

Reshaping policing for the public

A discussion paper from the advisory group on the national debate on policing in austerity

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Foreword

Policing has gone through significant change in the past five years. In particular, the police service in England and Wales has seen total funding to individual forces reduced by between 12 and 23 percent between 2010/11 and 2015/16¹. While reported crime rates have fallen, there is also evidence to suggest that the level of demand on police resources has grown in other ways². Crime has also changed, increasingly taking place online and often with international aspects. These challenges are expected to continue – and, in many ways, intensify – as the police service faces further budget constraints over the next five years.

In 2014, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary concluded in *Policing in Austerity: Meeting the Challenge*³ that continuing to administer substantial cost reductions in the same way as over the preceding four years was not an option and that, if forces were to maintain the service they provide to the public, then reform was required in the way the police service is organised and funded.

All those involved in policing in England and Wales recognise that further change is needed; but this is not just about responding to budget pressures. There is also real ambition across the police service, as part of its mission to prevent crime and protect the public, to enhance its capability – especially in new, specialist areas such as online and cyber-crime – and to rise to the challenge of serving the public to the standards they have a right to expect.

That is why our advisory group came together in late 2014 to support a national debate on the further changes needed in policing. The advisory group is made up of representatives from across policing including senior serving officers and staff, the College of Policing, police and crime commissioners (PCCs) and staff associations and unions.

In the past six months, the advisory group has sought to conduct a broad and inclusive debate, listening to as many voices as possible from all those with an interest in policing, sharing thoughts and identifying ideas that could shape policing in the future.

¹ *Financial sustainability of police forces in England and Wales*, National Audit Office, HC 78 Session 2015-16, 4 June 2015, paragraph 1.19. Taking into account changes in central and local government funding during the period, central government funding to police and crime commissioners during the same period decreased by 25% in real-terms.

² *College of Policing analysis: Estimating Demand on the Police Service*, College of Policing January 2015, www.college.police.uk/News/College-news/Pages/First-analysis-of-national-demand.aspx

³ *Policing in Austerity: Meeting the Challenge*, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, July 2014, page 44, www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publication/policing-in-austerity-meeting-the-challenge/

As well as a large workshop event in Birmingham (to which all PCCs and chief constables, the National Crime Agency (NCA), staff associations and unions, national and local government representatives, criminal justice and community safety partners and other policing experts were invited) and a second event in Warwickshire, we have surveyed the public through polling and focus groups and made a public call for evidence. We have also discussed these issues with the National Audit Office, as it has conducted its recent review of the financial sustainability of police forces in England and Wales⁴. All of these views have helped to inform our thinking and are referred to throughout this paper.

In producing this paper, it was not the advisory group's intention to offer a solution or to claim that there is complete consensus regarding the future of policing. Rather, the advisory group's ambition was always to stimulate debate about the future of policing and we are pleased that the process has helped to make this happen.

This paper does, however, represent the thoughts gathered during the debate. It sets out the advisory group's general perspective on what needs to change and how the police service, working with the support of national and local government and local public service partners, might bring about what is an ambitious programme of reform.

Given the scope and ambition of the options the advisory group is describing, this paper is only the beginning. Much more consideration and detailed work will be required. In particular, while the paper focuses on the functions of policing, the advisory group recognises that it is people who will be at the heart of making further change a success.

Reflecting the course of the debate process, the paper focuses on issues relating to local policing. The advisory group is keen to stress that this is not to underestimate the increasingly important international dimension of much of the crime that is being committed in England and Wales. Making the connection between the issues set out in this paper and that international dimension will need to be a significant feature of the next stage of work.

For now, the ideas in this paper need to be discussed further by the police service and the Home Office, but we hope that the paper articulates a shared ambition for national and local government, the public, police and crime commissioners, stakeholders, partners and all those within the service. Effective policing, accessible to those we serve, is not achieved in isolation, so this cannot just be an internal police matter.

⁴ *Financial sustainability of police forces in England and Wales*, National Audit Office, HC 78 Session 2015-16, 4 June 2015.

A broad, evidence-based conversation with the public and stakeholders about what the police service can offer in the future, including encouraging the public to interact with the police in new ways, will be an essential part of this process.

There will also need to be significant investment of time and effort if a new approach is to be realised; but we believe that we must make progress quickly to respond to the challenges ahead, and to demonstrate to the public that we are reshaping policing to meet their needs.

Rapid action is now needed to inform the Government's spending plans and the provisional police funding settlement due in late 2015. We believe that we should set ourselves a shared goal that, by autumn, there should be sufficiently well-formed agreement on the most pressing and immediate reforms, how they are to be achieved and what timescales the police service needs to work to in order to make change happen. The creation of a national reform group or board to oversee the next phase of work (as well as any subsequent implementation) will be vital to achieving this goal.

We look forward to continuing the debate.



Alex Marshall, Chief Executive, College of Policing



Sir Peter Fahy, Chief Constable, Greater Manchester Police



Zoë Billingham, HM Inspector of Constabulary



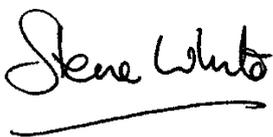
Steve Finnigan, Chief Constable, Lancashire Police



Neil Rhodes, Chief Constable, Lincolnshire Police



Paddy Tipping, Police and Crime Commissioner of Nottinghamshire



Steve White, Chair, Police Federation



Irene Curtis, President of the Police Superintendents' Association



Gavin Thomas, Vice-President of the Police Superintendents' Association



Francis Habgood, Chief Constable, Thames Valley Police



Ben Priestley, National Officer, UNISON



Nigel Brook, Assistant Chief Officer, West Yorkshire Police

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. The police service and law enforcement agencies in England and Wales are committed to further change so that policing best meets the needs of the public within a climate of continuing budget pressures.
- 1.2. Further change should be in line with a set of principles which reflect the police's mission to prevent crime and protect the public. The following principles were developed during the course of the national debate:
 - We will seek to protect the public and keep people safe from harm, especially the most vulnerable members of our communities. This will mean focusing as much on early action to prevent and reduce crime as reacting to crime once it has happened.
 - We will provide a service that is valued and supported by the public, tailoring the service to individual needs and focusing on the victim.
 - We will seek to protect ease of access to frontline services by a range of means, including online access and a visible local policing presence that works directly with communities.
 - We will enhance capabilities and achieve value for money by scaling up specialist capabilities⁵ and standardising functions where appropriate. This will help to maintain capability and resilience across policing but without losing agility when fighting crime.
 - We will work in close co-operation with all other organisations involved in public protection to keep communities safe and work with communities so they play their part alongside the police in securing their neighbourhoods. This points towards greater integration between public services, for example through the development of shared public safety plans with single leadership and shared budgets.
- 1.3. This suggests a possible new framework for policing where:
 - Local, frontline services accessible to communities provide a 24/7 response; neighbourhood policing focused on problem solving that protects people and prevents bad things from happening and getting communities involved; and local crime investigations.

⁵ For the purposes of this paper, the group has defined specialist capabilities as those relating to counter terrorism, organised crime, cyber crime, major crime, intelligence, public order and armed policing.

- Frontline services (including the safeguarding⁶ of vulnerable people and the management of offenders) are provided collaboratively with other local public services involved in community safety, working to a common set of outcomes as part of partnership arrangements. These arrangements should include the ability to share and prioritise time, money and people to achieve effective local outcomes.
- Specialist capabilities (such as those within the Strategic Policing Requirement) and areas of operational and criminal justice support are consolidated into cross-force functions⁷, strategically located and operating to national standards. The most highly specialised capabilities (such as counter-terrorism) should be provided nationally. This would minimise the number of locations required to support an effective police service; allow capabilities common to different policing activities to be deployed flexibly; and preserve access to capabilities for all forces without losing the ability to deploy rapidly on the basis of threat, risk and harm.
- Different arrangements for cross-force working will be appropriate depending on the nature of the participating forces. For example, in some areas a larger force might provide the location for these capabilities on behalf of the participating forces, whereas in others, shared capabilities might be added to existing arrangements such as regional organised crime units (ROCU). This will require further work based on local circumstances and should be an iterative process, focusing first on those areas of specialist capability which should only be provided on a cross-force basis.
- Business support functions are provided through greater economies of scale that reflect local circumstances, recognising the opportunities to build scale through local partners, other forces and/or with the private sector.

⁶ For the purposes of this paper, the group has defined safeguarding as protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

⁷ A cross-force function is one that brings together a number of forces in partnership and does not necessarily mean a function organised on the basis of current or recognised 'regions'.

- Robust accountability for the maintenance of an efficient and effective local police service continues to sit with local police leaders and police and crime commissioners (or mayors where appropriate). This means it would be necessary to create arrangements that span local services and cross-force/national functions which allow local leaders to assure themselves that the totality of the police service provided to the public in their areas is efficient and effective. These arrangements should build on the experience of existing mechanisms such as those within the NCA.
- 1.4. In creating capability through cross-force or national functions, it will be critically important that specialist units, for example those relating to organised crime, maintain their ability to connect and work closely with local neighbourhood teams. Local policing is the bedrock of policing and is central to its continued success. To serve and protect communities fully, any new framework should support the flow of information and intelligence (supported by effective tasking and co-ordinating arrangements⁸) to make the connection between neighbourhoods, cross-force units, the national and the international.
 - 1.5. The local aspect of these options represents a significant change in both the scope and ambition for joined-up public services, and goes beyond the ability of the police service to provide them unless both national and local government play a leading role. The options are in line with the recent Government announcement of further devolution of decision-making to local areas heralded in the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill⁹.
 - 1.6. Strong political and managerial leadership nationally and locally will be needed to make these local changes succeed across England and Wales. This should include:

⁸ For the purposes of this paper, the group has defined tasking and co-ordination processes as the means by which priorities are agreed, and decisions are made, by interested parties regarding competing demands for the use of resources on the basis of risk, threat, harm and vulnerability.

⁹ The Bill (announced in the May 2015 Queen's Speech) provides the legislative framework for the devolution agreement reached with Greater Manchester and flexibility to implement other devolution arrangements as they are agreed. The generic provisions in the Bill allow the introduction of elected mayors for combined authority areas and for the mayor to undertake the functions of the police and crime commissioner.

- commitment from central government to working closely with local areas as seen in the Whole Place Community Budget pilots. Continued provision of support, expertise and experience that can be facilitated by central government and other national bodies will unlock potential and help local public service partnerships¹⁰ to establish themselves on a sound footing;
- help for these local partnerships from across central government to adopt new approaches with speed and effectiveness. In particular, this will mean investment in early intervention approaches (such as those for troubled families). Depending on the nature of the partnerships, this could require change to legislative frameworks;
- replacement of multiple, uncoordinated funding streams with multi-year settlements and authority to budget, fund and commission jointly new ways of providing services. This includes flexibility for partnerships to develop and implement new models of investment;
- a willingness to challenge the fundamentals of existing working practices across public services to reflect the needs of the public. In order to succeed, this approach needs to ensure that the right specialisms exist in the right organisations and that they are accessible when needed;
- a default position of sharing information and data safely among those working together, potentially requiring national action to remove barriers to appropriate sharing of information; and
- investment in implementation capability to make integration work and sustain it across partnerships, for example, in developing a whole-system, evidenced approach to re-designing services.

1.7. Police and crime commissioners (or elected mayors where cities choose to take advantage of the devolution of power to the cities) and local police leaders will continue to be accountable for the maintenance of an efficient and effective police service in their areas. They will therefore require robust governance and accountability arrangements that span the different elements of this new approach to allow them to discharge all of their responsibilities.

