy and a community engagement strategy were awaiting approval at the strategic management board at the time of inspection having been refined (they were subsequently approved).
- In July 2006, as part of the Citizen Focus project, Northumbria Police agreed that an independent review would be undertaken by an external consultant into the level of service provision offered by the media services department, and that thereafter this would define a standard for high-quality service delivery. A key recommendation was the development of a force corporate communications strategy.
- The corporate communications strategy governs all communications activity and is being delivered via the following communication objectives:
 - Northumbria Police will build and maintain strong and effective communication mechanisms with all employees and internal stakeholders.
 - Northumbria Police will develop effective systems to communicate with all sections of the community, partners, stakeholders and hard-to-reach groups.
 - Northumbria Police will work in partnership with the media in order to communicate accurate and timely information to the community in an effort to reduce crime and disorder and to build trust and confidence.
 - Northumbria Police will develop a range of communications mechanisms to ensure that corporate messages are consistently communicated in a professional way to all audiences.
 - Northumbria Police will actively manage its corporate identity to ensure that all corporate information is consistent and accessible to all audiences.
- The performance improvement unit is changing the inspection regime and is moving towards the goal of Citizen Focus becoming a 'golden thread' through everything the force does – increased inspection activity in the areas of Citizen Focus and Neighbourhood Policing will increase the sharing and understanding of best practice across area commands.
- Examples of local initiatives intended to improve the internal understanding and delivery of a citizen-focused service are as follows:
 - a quality of service questionnaire given to all users of the REACH service at the conclusion of the case so the force can collate information to improve service delivery;

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- Citizen Focus-related objectives (respect, fairness, professionalism) in all senior management team performance development reviews;
- key messages implicit within the statement of visible leadership;
- integrity development plan – people held to account in most extreme cases of poor service;
- Patrol Ready – officers are fully briefed/equipped prior to commencing duty, with a strict requirement to update deployment status – this applies to all resources, not just 24/7 staff;
- Acting Ready – this focuses on the compliance and development of acting ranks, ensuring that they are fully briefed and have a full understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the rank. It will incorporate deployment and reinforcement of Citizen Focus;
- workforce modernisation demonstration site – based on Citizen Focus outcomes and satisfaction of victims and witnesses;
- meeting culture – all engagement activities have a defined purpose and feedback mechanism, monitored via the Neighbourhood Policing performance framework TPM (access/influence/intervention/answer);
- change from a blame culture to a learning culture, facilitated by the PSD, which is carrying out surveys of complainants, police officers and police staff over a three-month period in order to convey key messages and improve customer service. Targeted surveys will be conducted thereafter;
- a structured process to train and develop supervisors at area command level, where Citizen Focus is an explicit issue. A series of training days is being held for supervisors to ensure that they understand ‘the future’;
- the establishment of Citizen Focus as a formal agenda item at all TCG meetings;
- the conveying of ethical principles at all sergeant and inspector local training days;
- the revamping of local quality of service to accommodate quality control. Results are fed back into performance framework and acted upon;
- monitoring of standards of investigation and dip-sampling, conducted on a regular basis;
- Citizen Focus presentations given by the senior management team to inspectors and police staff equivalents;
- the practice of area command sergeants spending time in the control room to gain a better understanding of why it is so important to get the duty states right;
- a safer crewing policy, displayed on A1-sized posters in briefing rooms;
- changes made to front offices to ensure that a member of staff sits at the front window to greets customers and make sure that the office is kept tidy – this reinforces the importance of Citizen Focus;
- a local staff survey, based on the force’s six ethical principles: the results are fed back into the area command inspector review process;

