BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE

Agenda Item 6.3
Appendix A

SUMMARY OF RECENT REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

The reports covered within this Appendix are:

- The Review of Policing – Final Report from Sir Ronnie Flanagan
- The Public & the Police (Civitas)
- The New Bill: Modernising the Police Workforce (Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR))
- A New Beat: Options for more Accountable Policing (IPPR)
- Answering to You: Policing in the 21st Century (Local Government Association)
- Engaging Communities in fighting Crime (Cabinet Office)

1. REVIEW OF POLICING

1.1 Sir Ronnie Flanagan presented his interim report of his review of the police service to the Home Secretary on 12 September 2007. His final report was published on 7 February 2008. The review arose from the policy review '*Building on Progress: Security, Crime and Justice*', launched by the then Prime Minister, Tony Blair, in March 2007.

1.2 Whilst researching the report, Sir Ronnie spoke extensively with those involved in policing; this included spending time with patrolling officers to hear of their problems and ideas for change. Seven key areas were explored:

- Threat, harm and risk
- Central structures and systems that support 21st century policing
- Improving performance at force level
- Developing the police workforce
- Freeing up space
- Delivering in partnership
- Involving local people.

1.3 Sir Ronnie makes a total of 33 recommendations in his report. Some of these are of particular interest to BTP and have been specified under each chapter heading.

1.4 Threat, harm and risk

The key question posed by the first chapter of the report is how the police service can best deploy its resources between three fundamental - but often conflicting objectives which lie at the heart of policing:

- The need to minimise the threats facing the public
- The need to reduce the harm which crime causes
- The need to have contingencies in place to manage any residual risks.

1.5 In the rest of the report Sir Ronnie develops proposals for how his vision for the police service in the 21st Century can be put into practice.

1.6 Central structures and systems that support 21st century policing

On central targets for police performance Sir Ronnie proposes (Recommendation 2) that as the Assessment of Policing and Community Safety (APACS) develops and replaces the Policing Performance and Assessment Framework (PPAF), police forces need to widen the sources of information gathered for their database in order to provide them with a greater understanding of performance and productivity. BTP therefore needs to ensure that its data requirements are considered and what is produced meets its particular needs.

1.7 Improving performance at force level

At a time of restricted financial resourcing, Sir Ronnie stresses the need to ensure that police forces maximise income generation from private sources. He asks (Recommendation 9) Chief Constables to ensure that they are taking an entrepreneurial approach to policing, not just in ethical income generation through private sector sponsorship and business enterprise, but also through encouraging finance directors to create and exploit 'business opportunities'.

1.8 The examples given are from North Wales and Kent forces, who both offer driving courses to other organisations in those times when the existing driving instructors are not required to provide force training. The Metropolitan Police Transport Operational Command Unit (OCU), paid for by Transport for London, is cited as an excellent example of a fully funded OCU

which in Sir Ronnie's view would provide a suitable template for airport policing arrangements once a review is completed on the question of designation.

1.9 Developing the police force

Workforce modernisation features in the final report with Sir Ronnie commenting on the pilot programmes undertaken by both Surrey Police and the Metropolitan Police to transfer traditional police investigation roles which do not require sworn officer powers to police staff. He asks (Recommendation 12) the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) to undertake an early evaluation of these pilot sites and asks (Recommendation 13) the Home Office to make clear its strategy for workforce modernisation in the Green Paper. A whole chapter of the Green paper is devoted to workforce modernisation and the workforce mix. The NPIA evaluations would be of assistance to BTP's 'Frontline First' Project.

1.10 Sir Ronnie talks about shift patterns and the matching of resources to demand. He believes significant benefits can be gained from a shift pattern that accurately reflects when officers are needed. This involves minimising the demand for overtime, ensuring that officer's operational time is maximised when they are on shift, and ensuring that officers are properly rested and able to perform their duties as effectively as possible. Sir Ronnie's views support BTP's continuing efforts via Performance Inspection to investigate how the Duty Management System can be used to maximise the effectiveness of BTP's operational resources.

1.11 Of interest to BTP is that whilst Sir Ronnie talks about the development of the 'police family', he does not expand in his final report on his suggestion, made in his interim report, of developing the complementary policing role of PCSOs by the introduction of a 'Voluntary PCSO' scheme.

