

A Force to be Reckoned With

A Policy Report by the Policing Reform Working Group



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Interventionist Neighbourhood Teams with a commitment to intervene

This will require:

- A commitment by the police to intervene in any observed act of crime or antisocial behaviour
- The rebuilding of discretion for police officers
- Closer affinity between Neighbourhood and Response officers
- Better management of resources to ensure that the maximum quantity and range of interventions can be delivered
- An increased skilling of officers to ensure that they have the capability to deliver the widest possible range of interventions.

Harm's Way Pledge

The Working Group recommends Surrey Police's "Harm's Way" Policy for adoption by the whole Service. Police should be expected to put themselves in harm's way in order to protect the public. The balance between protecting a member of the public and protecting a police officer is a fine one, but the presumption must always be towards protecting the public.

Police training for discretion and Restorative Justice

In order to facilitate appropriate and resource-efficient interventions, all officers should be trained to employ discretion to choose amongst a range of possible disposals. The aim is to empower police responding to a minor incident or act of antisocial behaviour, as well as certain serious offences, to use professional discretion to determine which disposals are appropriate and to train them in the implementation of those disposals.

For example, police should be trained to conduct community accountability meetings (based on Restorative Justice techniques), which have proven highly effective in trials - involving an

assessment, interviews and, if appropriate, achieving a resolution between the involved parties – typically in less than half an hour and without recourse to the time and resources required for arrest, charge, court and prison.

Restore police charging on volume crime

The police should be restored the responsibility for charging over volume crimes. For more serious crimes, the CPS will retain charging responsibilities.

Re-balance the Tripartite system:

Scrap APACS as the national performance assessment system

Replace APACS with a small number of national indicators for Protective Services (Not more than 5)

Police activity should be freed from restrictive and priority-distorting quantitative targets. The goal is to give police the freedom to intervene more often and make use of a wide range of disposals which are more effective and efficient.

A Crime and Justice Commissioner should be elected for every Police Force area in the country

- Act as a figurehead for community safety.
- Chair the Police Authority and hold to account the Local Criminal Justice Board and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships.
- Set local priorities for all of these agencies and influence the spending of budgets across partnerships.
- Have a duty to consult the public and coordinate consultation by all of the partner agencies, including by convening “Citizens Juries” in every BCU.

Strengthening operational independence for Chief Constables

Chief Constables should:

- No longer be subject to Fixed Term Appointments.
- No longer receive performance-related bonuses.
- Have the power to appoint top team members, from the lower ranks, on a fixed term basis.