



BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE

www.bedfordshire.police.uk

This is a summary of the Three Year Strategy Plan for Bedfordshire Police. If you are interested in reading the plan in its entirety please visit the library section of the Authority's website from where it may be downloaded.

A summary of this Plan is also available in the following languages; Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati and Punjabi. A 'talking tape' summary in English is also available. Please contact us for further details.



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Your Safety... Our Priority



BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE



A summary of the
Local Strategic Plan 2005 – 2008



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Foreword

Policing will continue to be a challenge as long as there are people seeking to break the law. As criminality becomes more sophisticated so must the strategies and tactics adopted to fight it. From low-level volume crime and anti-social behaviour to international terrorism and gun crime, the police service, together with its partners in the criminal justice system and the community, has to seek out new methods to address these problems.

This Plan for 2005 – 2008 illustrates how Bedfordshire Police intends to fight crime and the fear of crime over the next three years and thereby improve the quality of life for those living and working in the County. People want to see action and measurable results against the crimes and behaviours that spoil their lives. Thankfully, the chances of becoming a victim of crime are the lowest they have been for many years and are falling still further and we are determined to see further improvements in the future. The threat from international terrorism does not diminish and we have to constantly guard against the unthinkable.

The role of the Police Authority continues to grow as Police Reform takes shape. We wish to oversee the delivery of a high quality service that meets the expectations of its users – namely the community. We want to see a Police Service that has community-based policing at the heart of its policing style, where people are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and have respect for other members of the community, irrespective of age, race, gender or disability. This is summed up in our Vision for Bedfordshire:

“Bedfordshire will be a place where the police engage with citizens and key partners to provide high levels of reassurance and public safety”

Since 2001 – 2002, the workforce has increased by 34% to its highest ever total. The extended Police Family includes over 40 Police Community Support Officers and, at more than 200, a record number of Special Constables. We wish to continue this growth.

This Local Strategic Plan for 2005 – 2008 has been developed to meet our aims and we commend it to you.

Finally, the Authority would like to thank our outgoing Chief Constable, Paul Hancock, for his valuable work over the last four years. Many of the strategies that he helped to put in place are showing excellent results and we offer him our best wishes for his well-earned retirement.

Bedfordshire Police Authority

Policing in the 21st Century

The National Perspective

A diverse society has diverse and sometimes opposing needs. Growing elderly and young populations have distinctive needs that require innovative approaches. Our sense and understanding of 'community' is changing. We have greater freedoms and opportunities to live, work, travel and socialise as we choose. The traditional foundation of work and career is being replaced by a pursuit of fun and leisure. While these changes are no bad thing, they do lead to over-indulgence and selfishness. Drug abuse, alcohol misuse, violence and anti-social behaviour are common problems. Criminals are also becoming more sophisticated and taking increasing advantage of weaknesses in our communities.

Developments in policing and criminal justice have sometimes failed to keep pace with these changes in society. Victims and witnesses of crime are often afraid to press charges or give evidence. Anti-social behaviour can plague whole communities.

The national challenge is to find ways to tackle crime and disorder without stifling the freedoms modern society now expects. Through the Police Reform agenda, the Home Office approach is to establish a foundation of security, public order and stability, to provide the trust and confidence that people and communities need in order to fulfil their potential.

The Home Office Strategic Plan 2004-2008

Home Office Strategic Objectives

- People are and feel more secure in their homes and daily lives
- More offenders are caught, punished and stop offending and victims are better supported
- Fewer people's lives are ruined by drugs and alcohol
- Migration is managed to benefit the UK, while preventing abuse of immigration laws and of the asylum system
- Citizens, communities and the voluntary sector are more fully engaged in tackling social problems, and there is more equality of opportunity and respect for people of all races and religions

The National Policing Plan 2005-2008

Key national priorities for 2005 – 2008

- Reduce overall crime – including violent and drug-related crime – in line with the Government's Public Service Agreements
- Provide a citizen-focused police service which responds to the needs of communities and individuals, especially victims and witnesses, and inspires public confidence in the police, particularly among minority ethnic communities
- Take action with partners to increase sanction detection* rates and target prolific and other priority offenders
- Reduce people's concerns about crime, and anti-social behaviour and disorder
- Combat serious and organised crime, within and across force boundaries

* Sanction detections are notifiable/recorded offences resulting in charge, summons, caution or taken into consideration at court.

The Local Perspective

Working in Partnership

Bedfordshire Police and Bedfordshire Police Authority are statutory partners in the four local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) that cover our area along district council boundaries. Each CDRP must produce a three-year strategy for tackling the key community safety issues in their area. Bedfordshire Police is required by the Home Office to agree targets to support efforts to reduce crime by 15% by March 2008.