1.12. Freeing up space

Sir Ronnie asks (Recommendation 19) that all existing doctrine, which includes regulations, codes of practice, operational policing manuals and practical advice on best practice in the police service, should be reviewed and consolidated so that the total impact can be assessed and overlaps in individual documents removed by the end of 2008. He asks that

this process should be led by ACPO, with support from NPIA. He recommends that their focus should be on the combined impact of changes to the service and the development of a protocol of 'review and replace' rather than continually adding to existing doctrine.

1.13 On crime recording, he specifically recommends that low level crimes are recorded in a shortened format (Recommendation 21) and asks that the definition of violent offences be refined to include only those offences involving physical injury. On the investigation of crime he seeks a reduction in the amount of time officers are expending on very minor crimes and greater use of discretion and professional judgment to move away from what is perceived as a the risk adverse culture and change it into one that is just risk conscious. Various trails of improved processes are currently underway and their results may require BTP to alter its current crime reporting and investigation procedures in due course. These developments will be picked up by Performance Monitoring and Horizon Scanning. ACPO are holding a conference on 8 December to discuss the findings of the four pilot forces who were used to evaluate short crime reports and the use of professional judgment.

1.14 On bureaucracy, Sir Ronnie says (Recommendation 22) that steps need to be taken to roll back unnecessary paperwork relating to the demands of the courts and the Crown Prosecution Service. He supports the roll out of the Simple Speedy Summary Justice Initiative. He also wants to see a cutback in work undertaken by police to meet the requirements of central Government performance management as well as lengthy preparation for HMIC inspections.

1.15 On Stop and Search, Sir Ronnie recommends the continuance of the formal completion of the form so that officer accounts of the encounter are "both proportionate and appropriate", as it is a much more invasive process than simply asking someone in the street to account for themselves. While proposing (Recommendation 24) that the use of a Stop and Account form should end, Sir Ronnie believes the Stop and Search form should be kept to demonstrate accountability, particularly to those from minority ethnic groups.

1.16 The Stop and Account procedures would change with the officer providing the individual asked to account for themselves with a receipt in the form of a business card or similar. The Airwave radio would be used to record the stop. West Midlands Police recently undertook to pilot these arrangements and the results are awaited. The impact on BTP of such

arrangements needs to be considered in particular the likely effect on increased volumes of Airwaves traffic for its control room operations.

1.17 Delivering in partnership

Sir Ronnie notes with regret the decision in November 2007 for the Home Office to discontinue direct funding for the national roll-out of the Single Non-Emergency Number (SNEN) '101' telephone service. He cites its operation as a catalyst for improved partnership working between police forces, their local authorities and community safety partners in those areas where it has operated and requests that what has been learnt from the pilot sites is shared more widely. The SNEN was not covered in the Green Paper Policing Pledge commitments and so each police force will have to make its own arrangements for non-emergency and Neighbourhood Policing Team contacts. As a result considerable issues surrounding uniformity of police response will have to be addressed.

1.18 Having stressed the need to embed Neighbourhood Policing (NP) in his interim report, Sir Ronnie, undertook further research for his final report on how NP should be developed to create more effective partnerships, with the police moving on from just responding to incidents to problem solving in collaboration with others.

1.19 Involving local people

Sir Ronnie is keen for the police service to meet the needs of local people for information. He feels that whilst a great deal of effort has been put in to providing local policing summaries, these currently do not provide what local people actually want. His preference would be for the police to provide information at a ward level which is accessible and relevant to local residents and businesses. This would include not only local data on trends in crime, but information on how priorities are established. He believes this could be web-based and if genuinely multi-service, provided by the local authority. These themes were taken up and expanded upon in the Green Paper.

1.20 Sir Ronnie recognises the current political debates as to the preferred local accountability of public services and sets out the arguments for and against various options, including having directly elected representatives on police authorities. In doing so he chooses not to opt for a

particular solution but offers them up for consideration by the Home Secretary in the Green Paper on policing.

