



Policing for a Better Britain

Report of the Independent Police Commission

Summary and Recommendations

“Policing should contribute to the creation of a safer, more cohesive and more just society.”

The police service in England and Wales is going through a period of tumultuous change and faces huge challenges in the years ahead. Today policing takes place against the backdrop of deep social transformations – a global economic downturn, quickening flows of migration, widening inequalities, constitutional uncertainty, and the impact of new social media. Crime levels have fallen, but the police and their partners face the challenge of new forms of criminal activity including cybercrime, fraud, terrorism, and the trafficking of people and goods. Endemic problems of anti-social behaviour continue to blight the lives of many people in our most deprived communities. An increasingly sceptical public make competing demands for order, not all of which the police are able to meet. Victims of crime, rightly, want a more personal, swift and just response from the criminal justice system. Public confidence in the integrity of the police has been damaged by a spate of organisational failures and high profile scandals. The police have experienced sharp budget cuts and face a period of fiscal restraint that is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. We are no longer able to improve policing by spending more money on the police service. That path has been closed off. Given this, the Commission has taken great care to develop a vision of better policing – and a set of practical proposals - which do not require additional resources.

The police have also been subject to a radical programme of reform instigated by the Government. Some of these reforms have been important and necessary – for example, changes to police officers’ pay and conditions and the creation of the College of Policing. Others however have proven less successful, such as the experiment with elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) which has been riddled with failings. Whilst the introduction of PCCs has given effect to an important democratic principle, the model has fatal systemic flaws. The Government has created a stand-off with the police service that has left officer morale at rock bottom. The police have a structure of 43 separate forces that few believe to be cost-effective or adequately equipped to meet the crime challenges of today – though there is no consensus on a better alternative. The procurement of technology by the police service continues to be problematic. Indeed it was described by Sir Hugh Orde in evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee² as being ‘in a bit of a mess’. Furthermore the service, constrained by the lack of finances available to it, risks outsourcing key aspects of policing to the private sector in an ad-hoc and unprincipled manner. Faced with continuing budgetary constraints and repeated calls from government ministers insisting that they are ‘crime-fighters’, the police service in England and Wales is in danger of retreating to a discredited model of reactive policing. Neighbourhood policing that is responsive to the concerns of local communities is being threatened. In short, we believe that the Government has made the wrong calls in areas where it has acted - police purpose and governance - while failing to address key issues where reform is urgently required, such as police standards, misconduct, and structures.

² House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee (2011) New Policing Landscape

In this Report – *Policing for a Better Britain* – we set out a bold and radical vision of how to deliver fair and effective policing in straitened times. We offer a coherent, long-term model that is rooted in the Peelian tradition of British policing, but which seeks to apply Robert Peel’s founding principles to the challenges the police face today. This model of policing is one grounded in values that are widely shared among the British people and informed by good evidence of how the police can, with others, contribute to the creation of a safer, more cohesive and more just society – in short, to a better Britain.

We aim to create a police service that is professional, democratically accountable and which serves the common good. Our vision is of a police service with a social purpose that combines catching offenders with work to prevent crime and promote and maintain order in our communities. It means a service that listens closely to the demands of everyone while meeting the needs of the most vulnerable in our society and protecting victims of crime. It means a service that is rooted in local communities while also possessing the capacity to tackle effectively threats of organised and cross-border crime. The ‘golden thread’ running through our analysis and proposals is that the local policing area is the core unit, and building block, of fair and effective policing.

The Report contains a detailed and integrated set of recommendations designed to give effect to this vision. In concrete terms, we propose a programme of reform framed around eight themes, each of which seeks to address the initial terms of reference set.³

A Social Justice Model of Neighbourhood Policing

- 1 We need to bring clarity and stability to a broader social mission for the police. The police are not simply crime fighters. Their civic purpose is focused on improving safety and well-being within communities and promoting measures to prevent crime, harm and disorder. **The Commission recommends that the social purpose of the police should be enshrined in law.** This will help to bring much-needed consensus to the question of what we expect the police to do.

