

**CUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY
Policing Plan and Best Value Committee**

14 June 2005

Agenda Item 10

PLANNING FOR THE QUALITY OF SERVICE COMMITMENT

A report by the Chief Constable

SUMMARY

This report includes an impact assessment of the national quality of service commitment, and proposes an action plan to comply with it by November 2005.

RECOMMENDATION

- That the committee approves the attached action plan to meet the national quality of service commitment.
- That the committee monitors progress on the action plan on a quarterly basis.

DETAILS

Background

The national quality of service commitment sets out the standards and services the public can expect when they make contact with the police.

The quality of service commitment applies to all members of the public who have reason to call on the services of the police, which this document refers to as "user".

The National Policing Plan requires every force to have an action plan to comply with the quality of service commitment by November 2006 in place by April 2005. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) are coordinating the service's response and will shortly survey other forces.

External scrutiny of compliance with the quality of service commitment will be via existing Police Performance Assessment Framework measures of user satisfaction and the Baseline Assessment.

Local Context

The Constabulary has sound performance on user satisfaction, it currently meets its target of 85% user satisfaction. In Cumbria, those people who have had contact with the police have a greater degree of satisfaction with police services than those who haven't – suggesting an adequate quality of service.

Approach to Action Planning

A working group of key internal stakeholders assessed the impact of the standards on the constabulary:

- Chief Inspector Communications Centre
- Citizen Focus Project Manager
- Chief Superintendent Partnerships
- Chief Superintendent Criminal Justice
- Detective Superintendent Support
- Chief Superintendent Professional Standards
- Director Strategic Development
- Director IT/IM.

The Impact Assessment is in Appendix 1.

The action plan was then produced in consultation with the stakeholder group to address the minimum actions that must be taken to achieve compliance with the commitment by November 2006. The Action Plan is included at Appendix 2.

Financial Implications

Much of the work relates to already planned developments, e.g. the Citizen Focus project. The biggest new piece of work is to ensure that the constabulary's processes can continue to deliver acceptable levels of user satisfaction.

A study is required to consult with the public, examine constabulary processes and develop options for improvement before the financial implications are known. The planned Best Value review of user satisfaction will undertake this. Depending on the results of consultation, solutions might range from targeted training of police staff to large-scale change including new IT facilities.

Citizen Focus

The action plan shares some actions with the community consultation action plan and Equality Scheme, and all 3 are linked to the Citizen Focus Project, which will ensure a coordinated programme of developments in citizen focus. The wider citizen focus programme includes:

- Standards of service and call handling
- Neighbourhood policing
- Local priorities, community engagement and policing information
- Working with volunteers.

Police Authority Responsibilities

Guidance on planning for the Quality of Service Commitment, produced in consultation with the Association of Police Authorities, sets out Police Authority responsibilities as follows:

1. Ensure that an impact assessment has been completed and is accurate
2. Ensure that an implementation plan is produced by the end of April 2005, and that it reflects the impact assessment

3. Check that the implementation plan reflects local user and public feedback (using existing sources where available)
4. Sign-off the implementation plan
5. Establish a process to monitor progress towards compliance
6. Take cognisance of the resource implications of the implementation plan and build these into planning and budgeting.

This report provides the opportunity for the constabulary's approach to initial impact assessment and action planning to be reviewed. A major element of the action plan is a Best Value review, which will research the need for further change to deliver user satisfaction, and which will involve Lead Members, Best Value Board and Policing Plan and Best Value Committee. As noted above, the implementation plan and Best Value review will need to be taken into account in planning and budgeting. Given that Policing Plan and Best Value Committee will have a high level of involvement in the quality of service work, it may be appropriate for this committee to undertake the recommended regular progress monitoring.

Michael Baxter
Chief Constable

Making it easy to contact us

Standards

Provide equality of access to services and information

Provide a range of ways to access our services that address the needs of users

Consult with those who use our services and the local community about what is important to them

Publish specific local commitments

Provide a range of information that focuses on areas of service that you have told us are important to you, ensuring the information is easy to understand

Widely publicise the details of how you can access police services in your local area.

