



BUSINESS PLAN 2011-2012

Bedfordshire Police Authority

Business Plan 2011-2012

Introduction

Bedfordshire Police Authority has responsibility for ensuring an efficient and effective policing service for the people of Bedfordshire. We are fortunate to work with a highly committed police force which seeks to deliver and maintain good standards of policing for local people. However, over the next few years Bedfordshire Police will face some difficult times as it comes to terms with the considerable budget reductions announced by the Coalition Government. It is the responsibility of the Authority, in conjunction with the Chief Constable to find ways of addressing these budget cuts while maintaining and improving front line services.

At the same time as dealing with reductions to the budget the Authority will also face its own set of challenges. The publication of the ***Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill*** proposes to make the police service more accountable to local people by replacing police authorities with directly elected police and crime commissioners from May 2012. During this transition period the Police Authority will have the challenge of ensuring 'business as usual' while simultaneously planning to move to a different governance model.

Therefore over the next twelve months the Police Authority will focus on two key functions:

- I. **Setting Strategic Direction, Priorities and Targets** – and holding the Chief Constable to account for effective performance against the strategy, priorities and targets;
- II. **Ensuring Value for Money and Productivity** – by holding the Chief Constable to account for the efficient delivery of policing services to local communities.

Our Purpose

As well as setting strategic direction and ensuring value for money, the Authority has a wide range of statutory responsibilities, including:

- Ensuring that policing services are provided fairly and in a way which does not discriminate against any group or individual, promoting equality of opportunity and working to eliminate unlawful discrimination both internally within the Authority and Force and in the provision of policing services;
- Setting the budget for the Force, including raising the policing precept;
- Exercising effective oversight of Force performance against the Policing Plan and reports honestly to the community about the Force's achievements;

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- Taking into account the views of all those who live in, work in, or visit Bedfordshire and ensures that the views of local people are reflected in the nature and style of local policing;
- Providing feedback on how issues raised through consultation and engagement have been used;
- Appointing Chief Police Officers and, where necessary, discipline and dismiss them;
- Monitoring the way in which complaints against officers and staff are dealt with by the Force, deals with complaints against Chief Police Officers and monitors complaints about the direction and control of the Chief Constable;
- Maintaining an effective Independent Custody Visiting Scheme;
- Working in partnership with local Community Safety Partnerships, Local Safeguarding Children Boards and other criminal justice agencies to deliver community safety and a coherent high quality joined-up service.

It is clear to the Authority that its focus, over the next year, must be on the main functions already identified and where it can add most value. We will ensure that we remain compliant with our statutory duties while undertaking our business in a different way.

Strategic Intent

The Authority's strategic purpose and direction for Bedfordshire Police is to 'Fight Crime and Protect the Public'. Over the next twelve months the Force will radically change the way it undertakes its business with local policing becoming more accountable to communities through redesigned local policing teams. The Police Authority has always worked to ensure that Bedfordshire Police has focused their resources on tackling what matters most to local communities: this approach will continue with the introduction of the new Police and Crime Commissioner. The new policing model will ease the transition from Police Authority governance to the Commissioner.

We will continue to build on the success of our police force collaboration programme, primarily through our strategic alliance with Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire, to assist us in being able to maintain a front line policing service. We will also continue to work with our local authority partners to explore opportunities for shared services and outsourcing in order to meet the financial challenges, increase resilience and provide a value for money policing service

Strategic Principles

The Authority and Force has underpinned the strategic intent with five key principles:

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- **People** – Having the right people in the right place at the right time with the right support making the right decisions;
- **Processes** – Providing better policing services to the public through a robust and relentless review of the way we do business at all levels to ensure continuous improvement;
- **Resources** – Making economic, efficient and effective use of all the resources at our disposal at all times;
- **Partnerships and Collaboration** – Using effective partnerships and collaboration to deliver a responsive, consistent and locally focussed policing service;
- **The Public** – Delivering a fair and consistent service to all whilst focusing on the vulnerable and repeat victims, locations and offenders.

In addition, the Police Authority will continue to conduct its business based on the ten Nolan Principles of public life to ensure its decision making remains open, transparent and accountable to local people.