This has recently been achieved, following the introduction of a single national police service, in Scotland. We believe that the national statement of purpose for Police Scotland has much to commend it as a model for enacting a legislative purpose for the police in England and Wales. Section 32 of the relevant legislation declares:

‘The policing principles are —

- (a) that the main purpose of policing is to improve the safety and well-being of persons, localities and communities in Scotland, and
- (b) that the police service, working in collaboration with others where appropriate, should seek to achieve that main purpose by policing in a way which —

³ Please see appendix eight for a full list of our terms of reference

- (i) is accessible to, and engaged with, local communities, and
- (ii) promotes measures to prevent crime, harm and disorder.⁴

2 The neighbourhood remains the key building block of fair and effective policing and it is vital that visible, locally responsive policing is protected in times of fiscal constraint. We need a police service that listens closely to the demands of the whole community while focusing resources where evidence suggests they are most needed and can do most good. We need local policing that treats everyone with decency and respect. Neighbourhood policing has to be distributed and delivered in ways that are substantively and procedurally fair. The protection of neighbourhood policing demands that the legislated national purpose is backed up with a set of national minimum standards of police service which everyone should be entitled to receive, and which local police forces and those who call them to account must deliver. **To this end, the Commission recommends that a Local Policing Commitment is introduced.** The substance of this Commitment will be subject to further discussion. However, it should include the following:

- (a) a guaranteed minimum level of neighbourhood policing;
- (b) emergency response or an explanation of why this demand will not be met or can be met by other means;
- (c) requests to the police for assistance, or reporting a crime will be met by a commitment to appropriate response times;
- (d) reported crime will be investigated or an explanation given of why this is not possible;
- (e) victims will be regularly updated as to the progress of the investigation; and
- (f) those coming into contact with the police whether they be victims, witnesses, offenders or complainants will be treated with fairness and dignity.

Creating Effective Partnerships

The police must build and strengthen key relationships in order to prevent crime and reduce harm in our communities – relationships with community and third sector organisations, with mental health agencies, with social work, education and training, with prosecutors, courts and probation, and with the private sector. **We recommend a series of practical measures that need to be taken in order to protect and enhance key crime prevention partnerships.**

- 3. As part of a commitment to strengthening neighbourhood policing, the police and local councils should **involve ordinary citizens and those in key occupations in dealing with conflict, crime and anti-social behaviour.**
- 4. To improve the effectiveness of police relationships with other actors in the criminal justice system:

⁴ Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

- (a) The College of Policing should review and **improve the quality of police training in criminal law and criminal procedure**, including the rules of evidence and the role of police officers and police work in the criminal justice system;
 - (b) All forces should **move rapidly towards enabling the electronic submission of case files** to courts and prosecutors;
 - (c) The Home Office should **set out a coherent set of principles for dealing with offenders and offending outside the criminal justice system** with a view to improving public confidence in such disposals.

- 5. Local community safety partnerships are being undermined by cuts to local government and by the shift of focus and budgets to PCCs. **The Commission recommends that the success of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 needs to be built upon. We need to protect and extend the statutory arrangements that the Act put in place and the Commission recommends a considerable strengthening of police accountability at the so-called Local Policing Unit (LPU) which is where Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) generally operate. These proposals are set out fully in chapter three.**

- 6. We consider that the UK needs a combination of police and a third party agency to act as a portal for the reporting of online crime, as an analytic filter of those reports and as a distributor to single points of contact in each force or the National Crime Agency (NCA). **We recommend that work be taken forward to develop such a third party agency supported by the industry, banking and corporate social responsibility from affected businesses.**

- 7. Police relationships with the private sector are important and essential. Pressures to extend these relationships are also going to increase as budget cuts continue to bite. However, it is vital that partnerships with the private sector are developed in a coherent and principled way that attends to what the private sector can more effectively deliver and to the limits of private sector involvement in police work. **The Commission recommends that when considering whether to outsource areas of police operation, PCCs and other stakeholders should adhere to the following principles:**
 - (a) How policing services are provided is a matter for democratic debate and political choice;
 - (b) The coherence and effectiveness of policing should be enhanced rather than undermined by private sector involvement;
 - (c) The use of the legal powers of the warranted constable should only be exercised by the public police;
 - (d) Functions that rely on trust and legitimacy should normally be carried out by the public police;
 - (e) The symbolic function of the police as guarantors of social order and legitimate governance should not be undermined.

