

**Proposed Consultation response to the Government green paper:
“From the neighbourhood to the national: policing communities
together**

The City of York Council has consulted its members and at a meeting of the Executive on 7th October, agreed the following response to the green paper: -

**CHAPTER 1: IMPROVING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE PUBLIC AND
THE POLICE**

- The Council supports any proposals, which enhances neighbourhood policing, community consultation and partnership working. It is important however to allow authorities to develop individual frameworks for policing and engagement at a local level that suits local needs, and that frameworks are permitted to mature so as to become embedded and achieve results. York already has a joint community engagement strategy in place that supports neighbourhood policing and partnership consultation, and we have examples in place of good collaborative working between the Local Authority and Police Authority.
- The Councillor Call for Action could be a process to provide a challenge to a course of action by, or decision of, the Chief Constable. It must however, operate within the existing democratic process and should not restrict the role of the elected councillor to raise issues on behalf of their community under existing arrangements.
- The direct election of members of the public as a ‘crime and policing representative’ to sit on Police Authorities and to chair CDRPs is strongly rejected. There already exists a democratic process to elect local Councillors to represent the community, and then to sit as local authority representatives on the police authority. The election of a separate body of individuals is bureaucratic and it is questioned whether those individuals would be able to truly represent the locality, or indeed have the level of commitment to performance and/or detailed understanding of community safety to adequately fulfil this role.
- The proposal to use a proportion of BCU funding for participatory budgeting is rejected. The local use of BCU funding is already well managed. All decisions in North Yorkshire have been made in partnership with the two CDRPs. If this fund is given to the Crime and Policing Representative to administer, there is no guarantee that it would be utilised in the same way. BCU funding is used alongside SSCF and largely driven by intelligence led priority setting, which has supported local policing priorities. This proposal is in danger of using scare resources to support whoever can make a good case, rather than being allocated to a particular and well informed crime reduction strategy.

CHAPTER 2: REDUCING BUREAUCRACY AND DEVELOPING TECHNOLOGIES

- The concept of reducing bureaucracy by the police is supported, as is the realignment of targets to ensure there is no longer conflict between police and other criminal justice targets
- The idea of tackling risk aversion is supported, and in particular may assist in issues like the sharing of police data between forces and their partners. This has been a specific issue with the sharing of the Council's staff risk register with the police.

CHAPTER 3: DEFINING ROLES AND LEADERSHIP IN THE POLICE SERVICE

- The proposals to develop leadership and skills within the police service are welcomed. However, the Home Office should review the requirement to appoint a warranted officer as Chief constable. The skills required to head and manage a complex organisation with £100m plus budgets may be better placed within a Chief Executive role, thus allowing talented individuals from a variety of related backgrounds to apply. Such opportunities already exist in many other public sector organisations. The person specification of a Chief Executive can then be determined by the skills and experience needed for the role, rather than restricting applicants solely from within a policing background. Operational policing experience to assist the Chief Executive can be derived from high-ranking support officers at a deputy Chief Constable level.
- Consideration also needs to be given to the impact of frequent senior officer changes on both local and force wide issues. For example the implementation of completely new policing regimes can often leave partners operating in a continually changing policing environment. As the requirement of the police to engage with communities and partners becomes more important, then there needs to be more stability and continuity in terms of policing policies

CHAPTER 4: FOCUSING ON DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT

- The equality, diversity and human rights strategy for the police service is welcomed. The police force should endeavour to mirror the make up of the local community and encourage the attraction of applicants to the police service from members of the community and diverse backgrounds.

CHAPTER 5: CO-ORDINATING CHANGE IN POLICING

- The role of the National Policing board is key to developing strategic consistency on issues of national policing importance. This is particularly relevant to the development of issues such as IT. In the past, adhoc IT solutions have been sought that differ both within and between forces. It is essential that there is a move toward better and more efficient access and exchange of data and intelligence between forces.
- It is agreed that there should be guidelines or principles to determine whether decisions should be taken nationally, regionally, or locally. But in line with the concept of Neighbourhood Policing, it is important that flexibility on practices is retained locally to ensure scope for responses to local needs

CHAPTER 6: REINFORCING COLLABORATION BETWEEN FORCES

- Collaborative working between forces is essential in relation to protective services and dealing with critical incidents. A force such as NYP does not have the resource to deal with certain situations alone, and therefore having the capacity to draw on neighbouring forces which have significantly higher numbers of officers is essential.

CHAPTER 7: IMPROVING PERFORMANCE IN POLICING

- The proposals to improve performance and efficiency in policing are welcomed. The fact that there are no specific consultation questions aligned to this chapter is taken as an oversight
- The move to perception based measures as an indicator of public confidence however is concerning as this is difficult to influence. Effort still needs to be placed on recording actions and outcomes on crime and disorder in order to be able to publicise performance to provide reassurance and hence influence perception
- The British Crime Survey question, along with other perception measures aligned to the LAA which feature in the Place survey is ambiguous. It is not possible to ask for perception on the police and partners within a single question, as respondents cannot then differentiate between satisfaction with the police, police and partners combined or single partners, or can they differentiate between the 'local' and 'national' situation which can be temporarily influenced by media reporting of specific cases.