¹⁰ These arrangements could potentially include all local organisations involved in public safety and/or protection work but their membership will vary depending on the issue on which the organisations are working together. Other than the police, these arrangements might include local authorities, other bluelight services, health and wellbeing boards, schools, college and universities; housing bodies and voluntary sector organisations.

- 1.8. Cross-force functions will remain accountable to participating local leaders, which will ensure that all forces have access to specialist capability on the basis of threat, risk and harm. National elements too will require robust arrangements that allow police and crime commissioners (or elected mayors) and local police leaders to discharge their responsibilities. Where appropriate, these should build on, or take account of, existing mechanisms at the national level, such as tasking arrangements under the Crime and Courts Act 2013¹¹; and through fora such as the National Strategic Tasking and Coordination Group.
- 1.9. Taken together, these options will help policing to provide an effective police service to the public, strengthen existing specialist capabilities and quickly build new capabilities where needed.
- 1.10. These changes also present an opportunity to reform significantly the funding formula which was seen by many as highly complex, opaque and backward-looking. As part of the review of police funding already underway, the Home Office should consider introducing more transparent funding arrangements which emphasise current and future policing priorities and allow greater flexibility for local partnership working. In particular, police and crime commissioners should have greater flexibility to set the amount of funding raised through local taxation.
- 1.11. Consideration should also be given to direct funding of any units set up to enhance specialist capabilities provided on a cross-force or national basis rather than routing money via participating forces. Evidence from the creation of regional counter-terrorism and organised crime functions suggests that funding units in this way builds the capability of shared functions more rapidly and promotes a consistent national approach.
- 1.12. Any reform of the funding formula – which will not be straightforward given current complexities, and will require shared effort – should be clear at the outset about transitional arrangements so that forces can manage uncertainty and allow for robust planning.
- 1.13. Subject to the agreement and support of Ministers, an evidence-based approach is needed to oversee the next phase of this work (including the formation of a national reform group or board), with a shared goal of reaching sufficiently well-formed agreement by autumn 2015 on the most pressing and immediate reforms.

¹¹ Section 5, Crime and Courts Act 2013.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. The National Debate Advisory Group was convened in November 2014 to support a national debate on the future of policing as recommended in HMIC's report, *Policing in Austerity: Meeting the Challenge*¹².
- 2.2. The membership of the advisory group in November 2014 was as follows:
 - Alex Marshall – Chief Executive of the College of Policing
 - Zoë Billingham – HM Inspector of Constabulary
 - Steve Finnigan – Chief Constable of Lancashire Constabulary
 - Paddy Tipping – Police and Crime Commissioner for Nottinghamshire
 - Steve White – Chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales
 - Irene Curtis and Gavin Thomas – President and Vice-President of the Police Superintendents' Association of England and Wales
 - Francis Habgood – Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police
 - Ben Priestley – National Officer, UNISON
 - Nigel Brook – Assistant Chief Officer, West Yorkshire Police.
- 2.3. During the course of the debate process, Sir Peter Fahy (Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police) and Neil Rhodes (Chief Constable of Lincolnshire Police) joined the advisory group. Sara Thornton (Chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)) has also been involved in the preparation of this paper.
- 2.4. While the National Crime Agency (NCA) was not represented formally on the advisory group, it has, given its role and experience in building capability at national and cross-force levels, been involved in the debate and the preparation of this paper.
- 2.5. Members of the advisory group participated in a personal capacity and not as formal representatives of their respective organisations. The findings of the advisory group set out in this paper therefore reflect the views of individual members, informed by and reflecting the debate process described below, and should not be regarded as agreed positions of the

¹² *Policing in Austerity: Meeting the Challenge*, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, July 2014, www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publication/policing-in-austerity-meeting-the-challenge/

respective organisations, nor as implying that the advisory group is at all times in complete agreement.

2.6. The terms of reference for the advisory group stated that the debate should consider:

- how, and the extent to which and the respects in which, police forces should operate with one another, including on a local, regional and national basis;
- the extent to which policing functions should be performed locally, regionally or nationally;
- how, and the extent to which and the respects in which, public services, of which policing is one part of a wider system, should co-operate, including on a local, regional and national basis;
- the ways in which police forces receive funding (both locally and nationally), having particular regard to the facilitation of the achievement of the objectives of police and crime plans, the freedoms in this respect available to police and crime commissioners, and possible reforms to the policing allocation formula; and
- the nature and extent of available financial and other incentives for improved efficiency and effectiveness in policing.

2.7. The objectives of the advisory group were to:

- provide expertise and input on the overall approach to convening this debate;
- ensure that the views of all elements of the policing family are taken into account;
- support consultation events to develop options;
- provide comment and advice on the emerging options for potential change; and
- agree a shared set of options to be advanced on behalf of the advisory group.

2.8. The advisory group committed to producing its conclusions by June 2015 to inform the thinking of incoming government ministers after the May 2015 general election.

- 2.9. The debate was conducted primarily by inviting all police and crime commissioners and chief constables – together with others – to an event in Birmingham on 5 March 2015 to share their views, draw on successful examples from in and outside policing, and debate a range of options based on five questions¹³. Over 100 police leaders attended the Birmingham event including a number of police and crime commissioners, senior police officers and staff representing nearly 30 forces, staff associations and unions, criminal justice partners, other partner organisations, the private sector and national and local government representatives.
- 2.10. A second event was held at the College of Policing on 1 May 2015, at which over 70 of those participants helped to give further shape to the options now set out in this paper.
- 2.11. These inclusive events have been supplemented by consultation with the public through a call for evidence as well as polling and a small number of focus groups. Lastly, the options in this paper have been informed by the ongoing work of the College of Policing, Sir Peter Fahy's work on specialist capabilities and the work of the NPCC to build regional capability against organised crime.

¹³ The questions were 1. What should be the role and mission of the service in the future and what does this mean for policing priorities? 2. In the future, which policing functions should be at a local and/or cross-force and/or national basis? 3. Are there successful models which bring together local public services to prevent and reduce crime and/or keep victims safe which could be adopted more widely? 4. How should the funding available for policing be distributed to match demand, maintain viable forces and incentivise efficiency and how should local freedoms and flexibilities to raise additional funds be provided? 5. At what point might a force be deemed unviable and what are the warning signs that this is likely to happen?

3. The context for policing in austerity

- 3.1. This chapter sets out the context for policing in the next five years as a preface to the advisory group's thinking.

The funding context

- 3.2. Between 2010/11 and 2015/16, reductions in total funding to individual forces ranged from 12% to 23%¹⁴. Central government funding to the police has fallen substantially since 2010/11 with the 2010 spending review specifying a 20% reduction by 2014/15 and the 2013 spending review including a further 4.9% real terms reduction for 2015/16 (equating to a total cash reduction of £299m in the overall police funding envelope compared with 2014/15)¹⁵¹⁶.
- 3.3. The July 2015 Budget is expected to confirm the resources available for non-protected departments (including the Home Office) in coming years. The analysis¹⁷ by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) at the time of the March Budget of the new government's plans showed departmental spending for the period 2015/16 to 2019/20 reducing by £13.6bn (or 3.7 percent). However, taking account of protected departments, the reduction for non-protected departments in the same period was estimated to be £18.3bn (or 9.4 percent).
- 3.4. While it is difficult to make a firm prediction at the time of writing, it is a reasonable assumption that the police service will experience further significant year-on-year tightening of budgets for at least the next few years. According to the IFS briefing on the March 2015 Budget, the overall spending reductions implied at the time are twice the size of any year's cuts

¹⁴ *Financial sustainability of police forces in England and Wales*, National Audit Office, HC 78 Session 2015-16, 4 June 2015, paragraph 1.19. This range is because of the variation in the proportion of central government funding to council tax funding that individual police and crime commissioners received.

¹⁵ *Op cit*, paragraph 1.8

¹⁶ *Op cit*, in paragraph 1.9, the National Audit Office report also states that, with the exception of council tax freeze grants, the Home Office reallocates some of the total settlement into grants and other policing activities to support the sector more widely. Once reallocated funding has been removed, central government funding direct to commissioners reduced by £2.3 billion (25%), in real terms, from £9 billion to £6.7 billion between 2010/11 and 2015/16.

¹⁷ Presentation on public services spending at the Institute for Fiscal Studies' lunchtime briefing, 19 March 2015

over the past five years. And even though, according to the March 2015 Budget, public spending will begin to grow in 2019/20 in line with national income, there is nothing yet to suggest that policing will see an increase in funding during this period.

Understanding the demand for policing

- 3.5. Historically, the police service has lacked reliable data to allow forces to describe – and predict – how demand for services is changing over time¹⁸. This lack of information represents a weakness for the police service in terms of robust planning for the future, and has resulted in levels of recorded crime becoming a proxy measure for police workload.
- 3.6. However, in its report, *Estimating Demand on the Police Service*,¹⁹ the College of Policing says that there is some consistency across data sources to support the suggestion that, while recorded crime in England and Wales has reduced, demand on police resources has grown in other ways. For example:
- although police recorded crime and incidents have been decreasing over the last 10 years, the trend is now slowing and some types of crime and incidents, for example rape, appear to be increasing;
 - there were 35,000 fewer officers and staff (including police community support officers (PCSOs)) in March 2014 than in March 2010, a fall of 15 percent. Since March 2010, police officer numbers have fallen by around 16,000 (11 percent) to just under 128,000 full time equivalent officers in March 2014. As a result, in 2014 there was one police officer for every 445 members of public, an increase of over 50 people per officer since 2010;

¹⁸ *Financial sustainability of police forces in England and Wales*, National Audit Office, HC 78 Session 2015-16, 4 June 2015, paragraph 11. The National Audit Office found that “there are no national standards for measuring demand and no comprehensive national picture of demand across policing, including demand potentially caused by funding reductions in other sectors”.

¹⁹ *College of Policing analysis: Estimating Demand on the Police Service*, College of Policing January 2015, www.college.police.uk/News/College-news/Pages/First-analysis-of-national-demand.aspx

- the changing crime 'mix' – including new and emerging types of complex crime associated with supporting those who are vulnerable, protecting the public and keeping them safe – means that, over the last ten years, the costs of crime for the police have not fallen as much as the overall numbers of crimes. It is possible that time spent on more 'costly' crime has increased, particularly on complex crimes such as child sexual exploitation;
- the police deal with a wide range of what are sometimes called 'non-crime incidents' that are not captured in police recorded crime – 84 percent of all command and control calls relate to 'non-crime incidents'. Much of the police activity that results from these calls relates to issues of vulnerability, public protection and safeguarding. As with crimes that relate to vulnerability, these incidents are likely to be complex with many involving combined organisational responses (e.g. mental health). In addition to these statutory responsibilities, the police are becoming increasingly involved in other protective activities to prevent re-victimisation of vulnerable people, including Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) and troubled family interventions;
- demand on the police associated with protective statutory requirements, such as Multi-Agency Public Protection Panels, appears to be increasing; and
- there is also a continued requirement for all forces to meet national obligations and standards including those set out in the Strategic Policing Requirement and in relation to specialist areas of policing such as counter-terrorism, organised crime and public order.