- a) the location and opening times of police stations and other contact points
- b) the name of the officer who is responsible for policing in your area
- c) when you should call 999 for emergencies
- d) the arrangements for contacting the police for non-emergencies
- e) the arrangements for how to report a crime or incident

Assessment

- The Constabulary offers a range of service access methods including phone, web, stations, LPT access points, mobile police station, high level of visible patrol, community surgeries. However, in some locations LPT deployment points that aren't accessible to the public have replaced accessible police stations. Also, the website is very much under development.
- The Constabulary doesn't have strategic information on its access points, minimum standards for them, or feedback information on whether this meets community requirements.
- Work has been completed to ensure accessibility of main stations to people with disabilities. There are no specific service or information access arrangements for people whose first language is not English. We have limited information on whether our existing accessibility arrangements meet the requirements of people with special needs.
- There has been no specific consultation on user requirements to inform local service commitments.
- There is one local service agreement to keep main stations open until midnight.
- The information available to the public is based on statutory documents. The annual report has been developed to be usable and address known public information needs, but provides information only at force and BCU level.
- Information on how to access services has not been widely publicised or marketed. A recent community survey found that while 98% knew how to report an emergency only 60% knew how to make a complaint and 45% knew how to access information about the policing services available.

Actions

- Identify all access points in the Constabulary, times accessible etc.
- Carry out user/community consultation to find out:
 - Accessibility needs and whether current arrangements meet them
 - Which aspects of service are most important to them
 - Which information about policing is most important to them
- Carry out targeted consultation with community groups representing users with special needs to assess whether current arrangements meet them
- Based on user consultation, and with reference to force targets, develop a business case for changes to access methods or points (if appropriate).
 - Secure agreement
 - Publicise as appropriate
 - Feed into Estates Strategy as appropriate.
- Based on user consultation, develop a local service commitment.
- Based on user consultation, develop improved local performance information
- Carry out service and access marketing campaign
- Establish a process to ensure regular feedback on accessibility and information, and response mechanisms.
- Implement SNEN in accordance with national timescales
- Implement the internet development strategy

Providing a professional and high quality service

Standards

Act with integrity and treat everyone we deal with fairly and openly

Treat you politely and with respect

Take your concerns seriously and explain what we are doing to address them, including whether or not we are taking action, and why

Provide you with the help and advice you need

Assessment

- The ongoing introduction of ICF and universal PDR will support development of service behaviours.
- Everyone has received diversity training, and this will be built upon in future.
- Complaints are at a low level and IPCC procedures are complied with.
- Not all staff coming into contact with the users have had user service training.
- User service standards have not been communicated to staff and performance is not monitored.
- Community surveys indicate that a small % of users find officers to be rude (2%), uncaring (4%), or off-handed (4%).

Actions

- Mystery shopper scheme to assess user service levels.
- Communicate local service commitment to staff
- Secure resources for user service training via Force Learning Panel, develop user service training and deliver.
- Carry out a customer walkthrough of complaints processes, and recommend improvements as appropriate.
- Implement improvements to complaints processes.
- Design cost effective user service performance monitoring processes.

Dealing with your initial enquiry

Standard

Ensure that we properly understand what you are telling us

Explain how we are going to deal with your enquiry

Wherever possible provide you with a reference number

Where your enquiry requires specialist knowledge or expertise, transfer you to the appropriate named person or department for your enquiry

Where the appropriate person is not on duty and we cannot connect you, tell you of the delay and give you the opportunity to leave a message. You will be made aware of the likely length of time it will be before someone will respond to your message

If your enquiry is not an emergency but does require a police officer or other member of staff to visit you, arrange a suitable time with you. If something changes and we cannot keep to the arrangement we have made we will inform you at the earliest opportunity

If your enquiry is about something that the police cannot deal with, tell you if there is another organisation that can help you and if so, how to get in touch with them

Assessment

- Staff are currently unaware of these standards
- Current procedures do not ensure that the standards are met in all cases.
- Response to phone enquiries is monitored by supervisors on a sample basis.

