

# **An Introduction to the Police Authority**

The following summary has been prepared by the Chief Executive to provide a general overview.

## **1 General Background**

Policing in the UK is provided by local police forces. In England and Wales there are 43 police forces each directed by a Chief Constable. There are in addition over 20 specialist forces created by statute such as the British Transport Police, Royal Military Police and the UK Atomic Energy Constabulary.

Each of the 43 ordinary police forces is overseen by a Police Authority composed of 17 (in some cases 19) local people appointed (not elected) under prescribed procedures. Over half the members are drawn from local authorities (councillor members) and the remainder are independently appointed members. (At least one independent member must be a magistrate).

Police Authorities have a range of statutory roles not least of which is the selection and appointment of a Chief Constable and the Command team.

Each Chief Constable, Deputy and Assistant Chief Constable is appointed by the Police Authority from amongst those persons meeting Government prescribed requirements and approved by the Home Secretary. Chief Constables must normally have served as a Chief Officer (Assistant Chief Constable or Deputy Chief Constable) in another force for at least two years. Divisional Commanders (Chief Superintendents) are appointed by the Chief Constable, but the Chair of the Police Authority is consulted and involved in the selection process and the Chair of the Policing Board involved in the induction process.

Chief Constables and Deputy Chief Constables are by law appointed on limited fixed term contracts which may be extended (for short periods only) by the Police Authority with the consent of the Home Secretary.

Chief Constables and their senior command teams are members of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and Police Authority members are members of the Association of Police Authorities (APA). Both national bodies carry out an information sharing and policy development role and are the principal vehicle for consultation by the Home Office.

These two influential groups, together with Government (principally acting through the Home Office) help to shape local policing policy. This arrangement is often referred to as the "Tripartite Arrangement". Over the last ten years the lead local authorities (unitary and county councils) and other statutory partners have been afforded an increasing influence in setting local policing or community safety priorities.

While the directive power of the Home Office cannot be underestimated it is important to understand that Chief Constables exercise what is usually described as 'operational independence'. The Police Act 1996 states that "A police force maintained under section 2 shall be under the direction and control of the chief constable appointed under section 11."

This is an important constitutional safeguard which helps to protect operational policing from political direction. Unlike judges however Chief Constables can be required to resign. This is a power exercisable by Police Authorities with the support of the Home Secretary. This provides a safeguard against incompetent or improper conduct. Police Authorities also have the power to initiate disciplinary proceedings against Chief Officers following complaint of personal misconduct.

The role of the Police Authority is to fulfil those statutory responsibilities placed upon it. The Police Authority's freedom of action is constrained by Government frameworks and regulations, by limits on its financial resources, by its environmental context, and importantly by the 'operational independence' of the Chief Constable.

Nevertheless the Police Authority is highly influential in shaping policing activity and style. It is in effect the local democratic element of the tripartite arrangement. It is charged with understanding local opinion with respect to policing, in negotiating a strategic plan for local policing with the Chief Constable and is a regulator of the overall resources available for policing by setting the local police precept. Local, in this context, refers to the whole force area but the last few years there has been a development in the setting of much more local targets

through partner and public participation.

Arguably the 'tripartite' system of governance is no longer accurately descriptive of governance arrangements for policing. This is partly because it does not recognise the role of partners and the fact that forces have some accountability to these and other bodies. It is also felt by many that the structure has become unbalanced; with the role of the Home Office over the years having become too directly involved in the delivery of policing at the local level.

Police Authorities as currently constructed have provided a successful model to maintain operational independence of Chief Constables in a largely politically independent environment.

## 2 Setting the Budget

Each year the Police Authority must set the police precept. The police precept (that element of the Council Tax fixed by the Police Authority annually) is subject to the capping processes of the Department of Communities and Local Government (not the Home Office!) and any Police Authority setting an excessive precept (in the view of the Secretary of State for Local Government) may be required to re-set its precept and re-bill the council tax payers. The precept setting power of Police Authorities can provide a valuable influence over policing priorities and the shaping of developments. The introduction of a strict capping regime has severely limited the Police Authority's discretion in this important area.