Police Authority Business Plan

The Police Authority is an independent organisation and is committed to continuous business development and improvement. For the past three years the Authority has developed a business plan and annual plan to provide a structured and focused approach to improving its own performance. The identified improvements culminated in the recent HMIC/Audit Commission Inspection scoring the Authority as ‘performing well’ in the value for money section, one of few police authorities nationally to be awarded this score. In the remaining areas the Authority was graded as meeting the standard.

Responsibility for progress against the Business Plan rests with the Authority’s Compliance and Risk Management Committee. The Committee receives regular update reports and provides direction on those actions which remain outstanding or should be discontinued. In view of the changing political and financial landscape the committee agreed that going forward the Authority needed to review its committee structure to ensure it remains efficient and effective over the period until the Authority hands over its statutory duties to the Police and Crime Commission in May 2012.

As part of the committee review a number of recent and influential publications were taken into account. The HMIC reports ***‘Valuing the Police’, ‘Sustaining Value for Money in the Police Service’, and ‘Police Governance in Austerity’*** all point to the need for Police Authorities to re-assess their activities and spend less time on the broad range of responsibilities and have a sharper focus on the key decisions that really matter in terms of securing a more cost-effective and efficient policing service. To ensure value for money the

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focus for the Authority over the next financial year will be to realise the savings it needs to make while maintaining and improving performance. The way the Authority carries out its business must be shaped differently to meet the challenges ahead.

A new, streamlined, committee structure will help the Authority to focus on those areas where it can add value and make most difference. By changing the way we conduct the business the Authority will have the resilience it needs to make the 'tough decisions' over the coming financial year. Resources will be allocated to those priority areas which are of greatest threat, harm and risk to local communities. The Authority's scrutiny will focus on 'following the money' to ensure the best possible outcomes for local people. This new way of working will lay the foundations for a smooth transition to a new governance regime.

Business Plan – 2011/12

In order to successfully deliver against the two key functions of '**Setting Strategic Direction**' and '**Ensuring Value for Money**', the Authority's 2011/12 Business Plan is based on the following four objectives:

- I. Setting an affordable strategic direction for 2011/15 and beyond;
- II. Holding the Chief Constable to account for the successful delivery of the 2011/12 strategic plan within the budget available;
- III. Communicating 'hard choices' and understanding public perception in relation to cuts and changes to service delivery in order to provide reassurance;
- IV. Putting in place the necessary arrangements to ensure a smooth transition to a new governance model

The Authority adopts a risk management approach to its business and regularly reviews and revises its strategic and operational risks. The Authority and Force currently has eight strategic risks, listed below:

- Unable to continue to deliver an increase in public confidence in Bedfordshire Police and meet the confidence target;
- Inability to respond to individual customer needs;
- Innovation is stifled by force structure or culture;
- Failure to manage safeguarding responsibilities effectively
- Ineffective and outdated processes and procedures;
- Unable to match resources with priorities;

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- Changes in the national policing landscape that are detrimental to Bedfordshire Police
- Ineffective partnership working.

The Police Authority also has three specific operational risks:

- Reductions in external funding;
- Pro-action communications and
- Uncertainty surrounding the change in overall governance.

The 2011/12 Business Plan has been shaped with these risks in mind. In particular, the focus on the two key functions of setting strategic direction and ensuring value for money and the resulting priorities will clearly help mitigate the risks faced by the Authority at this time.

Implementing the Plan

The action plan below sets out the framework for how we intend to take this Business Plan forward. Progress against the plan will be reported to the Authority's Compliance Committee on an exception basis only.

The arrangements for transition to a new governance structure are as yet unknown and therefore any plan developed to deliver the business plan needs to be realistic, achievable and above all, flexible.

Equality Analysis

An action plan has been developed and used by the Police Authority Secretariat to support delivery of this business plan. Each action has been assessed and given an equalities risk grade. Twelve were graded high, the majority of which related to setting the plan and budget, twenty eight were medium and twenty were low. Whilst equalities considerations should be part of all activity, the Police Authority will publish written equality analysis (formerly impact assessments) covering the business areas graded as high. Progress will be reported in the Single Equality Scheme Annual Report in September 2011.