Achieving Better Democratic Governance

The Government initiated a radical reform programme designed to enhance the democratic governance of the police. However, the 'single individual' model of accountability that has been introduced has serious deficiencies that cannot easily be fixed. **The Commission recommends an alternative path to achieving better local democratic governance** comprising the following elements:

8. **Local democratic accountability is an important value that needs to be defended and extended.** There must be no retreat from the principle of giving the public a direct voice in how they are policed. Locally elected politicians should set the strategic direction of the police and hold them to account for their performance.
9. Following a careful evaluation of the evidence, **the Commission concludes that the PCC model is systemically flawed as a method of democratic governance and should be discontinued in its present form at the end of the term of office of the 41 serving PCCs.**
10. The Commission sees no benefit in reinstating local police authorities in place of PCCs, nor does it consider it desirable to return to the days of trying to steer local policing from Whitehall. The Commission proposes to further democratise decision-making over policing by devolving greater powers to lower tier local authorities. The Commission recommends four key measures to achieve this:
 - (a) The introduction of a **legal requirement on the police to organise internal force boundaries in ways that are coterminous with the lowest relevant tier of local government;**
 - (b) Legislating to **give local government a say in the appointment of local police commanders;**
 - (c) **Enabling lower tier local authorities to retain at least some of the police precept of the council tax which they will then use to commission local policing from their force. this funding would be ring fenced to fund the police service and could not be diverted into other local authority services; and**
 - (d) **Giving those same lower tier local authorities the power to set priorities for neighbourhood policing, the local policing of volume crime and anti-social behaviour, by formulating and agreeing with local police commanders policing plans for their town, city or borough**
11. Having devolved decisions over local policing matters to a more local level, we recommend that at **force level a Policing Board comprising the leaders of each local authority within the police force are** be given the power to set the overall budget for the police force area, appoint and dismiss the chief constable and formulate and agree with the chief constable the force level policing plan setting out the strategic priorities for the force.
12. Two other options should also be considered: **relocating the powers and budget currently held by the PCC so that they are jointly exercised by an Elected Chair and indirectly-**

elected local Policing Board, or transferring to a directly-elected Local Policing Board their powers of priority-setting, community engagement, commissioning services and developing close relationships with other criminal justice and community safety agencies.

13. The Commission believes that local community engagement has to be made a routine component of police work and a core responsibility of those elected to hold the police to account. **We recommend that police forces consider establishing ‘participatory budgeting units’ in order to ensure greater involvement of local communities in allocating local policing resources.**

A New Deal for Police Officers and Staff

The Commission endorses elements of the Government’s programme for modernising police pay and conditions. Such reforms were necessary and overdue. However, the process of implementing change has left police morale at rock bottom. These reforms also need careful scrutiny and review as they are implemented. **The Commission proposes a new deal for police officers and staff.** This is made up of the following practical proposals:

14. **We endorse the Winsor aspiration of enhancing the status of policing to a profession** and the corresponding proposals to raise the qualification standards of those entering the profession.
15. **We reject the new starting salary for police constables** and urge that a level be set commensurate with the qualifications and experiences of new recruits.
16. **The Commission recommends the setting up of an independent review of the effects of the Winsor recommendations** within two years of their implementation.
17. A new deal for police officers means, **implementing models of working which embed ‘procedural fairness for all’ in the routine operation of police organisations.** This requires police forces to put in place relevant structures and processes, training for senior officers and management, and high level commitment from chief officer teams. Police officers and staff must be treated as a vital resource in the development and delivery of better policing, not simply as the objects of reform.
18. **Greater use should be made of the powers within the 2006 and 2010 equalities legislation with a view to correcting the still poor representation of women and ethnic minorities in the police.** We recommend that the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) work with the police service, through the College of Policing, to review data on discriminatory treatment and disproportionate representation and that the EHRC consider initiating legal compliance action where explanations from forces are inadequate.