West Mercia set an increase of 4.9% for 2009/2010.

Special rules attach to the precept setting. While the overall budget and precept require a majority vote of the Authority as a whole (i.e. all 17 members), the councillor members taken en bloc can veto a precept setting proposal. Thus a precept motion requires a majority vote of both the councillor members (9) and the Police Authority as a whole (17).

The precept levels set by West Mercia Police Authority over the last 12 years are as follows:

<b>Year starting 1st April</b>	<b>Amount £</b>	<b>Increase £</b>	<b>Increase %</b>	<b>Index 1997 = 0</b>
1997	50.87			
1998	53.64	2.77	5.4	105
1999	59.00	5.36	10.0	116
2000	74.06	15.06	25.5	146
2001	78.50	4.44	6.0	154
2002	104.50	26.00	33.1	205
2003	119.80	15.30	14.6	236
2004	137.69	17.89	14.9	271
2005	143.17	5.48	4.0	281
2006	150.24	7.07	4.9	295
2007	157.66	7.42	4.9	310
2008	165.45	7.79	4.9	325

2009	173.62	8.1700000 0000002	4.9	341
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The above figures are based on a Band D household. The precept applies equally across the whole Forces area i.e. Shropshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Telford & Wrekin.

### 3 Policing Priorities

The Police Authority is required by law to agree a Policing Plan with the Chief Constable. This Plan sets out the priorities and targets for a rolling three years ahead. It is updated annually. The process by which this is done is set out more fully at page D-1.

For some years now Policing has been shaped by a number of detailed targets and priorities. While the Police Act 1996 envisaged that these were largely the province of the Police Authority acting in consultation with the Chief Constable, in more recent years a variety of legislative reforms have introduced externally imposed priorities and targets.

The Government in 2008 declared its intention to reduce the extent of targets/priorities and to simplify the national performance measurement framework. Whether this has yet been achieved is questionable.

The Home Secretary can by law impose priorities which must be reflected in the Policing Plan. In October 2008 the Home Secretary announced priorities for 2009-11. She announced her intention to introduce a single top down target of Public Confidence in Policing to be measured by public survey.

However the Home Secretary also made reference to a number of additional priorities as follows: -

- Increase public confidence in the police, reducing crime in line with PSAs 23 and 25, and effectively contribute to partnership working within the CJS in line with PSA 24;
- Work jointly with police forces and other agencies, such as SOCA and UKBA, to ensure that the capability and capacity exists across England and Wales to deliver effective protective services , tackle serious and organised crime and that the necessary improvements are made;
- Work with and through partners and local communities to tackle terrorism and violent extremism in line with the counter terrorism strategy (CONTEST); and
- Work in all of the above, in line with the Efficiency and Productivity Strategy for the Police Service, to ensure the best use of resources to deliver: significant cashable improvements; more effective deployment of the workforce; and to realise benefits of new technology.

Public Service Agreements (PSAs) are set by Government and contain considerable detail but the following summaries are very helpful:

PSA 23 MAKE COMMUNITIES SAFER

PSA 24 DELIVER A MORE EFFECTIVE TRANSPARENT AND RESPONSIVE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICE FOR VICTIMS AND THE PUBLIC

PSA 25 REDUCE THE HARM CAUSED BY ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

PSA 26 REDUCE THE RISK TO THE UK AND ITS INTERESTS OVERSEAS FROM INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

### **PSA 23 MAKE COMMUNITIES SAFER**

Priority Action 1 Reduce the most serious violence, including tackling serious sexual offences and domestic violence.

Indicator 1 'Most serious violence'

Data used Police recorded crime (baseline 07-08)

Local Measurement (LAA / APACS)

Priority Action 2 Continue to make progress on serious acquisitive crime through a focus on the issue of greatest priority in each locality, increasing public confidence in the local agencies involved.