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Objective 1:

To set an affordable Strategic/Annual Plan for 2011/15 and beyond

- Quarterly threat, harm and risk assessment report to Joint Strategic Planning Working Group (JSPWG);
- New Member Induction to include training on threat, harm and risk;
- Community Safety Partners to be encouraged to use threat, harm and risk when undertaking strategic planning;
- Continue to explore governance arrangements for Pan Public Sector Project with a view to improving joint strategic planning
- Progress property work-stream for Pan Public Sector Project, including supporting administration
- Local priorities to be better integrated into strategic planning process;
- Recruit Deputy Chief Constable;
- Consult and communicate to public what is important/priority and why;
- Make use of public consultation in determining local priorities and communicate importance and relevance of all priorities.

Setting the Budget and precept for 2012/13 and longer term financial plans by:

- Integrate threat, harm and risk into financial planning;
- Continue to lobby central government regarding funding;
- Development of medium term financial strategy to ensure viability, making better use of resources and reserves to increase productivity and performance;
- Impact assess the 2011/12 budget consultation;
- Understand the impact of the 2011/12 budget and strategic plan;
- Consult on policing priorities and budget throughout 2011/12;
- Communicate messages on financial challenges.

Objective 2:

Holding the Chief Constable to account for the successful delivery of the 2011/12 strategic plan within the budget available;

1. Effective performance management through:
 - Development of a balanced performance framework;
 - Robust scrutiny through exception reporting and a focus on areas of investment;
 - A targeted internal audit plan;
 - Officer and Member involvement in dip-sampling and analysis of complaints and professional standards;
 - Use of lead members on a task and finish basis;
 - Maintenance of the ICV scheme.

2. Improve internal information management through:
 - Re-assess Member support and consider policy and performance analysis from officers;
 - New Member Induction;
 - Member VfM objectives to be agreed;
 - Ensuring the Authority's web-site remains relevant and current;
 - Police Authority seminars and secretariat team meetings

3. Change agenda setting process to ensure scrutiny is targeted where it matters;

4. Targeted committee work plans based on areas of risk, return on investment, delivery of the strategic and annual plans and delivery of identified savings

5. Improve local accountability through;

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- Increasing easy and equal access to the complaints system;
 - Regular communication to local people on the progress against the plans and understand public perception in order to provide reassurance;
 - Regular consultation to test out the fit between Police Authority and Force plans and residents' expectations
6. Improve efficiency and productivity through:
- Developing productivity measures for inclusion into the balanced performance framework;
 - Further develop the collaboration programme through the strategic alliance and with other Forces where appropriate;
 - Monitor the use of capital assets to deliver the policing priorities;
 - Set ambitious efficiency targets;
 - Evaluate business cases to ensure benefits realisation;
 - Benchmarking information such as vfm profiles to be used;
 - Maintain scrutiny on overtime reduction, effective deployment and workforce mix;
 - Improve scrutiny on local priorities through Member 'reality checks'.

Objective 3

Communicating on the financial plans and 'hard choices' to the public;

- Continue to develop on-going communications plan to keep key partners and stakeholders informed of changes;
- Consult with local communities and business on policing priorities and budget;
- Feedback to communities, including agreed committee communications;
- Continue the use of briefing sheets for Members to use for presentations at Community Safety Forums;
- Publish two 'newsletters' to parish councils;
- Communicate governance changes to the public

Objective 4:

Putting in place the necessary arrangements to ensure a smooth transition to a new governance model

To ensure the Authority has the necessary capacity and capability to aid a smooth transition and provide resilience through:

- Implementing the new committee structure;
- Efficient and effective committee support and administration;
- Reviewing the way the Police Authority manages command and control and operational complaints;
- Implement recommendations arising from the review of complaints;
- Ensuring compliance with Freedom of Information and Data Protection;
- Ensure compliance with Health & Safety legislation;
- Conducting a staff skills audit as new arrangements become known;
- Providing training to address skills gaps;
- Staff retention and contingency planning during transition period;
- Revising the committee report template;
- Staff development/one to one's and development of key performance indicators;