19. **We recommend that staff with key skills such as Crime Scene Investigators, Crime Analysts and specialist cybercrime investigators should have a route into the service via lateral entry.**

Building a Police Profession

The Commission welcomes the creation of the College of Policing and believes it has a vital leadership role to play in developing the police into an evidence-based profession. To this end, we make the following practical proposals:

20. The Commission recommends **creating a ‘chartered police officer’ as the basis of the police profession.** A ‘chartered’ police officer accountable to a strong professional body will improve public confidence and give greater competence and status to police officers and staff. All police officers must register with the College of Policing. Existing officers will be registered under ‘grandfather’s rights’, but all must demonstrate they are properly accredited within five years. This provides a mechanism for continuous professional development and means that those without accreditation will leave the service. The College of Policing will become the authoritative voice of policing in relation to standards, procedures and training, but ACPO must maintain its position as the voice of the service on operational matters.
21. **The College of Policing would hold and make publicly available the register of all chartered practitioners.**
22. The presumption should be for total transparency –**with open, public hearings for decisions on serious misconduct** - rather than the muddled regime of partially open hearings and judgements which currently prevails.
23. Police officers found to have committed serious misconduct by the College of Policing board **should be struck off from the register.**
24. **The professional body’s primary lines of accountability should be both to the Home Secretary and Parliament.**
25. **A Code of Ethics for police officers and staff should be introduced, following consultation on the current draft produced by the College of Policing that would set standards of professional behaviour. That includes honesty and integrity, authority, respect and responsibilities to the public.**
26. **The relationship between the media and the police must be improved, based on:**
- (a) new media guidelines which re-build trust and confidence and encourage, not restrict, two-way openness and contact; and

(b) streamlined and minimal requirements to record but not restrict contact with journalists.

27. A publically available register of police practitioners should be created, that will:

- (a) incorporate all those working within public policing; and
- (b) operate different levels of registration according to qualification (ordinary, advanced, chartered) and permit multiple pathways to achieve advanced and chartered registration.

Raising Standards and Remediating Misconduct

A spate of organisational failures and scandals over recent years has badly damaged public confidence in the integrity of the police. It is vital this situation is put right. Recent experience has found wanting the existing system which separates the monitoring of organisational performance from the investigation of police complaints. The Commission suggests a single significant reform to remedy the failings of current arrangements.

28. We recommend the abolition of HMIC and of the IPCC, and the creation of a new single IPSC. From the outset the IPSC should create a database with the necessary storage facilities to retain oversight of serious investigations (historic and current) which are or are likely to be of significant public interest. This new agency would hold police forces to account for the delivery of standards, deal with misconduct effectively and efficiently, and ensure all failings are addressed without delay.

29. to ensure that the practice standards set out by the College of Policing are being appropriately applied by individual forces we consider that a power to impose an improvement framework akin to the Consent decree on forces where key standards fall well below an acceptable standard would provide a more active and effective regulation than the current regime of largely toothless recommendations.

30. The College of Policing would have responsibility for managing new ‘professional competence and conduct panels’, but the IPSC should have the duty to ensure that they are meeting the public interest.

31. We envisage that the new body would be ‘prosecution authority’ for serious complaints and the appeal body for complainants who were not satisfied with lower level complaints.

A Structure Fit for Purpose

32. The Commission found broad agreement that the present structure of 43 separate police forces for England and Wales is no longer cost effective or equipped to meet the challenges of organised and cross-border crime. In a world of greater mobility and fiscal constraint the model is untenable. However, there is little or no consensus about a better alternative

arrangement. Against this backdrop, the Commission makes a clear recommendation that change is essential and believes there are three serious options for finding a path out of the current impasse, namely:

- (a) Locally-negotiated mergers and collaboration agreements: actively encouraging forces to group together and supporting voluntary amalgamations, enhanced cooperation learning best practice lessons from the bottom-up ;
- (b) Regionalisation: A coordinated amalgamation into approximately ten regional police forces;
- (c) National Police Service: The creation of a single national police service (Police England and Wales) or two separate forces (Police England and Police Wales).