3.7. A number of other significant factors are likely to affect future demand for policing services. For example:

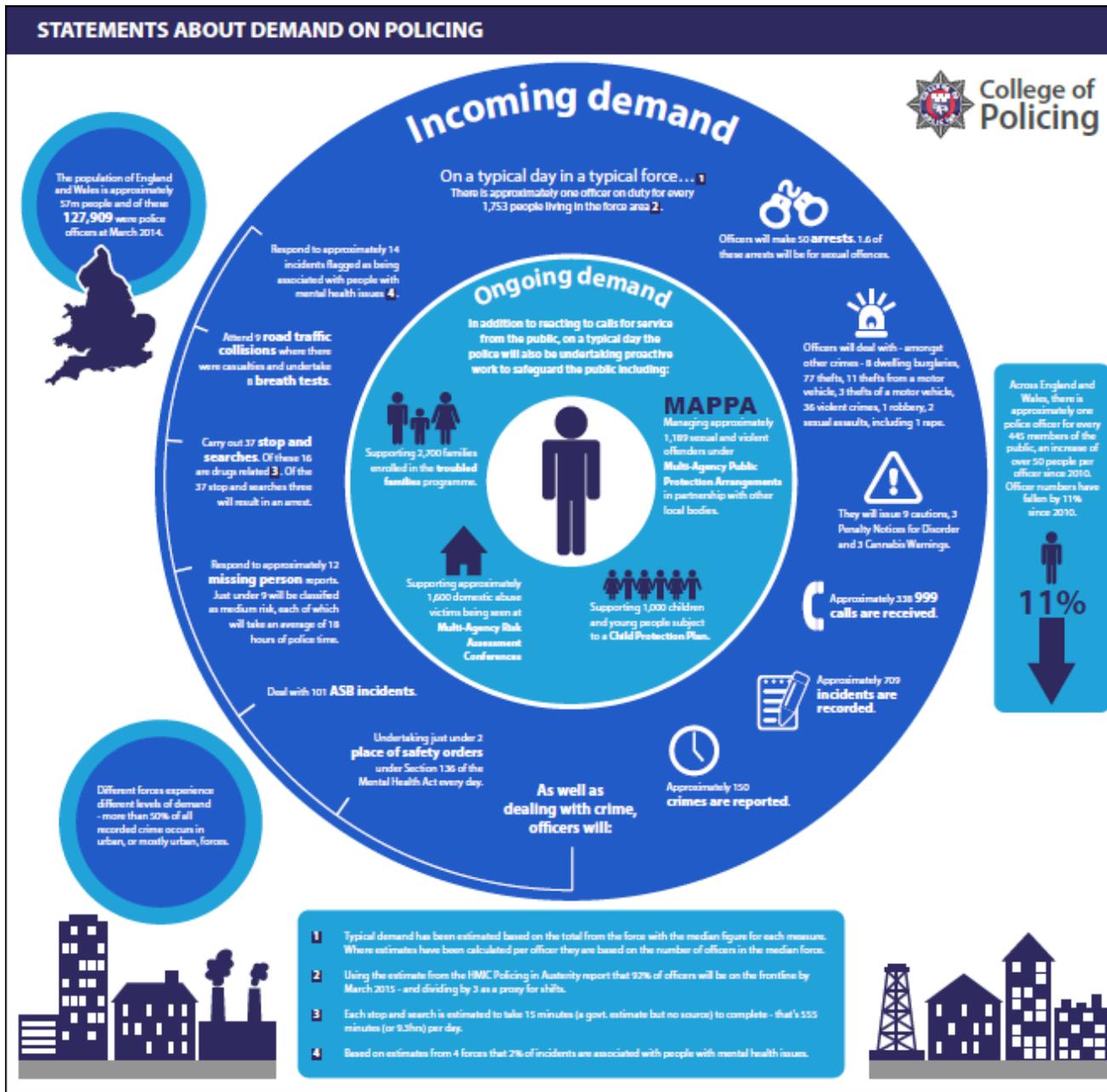
- many forces are recognising increasing and, in some cases, previously hidden threats associated with human trafficking, adult safeguarding, forced marriage, so-called honour-based violence and female genital mutilation – all of which represent a further demand which the police must match;
- future population growth, which is expected to be significant in some force areas over the next ten years, could have a significant adverse effect on demand;
- crime is moving online which brings with it an increasingly international dimension to criminality and therefore complexity; and

- in its report last year on crime recording²⁰, HMIC concluded that on average forces are under-recording crime by 19 percent with even higher rates of under-reporting of crimes of violence against the person (33 percent) and sexual offences (26 percent). Forces that are correcting the accuracy of their crime recording practices as a result of HMIC's findings are now investigating a substantial proportion of crimes that would previously have been 'written-off'.
- 3.8. Police-recorded crimes therefore present an indication of only the reactive part of the police workload. There are many types of work that the police undertake, both as a statutory duty and by common convention, which do not feature as reports of crime and which therefore do not appear in assessments of demand using police-recorded crime data.
- 3.9. In particular, there are proactive activities that the police undertake to reduce crime or protect the public as part of neighbourhood policing, such as focusing on crime and anti-social behaviour hotspots, repeat victims, and prolific or high-volume offenders. There is limited information on the amount of time the police spend on these problem-solving approaches, but understanding what is causing repeat offending or victimisation, or problems in hotspots, and coming up with solutions – often in partnership with others – allows the police to reduce crime and protect the public²¹. This is an effective way to allocate resources for crime reduction.
- 3.10. As neighbourhood policing plays the most important role in this proactive problem-solving activity, maintaining these local teams is essential if the public is to be protected. As police officer and staff numbers decline, there is a concern about whether forces can maintain these teams. Recent data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales on police visibility and HMIC's concern about the potential erosion of neighbourhood policing suggest that there may be some emerging pressure on levels of resilience.
- 3.11. This analysis is captured in Figure 1 below.

²⁰ *Crime-recording: making the victim count*, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, November 2014, www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publication/crime-recording-making-the-victim-count/

²¹ *What works in policing to reduce crime: a summary of the research evidence*, College of Policing, 2013, www.whatworks.college.police.uk/toolkit/Pages/Toolkit.aspx

Figure 1 – College of Policing analysis of demand for police services



- 3.12. As part of its recent report²², the National Audit Office examined whether the Home Office, with other policing stakeholders, has effectively managed the risks of reduced police funding. The report concluded that most forces do not have a thorough evidence-based understanding of demand, which makes it difficult for them to transform services intelligently and demonstrate they are achieving value for money. The advisory group agrees with this analysis.
- 3.13. The NAO report went on to conclude that the Home Office needs to be better informed to discharge its ultimate responsibility for overseeing the police, distributing funding and assuring Parliament that forces are providing value for money. The report states that the Home Office needs to work with HMIC, the College of Policing, police and crime commissioners and forces to fill the significant gaps in understanding, particularly around demand and on when forces may be at risk of failing to meet the policing needs of local communities.
- 3.14. The advisory group also agrees with the College's analysis that recorded crime represents only part of any force's workload, and agrees that there is a need to maintain preventive and proactive policing that protects the public through neighbourhood policing and leads to reduced demands on the police service.
- 3.15. In order that the police service is able to respond effectively to this new demand picture, the advisory group also recognises that transformation needs to take place across a number of areas, including reviewing the skills and make-up of the workforce, maximising opportunities from technology to automate and streamline working practices, and working more closely with partners across the public, private and voluntary sectors. We return to these points later in the paper.
- 3.16. The advisory group believes that the police service must invest in building on the work of the College of Policing to develop a much better understanding, both nationally and at force level, of the rapidly-changing demands that they are facing.

²² *Financial sustainability of police forces in England and Wales*, National Audit Office, HC 78 Session 2015-16, 4 June 2015.

Working with others to protect the public from harm and respond to complex problems

- 3.17. As the analysis from the College of Policing shows, new, complex crimes and other incidents involving protecting vulnerable people and keeping them safe are on the rise. An effective response to many of these issues goes far beyond the remit of the police and cuts across existing organisational boundaries, requiring a much more joined-up response from local public services. For online crime and criminality with an international dimension, the private sector and non-governmental organisations also have a significant role to play.
- 3.18. The College's analysis supports the point that the role of policing on the ground today has expanded to be about much more than crime. These activities are critical to protecting some of the most vulnerable people in our society; but the police's role in them has led to confusion regarding the purpose of the police service.
- 3.19. Meeting this challenge is made more difficult by the budget pressures with which local public services are wrestling. There is, for example, evidence that reductions in some services (for example community mental health services) encourage the public to view the police as a 'public service of last resort' when they are unable to access the help they need. This puts even greater pressure on police resources and is not sustainable in the long term.
- 3.20. The advisory group believes that if any local public service decides unilaterally to retrench services designed to protect the public then we will collectively have failed the most vulnerable people in our society. The advisory group believes that a much better approach would be for local public services to work more closely together.
- 3.21. There are already positive examples of joined-up services of this kind. However, across public services – including policing – this will require greater emphasis on a different skill set. This requires investment in leadership, building capability through mentoring and coaching, and putting a different set of incentives in place, including looking at how we pay and reward.

- 3.22. The concept of joining up public services locally around shared outcomes is not new and is reflected in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 which places a statutory duty on the police and local authorities to work together with partners and agencies to identify local crime and disorder priorities; to formulate strategies to assist in tackling these priorities, and to reduce crime at the local level and monitor and evaluate those strategies²³.
- 3.23. There are many examples where individual forces are working with public service partners locally to tackle specific groups or issues or achieve shared outcomes, for example, through the troubled families project (including pre-offending behaviour work), youth offending teams and integrated offender management. However, these examples are often on a relatively small scale, do not follow a consistent approach and/or are not shared effectively so other forces can easily replicate what works.
- 3.24. To make joint working a reality across public services, the advisory group believes that both the scope and ambition of such work must be considerably increased which will require sustained leadership and commitment from both national and local government, and across a broad range of public service leaders at all levels. It will also require a change to the culture of the police service, the skills it values in its leaders, and how it measures and rewards success.

Conclusion

- 3.25. The context for the future of policing is highly challenging and is expected to become even more so over the course of the next five years.
- 3.26. The conclusion of the advisory group is that the police service must go further in changing itself so that it continues to achieve its primary goal of preventing crime and keeping the public safe. But in order to succeed, the police service also needs to reach beyond its organisational boundaries to work much more closely with other public services involved in protecting the public from harm. The next two chapters set out options for further discussion in these areas.

²³ Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 states that each authority needs to do all it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder and to ensure services give due regard to crime and disorder.

3.27. The options are ambitious and, even if developed as described and at pace, would take time to be implemented. The final chapter of this paper sets out options for an agreed set of indicators which all those involved in policing could adopt as early warning signs that a force or forces are at risk.

4. How the police service in England and Wales might change

- 4.1. This chapter sets out a potential framework for policing in England and Wales as the basis for further discussion. It begins by emphasising the near unanimous view of all those with an interest in policing that the police service must place as much emphasis on preventing crime as it does on responding to and investigating crime once it has happened. Managing the demand for services more effectively must be an important goal in coming years.
- 4.2. The advisory group has considered particularly the importance of ‘public value’, i.e. recognising that measures of added value go beyond counting activities and outputs to include ways in which public organisations contribute to the wider aims of society. For the police service, this includes its role in helping to create a fair, just and peaceful society and helping citizens to live confident, safe and fulfilling lives. Critical to public value is what the public indicate they see as important priorities and what adds to the quality of their lives. These questions of public value inform the options set out in this chapter.
- 4.3. The chapter goes on to describe a possible new approach to policing which maintains the focus on accessible, local policing working for, and with, communities while providing greater efficiency and resilience through shared capabilities and standardised support functions.
- 4.4. The chapter concludes by describing the opportunity that such changes could present to replace the current complex and opaque national funding formula, and how a whole-system approach to technology could support the scale of change required.

Getting ‘upstream’ of crime – balancing response and prevention activity in a possible new approach to policing

- 4.5. In 2014, HMIC found²⁴ that, although forces have worked hard to protect neighbourhood policing, there was further evidence of its erosion, with the workload and remit of neighbourhood teams broadening further and higher than anticipated reductions of PCSO numbers. HMIC found that leaders of the police service recognised the value of neighbourhood policing but that,

²⁴ *Policing in Austerity: Meeting the Challenge*, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, July 2014, www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publication/policing-in-austerity-meeting-the-challenge

in the face of continuing budget pressures, many said that the police service could become increasingly reactive (with a focus on responding to 999 calls and investigating crime) rather than preventing and reducing crime.