1.21 Analysis

Most of the Report's recommendations are straightforward and offer common sense improvements as to the future of policing. They often reflect ACPO's position which they have held and campaigned on over an extended period.

2. THE PUBLIC & THE POLICE

2.1 On 30 May 2008 journalist Harriet Sergeant's report, '*The Public & the Police'* was published by the right wing think tank 'Civitas' and is written very much in a journalistic style. Additionally it does not contain much in the line of statistical or qualitative evidence to back up many of the assertions it contains.

2.2 The Report is highly critical asserting that the police are putting government targets ahead of serving the public and as a result criminalising usually law-abiding citizens for minor offences. Examples of the incidents the Report claims are being treated as crimes which would have previously been dealt with informally or ignored include children chalking on the pavement and playing ball in the street. One anonymous officer states how he was pressed by his Crime Desk to charge children playing with a tree with 'harassment'. A number of examples are given where Section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986 is used to meet targets, including those previously dealt with for being drunk and disorderly. The Report states that in a town with a large student population the local police began arresting drunken students under Section 5. However it was stated that the 'transport police' covering the local railway station 'were not playing the game' and as a result the number of drunk offenders dealt with at the station increased dramatically.

2.3 Another incident quoted that will be of interest to BTP tells of a student being arrested, held in custody for five hours and cautioned for a public order offence for keeping a London Underground station lift door open with his foot. The Report goes on to say: *"In a city where knife crime is exploding and the public are crying out for more police on the streets three officers are tied up for half the night arresting a young man for holding a lift*

door open with his foot." In this particular case BTP's records show that, the initial call from staff was for criminal damage and public order and hence the person was arrested. Subsequent enquiries and statements did not substantiate this fully, hence he was cautioned for the bye-law offence. The NSPIS log shows positive and appropriate initial action by the officers which unfortunately was not fully supported by subsequent staff evidence.

2.4 The Report states that inappropriate practices are encouraged, with pressure put on frontline officers to make arrests for minor misdemeanours by senior commanders, as the achieving of targets guarantees performance-related bonuses of between £10,000 and £15,000.

2.5 Furthermore the Report states that the pursuit of targets is skewed as those set by the Home Office are not weighted and so the same value is given to the police for cautioning a child who steals a chocolate bar as to the arrest and charging of a murderer.

2.6 The target culture means police are less likely to concentrate on complex crimes and also means that officers exercise less discretion when dealing with members of the public. The author warns that such actions are damaging public relations with confidence in the police being lost.

2.7 The Report states that complaints against the police have risen, with much of the increase; '*coming from law-abiding, middle-class, middle-aged and retired people who no longer feel the police are on their side'*. (It is not known how the author came to this conclusion as the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) does not record complaints using social grade definitions). The Report goes on to state that members of the public find officers to be rude and accuses them of neglecting their duties and failing to respond to reports of crime. In 2006-07, there were 29,637 complaints, the most for one year since records began some 17 years ago.

2.8 Ms Sergeant argues that current targets miss the point of what the public wants. She states that the Home Office judges each police force by how many crimes they detect and

that the public wants something different. They do not want crimes happening in the first place.

2.9 Ms Sergeant warns: '*The police cannot police without the backing of society. Without trust and consensus it is very difficult and costly to maintain law and order*.' Her view is that what is now in jeopardy is no less than the loss of the essential feature of British policing – policing by consent; with officers increasingly seen as the organs of Government rather than the traditional servants of the law and the communities they should serve.

Analysis

2.10 It would be easy to brush off the effect of this Report and the press coverage as untypical; filled with anonymous quotes from disgruntled officers and 'hard luck' stories from the public caught doing wrong. However, it would be wrong to dismiss what it says. If there is indeed evidence of a growing disquiet in a significant portion of the community who have traditionally stood as a firm constituency of unwavering support for the police; and it is due to the way they feel they and their families have been treated, then the Government and the police service as a whole needs to address this situation as a priority.

3. THE NEW BILL: MODERNISING THE POLICE WORKFORCE

3.1 The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) in February 2008 published a report regarding ways in which improvements in productivity in policing could be achieved. (This is the first of three reports on the police service to be published by the IPPR, the second is considered below and the third is to be published later in 2008.) It notes the debate engendered by the *Flanagan Review of Policing* as well as the policy ideas proposed by the Conservative Party to increase accountability at a local level. It also takes into account the current financial constraints (Comprehensive Spending Review 2007) on spending.