We recommend that detailed proposals for structural change, with the locally-negotiated mergers and collaboration agreements, regionalisation and national police service options produced and a wide-ranging consultation undertaken with a view to securing swift implementation.

Making savings and efficiencies

The Commission is disheartened and dismayed by the recurring criticisms of the police service's inability to rationalise its procurement of Information Technology (IT) and non IT consumables and is greatly exercised by problems besetting the forensic science services. The continued failure to manage procurement is not only costly in economic terms and wasteful of human effort but it potentially compromises the efficiency and effectiveness of investigation and other policing tasks. The imminence of a new generation of procurement contracts which include the Police National Computer (PNC), the Police National Database (PND) and Airwave presents a real opportunity to achieve greater integration and interoperability of intelligence and improve means of communication. The Commission cannot emphasise strongly enough the urgent need to address these persistent problems. There should be national guidelines and, wherever possible, national frameworks for local forces to purchase goods and services, together with a robust analysis of police forces' requirements similar to those proposed by the National Audit Office (NAO), namely: appreciation of thresholds whereby back office functions can be streamlined or removed; analysis of trade-offs between supporting all forces and a staged approach; and clarity about degrees of convergence to be achieved within the service and between the criminal justice service agencies.

- 33. The Commission recommends the development of a national procurement strategy co-ordinated jointly by the Ministry of Justice and the Home Office for IT, non IT consumables and forensic services; the aim being to secure integration, common standards and value for money of these services.**

The Commission has calculated the following savings that, enacted swiftly, could save the forces an estimated £62.6 million to 2016/17. These should be only the tip of the iceberg in terms of better procurement and collaboration.

- (a) According to findings published by the Public Accounts Committee and the NAO, if 80% of items were bought through the procurement hub, rather than the current 2%, potential benefits were estimated at just over £50 million to 2016-17.
- (b) Forces could save an estimated £4.8 million to 2016/17 across five types of common equipment, assuming they paid the average of the five lowest prices paid.
- (c) Forces have also found it particularly hard to agree common specifications for uniform, which they spent almost £8 million on in 2010-11. If forces could replicate cost reductions achieved through standardising uniforms in the prison service they could an estimated £7.8 million to 2016/17. As the NAO has said, this would not require a single national uniform or inhibit forces having customisable insignia to identify their officers.

34. The Commission recommends that every force provides all its police officers and operational staff with all 19 basic technology operating system capabilities (as identified in the HMIC report '*Taking Time for Crime*' of 2012) as a minimum and ensures that all software updates are routinely installed.

35. The Commission sees real merit in seeking to ensure that officers can access intelligence remotely through a single integrated platform and proposes achieving this through:

- (a) storing the PNC, the PND and forensic support systems such as the National Fingerprints Database on a single platform;
- (b) making federated systems, including national watch lists, searchable via this new platform;
- (c) giving responsibility for the database to a lead force;
- (d) making access to the platform available to all officers via their mobile technology capabilities as early as possible.

36. The Commission is extremely concerned about the current provision and use of forensic science services. We consider that urgent attention should be given to ensuring that the quality of forensic service provisions meet operational requirements, thereby avoiding current and future problems.

37. In addition to the principles underpinning relationships between the police and the private sector, outlined in recommendation seven, we recommend that the following public interest tests are applied to the process of procuring goods and services, designing contracts, and monitoring the performance of contractors:

- (a) **consultation** - police officers, staff, stakeholders and local people should be consulted prior to any final decision being taken;
- (b) **responsibility** – consideration should be given to: whether police forces have the necessary skills to procure effectively and ensure quality compliance? Are forces dependent upon a small range of suppliers? Have allowances been made for possible unforeseen changes in the landscape of policing such as, for example, further budget cuts? Have forces used their collective bargaining power to

advance wider policing and social goals such as positive action initiatives to encourage employment of black and ethnic minority (BME) staff? Have forces ensured their contractors are being paid a living wage?