Indicator 2 'The level of serious acquisitive crime'

Data used Police recorded crime (baseline 07-08)

Local Measurement (LAA/APACS)

Priority Action 3 Tackle the crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour issues of greatest importance in each locality, increasing public confidence in the local agencies involved.

Indicator 3 Public confidence in local agencies dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter to people in their local area

Data used British Crime Survey (baseline 07-8, Q3 & Q4)

Indicator 4 Perceptions of anti-social behaviour

Data used British Crime Survey (baseline 07-8, Q3 & Q4)

Priority Action 4 Reduce re-offending through the improved management of offenders

Indicator 5 Adult & Young Offender Proven Re-offending

Indicator 6 Serious Re-offending

Data used NOMS & Police National Computer (Baseline 2004)

**PSA 24 DELIVER A MORE EFFECTIVE TRANSPARENT AND RESPONSIVE CJS FOR VICTIMS AND THE PUBLIC**

Priority Action 1 Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the CJS in bringing offenders to justice.

Indicator 1 The efficiency and effectiveness of the CJS in bringing offences to justice

Data used TBC

Priority Action 2 to increase the levels of public confidence in the fairness and effectiveness of the CJS

Indicator 2 Public confidence in the fairness and effectiveness of the CJS

Data used British Crime Survey

Priority Action 3 to increase the proportion of victims and witnesses that are satisfied with the way they are treated by the CJS

Indicator 3 Experience of the CJS for victims and witnesses

Data used Police user satisfaction surveys / Witness and Victim Experience Surveys (WAVES)

Priority Action 4 better identify and explain race disproportionality at key points within the CJS and to have strategies in place to address racial disparities which cannot be explained or objectively justified.

Indicator 4 Understanding and addressing race disproportionality at key stages in the CJS

Data used LCJB returns

Priority Action 5 reduce the harm caused by crime by increasing the quantity of criminal assets recovered

Indicator 5 Recovery of criminal assets

Data used data from the Joint Asset Recovery Database

**PSA 25 REDUCE THE HARM CAUSED BY ALCOHOL AND DRUGS**

Indicator 1 Percentage change in the number of drug users recorded as being in effective treatment

Data used National Drug Treatment Agency Information

Indicator 2 Rate of hospital admissions per 100,000 for alcohol related harm

Data used Dept of Health Hospital Episode Statistics (HES)

Indicator 3 The rate of drug related offending

Data used PNC (baseline Q1 - 08) / (DIMIS) / (OASys)

Indicator 4 The percentage of the public who perceive drug use or dealing to be a problem in their area

Data used BCS (July 08)

Indicator 5 The percentage of the public who perceive drunk or rowdy behaviour to be a problem in their area.

**PSA 26** REDUCE THE RISK TO THE UK AND ITS INTERESTS OVERSEAS FROM INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

Outcome measures against the 4 'Ps' of PREVENT, PURSUE, PROTECT and PREPARE are in development.

In addition to the 'confidence' measure and the PSA priorities, the Home Secretary has announced the introduction of a Policing Pledge which itself will set out a number of minimum standards should must be met.

Moreover the Police and Police Authority are also required to commit to a number of locally agreed targets relating to up to 35 national indicators drawn from a list prescribed by Government. These additional local targets must be set out in Local Area Agreements. We have 4 such agreements in the Force area.

Police activity will still continue to be measured over a range of Policing Indicators (APACS) currently 45 in number. These indicators overlap in some cases (but not all) with the Local Area Agreement targets.

From 2009 HMIC and the Audit Commission acting jointly will prepare an annual CAA (Comprehensive Area Assessment) which will assess the performance of a variety of bodies within each lead local authority area e.g. Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin. While this will have regard to the performance of individual agencies (including the police) it will be looking at overall delivery and "partnership targets" across all of the agencies collectively. Areas of poor performance will be "red flagged". The assessment will be published.

A separate inspection of Police Authorities will be taken into account by the CAA. In West Mercia the Police Authority Inspection is not going to take place before 2010.