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- a written expectation sent to all area command inspectors by their area commanders, followed up by a programme of presentations to all constables and sergeants;
 - the reorganisation of the sergeant structure in one area command to mirror the senior management team structure, so as to ensure common understanding; and
 - patrol plans for NBMs and CSOs.
- The 2007/08 performance development review process for all staff requires evidence linked to the six ethical principles of the force.
 - Over £1 million has been spent over the past few years on public access improvements across the force area. Either buildings have been made accessible, or arrangements have been made for the provision of services in an alternative way. For example, the Pilgrim Street police station in Newcastle is a listed building and planning regulations prohibit disabled access alterations. A bell push has therefore been fitted, enabling disabled people to be attended to in the street in the first instance while their needs are assessed.
 - A Citizen Focus model has been introduced within the area commands, addressing the key area of accessibility of staff, with a focus on victims, witness and callers for service – for example through the Northumberland citizens' community engagement planner, which looks at engagement, problem solving and keeping people informed.
 - Managers on South Tyneside area command are communicating the message that service delivery needs to be focused on what the public want: an appropriate and prompt police response; professional treatment in their contact with the police; and staff to be realistic in their promises, including with regard to updating and feeding back information. There are clear linkages with the national quality of service work. The challenge is to achieve simple, tangible solutions which are meaningful to people, including in areas such as out-of-office messages, voicemail and contact details.
 - The Northumberland area command performance review specifically features a number of key areas targeted at ensuring a citizen-focused approach to policing services. These include the areas of:
 - Citizen Focus, including staff accessibility;
 - problem solving;
 - briefing (parade briefing/briefing logs);
 - vehicles (cleanliness etc);
 - property;
 - notice boards;
 - cleanliness of police stations;
 - complaints;
 - training;
 - media; and
 - recognition of good work.

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- On South Tyneside area command, front offices have been tidied up and line management responsibility transferred to the business side of the area command and away from operational managers.
- Northumbria Police has delivered specific Citizen Focus training to all members of staff as part of the Neighbourhood Policing training. In line with the paper agreed at the protective services review project board, Tier 1 training for chief inspectors, police staff equivalent and above was conducted by an external service provider. The training focused on the strategic aims associated with the Citizen Focus agenda. Training was also provided within the Tier 1 package for all police authority members and several police authority policy officers.
- This activity was supported by Tier 2 training, with more focus on the key messages. To complement and reinforce the training, a full article on Citizen Focus was published in the Spring 2007 issue of *Grapevine* (the force magazine). Additional information was made available on the force intranet, and marketing materials were distributed to staff in order to communicate the strapline, logo and ethos associated with the project (see illustration).



- Citizen Focus and Neighbourhood Policing are built into the student officer, sergeant and inspector training courses. Citizen Focus and its key messages have been built into the induction pack for new police staff starters.
- Northumbria Police has contributed to the national contact management programme, being the regional co-ordination lead. In the past the focus has been numbers-driven; however, it is now moving towards quality of service. Journey indicators are defining public expectation – demand, first contact and service delivery; outcome measures are underpinned by National Standards for Incident Recording/NCRS and intelligence processes. Training and delivery are focused on the programme to deliver a citizen-focused service; for example, the initial contact course has been enhanced to reflect ACPO principles. The focus is on setting and meeting public expectations at the first point of contact.
- The Northumbria Police pilot of the 101 contact number delivered significant benefits, including the enhancement of staff's soft contact-handling skills. This improvement has been aided by an extension of the contact handler course from three to eight weeks. The outcome has been a substantial improvement in call routing, offering effective support to operational staff.
- Northumbria Police has introduced a contact management unit that deals with approximately 1,000 calls per day (25% of all non-emergency calls). Staff have enhanced skills, enabling them to deliver effective performance addressing all aspects of secondary contact. Systems allow 30% of callers to dial an extension directly; the voicemail account enables a further 15% of calls to be resolved effectively.

