

SOUTH YORKSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

POLICE AUTHORITY

24 OCTOBER 2008

REPORT OF THE CHIEF CONSTABLE

NPIA Neighbourhood Policing Policy

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To brief members of the South Yorkshire Police Authority on the organisational implications as a result of the national review of PCSO's completed by the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA).

2 Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 review the current local external funding arrangements and future Force plans for funding PCSO's after 2011.**
- 2.2 evaluate the implications of PCSO's being given the power to detain as part of the national review of future PCSO powers.**
- 2.3 review the current approach taken to PCSO's providing detention officer duties (constant supervision of high-risk detainees in detention areas) with particular regards to human resources and future technical solutions/options.**

3 Background Information

3.1 Since their introduction in 2002, Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) have made a significant and positive contribution to policing. With their focus on high visibility, reassurance policing, community engagement and problem solving, they have played a critical role in the successful delivery of Neighbourhood Policing. The last two years have seen a large increase in the number of PCSO's resulting in 358 PCSO's currently employed by South Yorkshire Police.

3.2 PCSO's and Neighbourhood Policing are generally viewed as a success story but there has been significant negative national press coverage generally highlighting the different approaches taken by forces in the role, powers, training, supervision and uniforms provided. There is a concern that these factors have contributed to confusion and misunderstanding by the public on the role of PCSO's. The combined effects of adverse media attention and the variance in roles across forces has the potential to undermine the implementation of Neighbourhood Policing and lessen the positive local impact of PCSO's in terms of reassuring communities at a time when crime is falling and confidence in policing has been rising. Therefore, the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Home Office and the Association of Police Authorities asked the National Police Improvement Agency (Neighbourhood Policing Programme Team) to conduct a review of the current ACPO guidance for PCSO's with a view to addressing the concerns raised. The review resulted in 22 recommendations and South Yorkshire's position against these recommendations can be seen at **Annex A**.

3.3 The review redefined a National role and principles on which the deployment of PCSO's should be based. The review states:

3.3.1 'PCSO's should be either integrated into Neighbourhood Policing teams (normally geographic but could be for a defined community of interest, for example safer transport teams) or alternatively they can be deployed to directly support Neighbourhood Policing teams in their neighbourhoods. No matter which deployment method, the underlying principles are that PCSO's should spend the majority of their time within neighbourhoods and not the office/police station and /or undertaking administration roles'. Specifically their role should be focused on:

- Undertaking public facing non-confrontational duties in uniform
- Being visible in the communities on foot or cycle (vehicle if rural community)
- Dealing with anti social behaviour, low level crime and incidents, local problems/priorities and quality of life issues
- Supporting and improve service to victims and vulnerable people.
- Conducting engagement and problem solving activities

3.4 Attached at **Appendix B** is a list and description of roles matched against the above principles. Where a force's existing use of PCSO's conflicts with the above principles, the review proposes that they be given an agreed period of time to reconcile. The review acknowledges that this could involve realignment of budgets and changes involving staff which will require time to resolve.

3.5 The agreed period for reconciliation is until 31 March 2009.

3.7 It has been suggested that forces are to be compliant with the recommendations in order to attract any further funding. The National Police Improvement Agency has been contacted to establish the implications of failing to satisfy this requirement, but this still remains unclear.

4 Implications

4.1 In Sir Ronnie Flanagan's Interim Report he identified the need to continue the ring fencing of the Neighbourhood Policing Fund (the Home Office fund specifically for PCSOs) for an additional year. In her subsequent response to Sir Ronnie, the Home Secretary agreed that the ring fence should remain until the end of the next Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) period (2008 to 2011). It is clear that the match funding element has attracted inconsistent funding from partners and other interested bodies and with the present challenging funding situation within the public sector, both partners and police authorities are going to have to make difficult decisions regarding the amount of funding they can allocate to this area of policing in the future.

4.2 Currently South Yorkshire Police receives **£6,256,980** from central Government funds paid quarterly in arrears. South Yorkshire Police has 3 externally funded elements of the PCSO budget at Sheffield, Rotherham and Barnsley as follows:

4.2.1 Sheffield BCU receives 2 grants for PCSO funding:

- **£285,784** funds 10 PCSOs and has continued from 2007/08. This funding is envisaged to continue for a further 4 years to be reviewed annually.