Bedfordshire Police is also a partner in the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB). Working alongside other agencies in the criminal justice system – such as the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Probation and the Magistrates Courts – we aim to improve victim and witness care, tackling repeat offending, reduce re-offending and improve public confidence in the criminal justice system. Through the LCJB we support efforts to achieve the national Public Service Agreement (PSA) to increase the number of offences brought to justice.

Local Consultation and Engagement

We already consult and engage with local communities. Consultation can vary from informal forms such as visits to local communities by mobile police surgeries to more structured forms such as large-scale public opinion surveys.

Local Community Safety Issues

Police consultation, local intelligence analysis and consultation undertaken by partners has helped to identify common problems and concerns across our policing area:

- Anti-social behaviour
- Graffiti
- Vandalism
- Drug misuse
- Abandoned/ burnt out cars
- Level of crime
- Nuisance youths/ groups of youths
- Violent crime
- Visible policing
- Access to police services
- Drug dealing
- Burglary
- Vehicle crime

Moving From Consultation to Engagement

Our consultation helps us to listen-to, understand and prioritise many of the problems common to our area. However we also understand that 'one size does not fit all' and that particular groups and communities face unique problems. We know that much more can be done to ensure we understand the needs of hard to reach and hard to hear groups – those people in our community who either choose not to raise their concerns with us, or whose voices and needs are drowned-out by others. For Bedfordshire Police to have a positive impact on reducing fear of crime we need to encourage such groups and individuals to talk to us and work with us in making their communities and day to day lives safer.



The Local Strategic Plan 2005-2008

This document summarises our Local Strategic Plan for Bedfordshire. The strategy sets the direction for policing in Bedfordshire over the next three years and provides an overall view of the policing of our local area. Our Strategy comprises three strands:



Our Vision

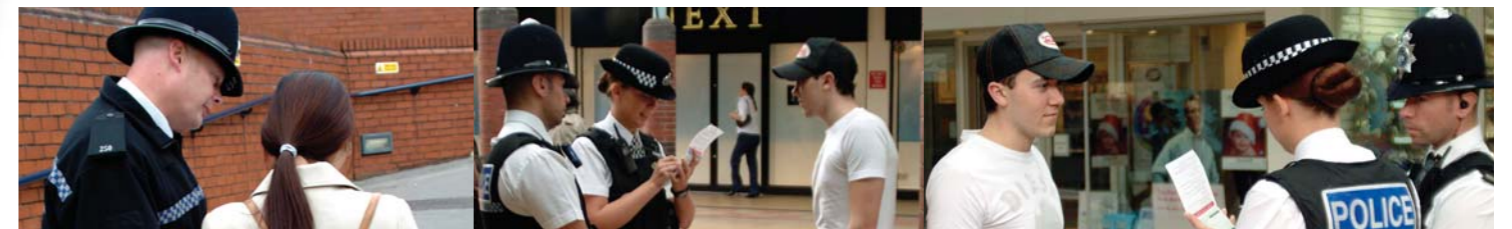
“Bedfordshire will be a place where the police engage with citizens and key partners to provide high levels of reassurance and public safety”



Our Mission -

The Mission of Bedfordshire Police is:

“Delivering a quality policing service in a customer focused way”



We believe that focusing on six key principles will help achieve our Mission and turn our Vision into a reality.

Principles to realise the Vision:

- Maintaining a citizen focus in all that we do
- Reducing crime
- Investigating crime
- Promoting public safety
- Providing assistance
- Managing our resources

These six principles will guide our activities through the life of this strategy. Each year, our supporting annual policing plans will also be built around these principles and outline the more detailed actions and initiatives that we will follow as we progress the delivery of this strategy.

The principles are outlined in more detail in the following section.



Our Actions

Our actions describe the key activities that we will undertake towards achieving our Vision.

Maintaining a Citizen Focus in all that we do

Focusing-on and understanding the needs of our community is the most important element of our strategy. Creating an organisation that can then meet those needs represents the single biggest challenge that we will face over the coming years.

Creating 'Citizen Focus'

Citizen Focus is about putting the law-abiding citizen at the heart of what we do, so that decisions are taken and services are designed with the involvement of the public to ensure that their needs as citizens are met. There are five key strands to providing citizen focus:

- Improving the experience of those who come into contact with the police
- Neighbourhood policing
- Effective engagement with the public
- A say for the public in how they are policed
- Organisational change to bring about increasingly responsive services

Making use of the Wider Policing Family

Recent changes in the law have allowed Chief Constables to recruit Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), who provide an additional uniformed patrol in our communities. Last year Bedfordshire Police appointed its first twelve PCSOs, deployed across Mid and South Bedfordshire. They are popular with local communities and provide valuable support to our officers. Further PCSOs have been appointed in Luton. The coming year will see the number of PCSOs increased to more than 40, extending across the whole county.