- Citizen Focus features in the strategic plan and the 2020 Vision document. The chief officer Citizen Focus strategic lead is actively driving activity and is recognised across the organisation as the Citizen Focus champion. All area commanders have a performance objective linked to Citizen Focus.
- In line with the announcements made by the Chief Constable at the annual force conference (and in a force-wide email), strategic responsibility for promoting Citizen Focus issues, including Neighbourhood Policing and partnerships, will now rest with the head of the communications department (in conjunction with the ACC lead). Citizen Focus is a key driver for the development of professional service delivery fit for the 21st century. This includes embedding Neighbourhood Policing (delivering accessible local policing services which identify and respond to local policing priorities) into a neighbourhood management approach and partnership working.
- Chief officers have demonstrated drive and commitment. There has been significant engagement with senior leaders (chief superintendents and heads of department) to influence a move to a citizen-focused culture, for example by means of strategic visioning days. Phase 1 of the corporate decision-making review was undertaken by external consultants during 2007 to ensure that the force's decision-making structures and processes were effective, provided strategic direction and enabled the delivery of business change.
- One of the key issues to emerge was the need to articulate clearly the vision for the force, and identify the supporting elements that underpin it. In order to achieve this, the full engagement of senior leaders was seen as critical: as a result, two strategic visioning days were held involving the chief officer team and senior leaders, to discuss the future strategic direction of the force. The process resulted in:
 - the reorganisation of the command team structure, roles and responsibilities;
 - greater empowerment of area commanders and heads of department, with less emphasis placed on the current hierarchical responsibility of chief officers;
 - a structure of directorates, with strategic leads being assigned ownership of programmes of work; and, ultimately,
 - the 2020 Vision and its component parts.
- The core values of the 2020 Vision highlight the aspiration that, through effective leadership and communication at all levels of the organisation, the force will ensure that every member of staff continues to build on their strength in delivering effective, efficient and professional policing services, by:
 - embracing the Total Policing philosophy, to ensure that Northumbria Police maintains its pre-eminent position as one of the highest-performing police forces in the UK; and
 - taking pride in all that the force does, putting the perspective of the citizen first and applying the principles of integrity and high quality service delivery enshrined in the force's six ethical principles:
 - be attentive – by listening to communities;
 - be responsive – by responding to the needs of communities;
 - be reliable – by not letting people down;
 - be skilled – by having staff with the right tools and abilities to do the job;

- be polite – to the public; and
 - be fair – at all times in carrying out duties.
- The strategic lead for the force values is the deputy chief constable.
- All force activity within the 2020 Vision has been designed with service delivery in mind, in particular the strategic aims relating to people and communities, which explicitly demonstrate the force commitment to providing a citizen-focused service and a workforce that reflects the individuals and communities it serves. The 'People' aim is as follows: 'People: by creating a culture which promotes empowerment, innovation and continuous personal development to ensure Northumbria maintains a diverse, responsive and flexible workforce.' The strategic lead for 'People' is the assistant chief officer (HR). The 'Communities' aim is as follows: 'Communities: by working with individuals and communities to deliver accessible local policing services, which identify and respond to local policing priorities and provide support during major incidents.' The strategic lead for 'Communities' is the ACC (local policing and operations).
- A key aim of the force strategic management board is to identify where pieces fit together and break down silo working. This includes the championing of corporate standards by chief officers, with a strong lead being given by the ACC (local policing and operations).
- Senior leadership engagement and feedback are taking place to ensure that all corporate leaders have bought into the Citizen Focus agenda and to identify the key strategic themes emerging from local business planning processes.
- On Sunderland area command, staff described senior management team visibility as good. Senior managers were seen to be approachable and to offer strong leadership.
- The head of GONE attends the ACCs'/area commanders' meetings.
- Northumbria Police has developed its internal inspectorate process over a period of time. The process helps enforce a corporate approach and ensures that corporate standards are branded across the organisation. Good practice is promulgated; however, this could be strengthened through more effective evaluation.
- There is evidence of staff receiving reward (including financial reward) and recognition for their good work from senior managers, supervisors and members of the public across the force area. The force has an annual reward and recognition scheme.
- Northumberland area command has a formal awards ceremony day for all staff and the area commander personally highlights and acknowledges good work. The area command has a sector review process that focuses on standards. Staff receive recognition within the process.
- Officers on Sunderland area command commented to the inspection that they had received a thank-you for good work from a neighbourhood resident the day before the inspection visit, and one from the superintendent within the previous two months.