- 4.6. The advisory group believes that the future of policing must not simply be about response and enforcement. Throughout the debate, the advisory group has found widespread agreement that local policing should balance responding to emergencies and other incidents with early action to prevent crime before it happens, reducing reoffending and investing in restorative approaches. Neighbourhood policing plays the most important role in generating the flow of information which allows this early action to happen.
- 4.7. Reaffirming the police service's collective commitment to preventive police work is important because the evidence reviewed by the College of Policing²⁵ strongly supports the conclusion that targeted and proactive policing, with an emphasis on preventive problem-solving, not only leads to sustained reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour but also reduces the public's demand for reactive police services²⁶. Based on these findings, the College's report on demand suggests that if a balance of response and preventive activity is not maintained, there is a risk that the downward trend in some crime types, which is likely to be a result of problem-solving, might not continue²⁷.
- 4.8. Maintaining a preventive approach will help policing to provide an effective police service for the public. It is, though, important to emphasise that this approach, while having a significant contribution to make, is not, on its own, a solution to the challenges ahead.

²⁵ 'What works in policing to reduce crime – a brief overview of the most effective ways the police can fight crime, based on the best research evidence at the time of publishing', College of Policing, October 2012, www.whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/overview/Pages/default.aspx.

²⁶ See also 'Spending on late intervention – how we can do better for less', Haroon Chowdry and Carey Oppenheim, Early Intervention Foundation, 12 February 2015, www.eif.org.uk/publications/spending-on-late-intervention-how-we-can-do-better-for-less/ which estimates that the annual cost of 'late intervention' to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour is £5.2bn.

²⁷ As well as within England and Wales, there is existing activity internationally which demonstrates the value of this approach for example how the NCA engages its International Liaison Officer network to get upstream and thereby helps to mitigate threats faced by the UK at national, regional and local level.

- 4.9. Successful preventive problem-solving will require the police to work in close partnership with other local public services and communities to identify and implement solutions to problems. Partners will play a vital role as they will have expertise, information and/or powers which will be critical to solving problems, for example, with nuisance neighbours. We return to this point in the next chapter of this paper.

What members of the public think – the role of the police

Ipsos MORI conducted eight qualitative discussion groups in four locations across England and Wales during which participants discussed their views and priorities on local policing, and how policing should be provided and paid for locally.

Participants identified a wide range of activities they expected their local police force to prioritise, clustered around responding to and preventing crime.

Participants wanted their local police force to spend as much time as possible tackling serious crime and as little time as possible on paperwork and 'petty' crime. Interestingly, some participants tended to view a broader range of crimes as 'serious' – not only sex offences, drug dealing and fraud but also anti-social behaviour. Others were of the opinion that all crimes were serious and should be treated as such. Although the sample size was very small, some younger participants especially felt that policing priorities should be focused on keeping people safe, being visible, and responding quickly, rather than on types of crime.

Participants also identified activities that they considered could be performed at a level above their local force including counter-terrorism and dealing with organised crime and cyber-crime.

In a separate survey of around 2000 adults conducted in February 2015, 48 percent of respondents ranked responding in person to emergencies as the most important service for forces to prioritise. 15 percent ranked tackling crimes of all types as most important; 13 percent ranked a local uniformed presence as most important, and 12 percent ranked countering terrorism and extremism as most important.

When asked to rank specific types of crime in order of the priority the police should give to tackling them, violent crime and crimes against the person were ranked highest (with an average rank of 1.7). Rape and other sexual offences had an average ranking of 2.4; serious and organised crime an average ranking of 3.7 and terrorism/extremism an average ranking of 4.3.

Most discussion group participants did not prioritise crime prevention over responding to crime or vice versa as both were seen as important. Participants tended to recognise the importance of prevention but not at the expense of responding to crime which was seen as a core police function.

Participants reasoned that investing in crime prevention meant less crime and a reduction in the associated suffering and cost later on. However, they also wanted to see criminals caught quickly. Instinctively, participants did not view this issue as an either/or decision.

On community policing, while many expected a visible and familiar local presence, others, particularly younger people, questioned its value and whether it was always an effective use of resources. However, participants of all ages expected the police to have a good understanding of the local area and to address issues through problem solving.

On local crime prevention work, participants frequently raised the point that the police should engage with, and understand, young people and win their respect. Some older participants also highlighted targeting visible community policing in troubled areas as a necessary crime prevention method.

Many participants perceived the local police as too involved in activities that took them away from their stated priorities, including paperwork and administration and matters such as speeding and other traffic offences and shoplifting that they thought could be better dealt with by PCSOs.

The survey showed 51 percent of respondents thought the police should give equal priority to all types of crime, but the survey suggested that different age groups might hold different views with older respondents being more inclined to hold this view.

Organising policing in the future

- 4.10. The advisory group has chosen not to focus in this paper on the issue of potential mergers of individual forces or what might be the 'right' number of forces in England and Wales.
- 4.11. The advisory group believes that thinking about police organisation must proceed from a clear set of founding principles which describe what policing should be for over coming years, and reflect the principal objectives of policing (the so-called policing mission) to prevent crime and protect people, especially the most vulnerable, from harm. Much more work will be needed on the appropriate structure or structures for the police service based on these principles.
- 4.12. These founding principles – which have been developed following widespread consultation and reaffirm the importance of the nine principles set out in the 'General Instructions' issued to every new officer from 1829 onwards (known as the 'Peelian principles') – then allow us to describe options for a possible new framework of policing described below.

4.13. The principles are that:

- We will seek to protect the public and keep people safe from harm, especially the most vulnerable members of our communities. This will mean focusing as much on early action to prevent and reduce crime as reacting to crime once it has happened.
- We will provide a police service that is valued and supported by the public, tailoring the service to individual needs and focusing on the victim.
- We will seek to protect ease of access to frontline services by a range of means, including online access and a visible local policing presence that works directly with communities.
- We will enhance capabilities and achieve value for money by scaling up specialist capabilities and standardising functions where appropriate. This principle means living within continued budget pressures while helping to maintain capability and resilience across policing but without losing agility when fighting crime.
- We will work in close co-operation with all other organisations involved in public protection to keep communities safe and work with communities so they play their part alongside the police in securing their neighbourhoods. This points towards greater integration between public services, for example through the development of shared, local public safety plans with single leadership and shared budgets.

4.14. In addition to these principles, it will be critical that any change maintains transparency and a clear system of local democratic accountability for policing in order to retain legitimacy with the public.

4.15. These principles suggest a possible framework for policing in England and Wales with the following characteristics:

- Local frontline services accessible to communities which provide:
 - (a) 24/7 response for emergencies and non-emergency incidents;
 - (b) neighbourhood policing focused on preventive problem-solving and community engagement;
 - (c) protection for vulnerable people through safeguarding and offender management; and

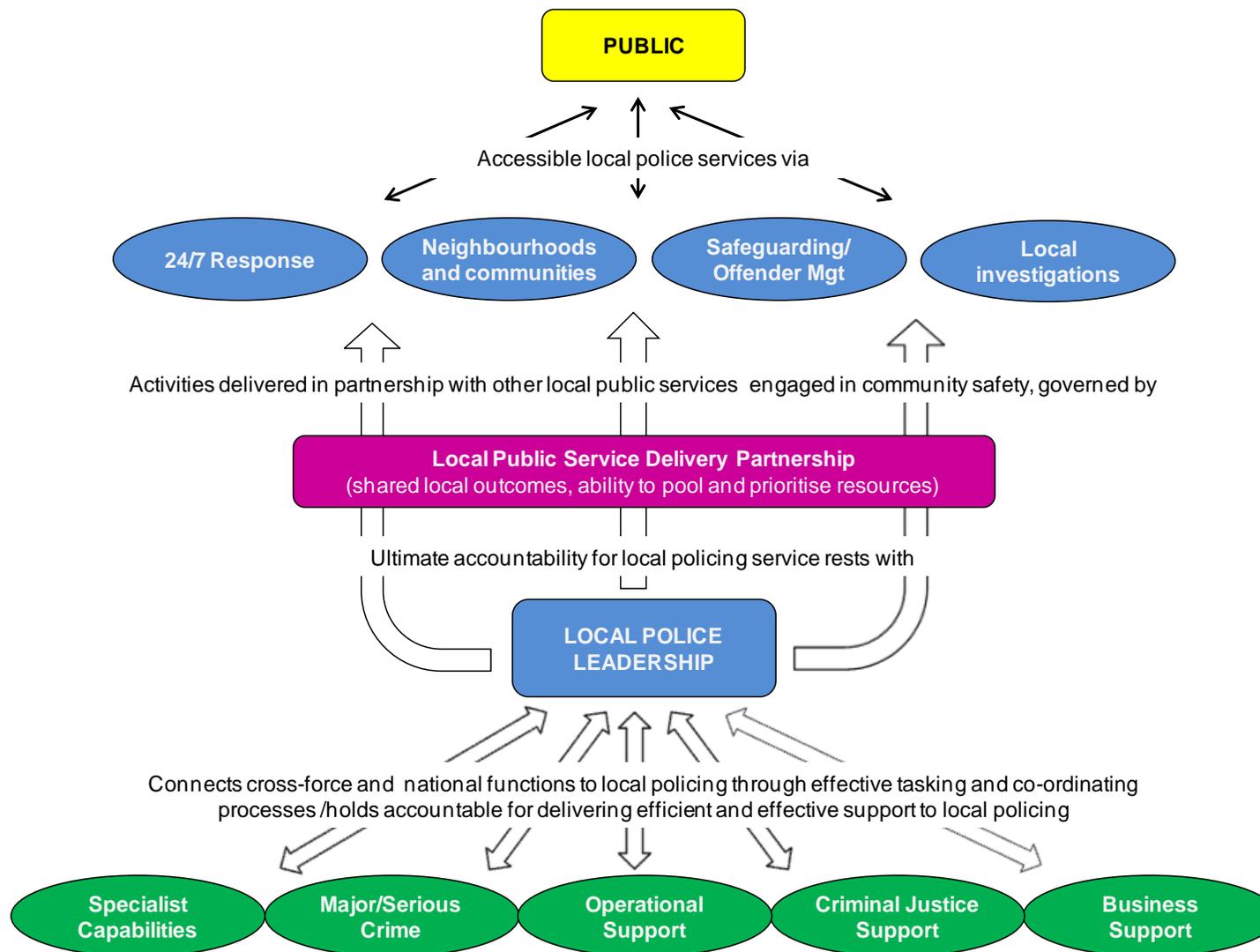
(d) local crime investigations.

- These services will be provided collaboratively with other local public services involved in community safety, working to a common set of outcomes as part of partnership arrangements.²⁸ These arrangements will include the ability to pool and prioritise resources to achieve effective local outcomes.
- Specialist capabilities and areas of operational support will be consolidated into cross-force functions, strategically located and operating to national standards. These include:
 - (a) specialist capabilities within the Strategic Policing Requirement.
 - (b) operational support including criminal justice support, contact management and resource management support.
- The most highly-specialised capabilities (such as counter-terrorism) will be provided nationally.
- Cross-force or national functions are likely to be the most effective ways of building new capabilities quickly.
- Business support functions will be provided through greater economies of scale but should reflect local circumstances.
- This approach to specialist and support functions will minimise the number of locations required to support provision of an effective police service, allow capabilities common to different policing activities to be deployed flexibly, and preserve access to capabilities for all forces, and provide efficiency savings without losing the ability to deploy rapidly on the basis of threat, risk and harm.
- Different arrangements for cross-force working will be appropriate depending on the nature of the participating forces. For example, in some areas a larger force might provide the location for these capabilities on behalf of the participating forces whereas, in others, shared capabilities might be added to existing arrangements such as regional organised crime units. This will require further work based on local circumstances and should be an iterative process, focusing first on those areas of specialist capability which should only be provided on a cross-force basis.