Serving a Diverse Community

Our policing area represents many diverse communities – including different races, religions and cultures - each with their own concerns and views about safety and confidence and with their own perceptions about the police. Sadly, revelations of racism and intolerance as shown in the 'Secret Policeman' TV programme, have weakened public confidence, but have also been a force for good in showing the challenges that we face and in leading to the development of plans to root out intolerance.

The new 'Equality and Diversity Programme Board' will develop and manage a range of initiatives grouped under six main headings:

- Race
- Disability
- Age
- Gender
- Faith
- Sexual Orientation

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places a duty on the police and other authorities to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good race relations between people of different racial groups. Our Race Equality Scheme is a strategic and timetabled action plan outlining our approach to race equality and illustrates our commitment to community and race relations. A copy of our Race Equality Scheme can be found in the 'community' section of the Bedfordshire Police website:

www.bedfordshire.police.uk

Quality of Service

We deal with a wide range of enquiries from the public. New commitments are being introduced across the country. These will set minimum standards for the service you can expect from us in terms of:

- Making it easier to contact us
- Dealing with initial contact
- Ensuring your voice counts
- Providing a professional and high quality service
- Keeping you informed
- Supporting victims of crime

Details of how we plan to introduce the new standards can be found in our annual policing plan for 2005 – 2006.

By the end of the three year period we aim to:

- Significantly increase the number of people who think that the local police do a 'good job'. (Baseline = 47.9%)
- Be better than our family average* in terms of overall levels of satisfaction for all users of the police service
- Be better than our family average* in terms of overall satisfaction levels of minority ethnic users of the police service
- Reduce differences in the percentage of stop searches that lead to arrest between different ethnic groups. (Baseline = 3% difference)
- Reduce differences in the sanction detection** levels for 'violence against the person' offences between different ethnic groups. (Baseline = 4% difference***)
- Reduce the difference in overall satisfaction levels between white and minority ethnic users of police services. (Baseline = 9.8% difference)

* The performance of each police force in England and Wales is measured by comparing it to a small group of forces with similar policing problems – our 'family of most similar forces'. Our target will be to increase our performance above the level of the average of our family. More details can be found in the 'Managing Our Performance' section of this strategy.

** 'Sanctioned detections' are those offences for which an offender is either convicted at court, cautioned, reprimanded, finally warned, given a penalty notice or has the offence taken into consideration while being sentenced for another offence. Targeting and measuring 'sanctioned detections' is a good way of ensuring that we are fully supporting other partners in the criminal justice system with efforts to bring more offences to justice.

*** As a high proportion of our police officers are white, and such crimes are usually detected, 'assaults on constables' have not been included in this figure as their inclusion would not give an accurate measure of the equality of service we are achieving for the wider public.

Reducing Crime

Dealing with crime continues to be at the heart of modern policing. Much effort already goes into investigation which, when successful, contributes to preventing further offending and meeting the needs and expectations of victims and witnesses.

Home Office calculations predict a 9% rise in crime by 2007 – 2008 due to changing economic conditions. More must therefore be done to reduce crime and the likelihood of becoming a victim. To reduce crime we will use intelligence led-policing and tackle:

- Volume crime (domestic burglary and vehicle crime)
- Drug-related crime
- Violent crime – and in particular domestic violence

Drugs and Crime – Breaking the Link

Through drug-testing those charged with relevant offences we will support national efforts to increase referrals to treatment programmes.

Domestic Violence

We will implement provisions in the new 'Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act' to encourage reporting and to support vulnerable victims. We will continue to operate a policy of positive arrest for domestic violence offences.

Alcohol and Violence

We will work with our partnerships to promote and enforce a responsible attitude towards licensing and the sale and consumption of alcohol. We will act swiftly to deal with the thuggery and loutishness associated with alcohol misuse.

Denying Criminals the Use of the Roads

We will use 'Automatic Number Plate Recognition' (ANPR) technology to help us to identify stolen or untaxed vehicles and track the movements of criminals.

By the end of the three-year period we aim to:

- Have reduced the overall level of recorded crime to not more than 53000 crimes
- Have reduced the level of recorded domestic burglary to not more than 3116 crimes.
- Have reduced the level of recorded vehicle crime to not more than 7402 crimes
- Be better than our family average in terms of levels of recorded violent crime
- Have worked with partners to increase the number of drug-dependent offenders entering substance-abuse treatment programmes
- Have reduced the level of robbery to not more than 840 crimes
- Have increased the percentage of domestic violence incidents where an arrest is made. (Baseline = 71%)

Investigating Crime

Advances in forensic science have led to dramatic improvements in the gathering of evidence. New intelligence and computer systems enable us to capture and analyse criminal and community intelligence with increasing sophistication. These developments place powerful new tools in the hands of the police in the fight against crime and repeat offenders and we intend to exploit them.