However the PURE assessment of the Force's financial management already takes into account the Police Authority's own involvement and governance contribution and this will currently inform the CAA.

**Providing Focus**

Finally it is worth noting that in order to enable the Police Authority and Constabulary to focus on the key indicators of performance of particular interest locally, a small number of key local indicators are included in the Policing Plan.

Each of the Authority's Panels identifies the performance data or updates it requires to ensure it's area of responsibility can be assessed. This local performance framework is subject to regular review and adjustment.

**4 Oversight of Police Performance**

Police performance is very comprehensively monitored. Each force has to make returns to the Home Office which in turn makes extensive and comparative data available to Police Authorities and Forces. Each year summaries of year on year performance are published by the Home Office based both on formal police data and on public crime survey data.

Over the last 10 years most measures of police performance have improved but this has not always been matched by public opinion surveys.

Huge efforts have gone into refining priorities, setting targets and ensuring forces collect their data consistently.

The Police Force regularly monitors performance figures at Performance Groups comprising Divisional Commanders and Heads of Departments in a monthly review by the Chief Constable and/or Deputy Chief

Constable. Members of the Police Authority are able to attend these meetings as observers.

The Authority also currently monitors performance by reports of key areas to each of its Panels.

Recently there has been a reaction to the target culture which has been increasingly seen as a bureaucratic and demotivating process. Above all concern has been expressed that common-sense policing, encompassing sensitive responses to public expectations, has suffered in the interests of chasing statistical targets.

This was one of the drivers of the revised performance measures designed to cover a wider range of police activity and intended to incorporate more qualitative and perception-based measures. This new framework is called the Assessment of Policing and Community Safety (APACS).

The APACS framework, which concentrates mainly on policing performance, includes areas where more than one agency is involved. This focus on 'partnership working' extends to a requirement on Police Forces and Police Authorities to agree targets with local partners in up to 35 performance areas drawn from a National Indicator Set of (currently) 198 items. The Agreement must be signed off by the Government acting through the Government Office West Midlands (GOWM). In West Mercia there is a requirement to participate in no less than four Local Area Agreements (relating to Telford & Wrekin, Shropshire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire). The Police Authority exercises this role through the Chairs of Policing Boards acting together with Divisional Commanders.

Police Authorities are also assisted in their oversight role by the publication of inspection findings by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies (HMIC).

HMIC reports are in the public domain and often highlight areas for improvement which, following discussion with the Chief Constable, members monitor through the Authority's panels.

HMIC reports can be force wide (e.g. Baseline Reports), specific to Divisions (e.g. BCU reports), or thematic (dealing with specific areas). It is understood that inspections will be increasingly carried out in a targeted way focussing on areas of potential risk or apparent under-performance.

## **5 Community Engagement and Local Priorities**

### **Community Engagement**

The Police Authority has a duty to consult the public. The Authority is also the element of the tripartite arrangement which represents the public voice.

The Department of Communities and Local Government and to a lesser extent the Home Office itself is planning greater emphasis on public engagement in policing issues.

The involvement of the public can take place at a number of levels. In relation to local policing activity and local crime problems, the public are encouraged to engage with their local policing teams. We have 145 such local teams made up of small groups of police officers and Community Support Officers. These teams can be contacted by telephone or by attendance at PACT meetings which are advertised on our websites.

The public can 'engage' with more senior police officers and Police Authority members in relation to more strategic issues or issues of more general concern. They can do this by attendance at Policing Matters Groups. Again these meetings are advertised on our websites.

They can of course also seek to contact the Police through the non-emergency telephone number **(0300 333 3000)** or by writing or emailing to the Police Authority Office or by contacting individual members direct.

The Authority funds and monitors annual surveys which explore public opinion and Members of the Police Authority obtain a good appreciation of public views on policing through their personal engagement with our communities,

The Authority is by law obliged to take the public's views into account when setting the priorities for policing in

the Policing Plan.

The Authority supplements this more general understanding of public mood by a consultation process with key partners in the run up to its budget and policing plan setting process.