²⁸ This is in line with the duty on public authorities in section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

- 4.16. There is recognition on the part of the advisory group that in this age of austerity, specialist capabilities cannot be properly protected, further developed and afforded if the traditional approach of all 43 forces, each with their own full suite of specialist functions, continues.
- 4.17. In creating capability through cross-force or national functions, it will be critically important that specialist units, for example those relating to organised crime, maintain their ability to connect and work closely with local neighbourhood teams. Local policing is the bedrock of policing and is central to its continued success. To serve and protect communities fully, any new framework must support the flow of information and intelligence (supported by effective tasking and co-ordinating arrangements) to make the connection between neighbourhoods, cross-force units and the national and international spheres.
- 4.18. An option for a possible framework for policing is illustrated in Figure 2 on page 30. This option is in line with work that the police service has already started, led by Sir Peter Fahy's on how specialist capabilities should be provided; builds on the NCA's national co-ordination role and existing successful approaches on counter-terrorism and serious and organised crime, and complements the work of the NPCC to build regional capability. This, and other potential options, needs much more detailed discussion and work both within and outside the police service.
- 4.19. Particularly critical for the success of such a framework will be ensuring connectivity between local, cross-force and national functions, and effective governance and accountability arrangements for cross-force and national functions so that local police leaders can have confidence in the support their forces receive from those functions. We return to these issues later in this paper.
- 4.20. While there is more detailed work to be done on this thinking, the advisory group believes that changes such as these which follow the principles described above will help policing to provide an effective police service to the public and play a part in meeting the challenges ahead.

Figure 2 – a possible framework for policing. Source: Advisory group on national debate.



What members of the public think – models of policing

Ipsos MORI conducted eight qualitative discussion groups in four locations across England and Wales during which participants discussed their views and priorities on local policing, and how policing should be provided and paid for locally.

When the current policing model for England and Wales was described, many participants in the focus groups perceived that it was potentially inefficient for each force to have its own management structure.

There was little spontaneous awareness of how forces collaborate at present. When given examples, participants tended to be in favour, particularly on collaborating on tackling crime and on sharing 'back room' functions such as finance, IT and personnel. Participants expected forces already to be collaborating on tackling crime through sharing of intelligence and records, especially in relation to organised crime and terrorism.

However, participants also highly valued the local force's connection to the area. Participants stated that they would not want to lose the sense of having a local, identifiable police force which was known locally, knew the community, and was visible. 59 percent of respondents to the omnibus survey said that retaining the identity of their local force was very (33 percent) or fairly (26 percent) important – with the most frequent reason given being to preserve the connection with the local community.

The idea of merging forces was viewed with suspicion by a large number of discussion group participants as they felt it might be driven by financial imperatives rather than providing a better service. However, there were some nuances to the discussion on force identity which some participants felt should not entail variation in standards of policing. In particular, participants felt that the importance of local identity did not apply to functions which people viewed as largely administrative such as HR. Many participants noted that collaboration should not mean any reduction of resources on the ground or the police becoming more distant and less involved with the community.

While a number of participants talked about the importance of police officers being local, others questioned whether this should always be the case. Irrespective of how police are organised, participants expected there should be national standards for police officers' conduct that should not be overruled by local considerations, and that police officers should be recruited and trained to the same standards.

Participants did not have especially strong views on specific types of activity that should be kept with the local police. They were, however, clear that it was important to have a familiar local presence and for officers to understand the area. Participants' main concern was that there should be no reduction in local services and resources.

In some groups there was little objection to forces collaborating and even merging at a regional level, providing the local understanding was not lost and police resources locally were not reduced.

Areas perceived as suitable for cross-force working with other forces centred on 'back office' or centralised functions such as HR, IT and finance on the one hand, and dealing with serious and organised crime on the other (e.g. drug-trafficking and people-trafficking). The separate omnibus survey confirmed that counter-terrorism and extremism are two areas where a provider larger than a local force is seen as most appropriate.

Developing a local and cross-force/national approach to policing

- 4.21. Based on the principles and framework described in the last section, the advisory group has developed a more detailed possible option for local, cross-force and national policing illustrating where current policing functions could be situated in future. This potential 'layered' option is shown in Figure 3 on page 34.
- 4.22. The advisory group provides this option to prompt further thought, discussion and debate and does not present it as a preferred solution. The advisory group accepts that this option might not be appropriate for some forces. There is always a risk of over-simplification through such options and there are many areas of policing that will require work across local, cross-force and national layers based on risk and/or the nature of the threat. Nevertheless, the advisory group believes that an option of this kind is needed to spark further debate and potentially achieves the twin goals of preserving responsive, flexible front line police services which are run and managed from within the communities they serve while also realising the potential savings and/or increased capability and resilience which come from economies of scale and standardisation.
- 4.23. The advisory group recognises that much more discussion and work is needed within and outside the police service to work through the detail of this option. The advisory group also acknowledges that moving from the current approach will require concerted effort, strong leadership and a willingness to compromise.

4.24. The advisory group also acknowledges that during the course of the debate, a range of views was expressed regarding which functions should always be provided locally. A number of voices argued in favour of a strong presumption of subsidiarity, i.e. that functions should continue to be provided locally unless there are compelling reasons why they would be better managed cross-force or nationally. Concern was also expressed that the police service must avoid the pitfalls that other public services have experienced in bringing functions together. The advisory group considered subsidiarity but suggests that such a presumption would restrict drastically the police service's ambition for the kind of transformational change it believes is required. The advisory group does, however, support the need to avoid acknowledged risks associated with establishing further cross-force and national functions – in particular relating to maintaining the connection to local policing and ensuring sound tasking and accountability arrangements that allow work and intelligence to flow between layers. This will need to be the subject of much more detailed work.

Figure 3 – A potential local, cross-force and national approach to policing for further discussion



A practical example – how the police service is working locally, cross-force and nationally to tackle online child sexual exploitation

Online child sexual exploitation is an area of significant risk where the NPCC and the NCA have agreed clear roles and responsibilities at local, cross force and national level.

This agreement helps those responsible at each level – individual forces, ROCUs and the NCA – to assess more accurately their resources and capabilities; how they match against requirements and then make evidence-based decisions about where to invest.

This has led to the creation of specialist units within the NCA’s Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Command to undertake, for example, victim identification and complex multi-jurisdictional investigations. Undercover officer online capacity is being consolidated at cross-force level to target those grooming children for sexual abuse. This allows individual forces to focus on intervening against individual offenders within their areas, working closely with local public protection partners.

This approach provides an example of how the police service can work together locally, cross-force and nationally to build capability, resilience and expertise.

A potential complementary approach for large forces – the *West Midlands Police 2020 Blueprint*

West Midlands Police has recently embarked on a major programme to transform how the force provides policing across its area, called the *West Midlands Police 2020 Blueprint*. The Blueprint – designed to reduce costs while making significant changes to the way policing is provided across the West Midlands – might provide a complementary approach to the options set out in this paper for some larger forces.

Central to the West Midlands' Blueprint is changing significantly the way the force listens and involves the public in policing to reflect increasingly diverse and 'digitally savvy' audiences embracing modern, digital technology on a larger scale.

The Blueprint also adopts a more proactive role to preventing crime. This means dedicating more resources to preventing crime and re-offending and expanding offender management to new groups of offenders. The force will also look at how it can integrate what it does more directly with other public services, building on the work done with its mental health triage scheme.

One of the critical elements of the Blueprint will be to protect the future of neighbourhood policing by changing how it is run, and focusing resources on areas of most need. The force is developing a neighbourhood policing model which is not constrained by geographical boundaries with the aim that, by 2020, the force will move to 'mission-led' teams which possess the best local intelligence on areas and can quickly access solutions to be able to help neighbourhoods. The ambition is for these teams to be integrated with partners to offer more effective problem-solving.

As the force develops its new neighbourhood policing model, uniform patrol will also change to become a more tightly-focused activity taking place in the most demanding places.

Governance and accountability arrangements for a possible new approach to policing

- 4.25. As part of this framework, accountability for the maintenance of an efficient and effective police service would continue to sit with local police leaders and police and crime commissioners, as it does now.
- 4.26. However, the possible new approach set out in the preceding sections would also require revised governance and accountability arrangements that span existing local and new cross-force and national functions – be they through a lead force, a new unit, or existing structures with established accountability and tasking structures (such as the NCA and the ROCUs). These arrangements will be critical to allowing local police leaders and police and crime commissioners to assure themselves that the totality of the police service provided to the public in their areas meet the required standards.
- 4.27. In particular, cross-force functions would remain accountable to participating local leaders, which would ensure all forces have a ‘clear line of sight’ and access to specialist capability on the basis of threat, risk and harm. Current experience in the police service is that governance of cross-force functions will also need to improve if local police leaders are to have confidence that the tasking and co-ordination process in relation to these functions can provide their forces with the support they need, when they need it.
- 4.28. With more functions being provided cross-force or nationally, it is likely to make sense to aggregate functions into a single, standalone command or within a lead force acting on behalf of participating forces. At a minimum, there should be a small number of logical and manageable units in order to avoid excessive proliferation of governance and accountability arrangements.
- 4.29. As set out in paragraph 4.15, the appropriate detailed arrangements for cross-force functions will differ depending on the nature of the participating forces. For example, in some areas a larger force might provide the location for these capabilities on behalf of the participating forces. If a lead force model is not desirable or appropriate given local circumstances, then arrangements would need to be put in place to establish a cross-force entity (or entities), each of which would take on functions on behalf of the participating forces. This will require further work based on local circumstances and should be an iterative process, focusing first on those areas of specialist capability which should only be provided on a cross-force basis. This work should build on the example of the most advanced

ROCUs which bring together a number of related, previously force-level, functions into one unit with a single governance arrangement.

- 4.30. It will be critical to the success of this approach that, while cross-force and national functions remain accountable to the leadership of their participating forces, they are also sufficiently robust and independent to make decisions about the service they provide based on threat, risk and harm. Further consideration would also need to be given to the sensitive issue of where tasking sits among local, cross-force and national functions. This will be as much a challenge of a new style of leadership and ways of working among police leaders as it will be about formal governance and accountability arrangements.
- 4.31. A similar approach would be required for any new national functions, recognising that there are already existing mechanisms at national level, such as those for the NCA. It would, however, not be practicable for all forces and police and crime commissioners to be part of formal governance or accountability arrangements for nationally provided functions. However, all forces would have to have clear routes into national functions so that they can address specific operational concerns relevant only to them and receive reports on performance. This might also provide an opportunity to re-examine the governance arrangements for some existing national functions or organisations with different accountability arrangements.

Changes required to create a possible new approach to policing

- 4.32. This possible new framework for policing represents significant change but builds on notable successes, for example the rapid establishment of regional counter-terrorism units. The NCA works closely with and through ROCUs, providing specialist capabilities that are not held locally, including access to the NCA's network of International Liaison Officers. ROCUs also work with the NCA on NCA-led operational activities, e.g. through the NCA's Child Exploitation and Online Protection command, the National Cyber Crime Unit and the UK Financial Intelligence Unit. HMIC has also identified²⁹ a number of successful collaborations between forces; between forces and other local public sector organisations and a few, larger value, partnerships with the private sector. HMIC's analysis showed that the majority of forces were working with other forces in some areas of activity, particularly in specialist areas such as firearms training and major crime

²⁹ *Policing in Austerity: Meeting the Challenge*, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, July 2014, Chapter 4, www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publication/policing-in-austerity-meeting-the-challenge/

investigations, and that most forces had an appetite for more collaborative working with local authorities. A smaller number of forces were considering how the private sector could be engaged in innovative ways to support cost savings.