As well as targeting drug users, our plans for tackling drug misuse also include targeting street level dealers and the criminal networks that control them. Using provisions in the Crime and Disorder Act we will seek out opportunities to target premises used for drug-dealing.

Much local crime, including drug dealing, is funded and controlled by higher-level criminal networks. Working in collaboration with neighbouring constabularies, other agencies and the vulnerable communities targeted by such gangs, we will share and maximise intelligence to identify and break up such networks and bring offenders to justice. Using the Proceeds of Crime Act, we will exploit every opportunity to seize the assets of criminals where there is evidence that these have been funded by criminal activity - effectively starving such networks of their resources.

Prolific and Other Priority Offenders

Bedfordshire Police is committed to supporting our partners in dealing with the prolific and other priority offenders in each area. We will support local efforts and plans to:

- Prevent and deter
- Catch and convict
- Rehabilitate and resettle

This commitment is reflected throughout this local policing strategy.

Turning Investigation into Justice

The police service is just one component in the wider criminal justice system. Working with partners through the Local Criminal Justice Board we will develop and implement shared plans to ensure that professional and thorough investigation activity is translated into justice. We will develop joint performance management systems with our partners to improve monitoring and make the criminal justice process more productive.

To ensure that more offences are brought to justice, our strategic aims will be to:

- Increase the number of sanctioned detections
- Work with our partners in local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to identify and target prolific and other priority offenders
- Improve the service we provide to victims and witnesses
- Work to improve the quality of file and case preparation
- Work in partnership to reduce the level of 'cracked' and ineffective trials (those cases that fail to result in a positive conviction) by improving investigation through the adoption of the standards to be defined by the new 'Professionalising Investigation Programme'

Use of the National Intelligence Model

We will continue to develop the use of NIM to support partnership work to reduce local prolific offending and work with neighbouring constabularies to identify networks of serious and organised crime.

Tackling Organised Crime

We will continue to work with other police services in our region to identify and target gangs. We will exploit powers under the Proceeds of Crime Act to recover criminal assets and stifle criminal networks. Reports of suspicious financial activity will be fed into our intelligence systems to enable us to identify money laundering from the proceeds of crime and to target criminals. We will continue to support national agencies in the fight against organised crime.

By the end of the three-year period we aim to:

- Have achieved locally agreed targets for the percentage of detections classed as 'sanctioned detections'
- Have achieved locally agreed annual targets for the number of offences brought to justice
- Have achieved locally agreed annual targets for the percentage of offences brought to justice

Promoting Public Safety

Our strategic aim is to increase community confidence and reduce the fear of crime. In addition to tackling crime head-on, dealing with the underlying 'triggers' of fear is therefore a major goal of this strategy and we will channel a greater proportion of our resources into public safety policing. We will:

- Make the police, and policing services, part of community life - raising visibility and access as a means to encourage feelings of safety
- Work with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and other bodies to deal with low level disorder and anti-social behaviour – the triggers of fear and further criminality

Local Policing Services for Local People

By understanding the needs of our communities, and tackling anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime, we aim to improve feelings of safety and security. By raising the profile of local officers in the community and through improved dialogue we will work to identify the particular problems that concern local communities and develop plans to solve these. Through the use of the Special Constabulary and Police Community Safety Officers (PCSOs) we will maximise the policing presence in the community to use these resources in ways that meet the needs and expectations of different communities

What Is 'Anti-Social Behaviour'?

There is no defined list of behaviours classified as 'anti-social' but anyone acting in 'a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress' risks being accused of 'anti-social behaviour'.

Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 gave us new tools, including dispersal orders for dealing with intimidating groups of youths, acceptable behaviour contracts to modify the behaviour of offenders, anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) to serve as final warnings and 'crack-house closures' where drug dealing and misuse is taking place in our communities.

Working through partnership, our approach will be based on the lessons learned so far:

- Engaging the community - listening and acting on concerns
- Encouraging the public to take a stand and report ASB
- Support victims and witnesses
- Swift, visible and tangible action to prevent problems growing
- Early warnings to offenders to curb behaviour
- A twin-track approach of support and enforcement
- A partnership approach to solutions with common and agreed goals
- Tenacity and resilience - overcome the minority who commit ASB

To support efforts to break the links between drugs and crime, the Home Office is set to enable courts that have issued ASBOs to individuals, also to refer them to drug treatment programmes where appropriate. Parish councils will be given new powers to issue fixed penalty notices for low level issues such as graffiti and litter. All these provisions serve to promote good citizenship and make our communities better and safer places to live.