3.2 To achieve a more radical vision of a modernised and professional police workforce the report proposes that:

- Police workforce structures should be reconfigured to have a more skilled specialised workforce

- Use of mixed teams of warranted officers and specialist support staff should be increased
- Training and development should be refocused – with a view to filling key skills gaps and developing all officers and staff to their full potential.

3.3 Examples are given of potential savings from structural reorganisations. For example Leicestershire Constabulary is cited as a high performing police force that has some 81% of its officers at constable level, whereas between 73% and 80% of total officers are at the rank of constable in other forces.

3.4 The Report claims that removing the ranks of Chief Superintendent and Chief Inspector would save some £9m nationally, even if the same personnel were retained at Superintendent and Inspector roles. More significant would be the savings if a ratio of six Sergeants for every Inspector could be achieved. This would result in estimated savings of over £350m. Furthermore, if a ratio of eight frontline staff for every officer of management rank could be achieved the savings would be some £1bn.

3.5 The benefits to the public are described in the Report as more specialist police having greater skills in the task they are performing, leading to a higher quality of service for citizens. It claims that victims are more likely to be supported effectively by those with well-developed victim-support skills. The Report suggests that specialist teams could use their wide range of combined skills to solve crime more effectively.

3.6 In relation to training and development, the Report asserts that there is a need to build a culture of development and learning within the police service. It notes the low level of training for police staff in that although they make up some 30% of the police family across all forces, they only receive around 16% of all training delivered within the police service. The Report states that reward needs to be aligned with a skills development agenda which would encourage officers and support staff to pursue career paths that meet organisational needs. It also notes that it is equally important to ensure that those who do not choose to specialise are not marginalised from the workforce.

3.7 The Report highlights a range of problems with current police reward arrangements stating that current pay arrangements based on length of service do not encourage the development of skills that are much needed in policing. It recommends that tenure-related increments beyond two, or at most five, years should be ended and the current competency related threshold payment scheme should be scrapped.

Analysis

3.8 The Report provides a radical alternative viewpoint on modernising the police workforce but this is not surprising as its authors come from a background outside the police family. Many of the ideas put forward are more prevalent in the private sector and so how well they would translate into a policing world is not clear. The Report does however make the suggestion that before full implementation they should be piloted in a few police forces. The Green Paper devotes a whole chapter to the workforce mix and NPIA's Workforce Modernisation Programme. At present there are ten demonstration sites and a full report on their findings is expected in 2009.

4. A NEW BEAT: OPTIONS FOR MORE ACCOUNTABLE POLICING

4.1 The IPPR published its report 'A New Beat' in June 2008, and it considers the ways in which the police could be held more accountable.

4.2 The document is a critique of the current tripartite settlement (between the Home Office, Police Authorities and Chief Constables) and concludes that Police Authorities must be radically reformed. It asserts that Police Authorities are weak, unaccountable and remote, while elected local government has no effective say over local policing priorities. The Report states that the Government has now conceded that there is an accountability deficit at the local level and that people should have more democratic control over policing priorities in their area. The Report identifies two ways of improving responsiveness and raising performance. Firstly through *'citizen focused policing'* which includes the development of a customer care culture in the police service, a reduction in the time spent on unnecessary processes and paperwork, embedding neighbourhood policing and providing residents with clear information about local crime patterns. (Notably all these were previously identified by Sir Ronnie Flanagan in his *Review of Policing)*.

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4.3 The Report identifies the second way to improve responsiveness and increase performance as *'increased local accountability'*. It asserts that making decision-making more accountable to communities is crucial to delivering improved performance and more responsive policing. Six options for increased accountability are considered. The first two relate to accountability at force level, the others address accountability at a low level within forces.

4.4 **Option 1 – A directly elected police commissioner**

This would provide a clear and direct means of holding Chief Constables to account. However it is felt that such an arrangement of holding police to account at force level would still leave decision making remote from local people.