Work in progress

- Though the key building blocks have been set up to deliver the Citizen Focus strategy, community engagement has been identified by the force as an area for development. A key element of the strategy is to develop market research capability and to use the information gained from this to influence service delivery effectively. In addition, processes to consult directly with service users are to be developed. These will also provide a means of evaluation. By this means operational and service elements will be able to be entwined and considered as a single issue.
- The implementation of the Citizen Focus strategy is being used by the force as a means of driving cultural change, particularly in relation to levels of decision making which impact on internal and external service delivery. The aim is to achieve a better organisational memory. Evidence of the shifting emphasis is seen in the business leaders' meetings, where challenge is beginning to emerge; and the test will be to filter this down to decision making at other levels of the organisation.
- Within the framework of the force community engagement strategy, all area commands have community engagement plans. At the present time these are of mixed quality.
- The force is addressing a self-identified gap with the production of a contact management strategy in support of the national contact management programme, in which Northumbria Police is playing an integral role.
- Investment in understanding is being made, initially with the role of inspectors and sergeants through the Ready to Patrol initiative building an expectation for leadership and direction, an imperative which is about 'making it happen' built up through communications and performance meetings. The process is about converting the issues into basic professional standards. Sergeants are required to check availability, ensuring that the resources are in place to deliver the right level of service and that technology is used to check on the maintenance of standards. Work is in progress to influence the culture of the organisation in terms of attitudes and behaviours around availability for deployment. This work cuts across the functional silos and includes CID staff.
- The process of embedding a community focus into the long-term psyche of the organisation is ongoing.
- Northumberland area command has introduced a sector review process, with the aim of ensuring that reviews not only consider performance but also focus on standards. The review process has been divided into five key areas: area command plan performance indicators, criminal justice, NIM, CDRP issues and standards. Area command plan performance indicators are wide-ranging and include:
 - under NIM: how the sector is closing the source gap;
 - under CDRP issues: the present overview of partnership working;
 - under resource management – the resource database;
 - under sickness management - updates to HRMS;
 - under briefing: parade briefings, property queues (items for disposal), notice boards, cleanliness of stations, complaints, training and skills profile, media, recognition of good work and so on.

- A grading system for the standards section of the Northumberland sector review process is in existence: blue represents 'good practice', green is 'acceptable', amber is 'in need of improvement' and red is 'below standard'. The review process will take place every four months from April 2008. Sector inspectors are to ensure that regular team performance meetings are held and recorded, ensuring acceptable performance on the part of all individuals and teams by means of the geographic performance survey and the organisational performance survey.
- A visit to the customer service centre and library at West Denton found a clean, modern public building with a high footfall (over 5,000 people during February 2008), in which however there was only a small, indistinct poster with the names and contact details of local neighbourhood officers and CSOs, displayed among a number of unrelated posters; there were no photographs of staff. Evidence from centre staff suggested that the neighbourhood staff visit only occasionally, although there are facilities for officers to meet privately with members of the public by appointment. Information leaflets are available to members of the public on a range of crime and ASB themes.
- Etal Lane police office is a clean, modern public building with a high footfall in which there was a small poster displayed with the names and contact details of just one NPT; there are no photographs. The information displayed may have been factually correct but was not presented to best effect. A Crimestoppers Payback poster was on display.
- Phase 1 of the Citizen Focus and Neighbourhood Policing training has been delivered to members of staff in structured events. However, on reflection the force believes that this was an inappropriate means of communicating key messages. Phase 2 training is to be amended in order to ensure greater understanding, particularly among leaders. The key aims are to deliver an appreciation that Citizen Focus is about delivering services which are tailored to the needs of the citizen and developing the skills and understanding required. The diversity element is seen as a natural extension of this, and the intention is to develop members of staff to be ambassadors of Northumbria Police.
- The workforce modernisation demonstrator site work at Southwick provides the force with an opportunity. Citizen Focus, while driven from a strategic level, needs to be understood at all levels of the organisation. The required shift in culture is only starting to happen and the development of the new performance management framework is seen as important to this process. The development of APACS is also an important lever.