Crime, Community Safety and Partnership

Providing safe communities is not just the responsibility of the police. Many issues, such as anti-social behaviour, are on the fringes of conventional policing responsibility and require co-ordinated preventative action from a number of other organisations and agencies. Working with other agencies, and especially Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, will therefore be critical to providing increases in feelings of public safety.

Although the perceptions of crime caused by anti-social behaviour may not reflect reality, the fears are very real and affect the quality of life of whole communities. Being a victim of anti-social behaviour is different to being a victim of crime and the police alone can not always take the action necessary to resolve problems. As part of our strategy, our efforts to provide more locally-focused services and to work more closely in partnership will provide us with the means to identify problems and ensure that the needs and expectations of responsible citizens are recognised and put first.

Protecting Children and the Vulnerable

All agencies and organisations that deal with children have a duty to safeguard their welfare. The Bichard Inquiry and Report, following the tragic deaths of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman at Soham in Cambridgeshire identified much room for improvement in the sharing of vital information both within the police service and externally with other agencies. Work is now underway to improve communication between agencies and to increase mutual trust and information sharing. We will continue to demonstrate our commitment to these changes through our dialogue with partners and will actively support the implementation of national systems to improve the sharing of information and intelligence.

Other improvements to safeguard children are provided by the Children's Act 2004. The aim of the Act is to provide a framework to enable local authorities and their partners to develop joined-up planning and services for children. The co-operation between the police, local authorities and other agencies will be reinforced, with the police authority becoming a 'relevant partner' in the 'Children's Services Authority' and the police becoming formal members of new 'Local Safeguarding Children Boards'. We will put in place the necessary changes to resources and processes to ensure that we fulfil our obligations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Counter-Terrorism

The threat of terrorism continues to be an unfortunate reality in the 21st century. Bedfordshire Police has long supported national efforts to counter terrorism and has built up much experience and expertise. Based on the use of the National Intelligence Model (NIM), the National Strategic Assessment shows that the nature of the terrorist threat is changing, with radical groups from abroad being prepared to mount suicide attacks and inflict massive casualties.

Communities can unknowingly provide a hiding place for terrorists, allowing them to pass unnoticed amongst the law-abiding. Their presence and intentions threaten to undermine the cohesion of our community – causing fear and mistrust. We will support the national counter-terrorism aims through:

- Prevention
- Pursuit
- Protection
- Preparedness

Bedfordshire Police is committed to preserving the diversity of our community and protecting the rights and freedoms of all citizens. We will continue to take the necessary steps to safeguard our community, both through local activity and intelligence gathering and through support of other security services. We will continue to train our officers to deal with risks posed by chemical, biological, nuclear and radiological threats. We will continue to work with other local agencies to develop plans to counter the threat of terrorism. With a busy international airport at Luton and our proximity to London we must all continue to be ever-vigilant.

Making Roads Safer

We will continue to work to support the national Road Safety Strategy. By 2010, the Government seeks to achieve, when compared to the average for 1994 to 1998:

- 40% fewer people killed or seriously injured
- 50% fewer children killed or seriously injured
- 10% fewer 'slight casualties'

Speed continues to be a major contributing factor to many collisions. Consultation with our communities shows mixed views about the use of safety cameras. We are considering a review of their use as a tool to help deliver this strategy and to support the national strategy.

By the end of the three year period we aim to:

- Have reduced the percentage of residents very worried about burglary. (Baseline = 11.6%)
- Have reduced the percentage of residents with high levels of worry about car crime. (Baseline = 13.5%)
- Have reduced the percentage of residents with high levels of worry about violent crime. (Baseline = 17.6%)
- Have reduced the overall percentage of resident who think levels of disorder are high. (Baseline = 20.0%)
- Have reduced the percentage of residents who think levels of drug use or dealing are a big problem (Baseline yet to be published by Home Office)
- Have reduced the number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions. (Baseline =225)



Providing Assistance

For members of the public who need to call upon police services, we will ensure that those services are accessible, timely and appropriate. This includes how we answer queries and respond to calls for assistance.

Increasing the Quality of Service Delivery

We will raise the quality and timeliness of the service we provide. During the lifetime of this strategy we will introduce the new national 'Quality of Service Commitment', which provides minimum levels of service that all users can expect to receive in terms of:

- Making it easy to contact us
- Providing a professional and high quality service
- Dealing with your initial contact with us
- Keeping you informed
- Ensuring your voice counts
- Supporting victims of crime

Dealing With Calls and Enquiries

Although we will always give priority to emergencies, as part of our plans to introduce new national service standards we will work to improve the way we respond to your calls, ensuring that we understand what you are telling us. We will make sure that if we cannot connect you to someone who can help you, that we give you the opportunity to leave a message. Where the police cannot help you, we will let you know if there is another agency or group that can.