A fuller explanation of these engagement mechanisms is set out on the following pages.

### **Local Policing Team Level**

The Force have established 145 local policing teams (LPTs). Each LPT is required to engage with its local community to identify local issues which it must seek to resolve in conjunction with other local agencies when appropriate. The process of engagement is known by the acronym P.A.C.T.

P.A.C.T. (Partners and Communities Together) is a suite of engagement processes carried out by local policing teams and partners so as to engage local communities, to identify local issues and develop solutions. Activities include engagement with hard to reach groups and youth inclusion.

### **Divisional Level**

**Policing Boards** - Local Police Authority Members and the Divisional Commander meet to monitor delivery of the Joint Policing Plan at Divisional level in relation to community engagement (including PACT), partnership working and performance.

Each Division is given a sum of money for Community Safety Initiatives e.g. Local Policing engagement activities. Expenditure is approved by the Divisional Commander in consultation with the Chair of the Board and monitored by the Board.

Chairs of Policing Boards represent the Authority at strategic level on Partnerships within the Division and together with the Divisional Commander can commit to Partnership plans and targets.

### **“Policing Matters”**

These are meetings to which partner agencies are invited but the Police Authority is the lead organisation. Public meetings and events are held across each of the five Divisions providing the opportunity for the public and stakeholders to meet with the Divisional Commander, Police Authority Members and Partner Agencies, find out more about policing, ask questions and make suggestions. They also provide a forum for consultation regarding matters affecting the policing of the area.

### **Force-wide Level**

Police Authority and Constabulary – agree overall Plans

Strategic Panel – monitors and agrees Work Programmes of Panels

Inclusivity and Community Engagement (ICE) Panel – agrees and monitors a Community Engagement Strategy. The community engagement processes throughout West Mercia are reported to the ICE Panel which also oversees Partnership issues.

Partnership Co-ordination Group (PCOG) – Responsible for monitoring, co-ordinating and the development of Policing Board and Partnership activities. Membership comprises the Chairs of the five Policing Boards, Chair and Vice Chair of the ICE Panel and is attended by an Assistant Chief Constable.

Complaints and Surveys Working Groups - Looks at trends and issues arising from complaints and surveys and lessons learnt.

Annual Crime and Safety Partnership Survey – (Constabulary lead organisation) undertaken in partnership with the Police Authority, all the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships within West Mercia and the Safer Roads Partnership. Posted to 60,000 residents annually, there were 15,000 respondents in 2008. Results are taken into account in developing the Policing Plan.

Annual Young Peoples' Survey – (Constabulary lead organisation), on line survey undertaken with partners via schools across West Mercia– results are taken into account in developing the Policing Plan.

Annual Consultation Evenings – Held in January each year to consult with stakeholders, including

community and business representatives on the proposed plans, policing priorities and budget considerations.

Ad hoc electronic and postal surveys and consultation exercises on specific issues – e.g. Government Green Paper.

The Authority has a Lead Member for Equality and Diversity. Regular meetings are held with staff support networks. Consultation is undertaken with the three Police Independent Advisory Groups and Diverse Groups as required e.g. prior to consulting a variety of diverse groups the Independent Advisory Groups were consulted on the draft Combined Equality scheme.

The Authority's and Force's separate but complementary engagement processes (Policing Matters and PACT) run in parallel with engagement processes carried out by the local authorities and criminal justice agencies.

### **Partnerships and local targets**

It has long been recognised that many social ills are only in part addressed by single agencies such as Police or Local authorities. For some time now such bodies have been encouraged to work together. This has been matched by ever more complex structures for partnership engagement in which all Forces and authorities are required to participate.

Recently the Government have imposed responsibilities on Police Authorities to agree local priorities with a number of specific local partners, principally the lead local authorities. These local priorities are to be included in the Local Area Agreements signed off by Central Government acting through its Regional Offices. They impose specific local targets – some of which involve policing action.

Each local area can introduce additional public consultation processes to inform the development of a Local Strategic Plan which the Local Area Agreement is intended to deliver.