Areas for improvement

- Market Street is a poor-quality city centre police office with a small publicly accessible foyer (the office is not an operational police station but this is not evident to visitors). Outside there is a public intercom to advise disabled members of the public about access to the building. No names or contact details of NPT staff were on public display. In the foyer there is the facility to contact criminal justice and administrative services through an intercom, but there was no advice about how members of the public can access other services.
- Pilgrim Street is an old city-centre police station with a clean but dark and austere public reception area. A defaced Crimestoppers Payback poster was on display. No

names or contact details of neighbourhood staff were on public display, but the front counter assistants had details which they could give out on request. Private interview facilities are available.

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

Strengths

- The force understands the concept of the 'confidence gap', and that the challenge is to close the gap and also to influence expectations – by entering into a mature relationship with the public, by providing accessible and reliable policing services, and by managing a seamless citizen journey across functional silos.
- On South Tyneside area command, team performance meetings include topics such as the results of victim and witness calls, using a sample range of 12-20 calls each week. The 24/7 performance meeting is the means of monitoring performance and effectively provides a test of the application of the force's six ethical principles. This approach is complementary to centrally managed arrangements and provides real-time information. Common themes or specific individuals are identified and appropriate interventions put in place where necessary.
- The harm reduction unit has been restructured and sits within the crime department. The focus is upon crime prevention and reduction; however, the unit also impacts on enforcement. The unit now includes a research section.
- NPTs on Sunderland area command stated to the inspection that they 'live and breathe community performance', including community issues such as dog fouling as well as crime reduction. The senior management team at Gilbridge drives performance via core performance meetings.
- The force has conducted a Neighbourhood Policing survey as part of its commitment to consult with the residents of Northumberland and Tyne and Wear and to contribute to the national Neighbourhood Policing performance pilot. The aim of the survey was to uncover variation in policing performance between sectors, and also to help identify the priorities for action as determined by the public. A bespoke questionnaire was developed to meet this requirement, based on Home Office guidance and other sources of information. Some 32,508 residents across the force area were contacted to take part in the survey, and 17,297 questionnaires were returned. This high response rate of 53% ensured that the sample was comprehensive and sufficient to make representative conclusions at force, area command and sector levels. An average of 455 responses was received per sector, ranging from 222 in E6 (Newcastle Central) to 801 in A5 (Sunderland North).
- The force has developed communications, community engagement and Citizen Focus strategies detailing the requirements and rationale behind the need to consult, engage and give feedback. These are supported by area command engagement plans and a requirement for a sector plan to be detailed within each sector profile. The sector profile details the demographic characteristics of the sector, and these should be reflected in the engagement activity. Methods of feedback are required to be specified, and communication is included in the tactical option field of JPaTS. Each area command now also has a community link worker (first piloted in Newcastle and North Shields) to help facilitate this engagement. An example of work

with emerging communities can be seen in North Northumberland involving the Polish community.

- Examples of engagement activity include Operation Goldfinch, environmental audits, targeted surveys by CSOs and e-newsletters, as well as conventional use of the media and public meetings.