Improving Accessibility

As part of our plans for more localised policing teams and improving community engagement, we will make sure that local communities know who members of their policing team are, and how to contact them. We will develop and publicise a wider range of ways to make contact with us and explain when you should use the 999 emergency number. We will publicise the arrangements for contacting the police for non-emergencies.

Through the life of this strategy we will:

- Prioritise our response in favour of those most in need of our services
- Continue with initiatives to improve and increase the response and quality of our call handling
- Introduce new national standards and measures for call handling
- Develop and implement plans to achieve the service standards defined by the new national 'Quality of Service Commitment'

By the end of the three-year period we aim to:

- Answer at least 95% of 999 calls within our local target time of 15 seconds
- Answer at least 85% of non-emergency calls within 30 seconds

Managing our resources

Only through the planned and considered use of the resources available to us can we expect to succeed. We anticipate static budget levels over the life of this strategy and our philosophy for improvement will be built upon a foundation of 'doing more with what we have'.

To support this we will:

- Continue with our robust medium term budget planning process which has enabled us to deliver significant growth in police numbers at a significantly lower than average level of council tax
- Develop a resource usage strategy for the use of our physical resources – IT, buildings etc to support this Local Strategic Plan
- Develop a collaboration strategy with other police services that builds on our success with the Transport Consortium, developed with Thames Valley Police, and the ongoing work on procurement being carried out with other police services in our region
- Maximise bidding opportunities for funding from outside the core budget and develop an income generation strategy

A Workforce that Represents the Community it Serves

To achieve our strategy we need to create a flexible and professional workforce and equip our people with new skills to enable them to meet the needs and expectations of our community. We will ensure that our organisation is more representative of the diverse community we serve. Through our new Equality and Diversity Programme Board and other positive action initiatives we will ensure that women, members of ethnic communities and other minority groups have full and real opportunities to join and progress through our organisation.

Police numbers have increased significantly over the last few years. With this growth comes accountability – the need to ensure that those who represent the police uphold its values and demonstrate they provide a fair and equal service to all who need us. Through our recruitment practices, training and evaluation, supervision, performance review and external inspection we will ensure and demonstrate that intolerance is not acceptable in Bedfordshire Police.

Our Human Resource Strategy

To support delivery of the changes and improvements that will be necessary to achieve our Vision, we have developed a supporting Human Resources Strategy for 2005 to 2008. Our Human Resources Strategy has eight main themes:

- Race and Diversity
- Citizen focus/customer care
- Recruitment
- Retention
- Development
- Progression
- Leadership and Performance Management
- Health, Safety and Welfare

The Race and Diversity theme informs, underpins and drives all our activities. We recognise that we can improve business performance through a workforce that is truly reflective of the communities we serve and this will be reflected through an integrated approach to attracting, retaining and developing employees from all backgrounds. This will both enrich our organisation and ensure that the needs of these groups are fully met through the way we conduct our business.

Frontline Policing

We are the best-performing police service in the country in terms of the proportion of officer time spent on frontline policing. Frontline activities include patrol, burglary and vehicle crime reduction, crime investigation, domestic violence and family and child protection. Through reviews of our organisation, we will seek to ensure that as many as possible of our skilled and experienced staff are used in 'frontline' roles that directly support the services we provide.

To support achievement of our vision, we aim to:

- Ensure that our resources focus on frontline policing
- Ensure that support staff complement frontline activity and are focused on achieving the aims of this strategy
- Implement and maximise key information technology, such as 'Airwave' and mobile data, to support increases in patrol time and visibility
- Maximise available resources through collaboration – sharing resources in highly specialised/ corporate services
- Develop an organisation that is representative of the ethnicity and diversity of the communities we seek to serve
- Create an organisation in which excellence in community policing roles is both valued and rewarded
- Improve recruitment, retention and progression
- Reduce sickness and absenteeism



Best Value Performance Plans

Bedfordshire Police Authority has a duty to secure 'best value' in the provision of policing services. Processes and activities, central to the delivery of our plans and strategies form the core of a programme of reviews.

The best value review process enables us to examine current performance, evaluate options for improvement and implement changes. Progress in implementing agreed changes is monitored by the Police Authority at regular meetings. Inspections and audits are carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and the Audit Commission to ensure that best value reviews meet the required standard.

