

SOUTH WEST POLICING COLLABORATION STRATEGY 2012-2022

Revised May 2012

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INTRODUCTION

This Strategy sets out the region's collective vision and priorities for policing in the South West of England over the next ten years. It aims to build upon the good work that has already been completed within the region to date, but recognises the need to move faster, deeper and with more vitality in order to keep pace with greater public expectations, more complex operational challenges, the difficult and challenging financial context and the renewed political imperatives we collectively face.

It is the express intention of the five forces and police authorities in the south west, to demonstrate our collective commitment to work together and to capture our sense of ambition in that regard. We also envisage that the strategy will provide an enduring strategic toolkit to drive forward collaboration within the region, and as such will be equally relevant when the changes to policing governance arising from the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 have been implemented.

There is an overriding presumption on the part of the five forces and authorities towards collaboration in the South West Region, which means that on top of the individual collaborative/shared services projects contained within the agreed work plan, the achievement of standardisation and inter-operability will represent the established context for policing in the South West encouraging ever closer and more effective ties between the five forces.

At the time of preparing this Strategy, police governance is entering a period of transition. From November 2012, police authorities will be abolished and instead directly-elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) will be accountable to the public for an efficient and effective police service. Chief Constables will retain control of operational policing and be accountable to the PCC.

This Strategy has been prepared in good faith and in the best interests of policing and the public. Whilst it is recognised that responsibility for police collaboration will pass to PCCs in the future, it is hoped that this Strategy sets out a robust, well-founded and clear direction which can be sustained and supported in the future.

MISSION AND TEN YEAR STRATEGY AND GOAL

Mission

The overall Shared Vision of the Police Authorities and Chief Constables in the South West is to make the South West safer and increase public confidence in policing. Our Shared Vision is supported by a Shared Mission which commits the Police Authorities and Chief Constables to collaborating closely, both operationally and as organisations, so that individually and collectively our Forces are more effective and efficient.

Ten Year Strategy and Goal

Our ten year strategic goal for policing in the South West is for a policing service in 2022 that is characterised by five individual police areas where a range of high quality and locally responsive policing services is delivered to the public. These services must economically and effectively meet the policing needs of the people and communities we serve.

The ten year strategic goal also anticipates a policing service across the region that has achieved a high degree of standardisation and interoperability in terms of processes, systems, policies and procedures across the full range of their operational and support activities, so that individually and collectively the Forces have become more efficient and effective.

Our ten year strategic goal anticipates a policing service in 2022 that is characterised by close collaborative working between the five forces, and other partners where advantageous, as the established and preferred approach to supporting the efficient and effective delivery of policing services in the South West of England, with demonstrable commitment from Police Authorities, Chief Officers and personnel at all levels.

STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES SUPPORTING OUR TEN YEAR VISION AND GOAL

Strategic vision

- **Sustainability** in the longer term is key. Collaboration is not about quick wins or finding short-term solutions. Collaborative investments may take several years to bear fruit and arrangements should be entered into with that in mind.
- **Flexibility** is fundamental. Collaborative approaches need to be right for the time and the investors. Commitments should be kept under review to determine whether the significant investment remains justified as circumstances change.
- **Significant savings & improvement** Notwithstanding the principles above, there should be a focus on those areas that are likely to yield the most substantial benefits in financial but also operational terms. Ambition is called for in order to bring about a positive change for service delivery.
- **Accountability** Police Authorities are accountable to local people for an effective and efficient local police force by setting strategy and providing resources. Chief Constables are accountable to police authorities for operational delivery and the effective management of those resources

Common purpose

- The need to appropriately balance individual organisational need against the principle of securing the **greater good**.
- **Governance** arrangements should be thorough and robust but executed in a timely manner by way of effective supporting processes.
- Strong **leadership** and **clear direction** is needed by Police Authorities and Chief Constables. This should be backed-up by applying the required level of resources to enable successful implementation.
- **Clarity of individual responsibilities** is essential. Police Authorities set the policing plan in consultation with Chief Constables and then check upon delivery by applying challenge and scrutiny.
- **Clarity of wider responsibilities**. As well as recognising its responsibilities for policing at the local and regional level, the Region fully acknowledges the support it may be required to provide at the national level. The Region will seek to co-ordinate its activities in response to demands for support or services made to individual Forces from outside the Region.

Key outcomes

- **Improving the service to the public** is the required outcome. This should be seen as greater customer satisfaction and confidence in the service received coupled with a reduction in crime. The criteria of success should be clearly defined and agreed from the outset.
- **Greater value for money.** Economies of scale and greater resilience can be achieved through standardisation and interoperability.