- (c) **transparency** – has there been sufficient transparency to ensure that the public interest is being protected? Commercial confidentiality is clearly important, but it must not be allowed to stand in the way of getting best value out of scarce public resources;
- (d) **risk assessment** - have the values and practices of fair and effective policing been preserved?
- (e) **accountabilities** – are staff contracted to work for the police to be subject to the same processes for remedying misconduct as sworn officers?

Introduction: Contexts, Challenges & Principles

Introduction

The police today face an uncertain future in which the only thing that can be predicted with any confidence is that hard choices will have to be made. In this report, the Commission sets out a bold and radical vision of how to deliver better policing in these demanding times. But we do not and cannot start with a blank slate. Over the last 50 years – since the Royal Commission on the Police reported in 1962 – British society has altered dramatically and it is vital to take account of the key changes in the economic, social and political contexts within which policing takes place. Through our surveys, public meetings and evidence-gathering sessions, we have heard about the problems and challenges confronting the police service today. Any attempt to make the police better, and make policing contribute to a better Britain, has to be fully cognisant of this altered context and be able to address these challenges.

In this introduction, we lay out the key elements of the social context of British policing and describe the key challenges that have emerged from, and during, the Commission's work. We then revisit the 'Peelian principles' and consider their applicability to the world of policing today, noting that ACPO in their written submission to the Commission considered the Peelian Principles:

'a vibrant and valid foundation for policing today ... [which] remains relevant and ... one of the strengths of the British Model of Policing'⁵

What is required, the Commission argues, is a revised application of those core policing principles so as to provide the basis for a police service that can meet today's challenges in ways that are effective, legitimate and committed to the common good.

Contexts

British policing takes place in an economic, social and political context that has radically changed since the Royal Commission on the Police reported in 1962. It is essential to understand this wider context and its effects upon police work if we are to appreciate the scale of the contemporary challenges faced by the police. We will refer to these changes at relevant points throughout our report. For now, it is necessary to record the most significant elements of this altered context.

⁵ ACPO written submission

A climate of austerity

There is no doubt that any change will have to take place against the backdrop of diminishing resources. While it was true that until recently 'we spent about 2.5% [of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP)] on law and order, ... considerably more ... than any other [Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development] (OECD) member state,'⁶ the situation has changed with the police in England and Wales now facing real term cuts of 20% in their budget by 2014-2015, an estimated loss of £2.1 billion across 43 police forces. In 2010-2011, there was a reduction of 5.68% in front line officer numbers across England and Wales – a loss of 6,800 officers. An overall loss of over 15,000 officers is projected by 2014-15. Further cuts to the police budget of 'up to 6%' were announced by the Treasury in the Spending Review for 2016-2017. Even on the slower scale and pace of cuts proposed by the Labour Party, at half the size and over an entire Parliament, significant savings would still need to be found. Financial austerity is likely to be part of the structuring context for policing in England and Wales for the foreseeable future. This effectively rules out the option of spending our way to improved service or performance. Police forces are going to have to prioritise demand and focus their resources more effectively. This is a challenge that the Commission has sought to meet head on. We have taken great care to develop a vision of better policing – and a set of practical proposals - which do not require additional resources.

Socio-economic transformations

The social conditions within which the police operate have been transformed over recent decades and will continue to change. The globalisation of markets for goods and services; new patterns of personal mobility and migration; the advent of the internet and social media; the fragmentation of families and communities, and increasing levels of inequality, have created a shifting landscape of criminal opportunities, threats and risks and have impacted upon public demands for order and security. There has been growing public concern about anti-social behaviour, particularly in the most deprived communities, and a consequent pressure on the police to intervene. The police also work in an environment shaped by long-term decline in deference for and trust in authority. In today's world, citizens expect more of government, are more sceptically alert to the performance of public services, and often expect to be consulted over the form and quality of provision. Effective, legitimate policing is much harder to foster and sustain in this context. It requires careful thinking about how best to manage public expectations of policing, given that not all demands can be met. It also involves more than simply delivering a professional service to the public.