- 15 Additional PCSOs **£346,571** (Jul 08 - Mar 09) and **£451,891** (2009/10). This is new funding in 2008/09 and envisaged to continue for a further 4 years to be reviewed annually.
- 4.2.2 Rotherham has **£250,000** which supports 9 PCSO's, this fund is found from Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Forum (NRF) transitional funding so is for one year only 2008/09. (Rotherham no longer meets the requirements to qualify for NRF funding). Chief Superintendent Jukes (District Commander) is working with the Local Authority to seek to mainstream this funding, however, nothing has been agreed at present.
- 4.2.3 Barnsley has an agreement with BMBC for 21 PCSOs, 3 PCSO Supervisors and 18 PCSO's. Budget total cost is **£576,530** This funding is invoiced quarterly in arrears. Last year there was funding pressures on BMBC resulting in vacancies having to be managed in order to reconcile this difficulty. An assurance has been received that there is funding available for the full cost this financial year (2008/09) with the future continued funding unclear.
- 4.3 The National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) have reported the intention of the Home Secretary to finalise consultation and publish renewed policy around a future list of national standardised powers for PCSO's before December 2008 (recommendation 2 and 4 of review – Appendix A). A significant debate around the power to detain (a power not currently available to the PCSO's in South Yorkshire) to be adopted as part of the national suite of powers is ongoing. If adopted this will have considerable implications for the method of future deployment of PCSO's in South Yorkshire with additional training and equipment required for existing and future PCSO's to fulfil this function.
- 4.4 Additional actions from the audit are subject of an ongoing action plan to ensure compliance with national standards

5. Reasons for Exemption / Urgency / Lateness

N/A

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Appendix A: NATIONAL REVIEW OF PCSO ROLE

South Yorkshire – Current Position

- 1 **Recommendation 1** – Forces adopt the role and principles for PCSO's
 - 1.1 SYP PCSOs already conforms to the national proposal. PCSOs are fully integrated into Safer Neighbourhood Policing Teams and have ownership of a specific geographical area. The force policy for PCSO Principles of Deployment has been updated and circulated on General Orders 19 / 2008 (May).
 - 1.2 PCSOs are set within their personal reviews several core activities all of which incorporate the predictors of satisfaction to ensure they take on;
 - 1.2.1 personal responsibility by maintaining professional practice
 - 1.2.2 undertake problem-solving activities
 - 1.2.3 manage the organisation by giving excellent customer service, support and improving the service to victims and vulnerable people
 - 1.2.4 visible and accessible within the community by means of conducting patrols and performing public duties.
- 2 **Recommendation 2** – The NPIA consider with the tripartite partners whether further evaluation of the use of PCSOs is required
 - 2.1 The tripartite review team is to undertake further consultation within the public domain asking them specifically what they want or see PCSOs doing or believe they should be doing.
- 3 **Recommendation 3** – Forces should review currently designated powers to ensure they are all required and used by their PCSOs
 - 3.1 Powers have been looked at previously although this may be an area, which will need to be reviewed regularly. The powers have been mapped against APACS and one power has been identified; Power to search for alcohol and tobacco would assist with SPI4.2 paragraph 7A of Schedule 4.
- 4 **Recommendation 4** – Following the Home Office powers audit, the NPIA will work with forces and the Home Office to consider additional and / or alternative powers and seek to resolve any anomalies
 - 4.1 Irregularities are occurring in the powers, the Home Office is to review this. They are to look at what the problems are and where it is going wrong, the findings may lead to a change in legislation.
 - 4.2 Two powers have been identified and recommended in the Casey Report:
 - 4.2.1 Power to detain
 - 4.2.2 Power to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for disorder.
 - 4.3 SYP PCSO's have been designated the power to issue Fixed Penalty Notices under S5 Public Order Act 1986 (DA 04) – Use words/conduct likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress.
- 5 **Recommendation 5** – The NPIA will work with forces to ensure that suitable training and awareness is available at all levels of the service in the role, deployment and powers of PCSOs