Implementation

- Shared approaches should be based upon **trust and confidence** in each other amongst partners.
- All relevant delivery model options should be explored on an objective and **evidence-based approach**. Five-way police-only collaborations should not always be expected but should always be explored. There may be greater and quicker benefit from 'starting small' and allowing others to join when the time is right for them. Police Authorities should be able to demonstrate via **business case and analysis** the rationale for a chosen approach and those de-prioritised, ruled out or delayed.
- Collaborative approaches, in line with the above, should be the **preference** unless doing so would prove inefficient and/or ineffective.

ORGANISATION OF REGIONAL COLLABORATION PROGRAMME INTO 'TIERS'

Through the application of the agreed prioritisation process, individual projects or programme strands will be allocated to a specific collaboration 'tier' on the following basis:

Tier 1 indicates those areas of work that have been assessed as having the potential for the most significant savings, efficiencies, improvements in customer satisfaction, confidence and/ or a reduction in crime to be realised. These receive the highest priority and collective effort. Each Tier 1 project or work stream is led by a Chief Constable acting with the agreement and support of their Police Authority.

Tier 2 projects are those which have the potential to deliver significant savings and/or efficiencies, improvements in customer satisfaction, confidence and/ or a reduction in crime but require further development first.

PROJECT PRIORITISATION METHODOLOGY

The five forces and police authorities have agreed a project prioritisation methodology which will provide a consistent and rational basis for evaluating individual projects or work streams and the finite resources available to deliver them. In summary the two main criteria are strategic fit/impact and practicality and scores are ascribed based on how each project fits pre-determined thresholds/descriptions. This is an aid to decision making and should not be used absolutely rigidly; instead, it should help shape overall thinking before subjecting the aggregated results to an overarching 'reasonableness' test. A scoring and project prioritisation methodology is currently in use but can be adjusted if necessary.

ANNUAL CAPABILITY PROCESS

This overarching strategy will be supported by the actual regional collaboration Work Plan containing projects and programme strands allocated to specific 'tiers' based on the application of the agreed project prioritisation methodology.

The annual capability process is designed to inform the development of the Work Plan and refresh that Plan annually to ensure that it remains updated and fit for purpose. This process must also take account of the Strategic Policing Requirement and any other national responsibilities. The capability process is scheduled to take place in October/November each year making it ideally placed to inform the development of the Regional Collaboration Programme as well as informing the planning and budgetary processes for the individual police authorities/forces.

Importantly, the regional annual capability process for the development of the collaboration Work Plan will be fundamentally connected to and underpinned by the business planning processes of the five forces/authorities. On that basis there is a clear expectation that the force strategic and capability assessments that underpin the development of force control strategies and prioritisation will necessarily include the identification of potential new areas for collaboration which will then be explored by the Programme Board and brought forward to the Commissioning Oversight Board for prospective inclusion in the forward collaboration Work Plan. In this way, this strategy envisages the enhanced alignment of the planning processes of the five forces/authorities in order to maximise collaborative opportunities.

The business planning process is illustrated at Annex A.

MODELS OF COLLABORATION AND SHARED SERVICES

A number of collaboration models exist, and the five police authorities and forces do not pre-judge which is the most appropriate for any one collaborative venture. Instead, the region will look to the full range of options and assess the benefits (as well as costs, risks and drawbacks) of each before reaching a decision.

We will endeavour to consult on all significant changes which could affect the terms and conditions of officers or staff

Models of collaboration include:

- **Ad-hoc:** this would be opportunity-based and would align processes and functions between Forces as and when low hanging fruit presents itself. This is low risk but may also be low return. If nothing else, it should be pursued as a bare minimum;

- **Shared function:** this would involve identification of one or more areas of business where sharing of resource and alignment of processes can be achieved in isolation. Examples include the setting up of a joint Serious Crime Directorate operating between two Forces, the initiation of a joint Territorial Policing command or the creation of a single Corporate Services function (HR, Finance, Estates, Fleet etc.) to serve two (or more) Forces;
- **Strategic Alliance:** Forces within the South West region have the potential to collaborate in different ways, but links through geography or size may be the most logical drivers. Forces of similar size may achieve perceivably more equitable efficiencies through strategic alliances, though bigger / smaller arrangements may offer greater resilience to both. It is entirely feasible that the smaller force may well be “lead” in such arrangements should it possess specific specialism, facilities or skills. Forces with common borders will probably have easier practical opportunities to collaborate, but this should not preclude alliances and common working across a wider geography, especially in technological and special skill areas.

In all cases, consideration should be given to incremental approaches to collaboration and building alliances since this may prove to be more deliverable. However, such agreement should be structured to allow easy expansion to greater scope or to include more partners.