4.5 **Option 2 – A directly elected police authority**

This would prevent power from becoming concentrated in the hands of one person but suffers from the existing problem of Police Authorities in that they are less visible and would remain remote from local people.

4.6 **Option 3 – Give local authorities control of community policing**

Under this arrangement Local Authorities would take over the role currently performed by Police Authorities. Council leaders would set budgets, policing priorities and appoint local police commanders. Such an arrangement would improve democratic accountability and it is believed would deliver local responsiveness, joined up policing and community safety solutions.

4.7 **Option 4 – Give local authorities greater influence over community policing**

This option would allow Police Authorities to continue, but Councils would approve local policing strategies and would be consulted over the appointment of local BCU Commanders. By retaining control over the use of the police precept element of the council tax it would enable them to influence how the police service is delivered locally. Whilst it probably would improve delivery, it is recognised that such an arrangement could cause confusion over the reporting lines of accountability between the force and BCUs.

4.8 **Option 5 – The mayoral model**

Government could combine police reform with a move to roll out directly elected mayors across England. Elected Mayors would be given similar powers to those identified in Options 3 and 4. Whilst providing a clearer and more accountable local voice in setting police priorities is would concentrate a lot of power in one set of hands.

4.9 **Option 6 – A local police board**

This option would involve the conversion of those bodies involved in Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) into local Police Boards which would have directly elected members. The Report states that it is recognised that CDRPs are more visible to the public than Police Authorities and such a move would bring accountability down to a more local level. Police Boards would need powers over appointments, budgets and priority setting. It is recognised that there is a risk of creating a parallel structure rivalling the existing work of local government in dealing with community safety issues.

4.10 The Report admits that these different options each have their own merits and bring their own challenges. There is no perfect system for police accountability. Recognising that a 'one size fits' all model for police accountability is inappropriate, the Report recommends that the Government chooses to trial one or more of the options in different forces.

Analysis

4.11 The police reforms outlined in the report do not have direct relevance to the accountability structure for BTP. The Green Paper confirmed that this would be the case. However, any reform in the accountability structures of Home Office forces may impact on they way BTP relates to them in the future. Difficulties may be experienced when mutual aid or assistance is sought. BTP's priorities may not match those of locally elected police bodies. Seeking the agreement for joint operations with the local police to tackle local railway crime and disorder problems may become more time consuming.

4.12 It is interesting to note that while this Report mirrors much of what is considered in the LGA Report (discussed below), much of the content contradicts the evidence in that Report and the Casey Report. For example the Casey Report states that CDRP's are

more distant from the local population than Police Authorities currently are, whereas this Report states the opposite.

5. ANSWERING TO YOU: POLICING IN THE 21st CENTURY

5.1 In anticipation of the Home Office's Green Paper on policing the Local Government Association (LGA) published a discussion paper which it says *"is very much the LGA's own 'Green Paper' on the subject, rather than the Association's definitive view on the issue of police accountability".* It should be noted that the paper does not reflect the views of the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) or the Scottish Executive, and it does not attempt to set out any alternative models for police accountability in London.

5.2 The Report identifies twelve components to improve policing. These are reproduced below.

(1) **The first component in the LGA's reformed tripartite structure is to change the Home Secretary's responsibilities for local policing (*i.e. remove responsibility for level 1 and level 2 policing)*.** Some of the more obvious powers over local policing that could be transferred from or rebalanced between, the Home Secretary to local communities, or removed from the Home Secretary altogether include the following: those relating to the approving the appointment, and at time compelling the retirement, of chief constables; any powers relating to the setting of local priorities and plans; and the power to issue directions about local policing, a function currently of the Police Standards Unit. The Report states that the Home Secretary should continue to retain responsibility for level 3 crime, being accountable to parliament for the exercise of this responsibility.

(2) **The second component is the merger of Police Authorities and Local Authorities, so local police accountability is exercised through Local Authorities.** The Report states that handing powers from the Home Secretary to local communities will not deliver greater local accountability arrangements in the tripartite structure as it stands. The LGA believes Police Authorities have *"clearly failed to engage local people"* – although the evidence to back this up appears to be rather thin in the Report. The LGA states local police accountability would be

much improved if it was exercised through Local Authorities and this could be achieved by merging Police Authorities with Local Authorities so Police Authorities no longer have separate legal corporate identities. The LGA states the benefit of this sort of merger is that there would be an active place for independent members within Local Authorities, most logically through the scrutiny process. The expertise and experience currently brought by the independent members on the Police Authorities would thereby be retained. There is no indication how such a change might impact on BTP or other non-Home Office forces.