Changing levels and patterns of crime

Crime levels in England and Wales have been falling since the mid 1990s and continue to do so. Figures from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) for the year ending March 2013 show a 9% decrease in overall crime against adults compared with the previous year's survey. Crimes recorded by the police also fell by 7% for the year ending March 2013 compared with the previous year. This is not however a reason to be complacent. There are few grounds for assuming that volume crime levels will continue to fall during any prolonged economic slowdown. National trends mask the fact that criminal victimisation continues to be suffered disproportionately by the poorest and most vulnerable in society and impact detrimentally on

⁶ John Graham, Police Foundation in verbal evidence

their lives. The Commission believes there is a need to attend to alterations in criminal opportunities and behaviour – as evidenced, for example, by crime on the internet, by rising levels of fraud (frauds recorded by the police increased by 27% in the year up to March 2013) and by the propensity of criminal networks to cross force boundaries and national borders. Policing today has to be alive to these changing contours of crime.

Coalition government's reform programme

The Government has embarked on a radical overhaul of the police in England and Wales, the speed and scale of which signals a determination to engineer a revolution in British policing. Opinion differs on the coherence of this reform programme and its intended 'end-game'. Some of these reforms have been important and necessary, for example, the reform of police pay and conditions and the creation of the College of Policing. One could plausibly argue that the Government intends to create a leaner, locally responsive police service focused on the limited objective of cutting crime. Measures to cut 'red-tape' and bureaucracy, the Winsor Report proposals, support for outsourcing police services and the introduction of elected PCCs all seem designed to narrow the role of policing to an agent of deterrence, reacting to crimes rather than preventing them. Whether or not this interpretation is accepted, there is little doubt that by 2015 the police in England and Wales will have been significantly re-shaped. This means that any future government will be confronted with stark choices about which aspects of the Government's reform programme to accept, reject or extend, and what further reforms are required. The Commission's report offers a careful assessment of the Government's police reforms with a view to informing the programme of any future government.

Challenges

Over the last 24 months, the Commission has taken evidence from police officers, academics, national and local politicians, and police experts. The picture that emerges is in part a positive one containing success stories of which the police service can be proud: counter-terrorism and the policing of the Olympics merit particular mention in this regard. However, the evidence we have gathered reveals a number of problems and challenges confronting the police service in England and Wales. In this report the Commission sets out a vision, and a programme of reform, that can respond to these challenges. We turn first to describing briefly the nature and scale of the challenges the police currently face.

The threat to neighbourhood policing and the danger of retreating to reactive crime control

Faced with budgetary constraints and the Government's insistence that the police are 'crime-fighters', the police service in England and Wales is in danger of retreating to a discredited model of reactive policing. Neighbourhood policing, responsive to the concerns of local communities, is being threatened. In the Commission's view, it is vital that this 'retreat to the core' is halted. In chapter one, we show that policing which is responsive to local concerns and treats everyone with dignity and respect is the key to building public confidence, and consider how to protect neighbourhood policing during times of austerity. In chapter two, we consider

how best to build the key relationships that are necessary to deliver enhanced community safety.

The problem of PCCs and the spectre of a failed experiment

There is mounting evidence of serious difficulties in how PCCs are operating on the ground. There is little public knowledge of, or support for, this experiment in democratic policing. There have been well-documented problems with how PCCs appointed their staff and handle their relations with chief officers. It remains difficult to envisage how a single individual can provide effective democratic governance of police forces covering large areas, diverse communities and millions of people. In sum, we are confronted with the spectre of an experiment that is failing. The principle of democratic accountability that underpins the PCC experiment is sound and needs protecting – even extending. But serious thought needs to be given to finding better ways of giving practical effect to that principle. We turn to this question in chapter three.