- **Lead force:** This model allows one force to provide policing services to other forces under a police collaboration agreement. Under this model general management and tasking falls to the lead force Chief Constable but alternative arrangements for direction and control of officers and staff may be made. Such arrangements may reflect elements found in the shared service model.
- **Beyond regional boundaries:** the five forces and authorities already undertake a number of successful collaborative ventures with other forces outside the south west region. For example the West Coast Forensic Science Consortium. Forces will continue to look for these opportunities and assess the benefits that they pose both individually or collectively.
- **Joint venture:** a longer-term, more structured and binding agreement, in which collaborating forces cede authority over staff and assets to a central unit e.g. the National Police Air Service, which co-ordinates action against priority targets or problems.
- **Outsourcing:** the activity of contracting out a service or function, traditionally provided for in-house to an external provider

Whichever model is selected, agreements will be framed having regard to the following principles.

- The model will at least maintain or add value to service delivery;
- The model will be mutually beneficial, will provide a net financial benefit and assist each force to realise financial savings;
- The approach should not disrupt significantly ongoing force change programmes, though it should be recognised that any plan for an alliance will alter the evolution and delivery of the final service arrangements;
- Costs and benefits should be distributed fairly, transparently and with the minimum of bureaucracy;
- Structures should provide services against a set of common objectives;
- Steps towards any approach should not preclude or present barriers to any consideration of greater benefits that might arise from full regional collaborative solutions or other strategic partnerships; indeed there may be some areas where a broader approach may be beneficial;
- Forces should avoid acting in a way that hinders the creation of alliances or collaboration between other forces in the region or elsewhere.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATION

The current statutory basis underpinning collaboration agreements between police forces and police authorities is contained within sections 23 and 23A to 23I of the Police Act 1996 (as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2009) (“the Act”). In accordance with the provisions of the Act, collaboration agreements that are entered into by relevant forces and police authorities may take place where it is determined by the parties that such agreements are in the interests of the efficiency and effectiveness of the respective forces and authorities. Statutory guidance for police collaboration was issued in March 2010 which currently remains applicable. In terms of the future policing governance arrangements upon the commencement of relevant provisions contained within the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act, Section 89 of that Act further amends the Police Act 1996. Additionally, Commissioners will be required to have due regard to the terms of the Strategic Policing Requirement which will be relevant to the effectiveness of collaboration between policing bodies and police forces.

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act will bring about the biggest change to the police governance and accountability model for a generation. Under this change, in November 2012 Police and Crime Commissioners will be elected to oversee policing in each Force area with PCCs setting strategy and commissioning services from the local Chief Constable and other partners. PCCs will be under a duty to collaborate with other PCCs and Forces for the purposes of efficiency and effectiveness and demonstrating value for money.

Police and Crime Plans

Police and Crime Commissioners will be required to publish a Police and Crime Plan for their area. This will set out the priorities and objectives for the Force and the resources the PCC will make available to deliver this. PCC's have a duty to maintain consideration of the ways in which collaboration could be exercised to improve the efficiency or effectiveness of policing in the local area. The Secretary of State has the power to order collaboration with respect to specific police functions.

Strategic Policing Requirement

In preparing the Police and Crime Plan, the PCC must also have regard to the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR). The SPR is the Home Secretary's articulation of the national threats and risks facing the country and the policing response that is required to counter them. Each police force area is required to contribute to this response. There is an expectation by Government that this will often be a collaborative force response.

Policing Protocol

The Home Secretary will also issue a Policing Protocol to which the PCC and Chief Constable of each Force must also have regard to. The Protocol establishes the terms by which working relationships can be effectively maintained whilst recognising individual roles and responsibilities. This is particularly important given the distinct roles of the PCC and Chief Constable, the former providing strategic direction and accountability, the latter having direction and control of the Force's officers and staff to deliver the Police and Crime Plan.

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Region has adopted a governance and accountability structure which clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of Police Authorities individually and collectively.

The Regional Collaboration Programme is overseen by the South West Police Authorities Joint Committee (SWPAJC). Its role being to articulate the strategic direction for policing in the south west region on behalf of the five participating Authorities and set out a Plan for how this will be delivered. It then considers the merits of collaborative proposals brought forward from Forces by way of a business case. Once a way forward has been agreed, the SWPAJC will hold Chief Constables to account for delivery against the scope, scale and cost of the agreed Plans.

Police Authorities individually and collectively, are accountable to the taxpayer and Government for the efficient and effective utilisation of police funding and resources. Regular reviews and audits by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and, currently, the Audit Commission ensure that police authorities discharge these duties appropriately.