The Local Strategic Plan is not intended to address policing issues exclusively or even principally. Police Authority members and Police Officers are but one of the partnership members. Partnerships are administered by the lead local authorities.

Recent APA research has questioned the assumption that the public have a strong appetite for increased involvement in policing priority setting or resource allocation decisions. Rather research suggests that the public are concerned to have access to responsive and focussed police services when they need them.

Furthermore it is questionable whether partnership or collective working is appropriate in every case. The most effective partnership working arises where partners truly share common goals and see added value in acting together. The existing frameworks are not well designed to address this more focussed approach.

It is important that local priorities are viewed in the context of the wider policing remit and to ensure that local commitments are given where they are consistent with the overall policing strategy and available resources.

### **APA Survey**

A Ipsos Mori poll in 2008 revealed:

Over half (53%) of respondents agreed that they "like to know what the police are doing but are happy to let them get on with their job", 26% said they are not interested in what the police do as long as they do their job, compared with just over one in ten (13%) agreeing that they would like to have more of a say in what the police do.

When asked to identify two or three things respondents would like more information about, 42% identified that they would like information about what is being done about crime and anti-social behaviour in their area, compared to 16% who want information about how decisions are made about policing, and 16% who want information about how the local police force is held to account.

### **Local targets**

A further set of aspirations for local delivery are included in the new Policing Pledge and which will set out

promises of service standards which are fixed both nationally and locally.

### **Policing Pledge**

The Policing Pledge is a set of promises to local residents that not only gives more information about who their local neighbourhood policing team is, but also ensures that communities will have a stronger voice in telling the police what they think is most important and what they are most worried about.

The Policing Pledge makes a number of promises on how local police will work with the community to help resolve their concerns. It also sets standards for the kind of service that can be expected. The local police force will deal with emergencies and non-emergencies within certain agreed times and for victims of crime, will agree with them how often and for how long they will be kept informed of progress on your case.

All police forces across the whole of the England and Wales have signed up to provide the same level of service to their communities. This means that it will be easier for local people to have their say on how they police their local area, and guarantees that wherever they live, you can expect the same, high level of service.

Wherever you live, you can get the following information by searching for your neighbourhood policing team:

- 1 Contact details of your Neighbourhood Policing Team
- 2 Details of your next Neighbourhood Policing meeting
- 3 Your neighbourhood priorities
- 4 Action being taken by the police and follow-up to problems raised by the community
- 5 Local crime statistics, information and crime maps
- 6 How to get involved and help make your community safer

## **6 Providing Information**

In 2008 the Government announced its commitment to provide greater information to the public about crime levels. There are already obligations to publish specific documents including the Policing Plan, an Annual report of performance delivery against the Policing Plan, a Policing Summary which contains information about local policing teams and a Council Tax Precept Leaflet summarising Police Authority expenditure at precept levels.

All these documents are available electronically, as are detailed crime statistics for local areas but some documents have to be delivered as hard copy publications to each household. The Constabulary and Police Authority maintain their websites but these are inter-connected. Between both sites a considerable amount of current and historical information is readily available to the public and press.

In addition Forces are now required to publish crime data on the Web and this can be accessed either from the Police Web Site or the Police Authority web site.

## **7 Collaboration**

There has long been a power for Forces to offer assistance outside their geographic boundaries. Under general rules of engagement settled by ACPO some activity is undertaken on a mutual support (non-charged basis) and other activity is undertaken on a reimbursement basis.

West Mercia has for some time shared use of a helicopter with Staffordshire and played a key part in the Central Motorway's Patrol Group (members being West Midlands, Staffordshire, West Mercia and until 2008 Warwickshire).

In 2005 Dennis O'Connor HMIC published a report in which he identified a gap in service delivery which he considered required collaboration between forces or their amalgamation into larger units.

The services identified were given the collective term "Protective Services". They were:

Major Crime (Homicide)  
Serious Organised and Cross Border Crime  
Counter Terrorism  
Civil Contingencies  
Critical Incident  
Public Order  
Strategic Policing Roads.