4.33. These experiences suggest that the following will be required to make an approach of this kind work:

- A consistent model for change that focuses on achieving outcomes of safe, healthy and thriving communities, and supports senior police leaders and police and crime commissioners to achieve significant change with sound evidence, high standards and a degree of consistency.
- Trusting relationships between leaders, role-modelled and reinforced to the rest of the force. This will include a willingness on the part of leaders to let go of control, and an acceptance that the benefits will not always be reaped equally.
- Empowerment of cross-force and national functions to make decisions based on threat, risk and harm while ensuring that all forces have access to specialist capabilities.
- Addressing skills gaps when cross-force working involves dealing with commercial ventures and practices. Professional skills, in particular in change, demand and performance management, will be needed to secure the best services.
- Flexibility for forces to set up joint ventures or other vehicles as appropriate to support cross-force working.

4.34. A particular consideration during these changes must be the wellbeing of officers and staff, keeping them engaged, committed and healthy. The police service is seeing attrition due to changes in the way it does business and the loss of non-operational roles in most forces has increased the urgency to build greater capability and resilience. Forces in the UK lost 600,000 days last year to stress, anxiety or depression, and some 78 officers nationwide spent the entire year away from work because of such problems. The Metropolitan Police Service alone lost 53,000 days to stress-related sickness last year, with Greater Manchester Police losing 24,000.

4.35. The NPCC's Wellbeing and Engagement Working Group has adopted a four-pronged approach to address the wellbeing challenges the police service faces. In the past year, the group has focussed on:

- Developing the evidence base of what has already been done, and what is known about wellbeing in the context of policing, and is congruent with the College of Policing approach to work.
- A Public Health Responsibility Deal is also being adopted, working with the Health England to promote the commitment of the service to the wellbeing of its people.
- To showcase this there will be a series of 'Getting Started' events that will assist forces in developing wellbeing within their areas.
- The working group will collate information, data and analysis on what interventions work in addressing wellbeing in the policing workplace. Forces are also tracking and analysing people data; with a focus on the appropriate use of health and welfare resources, police support departments; and disciplinary bodies.

4.36. Continuing this focus on the wellbeing of the police service's people will play a critical part in making successful change happen.

Reform of funding arrangements

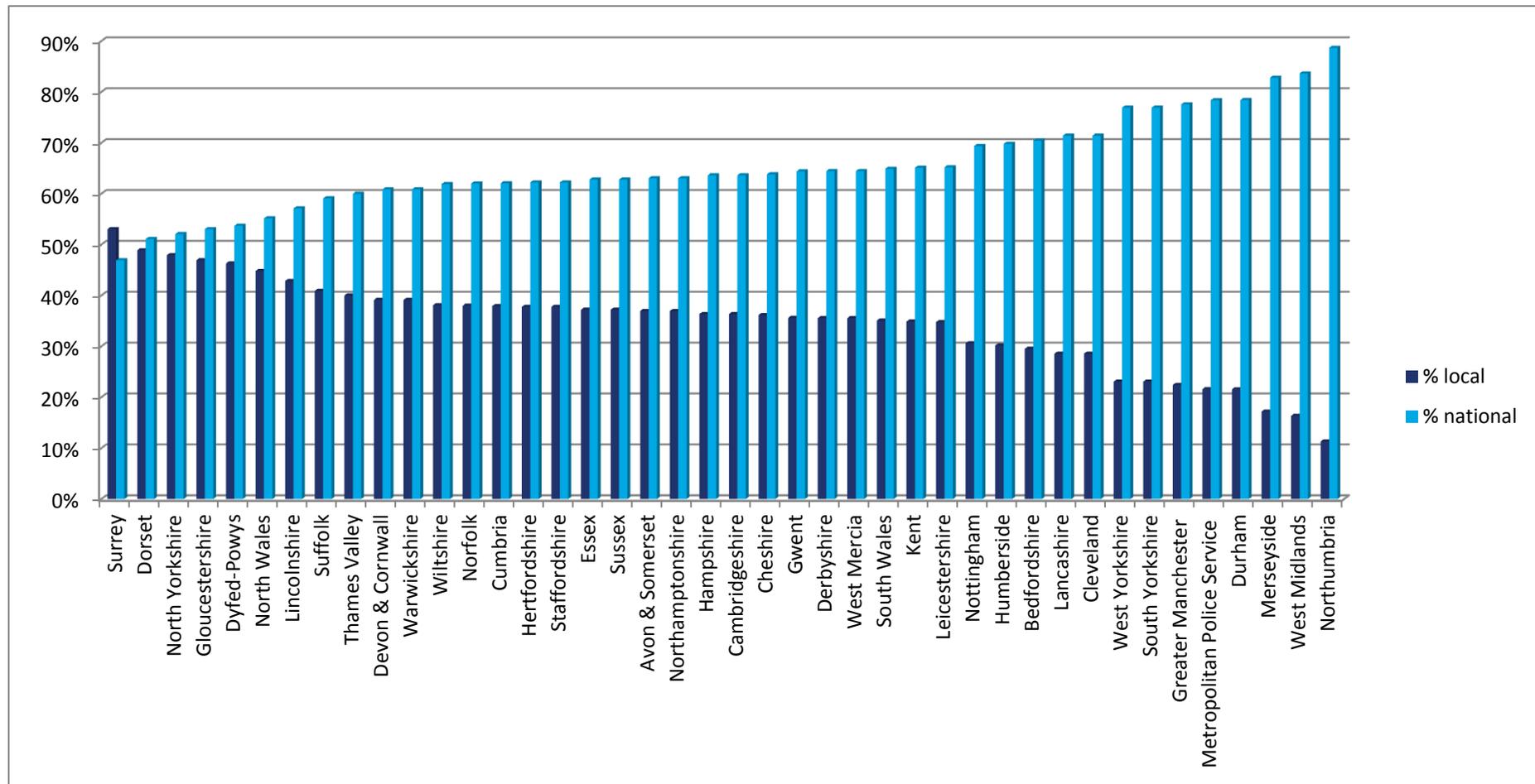
4.37. The shift to a possible new approach to policing presents an opportunity to revisit and reform the current arrangements for funding policing in England and Wales. The advisory group does not intend as part of this paper to get into the minutiae of the current funding formula or make detailed recommendations for change. However, the advisory group believes that there is a persuasive case for change.

4.38. The grant-based funding formula overseen by the Home Office is seen as backward-looking, highly complex, opaque and, through its reliance on out of date data and regression, distant from current policing reality. This is a particular weakness as it focuses on the past rather than reflecting real needs and being adaptable to future needs and does not take account of policing priorities to increase prevention and visible policing (as opposed to crime data) or the need for greater flexibility to work in partnership locally. There is also concern as to whether the formula can take account of predicted significant population growth in some force areas.

- 4.39. The current approach is made more complex for forces and police and crime commissioners because of their very different funding positions as a result of local history. Figure 4 on page 42 compares the percentage of total funding each force receives through the national grant formula and from local funding³⁰. It shows that Surrey Police uniquely draws most of its funding (53 percent) from local taxation whereas Northumbria Police draws 89 percent of its funding from national grants and only 11 percent locally. Many of the largest forces in England and Wales draw less than a quarter of their funding from local taxation. This means that, across England and Wales, just under 30 percent of police funding comes from local taxation as opposed to 70 percent from the national grant; any across-the-board cuts in the national grant; therefore fall unevenly; for example, a 10 percent grant cut would reduce Surrey's total budget by 5 percent whereas it would represent a cut of 8 percent for Northumbria.
- 4.40. This disparity in the funding mix makes some forces particularly susceptible to changes in the funding formula. In the example above, a change in the formula affects 89 percent of Northumbria's funding whereas it affects only 47 percent of Surrey's.

³⁰ Based on Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) data collected from forces in 2011.

Figure 4 – comparison of national and local funding sources for 42 police force areas³¹



³¹ Based on Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) data collected from forces in 2011.

What members of the public think – funding the police service

Ipsos MORI conducted eight qualitative discussion groups in four locations across England and Wales during which participants discussed their views and priorities on local policing, and how policing should be provided and paid for locally.

Discussion group participants discussed the extent to which they would be prepared to spend more for their police service.

Generally participants were against spending more to maintain the current level of service, especially in the one area where the local police force tended not to be highly regarded by the group participants.

Perceptions of the economic situation and austerity also affected attitudes towards paying more. In an area where the local police force was not highly regarded by the focus group participants, there was a view that money was not the issue and that if the force was better run and managed, it could provide a reasonable service within current resources.

There was slightly more openness to paying more for an enhanced police service. There was however scepticism about whether paying more would result in improvements. Some people were even sceptical about whether the extra money they paid would go to the police, and questioned whether they would know how it is being spent. Trust and transparency would therefore be vital before participants would consent to paying more for policing, and a clear idea of what the expected improvements would be. In addition, participants reported wanting to see efficiency savings and best use of current resources before consenting to paying more.

Participants were strongly against the idea that those who use the police service more, or who live in a relatively high-crime area, should pay more than those who use the service less or who live in low-crime areas. However, some felt that individuals who waste police time should personally be made to pay more. That may include those who take up police time for being drunk and disorderly. There was also support for the organisers of one-off events such as demonstrations, parades, and sports fixtures, being liable for policing costs. In the separate February 2015 omnibus survey, 31 percent of respondents thought policing should predominantly be funded nationally with a small proportion of local funding. 24 percent thought that policing should be funded equally nationally and locally. However, a further 17 percent of respondents did not know.

4.41. As a result, the advisory group believes that, as part of the review of police funding already underway, the Home Office should consider introducing more transparent funding arrangements which emphasise current policing priorities and are adaptable to future priorities and allow greater flexibility for local partnership working, as follows:

- More flexibility should be given to police and crime commissioners to set the amount of funding raised through local taxation.
- If the funding cap³² remains in place, it would be more equitable if forces that are able to raise less funding through local taxation are given the flexibility to catch up with those forces that are able to raise more. One way this could be achieved is by setting the cap by reference to a set increase to the (Band D) precept level rather than a percentage e.g. £5 rather than 2%. The current rules, based on a percentage increase, mean that forces with higher precepts can potentially increase their precepts by far more than forces with lower precepts.
- Consideration should be given to direct funding of any units set up to provide functions cross-force or nationally rather than routing money via participating forces. If this occurs, it will be critical that these units do not become detached from participating forces. Nevertheless, the advisory group believes that the time is right to explore the potential benefits and problems of direct funding as there is some evidence that this approach has helped to build capability in important areas such as counter-terrorism and organised crime, and that it might help to develop more quickly specialist capabilities in emerging areas such as responding to online and cyber-crime. The advisory group recognised earlier in this paper the concerns about the accountability and governance of these functions but believes that these concerns are better addressed through putting in place robust management arrangements rather than relying on control of these units' finances through cumbersome and time-consuming processes.
- As now, the majority of national grant funding will go direct to police and crime commissioners, but under a revised formula which is more transparent and reflects the full range of policing activities (see below).

³² In technical terms, the former capping arrangements were replaced by referendum thresholds through the Localism Act 2011.

4.42. This type of funding approach would align with the principles and options described elsewhere in this paper and especially support the desire for more flexibility to join up local policing with other public services through pooled public service budgets, based on the fact that this is 'public money for the public good', as well as cross-force working between forces. It is also in line with the recent recommendations of the National Audit Office that the Home Office should adopt an approach to funding that takes fairer account of forces' local circumstances³³.