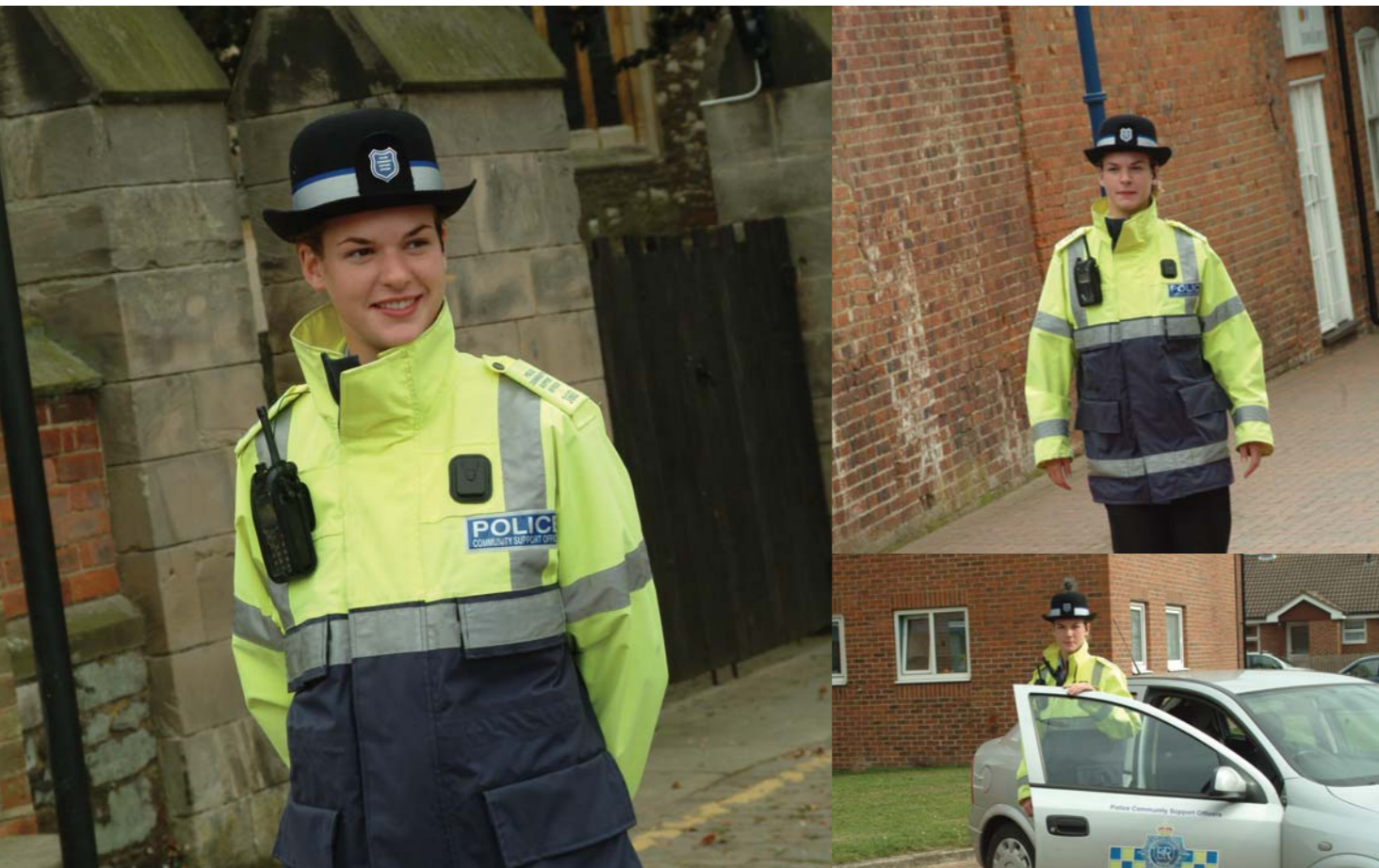
Efficiency Plans

The Home Office requires that every police constabulary in England and Wales improves its efficiency every year and publishes plans showing how these savings will be achieved. Savings from many projects, including best value reviews, contribute to our annual Efficiency Plans. Efficiency savings will be recycled into frontline policing and other areas in support of our strategy, aiding achievement of our vision.

A summary of the Efficiency Plan for 2005 – 2006, showing how we will use savings to improve frontline services, can be found in our Annual Policing Plan 2005 – 2006.

By the end of the three-year period we aim to:

- Have remained within the top three forces for the proportion of officer time devoted to 'frontline' policing
- Have increased the proportion of our recruits coming from minority ethnic communities. (baseline = 14.3%)
- Be in the top two forces in terms of the proportion of female police officers in the force
- Be in the top two forces in terms of the proportion of minority ethnic police officers in the force
- Be in the top two forces in our family in terms of minimising the amount of working time lost to sickness



Managing our Performance

Turning the Strategy into Action

Performance management provides the framework to ensure that activities are progressing as planned and that the service as a whole is progressing towards achievement of our Vision.