This led to proposals to amalgamate forces, throughout England and Wales. West Mercia, it was suggested, should be merged with West Midlands, Warwickshire & Staffordshire. These proposals were strongly opposed by West Mercia and eventually foundered on the rock of precept differentials. Largely because of different levels of Government Grant, the level of Council Tax precept varies significantly between Authorities. Merger would have required the same precept level to be applied throughout each new combined Police area and while in West Mercia precepts may have fallen, or at least not have increased, other areas would have faced steep rises in Council Tax levels.

In the aftermath of the failed restructuring Chief HMIC announced that the 'Protective Services Gap' should be addressed by 'collaboration' and a new duty to collaborate was added to the Police Act 1996.

While there can be collaboration between any forces, the Government have been keen to promote collaboration within Government Office Regions, in our case the West Midlands Region (Not to be confused with the West Midlands Police Force based in Birmingham). The Constabulary have already developed some collaboration activities, especially around serious crime and motorway patrol. The Chairs of the Police Authorities in the West Midlands and Police Authority Chief Executives meet regularly and periodically are joined by all four Chief Constables. In addition West Mercia has enhanced its own "protective services" capability with a £3 million development of personnel and facilities (largely sited at Defford near Worcester).

Counter Terrorism was not left to collaboration between forces. Instead Counter Terrorism Units were established in West Midlands, West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester together with the Metropolitan Police Force in London. Lead forces have assumed this obligation to co-ordinate Counter Terrorism activity throughout the Country, focussing on regional areas.

Considerable additional resources have been made available to CTU's (Counter Terrorism Units). CTU's are attached to specific forces, our most local being the West Midlands Police Force. It is therefore the West Midlands Police Authority which provides corporate oversight of our most local CTU but in view of the Unit's wider remit members drawn from each of the Authorities in the region, including West Mercia, have been kept informed of its development and activities. (Special CT vetting has been required for members performing this function).

## **8 Other National Bodies**

In addition to the CTUs, the Government created the Serious and Organised Crime Agency to tackle Level 2 serious and organised crime.

Level 1 crime denotes local crime, that which occurs largely within one Force area. Level 2 crime spills out across force boundaries. Level 3 crime is crime on a national scale. This differentiation is being increasingly criticised as crime often involves all three levels. Nevertheless this categorisation remains part of its policing vocabulary.

When first created SOCA appeared to be concentrating on Level 3 crime and individual forces did not receive the assistance they were expecting from this new body. In 2008 SOCA has declared its intention to support local forces in their fight against serious crime but pressures on SOCA have continued and an report in July 2009 (A People's Police Force, Police Accountability in the Modern Era, Rt Hon David Blunkett MP July 2009)

casts doubt on the extent to which SOCA is sufficiently resources to fulfil their ambitions.

The National Policing Intelligence Agency (NPIA) was established in 2007 and its role has been developing since then. Charged with giving nation-wide advice on processes and systems including IT systems. In particular the NPIA manage the training of senior police officers and the Command Course at Bramshill, which leads to ACPO level appointments. A revised and more comprehensive training programme has been devised and a National Police College is to be established. (Paul Deneen JP DL is a governor of the college).

Another body with a national view is the National Policing Board. This body comprises key stakeholders from the tripartite members and other important agencies. Currently its composition includes:-

Home Secretary, Police Minister, Permanent Secretary to the Home Office, Chief HMIC, NPIA, Chair of APA and other Board members, President of ACPD, Directors of relevant Home Office sections, Head of Police Reform Commissioner of Met Police, Chief Executive of APA.

The Board provides a useful mechanism to sound out or develop policy initiatives and keep a close eye on emerging policing issues of national significance. It enables dialogue at the highest level of Government and National Agencies.

Its minutes are published and are available on our website and are periodically supplied with the members' weekly bulletin.