- 5.1 SYP have to illustrate that there is training taking place within the force to portray what PCSOs can and can not undertake. Work is being undertaken at present to educate call handlers / dispatchers. A handbook is under construction for NHP and a meeting to incorporate information into the South Yorkshire Police Patrol Directory which is under review has taken place. This work is still on going.
- 6 **Recommendation 6** – Forces should recruit to defined National Standards using the national application form and the Integrated Competency Framework
- 6.1 SYP have been supplied with the national application form, these were originally being administered by Broad Systems, but due to funding being reduced the system was never implemented. As a result of the interim freeze on student officer recruitment, applicants who have been successful for entry into the police force are currently being offered places as PCSOs. The current PCSO course spanning July and August '08, 15 of the 17 people who are on the programme are made up of those who were waiting to become Police Officers.
- 7 **Recommendation 7** – Forces should adopt the WPLDP (Wider Policing Learning Development Programme) product by April 2009
- 7.1 WPLDP is being utilised in force, there are numerous packages which are available to PCSOs for development.
- 8 **Recommendation 8** – Forces should ensure that tutoring for new PCSOs is carried out by trained PCSO tutors
- 8.1 SYP have a comprehensive training programme for PCSOs who once completing their probationary period can become PCSO tutors. A training course has been developed which takes place over 4 days. There are 63 trained PCSO tutors. Sheffield has 30 tutors, although Darnall and Tinsley appear to be the only SNT without anyone trained. Barnsley has 10 none of which are situated at Cudworth SNT or Hoyland/Wombwell SNT, Rotherham 8 and Doncaster 15.
- 8.2 There is no monetary gain by undertaking the course, only enhancement of personal development.
- 9 **Recommendation 9** – Forces should review their refresher training to ensure it includes elements on problem solving and engagement
- 9.1 SYP comply – problem solving and engagement are part of the initial 4-week induction course. A yearly refresher course has been developed by the training department which will incorporate problem solving and engagement, PTP (PCSO Training Programme) Mod 1 is to be rolled out to all PCSOs as from October '08. In addition PCSOs were involved with the role out of SYPs Safer Neighbourhood training which encompassed problem solving and engagement work. ACPO are to undertake an evaluation as these they believe are the two key areas that are most needed.
- 10 **Recommendation 10** – forces should consider the adoption of a national NVQ developed between the NPIA and Skills for Justice and / or CLDP Neighbourhood Policing module
- 10.1 An NVQ for PCSOs is to be launched nationally within the near future. SYP currently have the CLDP module in force which will link in through national occupational standards. CLDP modules are currently around PDR and Learning

Development processes (Performance Management and Professional Development course), as well as particular task-related subjects.

- 11 **Recommendation 11** – The NPIA should develop a national strategy for the recognition of Accredited Prior Experience and Learning (APEL) for PCSO's transferring to become police officers.
- 11.1 APEL has been assessed and proved within other forces to be efficient and effective when moving from the role of PCSO to that of PC, it has shown that due to the reduction in training required to be cost effective. SYP are currently looking into this area and work is on going.
- 12 **Recommendation 12** – Forces should ensure supervision of PCSOs is provided by police sergeants working as part of a Neighbourhood Policing Team
- 12.1 In respect of operational elements the SNT Sergeant always takes primacy, however PCSO supervisors have been in place since 2002 within SYP working within the management structure of the SNT. PCSO supervisors do report directly to the SNT Sergeant who are their first line manager, but they maintain overall management of PCSOs.
- 13 **Recommendation 13** – Forces should review their existing supervision ratios to ensure these are realistic and in line with good practice
- 13.1 The ratio of PCSO supervisors to PCSOs is 1:8.6. The target agreed upon by the PCSO Board was 1:10 which makes the current ratio realistic. However some districts do exceed the stated ratio and they should be mindful of the agreed ratios.
- 14 **Recommendation 14** – Force adopt the principles related to PCSO uniform by September 2008
- 14.1 SYP uniform complies with the principles relating to uniform as PCSOs are distinct and the uniform worn identifies them as belonging to the force but depicts that they are PCSOs. Uniform provided is of a good quality. The issue with regards to the banding on the hat and the wearing of polo shirts has been forwarded as an agenda item for the next Uniform, Staff and Clothing Committee which is to take place on the 10th October '08. A copy of the recommendations has also been forwarded.
- 15 **Recommendation 15** – Future issues relating to PCSO uniform should be referred to the ACPO uniform appointments board
- 15.1 ACPO are to reinstate the uniform appointments board as this has previously fallen into disarray. All issues surrounding uniform for PCSOs must in future be referred to them.
- 16 **Recommendation 16** – The NPIA should provide guidance in operational risk assessment to ensure that decision making and control measures are consistent.
- 16.1 SYP have a comprehensive generic risk assessment which includes the use of PPE (body armour).
- 17 **Recommendation 17** – As a result of Recommendation 1, Forces should conduct a full risk assessment around PPE issued to PCSOs which is aligned to the corporate role and expectations of PCSOs
- 17.1 As recommendation 16; comprehensive generic risk assessment in place.