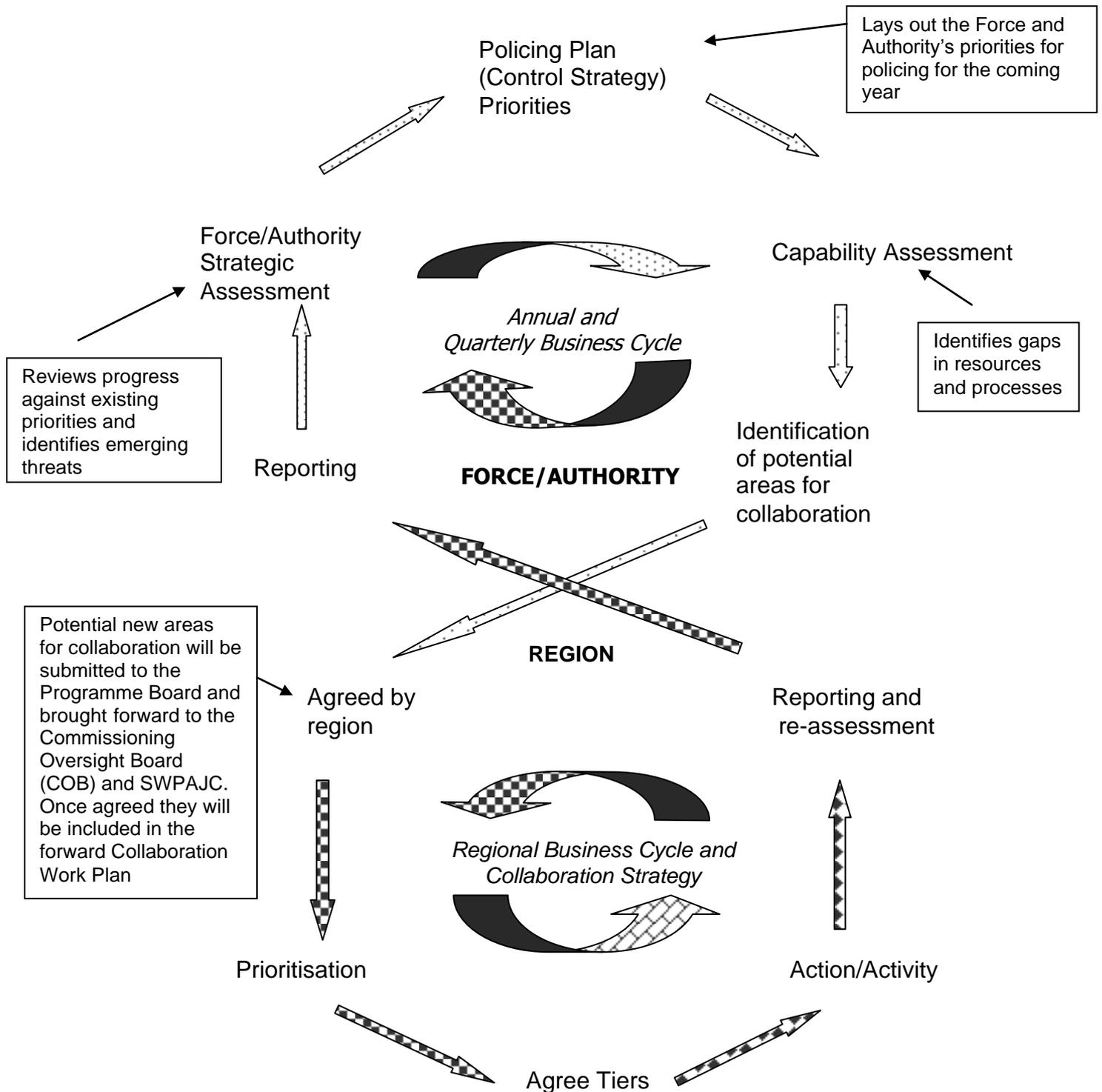
COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

When work is produced or implemented as a result of this strategy, the SWPAJC will expect that:

- 1) Each Authority or Force is able to evidence and demonstrate due regard of the equality duties in line with the Equality Act 2010, which are:
 - a) To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups;
 - c) Foster good relations between people from different groups.
- 2) Each Authority or Force is able to evidence and demonstrate consideration of and compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 3) Each Force is able to evidence that it has considered how the policies, practices or decision will impact on improving delivery of equality outcomes for communities in line with the relevant elements of the Equality Standard.
- 4) The SWPAJC will scrutinise the subsequent decision-making processes in line with the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010 by way of requesting Equality Impact Assessments /equality analysis where appropriate.

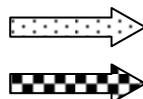
ANNEX A

PROCESS TO IDENTIFY AREAS FOR POTENTIAL COLLABORATION



The cycle illustrates:

- ◆ Force
- ◆ Region



Note: although this schematic is based on a business planning cycle for a police force – it represents the cycle with reference to identification potential areas for collaboration only, rather than describing the business planning cycle in its entirety.

REVISIONS

May 2012 Organisation of regional collaboration programme into ‘tiers’

Text amended to reflect SWPAJC decision on 23 April 2012 to amend programme from a three tier to two tier model.