Annual Policing Plans

Our strategy must support delivery of the national objectives. Each year we will review and re-publish our strategy, making sure it remains focused on issues of both national and local concern.

Monitoring Performance

Our performance and progress will be monitored against a series of local and national indicators. The Home Office sets national Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) for the police service. Other local indicators measure performance on issues of local concern identified through local consultation and engagement.

Targets

In addition to being used to monitor our performance, some SPIs are used as the basis for performance improvement targets in support of national Home Office 'Public Service Agreements' (PSAs).

Families of Most Similar Forces

The performance of each force is measured by comparison to small groups of forces assessed as having similar levels of policing need – our 'family of Most Similar Forces' (MSF family). The other members of Bedfordshire's family are Avon and Somerset, Hampshire, Kent, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire.

The Home Office uses the 'Police Performance Assessment Framework' (PPAF) to show the performance of each force compared to the average performance of the whole 'family'. The PPAF model represents six key domains of policing:

- Citizen Focus
- Reducing Crime
- Investigating Crime
- Promoting Public Safety
- Providing Assistance
- Resource Usage

The PPAF domains mirror the six principles for realising our Vision. Progress against our strategy can therefore be charted using the PPAF model.

Providing Data

Bedfordshire is one of the first areas to implement the new police National Management Information System (NMIS). This system allows us to collect and provide performance information to the Home Office and other bodies more easily and efficiently. By linking together data held in our other computer systems it also supports our efforts to manage our performance. We will continue to exploit the opportunities that NMIS provides.

Managing Performance

At the heart of national plans to improve accountability, quality, satisfaction and reassurance, is the need to improve performance management. The Police Standards Unit (PSU) has published a practical guide to performance management for the police service highlighting the hallmarks of an effective performance management framework:

- Clarity about the roles and responsibilities of police authorities, chief officers and managers for performance
- A performance framework linked to corporate planning, budgeting and resource management
- Chief officers' ownership and involvement in the performance review process
- Performance review structures to hold staff to account at all levels and across operational and support departments
- Recognition of good performance and follow-up where performance falls short
- Continuous improvement evident throughout the organisation
- Clear priorities widely understood by police officers and staff at every level
- Individual objectives and appraisal linked to performance
- Timely, accurate and relevant data to inform decision making
- Easily captured and clearly reported performance data

Accountability

At the heart of performance management is accountability. All police staff have an annual performance review. The reviews enable us to:

- Ensure that our staff know what is expected of them in terms of force objectives and priorities and standards of performance
- Review everyone's abilities and effectiveness in their roles
- Plan and manage everyone's work related objectives for the year
- Identify and address any needs for skills development which will benefit staff in their roles
- Identify and address any needs for skills development to prepare for any future role

By 2009, the performance of everyone employed by the police service should have been assessed as competent against National Occupational Standards relating to race and diversity:

- Fostering people's equality, diversity and rights
- Promoting people's equality, diversity and right

These two standards will be used to assess the ability of our staff to recognise and support diversity and to take positive action to minimise the impact of discrimination.



Chief Officers of Police

Through a programme of regular divisional meetings, the Deputy Chief Constable reviews performance with local divisional commanders, holding them accountable for their contribution to performance. In turn, the Police Authority holds the Chief Constable to account for performance through quarterly scrutiny and review meetings. From 2005 onwards the pay of chief officers will also be linked to performance and achievement will be assessed by the Police Authority. In particular, chief officers will be expected to evidence how they have promoted equality and diversity within their area.

Making Cost Visible

Bedfordshire Police is structured and organised so that as much as possible of our resources and funding is placed under the control of local divisional commanders, enabling them to tailor the services they provide to local communities. However a portion of our resources is still used for central and shared functions. Through the process of 'Making Cost Visible', Divisional Commanders have the opportunity to review expenditure on these headquarters support budgets. Central and headquarters departments are held accountable for their cost and the services they provide.

Partnership Performance

As Bedfordshire Police is a member of local partnerships, our local policing divisions must work effectively to improve performance both collectively as a force and as local partners. Government proposals for police reform include a review of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to ensure that partnerships are accountable to the communities they serve. Police Authorities will be given an expanded role to:

- Take into account local policing priorities identified by CDRPs when developing policing plans and strategies
- Oversee the relationship between CDRP and neighbourhood bodies, and ensure the implementation of citizen involvement – making sure these arrangements are not overly bureaucratic
- Co-operate with neighbouring authorities to help tackle cross-border (level two) crime and analyse the effectiveness of their own performance on level two crime
- Promote diversity within the police and Police Authority
- Conduct the Chief Constable's performance appraisal, decide pay and bonuses, with a formal requirement to consult HMIC
- Request HMIC inspection or PSU intervention in their force or particular parts of it where the Police Authority considers it necessary.