- 18 **Recommendation 18** – Forces should ensure a clear training programme for PCSOs in personal safety and conflict management resolution
- 18.1 Both personal safety and conflict management resolution are built into the 4-week induction course. PCSOs undertake yearly refresher training in personal safety and first aid. District personnel are responsible for identifying nominations for all courses They should do this by referring to the number of places they have been allocated for each Event date on the G Drive and utilising this place for someone who is nearing their skill end date. The Event has already been created on ORACLE by Training Support and the Personnel team then adds the name to the Event and issues the Joining Instruction.
- 19 **Recommendation 19** – Forces should employ PCSOs over the age of 18 years
- 19.1 All PCSOs in SYP are 18 years and over. A code of practice has been introduced to the effect that the minimum age is to be set at 18, HQ Recruiting have been advised of this decision.
- 20 **Recommendation 20** – The NPIA, with the support of the tripartite should work together to raise public awareness of the role of the PCSO in Neighbourhood Policing
- 20.1 SYP promote the role of PCSOs via Neighbourhood Policing Marketing and the Safer Neighbourhood website. Articles appear within local gazettes and newspapers regarding the work PCSOs are undertaking within their particular SNT. The Tripartite Review Team are to promote PCSOs by publicising the value of the PCSO role (this will be a national campaign).
- 21 **Recommendation 21** – Forces should seek to increase awareness of the role of PCSOs internally
- 21.1 PCSOs are marketed comprehensively within the force, good practice and sharing of new initiatives are promoted through the forces internal publication (Billboard), the intranet and the NHP Implementation Board. Work in this area is on going. The current project is to market the role of PCSO and their remit to call handlers / dispatchers. A further area to research is e learning and how it could become a compulsory learning process for staff to complete a questions and answers based learning schedule on PCSOs.
- 22 **Recommendation 22** – The tripartite partners consider how to address the issue of financial sustainability beyond 2008/9

Appendix B:

NATIONAL CORE ROLE AND PRINCIPLES OF THE PCSO FUNCTION

- 1 The core role and principles have been applied to the range of PCSO roles that are currently being undertaken in forces. Where the assessment identifies that this is not a function for a PCSO, it does not mean that this should not be carried out by a suitably trained member of police staff, rather the Review considered that it is inappropriate to be carried out by a PCSO.
- 1.1 Proposed core role and principles:
PCSO's should be:-
 - 1.1.1 Integrated into a Neighbourhood Policing team (normally geographic but could be for a defined community of interest for example, Safer Transport teams)
 - Or
 - 1.1.2 Deployed to directly support Neighbourhood Policing team(s) in their neighbourhoods (in both the above the PCSO should spend the majority of their time within neighbourhoods and not be office/police station based and/or undertaking administrative roles)
- 1.2 And With all the below principles applying:
 - 1.2.1 Undertake public facing duties in uniform
 - 1.2.2 Visible in the communities on foot or cycle patrol (vehicle if rural community)
 - 1.2.3 Deal with anti-social behaviour (ASB), low level crime and incidents, local problems/priorities and quality of life issues
 - 1.2.4 Support and improve service to victims and vulnerable people
 - 1.2.5 Conduct engagement and problem solving activity
- 1.3 The following are roles that are currently being carried out by PCSOs in forces across the country:
- 2 **Safer Transport Teams – Acceptable Variation**
Many forces have teams attached to transport hubs, routes and networks. This is an acceptable variation as it deals with a community of interest, with the PCSOs carrying out public facing duties in uniform, and spending the majority of time in the community, dealing with problem solving and supporting other Neighbourhood Policing teams.
- 3 **Schools and Youth involvement - Acceptable Variation**
There are many examples of this type of work carried out by PCSOs. There are examples of PCSOs attached to a particular school or schools as a full time posting. These are acceptable provided the PCSO is in uniform, working with educational personnel in partnership to solve problems within the school, and patrolling within the immediate locality/community around that school. It is also acceptable, and good practice, for PCSOs based in neighbourhood policing teams to visit and interact with schools within their geographic community. PCSOs replacing the schools involvement role and attending multiple schools to provide lectures or lessons would not be commensurate with the role defined above. There is no regular patrol, no attachment to a neighbourhood policing team or problem solving/engagement activity.
- 4 **Youth Focus/Engagement PCSO - Acceptable Variation**