## 9 Finances

Like other local Government structures, Police Authority finance is split into:

Capital Expenditure, that which involves one off costs sometimes supported by loan funding e.g. property purchase, and

Revenue costs, that which continues year on year such as salary costs. 85% of the Authority's annual spending is devoted to salary costs.

### Capital Expenditure

The capital programme for 2008/2009 to 2009/2010 has been approved and shows that both borrowing and use of reserves will be a feature of financing the capital spending plans. The details of the approved capital programme are:

#### Expenditure (£m)

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Vehicles and Equipment	1.863	2.986	1.143
Information Technology	3.939	0.898	0.850
Buildings	13.072	14.944	2.840
	<b>18.874</b>	<b>18.828</b>	<b>4.833</b>

The cost of borrowing used to support the Capital Program is shown as an item in the revenue account.

## Revenue Expenditure

The Authority's financial year runs from 1st April to 31 March.

Our annual gross expenditure in 2007/2008 was £208 million and our 2008/2009 budget (the current year) is £216.3 million.

The revenue budget for 2008/2009 is as follows:-

<b>Original Estimate 2008/2009</b>	
<b>£m</b>	
Employees	179.508
Premises	7.268
Transport	6.047
Supplies and Services	21.531
Agency Services	0.458
Capital Costs	1.506
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>216.318</b>

## Comparative Cost Data

There are 43 local police forces but some of these are large Metropolitan Forces. 31 forces are "Shire Forces" and these cost relatively less per head of population.

In terms of ranking, West Mercia's the seventh most economical English Non Metropolitan Police Force in 2007-08. (Previous year ranked tenth most economical i.e. low cost).

Our comparative position throughout the 31 shire forces is shown in the following table.

### West Mercia's position relative to all 31 English shire forces

	<b>West Mercia's Expenditure and Income per 1000 Population £ 000s</b>	<b>Average Cost Per 1000 Population £ 000s</b>	<b>Index of W.M.P.A.'s comparative Cost if National Average Age = 100</b>
<b>Employees:</b>			
Police Officers	103,132	105,640	98%
Police Staff	41,653	45,146	92%
Other (mostly training)	1,676	2,563	65%
<b>Total</b>	<b>146,461</b>	<b>153,349</b>	<b>96%</b>
Premises	5,764	6,742	85%
Transport	4,770	4,164	115%
Supplies and Services	17,129	16,937	101%
Agency	247	2,599	10%

Other Costs	0	609	-
Capital Financing	847	2,087	41%
Total Expenditure	175,218	186,487	94%
Total Income	19,367	2,357	83%
Net Expenditure	155,581	162,916	95%
Contribution to/from Reserves	-931	-1,667	56%
Budget Requirement	154,650	161,249	96%

## Notes

1. Based on net expenditure the most notable feature of the statistics is the fact that West Mercia's spending for 2007-08 per 1000 population amounts to 95% of the national average. (Previous year 96% of the average). The 'cost of the difference' shown as £7,335 per 1000 population (or £8,741,100 in absolute terms) is the extra budget which West Mercia would need to equal the average Non Metropolitan Police Force. (In the previous year this difference was £6,204 per 1000 population or £7,278,500 in absolute terms).

## 10 Government Reform

The Home Secretary commissioned a wide ranging report on policing, from Sir Ronnie Flanagan (the then Chief HMIC) which was published in early 2008; shortly followed by a Green Paper entitled "From the neighbourhood to the national".

The Green Paper consulted upon proposals to change the composition and constitutional framework of Police Authorities and a strengthening of local public and local authority involvement in priority setting and holding to account of constabularies; particularly in relation to Level 1 policing.

The Green Paper proposals seek to strengthen involvement in local policing building on the expansion of 'local policing teams' which were rolled out nationally during 2006/2007. West Mercia Police established 145 local policing teams by April 2008 and the Police Authority and the Force have done much to promote their role.

The most controversial aspect of the Green Paper related to the introduction of directly elected representatives. This proposal was seen as introducing a further element of 'politicisation' into the oversight and direction of policing and has now been abandoned.