Work in progress

- The force sees an opportunity, with the emergence of APACS as a lever, to change the culture from one which is primarily about delivering hard-edged performance gains in terms of reduction and detection of key crime to one which also takes proper account of confidence and satisfaction issues. Internal reporting of performance has completely changed to accommodate this shift in focus.
- Communications is seen to be a key element in delivering Citizen Focus, and initial training for communications operators is consequently being extended from three to eight weeks. The aim is to achieve a holistic knowledge of what the organisation needs and how it works. The cultural change includes recognition that members of staff are also customers, and that in house there is a diversity element with internal differences. Leadership is also seen as being a key element in delivery of Citizen Focus.
- Surveys have been outsourced in line with Home Office guidance. The lack of information from sources that do not wish to share data has posed a challenge in terms of improving service delivery. It is therefore intended to take the survey function back in house, so as to capture this information that is currently missed in order to inform and improve community services.
- A new consultation plan (development pending) will set out the force's co-ordinated approach to consultation to ensure that information collection, analysis and reporting meet the organisation's needs. The plan will emphasise the importance of re-engineering processes as a result of feedback to improve the way that services are delivered and therefore received.
- Dissatisfaction reports from PPAF user satisfaction surveys have been developed to highlight those victims surveyed who are completely or very dissatisfied with the service provided. The resultant one-page reports are forwarded to the area commands for local action.
- A new CID 88 form, to be given to members of the public after contact with the police, was about to be launched at the time of inspection. The new form gives specific instructions on how to give feedback on the service received, either by telephone or via the website.

Area for improvement

- Satisfaction indicators are promulgated to area commands via crime type. Targets and incident types are established key performance indicator and SPI data rather than being area command priority-focused.

September 2008

Performance Indicators

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

FORCE	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	2005/06 to 2007/08 change	2005/06 to 2007/08 change	12 months to March 2008
Northumbria	+5.0 pp	+7.2 pp	+5.8 pp	+3.8 pp

Summary statement

The SPI data shows that force performance is significantly better than the average for the MSF.

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

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

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 3.8 percentage points less satisfied.

Where there is a gap in satisfaction with service delivery between white users and users from minority ethnic groups, the force 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 force and the average for its MSF 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 Northumbria Police's own user satisfaction surveys, which comply with 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.

87.3% of people surveyed in the year ending March 2008 were satisfied with the overall service provided, which is significantly better than the average for the MSF.

Force performance significantly improved in the year ending March 2008; 87.3% of people surveyed were satisfied with the overall service provided, compared with 80.1% 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.

Force performance was unchanged in the year ending March 2008; 82.9% of users from minority ethnic groups were satisfied with the overall service provided, compared with 77.1% 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 3.8% less satisfied.

Where there is a gap in satisfaction with service delivery between white users and users from minority ethnic groups, the force has/has not evidenced that it is taking action to understand and narrow the gap.

Area for improvement

- SPI 3b iQuanta data shows an improvement in the satisfaction of BME customers compared to white customers over the last 12 months (ie an increase in the proportions in the completely, very or fairly satisfied categories). However, while force data for March 2008 shows a further improvement in BME customer satisfaction, there was a greater improvement in white customer satisfaction. The force consultation unit will examine this gap by way of focus groups.

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
ARCH	Agencies against Racist Crime and Harassment
ASB	anti-social behaviour
ASBO	Anti-Social Behaviour Order

B

BCS	British Crime Survey
BME	black and minority ethnic

C

CAF	community area forum
CCU	community cohesion unit
CDA	contact details and advice
CDRP	crime and disorder reduction partnership
CID	criminal investigation department
CSO	community support officer

F

FIID	force intelligence and information department
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G

GONE Government Office for the North East

H

HMI Her Majesty's Inspector

HMIC Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

HR human resources

I

IAG independent advisory group

ICCQ Improving Croft and Cowpen Quay

ISA information-sharing agreement

IT information technology

J

JPaTS joint planning and tasking system

L

LAA local area agreement

LMAPS local multi-agency problem solving

LSP local strategic partnership

N

NBM neighbourhood beat manager

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

R

RoCIS Recording of Community Issues System

S

SNAPS safer neighbourhoods action and problem solving

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.¹ 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 significant² 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.]

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

² 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.