

Agenda item No: 19

**EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY
PARTNERSHIP MEMBER BOARD MEETING:**

Report of the Director

**Increasing Public Confidence; Letter from the Home Secretary and the
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government**

1. Purpose of the report
 - 1.1 To present a recent letter to all local authorities, concerning the Single Public Confidence target for the police service and raising public confidence that local issues are being tackled.

2. Background
 - 2.1 The attached letter outlines the government intention to set a new target for the Police Service. The new target will be measured using the British Crime Survey question, which asks whether people agree that the Police and local authorities are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in their area.
 - 2.2 The letter sets out support for partnership approaches through the LAAs and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, in the context of promoting good practice identified in the regions. The RIEPs are given a specific mention (page 2).

3. Recommendations
 - 3.1 The Board is recommended to consider the attached letter and implications for the EM IEP support programmes.

Chris Allison
Director
East Midlands Regional Improvement & Efficiency Partnership



Dear Colleagues,

INCREASING PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

This letter is intended to update you on the recent announcement of the single public confidence target for the police service and highlight the crucial role that you and the police collectively play in driving improvements in the public's confidence that key local issues are being tackled.

The Policing Green Paper *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together* set out a radical programme of police reform. It reflected what the Government had heard from the public, the police service and their partners about what was needed to set the future direction of policing in England and Wales. It, like the 'Communities in Control' White Paper and the 'Engaging Communities in Criminal Justice', Green Paper puts improving public confidence at its heart.

As many of you will have heard at this week's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP) Conference, the Government will now set only one top down numerical target for the police service. The new target is a hard-edged measure and will be measured using the British Crime Survey question which asks **whether people agree that the police and local council are dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in their area.**

The target deliberately has a strong focus on promoting partnership working between the police and local authorities since we know that the police cannot achieve their aim to increase public confidence by working alone. Local problems require local partnership solutions and so we write to seek your continued support in the challenge that the police have been set.

Evidence shows that an effective and well-committed **partnership response** that focuses on treating the public with respect, listening to their concerns on crime and anti-social behaviour, acting on those concerns and feeding back information on action taken to the public are what will build public confidence in the police and local councils under the PSA 23 target, and in the wider criminal justice system under PSA 24.

We recognise that, working alongside the police, councils have played a key role in dealing with anti-social behaviour and in recent years this has delivered significant reductions in the number of people who believe anti-social behaviour to be a problem locally. We need to build on this success.

We know that many of you have visibly demonstrated, through the LAA process, the continued priority communities place on tackling crime and ASB and building public confidence. Over 80% of areas have at least one confidence related target in their LAA. For those without a designated target on confidence, progress against all 188 indicators in the National Indicator Set will be assessed as part of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment. The Audit Commission and inspectorates, including HMIC, will report on and inform progress in each local area through the Comprehensive Area Assessment process.

We are absolutely clear that good partnership working between all local authority Chief Executives, and their Chief Constables and Police Authority Chairs and with the active support of elected members, are key to building the stronger partnerships that will deliver the increase in confidence.

We know that much is happening with regard to join up at a local level: through CDRP legislation, local authorities are already under a duty to work in partnership with police forces and authorities and furthermore, the majority of every police authority is comprised of members of the local authority. We are confident that, as well as addressing local concerns, delivering against the police target will deliver local reputational benefits for councils.

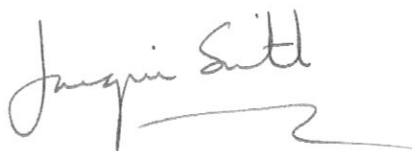
Your local police force will be seeking to work closely with you to identify and implement activity that will make a practical difference in your area. We ask you to support them fully, and as a key member of the CDRP, we ask you to work too with other 'responsible authorities' (the local PCT, fire service, as well as Local Criminal Justice Boards) to bring your resources together in support of improving the confidence of local people in your work to reduce and deal effectively with crime and ASB.

But of course we need to support both you and the police with this challenge. This is why we are working with forces and authorities to ensure that police forces and police authorities collect regular, comparable data at a CDRP level. This data will be collected in every CDRP across England and Wales and will be made available so that the public, the police service, and of course local authorities and other partners will all be able to access and understand at the most practical and local level how confident their local communities are that police and local councils are responding to the things that really matter to them. We will also be looking to the National Policing Improvement Agency, Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships and IDEa to share and communicate the good progress being made and information on how local authorities can work with the police to achieve a significant increase in public confidence as well as encouraging local partners to come together to share what is working for them.


And, where possible, we will be seeking to ensure that public confidence is uppermost in our strategies and policies. The crime and disorder Councillor Call for Action, which came into force on the 30th April, will also be an important way for the police and local authorities to work together to resolve crime and disorder problems, in a forum which is open to the public. It should therefore boost public confidence that police and local authorities are acting on crime and anti-social behaviour issues.

Another good example of this is the Safer Streets website. Building on the proposal in the Violence against Women and Girls consultation document in March the Prime Minister has announced that, in June, we will be launching a website to give people a say on what would make them feel safer on their streets. This will build on the excellent work that CDRPs, Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), Safer Neighbourhood and Safer Travel teams undertake up and down the country in making our neighbourhoods safer. The website will allow the public to report where they felt either safe or unsafe in their local area, and why – for example, that a particular street is badly lit. That information would then be shared with other users of the site, to add their own concerns, and with CDRPs and others to use it when planning safety improvements.

We all have an important role to play in delivering a step change in public confidence. We look forward to working with you to develop the effective partnerships that will deliver this change and lead to safer communities.



JACQUI SMITH



HAZEL BLEARS

cc: Police Chiefs and Chairs; Government Offices.