(3) **The third component in the LGA's reformed tripartite structure is the introduction of community safety charters between the Local Authority and its local community, against which the Local Authority and the local police can be held to account by local people.** It is envisaged the charter would be updated annually, with the objectives in it being incorporated into the Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets. Unlike the Civitas Report, while the LGA believes that the national police performance framework has forced the police to focus on national priorities at the expense of local ones, it would not want to lose the immense benefits from having performance regimes to drive improvement. The LGA claims that the difference with the charter is that the community safety priorities in the LAA would include entirely local priorities as established by the local community, with many fewer shared targets agreed between the partners and central government. While the LGA acknowledges the issues with Local Authorities *"engaging with the people they serve"* and "*decreasing turnout in local elections*" it states that *"with the merger of police and local authorities, residents will feel their council has a much greater ability to address issues they are concerned about and are much more likely to vote. That is also likely to attract more people to stand as councillors, which would address a further point about the skills and capacity issues raised about the quality of membership on police authorities."* The Report proffers no evidence as to how these conclusions have been arrived at.

(4) **The fourth component in the LGA's reformed tripartite structure is the creation of Community Safety Finance Account's in Local Authority budgets**

to safeguard spending on policing and community safety functions. The LGA believes local people should be able to make legitimate choices about funding priorities. *"If they would prefer to fund schools at the expense of the police that is a decision they should be able to make".* However, it would be possible to protect policing budgets (and any grant for policing from central Government) through local policing or community safety budget being treated as a separate Policing/Community Safety Finance Account.

(5) **The fifth component of the LGA's reformed tripartite structure is the consideration and debate by councils of Community Safety Finance Accounts in their own right during the budget setting process.** The LGA states the *"financing of the police is presently very opaque, with few people (including police officers) able to explain how police services are paid for".* No evidence to back this statement up is offered in the Report. Merging Police Authorities with Local Authorities will make a difference as Local Authorities will be responsible for setting budgets not only covering the services they provide, but those for the police as well. The LGA further believes the accountability for police funding would be improved further with the police budgets debated and approved by councils.

(6) **The sixth component of the LGA's structure is for merged police and Local Authorities to set the strategic context of police budgets, and to amend that context as necessary.** The Report states that though the Police Authority agrees the overall budgets it has no control over those budgets once agreed. *"The budgets have since the 1994 and 1996 Acts been under the control of the chief constable and not the police authority, who therefore have in fact minimal control of police expenditure…..full council would have responsibility for agreeing the strategic context in which budgets are set and be able to amend that context."*

(7) **The seventh component of the LGA's reformed tripartite structure is for Local Authorities to play a role in collaboration with Chief Constables in the police workforce modernisation agenda.** The Report refers to a number of commentators on the police (including IPPR, Policy Exchange and Professor Barry

Loveday, University of Portsmouth) who have identified issues surrounding police productivity and the LGA sees an *"obvious role for local authorities in aiding chief constables with the workforce modernisation agenda, given local government's generally recognised excellent performance compared to other public service, in delivering Gershon savings ahead of target."* The LGA claims this means local communities not only getting better policing services, but better value for money too.

(8) **The eighth component is for the BCU commanders to be given fully devolved budget responsibility, with existing BCU funds to be given to CDRPs/CSPs to commission services from their BCU commander.** The Report states that BCU's, while being responsible for nearly all police services delivered locally have only limited control over their budgets, and consequently they can find it difficult to meet the demands of their local community. *"We believe BCU Commanders would have greater financial responsibility if the HO's existing BCU funds were used differently. Instead of being allocated to chief constables they could be given as a grant to CDRPs/CSPs to spend on local community safety issues, including commissioning services fro the BCU commander."*

(9) **The ninth component is for the concept of Chief Constables' operational independence to be replaced by operational responsibility.** The Report refers to the Independent Commission on policing for Northern Ireland which states *"…all public officials must be fully accountable to the institutions of that society for the due performance of their function, and a chief of police cannot be an exception".* The LGA calls the concept of operational independence *"outdated*" The LGA agrees with the Independent Commission which favoured Chief Constables having operational responsibility meaning no-one could direct the Chief Constable as to how to conduct an operation, but the Chief Constable should be capable of being held to account for the manner in which he or she exercises those responsibilities. It also argues this should be extended to issues with the way the force conducts investigations or the operation of policies within forces.