Actions

- Local service standards
- Internal communication and training
- Performance monitoring
- Map, walkthrough and reengineer initial enquiry handling processes to ensure the standards are cost effectively met for an acceptable proportion of enquiries
- Implement amended processes
- Develop and implement an incident response policy and supporting criteria for call handlers.
- Feed into service marketing strategy referred to above.

Keeping you informed

Standards

Provide you with the details necessary for you to be able to talk to someone about your enquiry. In most cases this will be a reference number and the name and contact details of the person dealing with your enquiry

Update you at a mutually convenient time and in an agreed way

Take into account any concerns you may have about confidentiality

If we have not already been in touch with you, contact you monthly [NB: Commitment in the draft Victims Code is for notification on a monthly basis.]

To let you know whether we are still actively investigating your case and when we will review that decision. If we are not investigating we will explain the reasons for that decision.

Assessment

- Staff are currently unaware of these standards
- Current procedures do not ensure that the standards are met in all cases.

Actions

- Local service standards
- Internal communication and training
- Performance monitoring
- Map, walkthrough and reengineer processes to ensure the standards are cost effectively met for an acceptable proportion of enquiries
- Implement amended processes

Your Voice Counts

Standards

Provide a range of ways in which you can let us know your views and widely publicise these locally

Respond to you within 10 working days when requested

Publish regular updates about what we are doing to improve our services as a result of views received

Use this information to inform the development of future local policy and practice.

Use this information to increase our understanding of how you wish to be treated

Assessment

- Consultation is already in use to inform the development of local policy and practice. A joint community consultation strategy is in place with the Police Authority, and a supporting action plan for 2005/6 has been drafted. This provides a range of ways in which the public can tell us their views.
- Feedback opportunities are publicised in publications to every household and the website.
- There are no procedures to ensure that public feedback receives a response in 10 days.
- Community Voice contributors receive feedback on the results of consultation.

Actions

- The action plan for consultation in 2005/6
- Incorporate ways to feedback in service access marketing
- Design a process to ensure that feedback from the public will be responded to within 10 days when requested.
- Publicise the results of consultation through regular updates

Victims of Crime

Standards

Identify and support vulnerable victims and children

Provide you with a Victims of Crime leaflet (and other relevant leaflets depending on the nature of your case)

Unless you ask us not to do so, pass your details to Victim Support within 2 days

Keep you informed of the progress of the investigation, including arrest, caution reprimand, warning, charge, release on bail and court proceedings

Ask the Court for “special measures” to be used where appropriate to assist you in giving evidence at Court

When relevant, give you the opportunity to make a Victim’s Personal Statement

With your consent pass your details on to other organisations which are involved in your case

Assessment

- The Constabulary has developed improved structures and procedures to support vulnerable victims and witnesses over the past 2 years, including the use of special measures when appropriate. They are undergoing further development through implementation of the NCPE Codes of Practice for Domestic Violence, Child Abuse and Missing Persons.
- Victim of crime leaflets are provided to victims, details are passed to victim support, and opportunities are given to make a personal statement.
- As noted above, procedures do not ensure that standards regarding updates are complied with in all cases.

Actions

- Local service standards
- Internal communication and training
- Performance monitoring.
- Map, audit and reengineer initial enquiry handling processes to ensure the standards are cost effectively met for an acceptable proportion of enquiries
- Implement amended processes