4.43. There is strong support across local government for multi-year settlements and precept/council tax planning so any further work on this issue should also consider whether police spending should be looked at separately or as part of a total local tax levy for public services and whether it should be constrained or guided in any way.

4.44. More generally, the advisory group believes that reform of the funding formula should reflect the widely-recognised benchmarks for a high quality funding formula. The formula must:

- have strong underlying logic
- support police objectives
- be technically robust
- be resistant to manipulation
- be transparent and
- be comprehensible.

4.45. So a new formula should:

- be forward-looking (i.e. able to adapt easily to future priorities) and transparent so as to build confidence;
- be responsive to new demands and changes in the nature of policing, especially giving greater emphasis to prevention and partnership-working as well as responding to new types of criminal activity and taking account of local levels of deprivation; and

³³ *Financial sustainability of police forces in England and Wales*, National Audit Office, HC 78 Session 2015-16, 4 June 2015, Recommendation A.

- be developed in close consultation with the police and other stakeholders, drawing on professional expertise so that responsibility is shared while ensuring that no vested interest exerts undue influence.
- 4.46. Ideally, a new formula would be part of arrangements that provide multi-year agreements to help forces to plan and innovate with certainty and reflect broader thinking about the future funding of the police e.g. in terms of devolution of taxation responsibility, pooling of Whole Place Community Budgets between local public service partners, etc.
- 4.47. The advisory group recognises that reform is unlikely ever to achieve a perfect formula and that change might run the risk of creating more problems than it solves. However, on balance the advisory group believes that the time is right to address these issues, including addressing the wide variations in the amount that forces are able to raise locally for historic reasons.
- 4.48. If a fundamental review of this kind is agreed, then the parameters need to be clear from the outset so that forces and police and crime commissioners understand how the transition will be made from one funding system to another to allow them to manage uncertainty and allow for robust planning.

How technology can support the move to a possible new policing approach

- 4.49. Most officers and staff recognise that police IT is currently a patchwork of often disconnected systems. Typically forces will operate hundreds of applications, integrated to varying levels, which means it is difficult to have confidence in a single version of the truth on which to base decisions. Although many IT departments began the austerity period focused on day-to-day tactical decisions and minimising spending, as time has passed and transformation has become more critical, they have moved to showing how IT supports the future of policing with some excellent mobile systems being introduced.
- 4.50. The critical enabling role of IT is widely recognised and the picture is changing with increasing examples of IT supporting cross-force models. The Athena and Minerva programmes which bring forces together to connect information, align processes and share costs offer an opportunity to achieve a cross-force model for functions such as crime assessment or intelligence while taking advantage of reduced infrastructure costs. Similarly, some forces have jointly procured and implemented resource

planning systems which collect, store, manage and interpret data from across many activities to provide an integrated view of police business.

- 4.51. Beyond individual applications, some forces have recognised the need for wholesale transformation of IT and are entering into innovative, outcome-focused partnering arrangements. West Midlands Police has begun to link financial payment to the achievement of operational results and better service to the public and therefore IT improvements should be strategically focused on achieving those results. Similarly, Staffordshire Police is stating an ambition that technology should support a wider public service reform agenda in the county. In both instances there is a clear five-year vision and target operating model, which IT will support.
- 4.52. Forces' IT departments are increasingly accepting the need for a clear vision of how IT will support effective policing. This requires compatible and interoperable systems with standard operating practices that join up locally-integrated public services with cross-force or national bodies. This will be a significant challenge, not only for the police but for its partners too.
- 4.53. The approaches described above will place significant emphasis on flexible IT infrastructure, clear technology standards, integration and information management to ensure applications can easily be swapped in and out, systems talk to each other and are talking to each other about the same person or event. Technology concepts such as service-oriented architecture and master data management need to become increasingly familiar to police leaders.
- 4.54. As set out elsewhere in this paper, better access to information will be a critical part of achieving better joint working across the public sector. At a local level, matching of police, local authority, health and wider datasets will be fundamental in transforming local public service provision. Not only will this allow for a better understanding of overall demand so that integrated services can be planned strategically, it will also improve reactive decision-making and the co-ordination of action. Data sharing/access agreements will need to change and become more straightforward in order make this change happen. When advanced analytics are applied to such datasets, it will become easier to identify risk and to achieve true early intervention. This will be a major part of managing demand for policing services much more effectively.
- 4.55. Often data protection legislation and enhanced security requirements are seen as insurmountable barriers to achieving these kinds of changes. But the group believes that, if there is a shared commitment at all levels to overcome these barriers, there are numerous examples of how data can be integrated to improve strategic and tactical decision-making.

4.56. Of course, in a possible new policing approach of local, cross-force and national functions, technology can only ever be part of the solution. The technology exists, but benefits will only be achieved if force leaders, the ways of working and the culture support the broader objective.

Case study – East Midlands region

The East Midlands region is perhaps one of the largest geographical collaborations where forces are seeking to align onto one common IT platform (Niche Criminal Justice). The operational benefits of having a single view of offenders and intelligence will be a huge step forward, with organisational efficiencies achieved through not having to re-key information into numerous standalone and disparate systems. Collaborative buying power is also evident, with savings of £0.25m realised for Leicestershire Police alone as a result of the partnership.

While technology is an enabler, standardised operating practices offer further efficiencies. Working through a design authority process to introduce a simple East Midlands approach to all business areas has seen 364 individual custody forms harmonised into 36 forms with a single agreed process. This effectively allows any officer within the East Midlands to process a detainee in the same manner, using the same paperwork common across the East Midlands.

5. How policing should integrate with other local public services

- 5.1. The argument in favour of much closer working between local public partners (and, where appropriate, the private sector and non-governmental organisations) to 'join up' services is not new and there are many examples of successful collaborations of this kind, including existing moves in many forces to integrate with other bluelight services; the Greater Manchester partnership and the Whole Place Community Budgets³⁴ initiative³⁵. However, it should be noted that, even where collaboration is successful, this has often been targeted at smaller, specific cohorts of service users, e.g. troubled families.
- 5.2. All local public services are facing very challenging times which only increases the impetus for them to work together to transform how public services are provided. The advisory group believes that the challenge for the police and other public services involved in public protection is to go further to make integration of services the norm rather than providing isolated examples of good practice. This requires a significant step-change in the scope and ambition for joined-up public services – and will require active and sustained support from national and local government³⁶.
- 5.3. The advisory group believes that devolution of decision-making on public protection needs to build on and extend the provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and advocates the deepening of local strategic partnerships focused on broad public safety outcomes with one set of priorities, one definition of harm, one budget and one performance regime. These changes go beyond the ability of the police service and police and

³⁴ The Whole Place Community Budgets initiative was designed to integrate local public service delivery by encouraging a different way of working. The pilot programme was launched at the 2011 LGA Conference. The pilots have designed new delivery models that eliminate duplication, excessive process and wasteful internal transaction costs; use public assets, back office and staff resources more efficiently; align outcomes, targets and systems and share information about customers and use investment agreements and sharing of savings, based on robust financial evidence and business cases, to address the problem where partners have no incentive to invest in something that could save another partner money.

³⁵ Others include multi-agency safeguarding hubs (MASH), multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA), multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC) and integrated offender management.

³⁶ The Government's commitment to further devolution of decision-making (including policing) to metropolitan areas through the forthcoming Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill is encouraging in this respect.

crime commissioners to achieve them without both national and local government playing a leading role.

- 5.4. The elimination of duplication of processes and costs will save resources for all those involved as well as provide a better service for the public. It will, however, require strong political and managerial leadership and commitment of police, and other, service leaders nationally and locally to make it work.

What members of the public think – working in partnership

Ipsos MORI conducted eight qualitative discussion groups in four locations across England and Wales during which participants discussed their views and priorities on local policing, and how policing should be provided and paid for locally.

Participants were often aware that the police work in partnership with other services. They saw the rationale for this and supported it, though typically knew little about types of partnership working, or details of working relationships or the relevant issues. The types of services participants thought of were often social services and health services.

Some participants felt that the police could learn from others about how to deal with people with disabilities, especially learning disabilities and mental health problems. Younger participants in one group talked about the role of street pastors working with homeless people in their areas. In another group, participants saw the police's responsibilities to victims as going beyond catching the perpetrator to help them cope with the repercussions that extend beyond the crime, and discussed the importance of victim support and protection.

Lastly, some participants highlighted the need for training so the police can deal appropriately with different groups.

What a joined-up public service approach might look like

- 5.5. Based on the extensive evidence of good practice in this field, a strategic partnership which integrates policing activities with other local public services in order to protect the public from harm would need to have the following characteristics:

- shared responsibility between partners at all levels with absolute clarity on respective roles, responsibilities and accountabilities;
- clear leadership of programmes or projects where the police lead on some activities but also work under others' leadership as part of a wider public service team;
- a compelling strategic vision which translates into a common set of easily-understood outcomes for joint teams, focused on preventing problems before they happen rather than reacting to them;
- pooling of individual organisations' or services' budgets and resources where necessary to provide joined-up activities and eliminate duplication;
- a shared commitment to overcoming barriers that prevent timely sharing of information;
- a strongly evidence-based approach to decision-making;
- a focus on performance management centred on outcomes rather than arbitrary targets;
- a flexible working culture with a demonstrable desire for continuous improvement/evolution; and
- a shared commitment to integration and a fundamental redesign of services which put citizens and not institutions at the forefront, involving citizens in decisions which affect them.

5.6. Beyond local requirements, to be successful these strategic partnerships also need to draw national leaders and their organisations into the partnership in order to redesign services around the needs of local communities. Partnerships – or programmes and projects within them – are likely to include all of the following at some point:

Table 1 – potential local and national public service partners

| Local organisations/services | National departments/other organisations |
|---|--|
| Police | Home Office |
| Bluelight services | Ministry of Justice |
| Councils (unitary, county, district, parish) | HM Treasury |
| GPs, hospital trusts, clinical commissioning groups | Department for Communities and Local Government |
| Schools, colleges, universities | Department of Health and NHS |
| Housing agencies | Department for Education |
| Criminal justice partners (CPS, courts, probation, youth offending) | Local Government Association |
| Voluntary and community sector organisations | Other departments as required (e.g. Department for Business, Innovation and Skills; Department for Work and Pensions and Jobcentre Plus; Cabinet Office etc) |
| Faith groups | |
| Business groups | |
| Citizens | |

- 5.7. The advisory group recognises that bringing together these many partners with such broad goals is ambitious and might ultimately require some form of central government direction to bring partners together, but believes that this is the right approach for the future.
- 5.8. Evidence of what works from Whole Place initiatives suggests that partnerships will need to brigade activities into manageable programmes or projects with differently configured local partners working on each as appropriate. These programmes or projects will not be discrete, so it will be critical to establishing them that work can flow across/between them and that they do not inadvertently replace organisational silos with programme silos. Again, there is a wealth of evidence of good practice and expertise which can be drawn upon in setting up the partnerships to address these concerns.

- 5.9. A strategic partnership is likely to be headed by a multi-agency partnership board. Wherever possible, rather than create new arrangements, the role of partnership board should be performed through existing governance arrangements – such as community safety partnerships, health and wellbeing boards, local enterprise partnerships and local chief executive groups – building on the strong already-established local partnerships.
- 5.10. As much as suitable structures are necessary to this approach, the most critical element to achieving a successful partnership will be the preparedness of partners for collaborative leadership and to work across boundaries. This applies as much to government and national organisations as local partners.
- 5.11. This approach might also benefit from the creation of single leadership of the partnership through, for example, an executive mayor as envisaged for Greater Manchester or public service commissioners with devolved responsibility for public services across a locality. However, the appropriate model will depend on local circumstances, so local areas should have the flexibility to devise the approach that works for them.