(10) **The tenth component is for BCUs to become more accountable to the communities they serve through:**

- **An increase in the number of BCUs, with their size dictated by their local policing functions;**
- **Their boundaries coterminous as much as possible with Local Authority boundaries;**
- **BCU commanders to be subject to oversight from Local Authority scrutiny committees through the introduction of the provisions of the Police and Justice Act; and**
- **Local Authorities to be given a role in the appointment and dismissal of BCU commanders.**

BCU commanders are due under the Police and Justice Act 2006, if the provisions are brought into effect, to be overseen by the relevant Local Authority scrutiny committees. This will further increase BCU Commanders' accountability to the communities they serve. The LGA argues that even greater accountability could be achieved if the Local Authority had a role in the appointment and dismissal of BCU Commanders, and in assessing their performance. It suggests this could involve the Local Authority leader or elected mayor participating in the appointment process alongside the Chief Constable, with the Local Authority submitting their views on the BCU Commanders' performance as part of an appraisal process. *"In the case of BCU commanders who were not performing satisfactorily the council would be able to pass a vote of no confidence in the BCU commander, thereby requiring the chief constable to review that commander's suitability for the post."*

(11) **The eleventh component is for neighbourhood policing to become a mainstream police activity.** The Report states that neighbourhood policing (NP) *"provides a real opportunity for restoring public confidence in the police…..that confidence will be undermined if NP is not treated as a mainstream policing activity".* The Report claims that NP teams suffer more than other specialist sections within forces from abstractions, but does not state provide any evidence to support the claim.

(12) **The twelfth component of the LGA's reformed tripartite structure is:**

- **The establishment of Safer Ward Partnerships to bring local ward councillors and neighbourhood policing teams together to tackle crime at a street level; and**
- **For ward councillors to become local community safety champions for their wards, in the interim through the introduction of the Councillors Call for Action provisions in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.**

The LGA takes the view that it would be much better for the NP teams and ward councillors to work closely together, rather on their own. *"Now that NP teams cover every ward in England there is scope both for building street level partnerships between NP teams and ward councillors to become local community safety champions."* The Safer Ward Partnerships would see safer neighbourhood teams and the ward councillors meeting together with local residents to establish local community safety priorities and what can be done to address them. The LGA does not see these as new statutory arrangements but the bringing together of local partners, with the NP team and local councillors at their core.

Analysis

5.3 It was inevitable that the LGA would seek greater control over the police for Local Authorities. The Report states that it believes Local Authorities can help the police with their workforce modernisation programme because of their own success in pursuing value for money initiatives. However, such success can only best be described as patchy with many councils currently struggling with deeply rooted financial problems running schools and social services.

5.4 Recently published research from the LGA itself has identified the lack of knowledge members of the public have regarding delivery of Local Authority services, and additionally discontent at how Local Authorities have used legislative powers such as RIPA in relation to rubbish collection and school catchment areas. These findings go against some of the

assertions in this particular LGA report. Having a police force compete with other council services for adequate funding cannot be attractive option. That said, again it is not clear what, if any, impact such proposals if accepted might have on BTP and the BTPA.

5.5 It is worth noting that the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) recently published a list of the most popular top 20 local priorities agreed between local authorities and central government under the new Local Area Agreements (LAAs). Despite the respondents of the YouGov Survey stating they wanted "*Creating safer communities"* (81%) and *"Improving young people's safety"* (35%) as one of the five top priorities for local government[1], there are only four crime related priorities in the top 20. Serious acquisitive crime appears 7th behind others including the under 18 conception rate, per capita reduction in CO^2 emissions and obesity among primary school children. The re-offending rate of prolific and other priority offenders, and assault with injury crime rate are 13th and 14th respectively and repeat incidents of domestic violence appears at 20. This does not appear to provide overwhelming evidence of Local Authorities being responsive to the voice of local residents.