Action	Owner	Deadline
Identify all access points in the Constabulary, times accessible etc.	Citizen Focus Project	December 2005
Carry out user/community consultation to find out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility needs and whether current arrangements meet them • Which aspects of service are most important to them • Which information about policing is most important to them 	Strategic Development (BVR)	December 2005
Carry out targeted consultation with community groups representing users with special needs to assess whether current arrangements meet them	Strategic Development (BVR)	December 2005
Based on user consultation, and with reference to force targets, develop a business case for changes to access methods or points (if appropriate). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure agreement • Publicise as appropriate • Feed into Estates Strategy as appropriate. 	Citizen Focus Project Citizen Focus Project IT/IM Citizen Focus Project	March 2006 March 2006 October 2006 March 2006
Based on user consultation, develop a local service commitment and communicate it to staff.	Citizen Focus Project	August 2006
Secure resources for user service training via Force Learning Panel, develop user service training and deliver.	Citizen Focus Project with P&D	October 2006
Based on user consultation, develop improved local performance information	Citizen Focus Project with IT/IM	March 2006
Carry out service, access and feedback opportunities marketing campaign	IT/IM	October 2006
Establish a process to ensure regular feedback from users on accessibility, information, services	Strategic Development with IT/IM	November 2006
Implement local SNEN	PMU	December 2005
Implement the internet development strategy	IT/IM	March 2006
Mystery shopper scheme to assess user service levels.	Strategic Development and PSD	July 2005
Carry out a customer walkthrough of complaints	PSD	March 2006

Action	Owner	Deadline
processes, and recommend improvements as appropriate. Implement improvements to complaints processes.		
Map, walkthrough and draft options to improve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • initial enquiry handling processes • ongoing customer service processes To ensure the standards are cost effectively met for an acceptable proportion of enquiries	Strategic Development (BVR)	March 2006
Oversee a programme of business process reengineering, as approved following the BVR.	Citizen Focus Project	October 2006
Develop and implement an incident response policy and supporting criteria for call handlers.	Operations Board	March 2006
Implement the 2005/6 consultation action plan (Appendix 3)	Strategic Development and Partnerships with support from IT/IM	March 2006
Design a process to ensure that feedback from the public will be responded to within 10 days when requested.	Strategic Development with support from IT/IM	October 2006
Publicise the results of consultation through regular updates	Strategic Development with support from IT/IM	October 2006

Action Plan for Consultation 2005/6

Aim for 2005/6: To gather reliable information on how communities feel about our services, and to use the information in service development, to ensure we provide the best possible policing services

Action	Owner	Timing
<p>Carry out 2 surveys via Cumbria Community Voice.</p> <p>To improve the resulting information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm the decisions to be made using the consultation data and joint information needs and review questions in advance • Work with Community Voice on survey distribution to confirm it is representative • Developing weighting techniques for survey responses to ensure the resulting information is representative • Analyse the survey results by Local Policing Team and BCU • Assess the need to support survey findings with focus groups, and carry out as appropriate. 	<p>Strategic Development and IT/IM</p> <p>Strategic Development with advice from IT/IM</p> <p>IT/IM</p> <p>IT/IM</p> <p>IT/IM</p> <p>Strategic Development with advice from IT/IM</p>	<p>Surveys June 2005 and September 2005</p> <p>May 2005 and August 2005</p> <p>May 2005</p> <p>June 2005</p> <p>July 2005 and October 2005</p>
<p>Carry out targeted community consultation in support of Best Value Review</p>	<p>Strategic Development</p>	<p>To be confirmed – summer 2005</p>

Action	Owner	Timing
<p>Working with other agencies in the Joint Action Group, commission IODA to survey 300 people from minority ethnic groups on their views of public services in Cumbria, and with a view to identifying members of the public who would be interested in being involved in consultation.</p> <p>Carry out a launch day.</p> <p>Work toward establishing a joint consultative contact group/panel.</p>	Partnerships	<p>Survey: May 2005</p> <p>Launch: June 2006</p> <p>Likely timescale: March 2007</p>
<p>Establish standing Community Impact Assessment Groups, including people from visible ethnic minorities and people with disabilities, and begin consultation on policing services and policy.</p>	Partnerships	March 2006
<p>Carry out research on existing neighbourhood level consultation arrangements operated by local officers, and on the issues arising from the consultation.</p>	Strategic Development	August 2005
<p>Develop improved arrangements for frontline staff and local representatives to engage more effectively with local communities, with</p>	Citizen Focus Project	<p>Project started April 2005</p> <p>Project milestones to be confirmed</p>

Action	Owner	Timing
reference to the neighbourhood policing programme and other relevant elements of police reform.		
Carry out research on issues arising from LGBT liaison officer's work.	Strategic Development with advice from Partnerships	August 2005