This role will fall within the criteria if the PCSO supports neighbourhood policing teams with patrol advice and activity regarding young people. These PCSOs often work alongside neighbourhood policing teams, conducting visible foot patrol, gathering community intelligence and being part of planned engagement and problem solving activity.

- 5 **Police Station Reception Officers - Acceptable Variation**

There are presently station reception officers in many forces who provide a dedicated and effective service to the public. Although these staff are often attached to and work closely with neighbourhood policing teams, the role needs to extend to spending a considerable amount of their time in public, patrolling and problem solving. If the exclusive function of this role is based within a police station, performing administrative tasks, then the PCSO role and principles are not met. A number of forces are combining this role with patrol and ways of reaching further into communities with surgeries and other engagement methods.
- 6 **Mobile Police Station Reception - Acceptable Variation**

If the role is primarily that of Station Reception Officer (full time) then the above will apply. Should the role form part of neighbourhood engagement and problem solving, with elements of foot patrol, then it would be considered appropriate. It is totally appropriate for PCSOs who form part of neighbourhood policing teams to perform this function within their neighbourhood as an element of their duties, which is more often the case. A number of forces are combining this role with patrol and reaching further into the local communities with surgeries and other engagement methods.
- 7 **Support and Partnership Teams - Acceptable Variation**

This is an area where variations in the core role can be acceptable dependent on the specific nature of the function they are carrying out. A good example in this area would be the Anti-Social Behaviour Team who although not attached to a specific neighbourhood provide support to a number of neighbourhood policing teams by working alongside teams in highly visible problem solving activity, gathering of intelligence and patrol functions. Within this role the PCSO spends their time primarily in neighbourhoods conducting activity that accords with the principles.
- 8 **Trainers and Tutors - Acceptable Variation**

Training and tutoring new staff is considered a good variation in role and a development opportunity for experienced PCSOs. Ideally this should be within their neighbourhood but a pragmatic approach must be adopted with both tutoring and training functions, as the benefits of a short term abstraction may outweigh that of remaining within a neighbourhood.
- 9 **Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer – Outside Core Role**
- 10 **Hate crime & vulnerable people liaison - Outside Core Role**
- 11 **Family, community or witness liaison/domestic violence - Outside Core Role**
- 12 **Liquor and Firearms Licensing - Outside Core Role**

The key deciding features in these specialist cases would be the need for the PCSO to spend the majority of their time working and patrolling within the defined community of interest or neighbourhood (s). These roles have traditionally been primarily administrative/office based functions which involve calling on specific individuals/groups and/or witnesses/victims. The core role of the PCSO extends beyond purely engagement and liaison activity.

- 13 **Offender Management - Outside Core Role**
This variation was created to carry out a number of functions previously carried out by police officers, and is very much a role around liaison, working with partners in the judicial system and ensuring compliance with court conditions. There is no involvement as part of a neighbourhood policing teams and as such this sits outside the core role of the PCSO. Very little emphasis in this role is on the principles of the PCSO role as described above.
- 14 **Detention Officers/Investigating Officers - Outside Core Role**
The Police Reform Act 2002 makes allowance for the role of Detention Officer and Investigating Officers. These officers can have powers designated by the Chief Constable. This function falls outside of the core role and principles of the PCSO.
- 15 **Roads Policing/ANPR teams - Outside Core Role**
This function falls outside the core role for the PCSO as the officers are not based within the neighbourhood policing teams and appear not to spend the majority of their time supporting neighbourhood policing teams on foot or cycle patrol involved in engagement and problem solving activity. Assessments have been undertaken and several tasks that PCSOs are carrying out have been identified as not being a function of their role.
- 16 **South Yorkshire Police Role Variation**
- 16.1 It has been identified that the role of a Detention Officer is outside of the National core role and principles of a PCSO. South Yorkshire Police made a local decision to give PCSOs the power to undertake constant supervision of detainee duties within custody suites, utilised relatively rarely.