Making joined up public services a reality

- 5.12. The large number of previous Whole Place initiatives provides a wealth of lessons learned. A review³⁷ of these projects suggests that the following will be required to make joined-up local partnerships work:
- Commitment from central government to working closely with local areas as seen in the Whole Place Community Budget pilots. This approach demonstrated that reforms go further and more quickly with the support, expertise and experience that can be facilitated by central government and other national bodies, and this continued provision unlocks potential and helps partnerships to establish themselves on a sound footing.
 - Help for partnerships from across central government to adopt new approaches with speed and effectiveness. In particular, this will mean investment in early intervention approaches such as those for troubled families. Depending on the nature of the partnerships, this could require change to legislative frameworks.

³⁷ 'Local Public Service Transformation: A Guide to Whole Place Community Budgets', joint publication by HM Government and the Local Government Association, www.communitybudgets.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Guide-to-Whole-Place-Community-Budgets.pdf

- Sustained leadership from senior executives and political leaders locally which articulates the objectives for the partnership, and commits to joint accountability and a mature approach to the sharing of savings from working together.
- Replacement of multiple, uncoordinated funding streams with multi-year settlements and authority jointly to budget, fund and commission new ways of providing services. This includes flexibility for partnerships to develop and implement new models of investment.
- A willingness to challenge the fundamentals of existing working practices across public services to reflect the needs of the public. In order to succeed, this approach needs to ensure that the right specialisms exist in the right organisations and that they are accessible when needed.
- Commitment from staff across organisations and at all levels to the aims of the partnership and the opportunity to commission services in direct response to local priorities; also easy-to-understand outcome measures for the partnership that strengthen incentives and encourage local substantial practice changes.
- A default to share information and data safely across partnerships, potentially requiring national action to remove barriers to appropriate sharing of information.
- A mature approach to partnership which accepts that savings will not always directly benefit the partner investing in change, and is honest in relation to decisions about committing resources across organisational boundaries.
- A shared working culture across partnerships committed to continuous improvement and evaluation which supports, shares and replicates excellent practice with proven solutions that can be adopted locally, collaboratively and nationally.
- Investment in implementation capability to make integration work and sustain it across partnerships, for example, in developing a whole-system, evidence-based approach to re-designing services; expertise in programme and risk management; theory and practice of cost benefit analysis; information-sharing and technology requirements; accountability and governance arrangements; and funding mechanisms and communications.

- A joined-up approach to independent inspection which reflects and takes account of partnership issues and ambitions but does not create an additional level of inspection.
- Rapid development of new skillsets required to achieve the partnership's goals including investment in commercial/business skills, leadership, mentoring and coaching as well as changing how pay and reward and incentives are structured.

6. Managing risk during the transition to a possible new approach to policing

- 6.1. The options presented in the two preceding chapters are ambitious and transformational and could not, therefore, be achieved overnight.
- 6.2. In the meantime, as set out in chapter three, budget pressures will require individual forces to continue making significant further savings in this and subsequent financial years. As suggested in HMIC's report, *Policing in Austerity: Meeting the Challenge*³⁸, continuing to administer substantial cost reductions in the next spending round could potentially put some forces at risk within the next five years. HMIC will continue to revisit this issue as part of the efficiency pillar of its PEEL assessments³⁹
- 6.3. It is the responsibility of each police and crime commissioner to secure an efficient and effective police for their area and hold the chief constable to account for running the force⁴⁰.
- 6.4. However, as part of its paper, the advisory group wanted to offer its thoughts on a set of proxy measures which might be used by decision-makers (including, ultimately, the Home Office) to provide an agreed, early warning sign that a force is experiencing significant stress. It will be for the police and crime commissioner and local police leadership to make judgments based on these measures⁴¹.
- 6.5. There is no single or straightforward definition of what makes an individual force or forces viable or sustainable over time. There must be an operational dimension to sustainability and, though it is absolutely crucial, the sustainability of a force is about more than financial considerations such as the ability to balance its budget, declining financial reserves and so on.

³⁸ *Policing in Austerity: Meeting the Challenge*, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, July 2014, www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publication/policing-in-austerity-meeting-the-challenge/

³⁹ PEEL stands for the police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy programme and is the programme in which HMIC draws together evidence from its annual all-force inspections so that the public are able to judge the performance of their force and policing as a whole. The effectiveness of a force is assessed in relation to how it carries out its responsibilities including cutting crime, protecting the vulnerable, tackling anti-social behaviour, and dealing with emergencies and other calls for service.

⁴⁰ Section 1, Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

⁴¹ *Financial sustainability of police forces in England and Wales*, National Audit Office, HC 78 Session 2015-16, 4 June 2015, Recommendation C states that work is needed to develop better information to give more assurance on the health of the police service and give early warning of when a force might fail.

Nevertheless, there could come a point at which further reduction in a force's resources means that the level of police service to the public becomes unacceptable.

- 6.6. The factors suggested during the debate which might put on-going sustainability at risk include:
- a particularly demanding or high-risk policing area;
 - an unexpected and/or run of major incidents or inquiries which overstretch the force;
 - serious service failure in core local policing services or ability to contribute to national commitments;
 - increased number of neighbourhood abstractions to support other services;
 - failures in other local public services which have a knock-on impact;
 - over-ambition in strategic vision and mission coupled with a lack of prioritisation;
 - declining public confidence and trust in the ability of a force to discharge its functions and/or feelings of safety leading to a loss of reputation and therefore public legitimacy. This is a major consideration with the potential to have a vicious circle effect on a force's ability to provide services;
 - wider reputational failures caused by failures of governance, quality assurance, rigorously identifying and managing risk, contingency planning and so on;
 - poor management of resources and people, lack of training; and
 - falling morale and/or other people measures such as sickness rates and difficulties with recruitment and retention. While these could be factors in their own right, declining morale is also likely to be a symptom resulting from any of the other factors.
- 6.7. It is probable that a force which is at risk will experience a mix of some, or even many, of these factors. However, each of these factors is, alone, unlikely to be a reliable predictor that a force is struggling.
- 6.8. It is also possible that a force which exhibits many of these at-risk factors will continue to find a way to provide a police service while an outwardly more robust force could get into difficulty as a result of a seemingly less

serious set of problems. In such forces, further development of the 'enablers' that are often present in recognised, high-performing organisations (identified in the EFQM model⁴² as People, Leadership, Processes, Communications and Partnership) will help to build resilience in forces that might otherwise be at risk.

- 6.9. This indicates that it is not possible to define a measure (or even a series of measures) to predict when a force is approaching high risk. However, while definitive tests are unlikely, the advisory group believes that it is possible to identify a range of risk categories and related measures which could, individually and collectively, paint a picture of the underlying health of a force.
- 6.10. The aim of such a set of measures would not be to make a definitive decision about sustainability or viability but to provide an agreed framework within which early warning can be sent that a force is facing problems ahead.
- 6.11. A suggested set of measures is set out in Table 2 on pages 59 and 60.
- 6.12. The advisory group believes that a broad 'dashboard' of measures of this kind could support police and crime commissioners and local police leaders to 'take the temperature' of forces in a more consistent way.
- 6.13. All of the data supporting these measures are already collected (albeit not always consistently across forces) so a 'dashboard' report of this kind could be produced. While such a report would not provide a definitive answer regarding risk and future sustainability, it would provide a broad picture on which those responsible for decision-making can form their own judgments.

⁴² The European Foundation for Quality Management Model is a practical tool designed to help organisations improve by understanding the gaps in their organisational performance and identifying solutions.

Table 2 – Early warning measures of risk

| Reputational | Operational |
|---|--|
| <p>Public Levels of public satisfaction/confidence/ willingness to engage with the force</p> <p>Levels of feeling of safety/fear of crime</p> <p>Number of unsupportive/critical media comments about the force</p> <p>Process Number of failures in good governance e.g. control and mitigation of risks; contingency planning, quality assurance, IPCC-type referrals etc</p> | <p>General performance and trend data but with particular focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • response rates to emergency and non-emergency calls/incidents • number of crimes attended expressed as a percentage of total crimes • compliance with CJS and other casework timescales. • Strategic Policing Requirement ‘stress tests’ • number of service-related complaints from the public • significant operational failure(s) • level of quality crime investigations. <p>Ratio of officer/PCSO to population.</p> <p>Number/frequency of abstractions from neighbourhood teams</p> <p>Availability of technical support to handle investigations and analysis</p> <p>Number/frequency when core police services running at capacity, e.g. custody, response.</p> |

| Financial | People |
|---|---|
| <p>Balanced in-year budget</p> <p>Levels and direction of travel of financial reserves</p> <p>Balanced medium term financial strategy</p> | <p>Engagement measures/data from new staff surveys including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general morale • sickness rates • turnover and vacancy rates (recruitment and retention data) • output from exit interviews • views on personal and professional development, including coaching and leadership development. <p>Number of internal complaints and internal disciplinary cases</p> <p>Workforce plan covering the short and medium term and dovetailing into medium term financial plan.</p> |

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. The national debate advisory group has been pleased to support the debate process and prepare this paper on the ideas emerging from it. It represents our largely shared view of a future for policing which helps the police service to manage within constrained budgets while providing an effective service to the public.
- 7.2. In particular, while the paper focuses on the functions of policing, the advisory group recognises that it is people both inside and outside the police service who will be at the heart of making further changes a success, and must therefore be a principal element of any future approach.
- 7.3. The advisory group recognised from the outset that it had set itself a hugely ambitious task and that, in the time available, it would only be able to scratch the surface in terms of the transformational changes that are required.
- 7.4. But the advisory group was pleasantly surprised and encouraged by the degree of consensus that exists in terms of what needs to change as well as the clear determination and ambition that exists to make it happen. That is not to say that there was complete consensus as to which of the many options identified as a possible way forward are the right ones. But there is a very strong consensus that doing nothing is not an option; there will need to be substantial changes to policing if the public are to be protected to the greatest extent possible. The advisory group does not underestimate the huge amount of more detailed discussion and work which will be required to turn the ideas described here into reality.
- 7.5. We recognise that there are other areas and options that need to be further explored and much more work to be done, including the detail of how effective governance and accountability can be achieved across cross-force functions; how cross-force resources will be tasked effectively to deal with threat, risk and harm, and what a future funding model should look like, so as to ensure that the right balance is achieved between local, specialist and support services.
- 7.6. The advisory group therefore suggests that this paper should be used as a springboard to further and more detailed discussion with and between national and local government, the public, partners and stakeholders as well as across the police service.
- 7.7. These discussions need to progress quickly – in recognition not only of the challenges ahead but because the public wants and deserves to see how we are working together in their interests.

- 7.8. Rapid action is now needed to inform the Government's spending plans and the provisional police funding settlement due in late 2015. We believe that we should set ourselves a shared goal that, by autumn, there should be sufficiently well-formed agreement on the most pressing and immediate reforms, how they are to be achieved and what timescales the police service needs to work to in order to make change happen.
- 7.9. The advisory group believes strongly that support from the Home Office in setting and overseeing a strategic approach for these changes is absolutely vital to bring about radical, rapid and lasting change and that investment will be required if the approach we are putting forward is to be progressed. The Home Office and HM Treasury should also consider whether some funding could be made available in order to mitigate the risk in the interim for the police service as it moves away from outdated technology and to support the cost of change.
- 7.10. The advisory group believes that there is a strong case for the creation of a national reform group or board to oversee the next phase of work as well as any subsequent implementation.
- 7.11. Finally, the advisory group is encouraged that the national debate has put forward an ambitious and radical course for policing and is proud to put forward this paper as a staging post on a journey to the police service of the future.