6. ENGAGING COMMUNITIES IN FIGHTING CRIME

6.1 On 18 June 2008, the Cabinet Office published a review undertaken by Louise Casey, the former head of the Government's Respect Task Force. On the same day this Report was published the Government issued its response saying *"the government has announced practical steps it will take to improve neighbourhood policing in England and Wales. These steps will include: increasing the visibility of community sentences so offenders 'pay back'; providing local crime data and online maps; investing in a new team of community champions; setting national minimum standards for neighbourhood policing and dedicating funding for community safety."* The response also stated that to ensure the changes happen quickly *"Louise Casey will take on the role of Neighbourhood Crime and Justice Advisor. She will work to improve neighbourhood policing across the country."*

[1] The top five were (1) Creating safer communities (2) Improving the local economy (3) Getting more young people making a positive contribution to society (4) Improving adult health and well-being (5) Improving environmental sustainability.

6.2 Ms Casey sets the tone for this wide-ranging report by declaring that *"Nothing short of a revolution is needed in the way that the consumer is served – and by consumer we mean primarily ordinary, law abiding citizens and victims of crime".* The Report looks at five broad areas: putting victims, witnesses and other law-abiding citizens first; fighting crime and delivering justice for communities; a new approach to crime statistics; the citizen's role in tackling crime; and freedoms and accountability.

6.3 During the review, comments from some 13,000 members of the public were sought via public meetings across the country and public surveys. The police, academics, professionals and members of Local Authorities were also consulted. Throughout the Report, Casey makes convincing arguments for simplicity, consistency and a more joined up, unified delivery. She notes that *"the public want a police service that delivers to the same standards, that has a familiar 'identity' wherever they live, and to know what they can expect from it – irrespective of their postcode."*

6.3 In all the review makes 32 specific proposals for change, of which the following are probably of most interest in relation to operational policing:

- Publish monthly crime maps on the internet with crimes plotted on them, so that local people can see how dangerous their area is and how well the police are doing
- Give more power to PCSOs; extending powers to detain people for up to 30 minutes and hand out fixed-penalty notices for a variety of offences, including shoplifting and being drunk and disorderly. This idea is strongly opposed by the Police Federation. This initiative has a number of implications for police forces including the need to extend the depth and length of training given to PCSOs in such matters as the law and undertaking personal searches
- Police forces would be required to provide monthly leaflets to all homes advising what action against crime is being taken in their area, as well as contact numbers for local police. The Home Office backs closer links between the police and public, but some officers fear it would create more bureaucracy. It would be difficult to envisage BTP having the resources to provide similar information regarding crime at railway stations

- A fresh drive to reduce the police paperwork that keeps officers off the beat should be spearheaded by a senior officer assigned to the Home Office. Less bureaucracy in the police service is a constant theme of all reports into police reform but all are unclear how to balance this against the current documentary evidence needs of the courts and justice system
- Transfer responsibility for compiling crime statistics from the Home Office to an independent body. Whilst initially enthusiastic about the idea the Home Office is believed to now be less keen
- Introduce Community Crime-Fighters with the intention of involving the public. The Home Office backs this idea but the role of such teams may conflict with existing Neighbourhood Watch schemes
- Community groups that succeed in tackling crime and antisocial behaviour should be awarded with public money
- Drop centrally imposed police targets and replace them with a less rigid 'measure of public confidence'.

Analysis

6.5 Overall it concludes that *"public confidence and engagement would be improved significantly if the police, local government and other criminal justice agencies took action together and presented a more united and seamless front to local communities on crime"* Sentiments which are difficult to argue against.

6.6 Some of the issues raised by this Report which would be of most concern to BTP, as it would be likely to face significant financial costs from implementing these proposals are:

- The increasing of powers suggested for PCSOs
- The provision of Crime Mapping on-line for the whole national railway environment
- Increasing the level of publicity of railway crime and offenders.