Police morale and the damaging stand-off between police and government

Whilst the government's reform of police pay and conditions is both important and necessary, the failure to engage the service in the programme of reform has resulted in a damaging stand-off and plummeting morale. Derek Barnett, the former President of PSAEW noted in evidence to the Commission:

'if you want to reform an institution as valued and as important as policing, you surely must do it in a way that implements and introduces reform with those in policing, as opposed to implementing reform to policing ... [reform] is being done to us, and not with us.'

Our extensive surveys of police officers and staff highlight what is a bleak and worrying picture of anxiety and de-motivation present within the service.

Police forces also continue to fall short in efforts to make the police representative of the communities that they serve. In chapter four, we offer police officers in this country a 'new deal' – one that combines reform of pay and conditions with a serious and sustained effort to give police officers a greater say in the decisions that affect their working lives and thereby the confidence to treat the public with fairness and respect. In chapter five, we consider how these problems of morale and motivation can be addressed by building a policing profession.

Organisational failure and malpractice

Over recent months and years a litany of police organisational failures, malpractice and scandal have been revealed and widely publicised. It is instructive to list the most serious cases:

1. Improper relations between the police and the media revealed by the Leveson Inquiry;
2. Investigative failure of child sexual abuse (for example; Jimmy Savile, North Wales, Oxford and Rotherham);
3. Discrediting of victims, cover-ups and related wrongdoing revealed by the Hillsborough Enquiry;
4. The death of Ian Tomlinson following an assault by a police officer at the 2009 G20 Summit;

5. The dismissal of the chief constable and deputy chief constable of Cleveland Police for gross misconduct (and an unprecedented number of chief officers suspended under disciplinary regulations);
6. Allegations that the police 'bugged' the family of Stephen Lawrence and Duwayne Brooks;
7. Serious allegations made against police undercover teams – including developing personal relationships and fathering children under their false identities and using the names of dead children as pseudonyms;
8. Misleading reporting of crime figures and attempts to subvert the reporting of crime (for example the Southwark Sapphire Unit);
9. Criticisms by HMIC and the EHRC over the mis-use of stop and search powers; and
10. The unresolved allegations generated by the 'Plebgate' affair.

In a world of round the clock broadcasting and social media their effects reverberate rapidly and widely. These individual and organisational failures have badly dented public confidence in the integrity of the police and have come close to generating a sense that policing in England and Wales is 'out of control'.⁷ It is thus vital that we obtain a clearer understanding of the conditions under which these abuses of power occur in order to be better placed to prevent their reoccurrence. We also need to take steps to rebuild trust in the police in the aftermath of these cases and address the police's self confidence in making operational judgements. In chapter five, we examine the role of the College of Policing in this regard and make the case for introducing the role of 'chartered police officer'. In chapter six, we examine ways to more effectively join up the process of investigating complaints against the police with systems for improving organisational practice and standards.

A structure of 43 police forces which appears to be dysfunctional

It was clear from our evidence-gathering that few senior police officers and politicians believe the structure of 43 separate police forces is currently 'fit for purpose'. The current structure is not well-equipped to deliver efficiency and cost savings. It creates unnecessary duplication and compromises inter-operability. It is a structure that too often obstructs effective action against cross-force and cross-border crime. There is, however, little or no agreement on the best alternative arrangements or how to bring them about, especially in the light of well-documented problems with 'top-down' force amalgamations. Added to this, there is uncertainty about the role of the NCA and how its relations with individual police forces will develop, as well as a lack of clarity about the role the Home Office should play in the new policing landscape. These questions of force structure are discussed in chapter seven with future options laid out.

Problems of technology and procurement and the risks of outsourcing

During the course of our work, the Commission encountered a consensus regarding the poor state of police equipment and technology, and the inefficiencies of existing procurement processes, notably for IT and forensic science. Here too there was little agreement on the best means of procuring the equipment the police need and widespread recognition that this is a 'wicked problem'. Yet it is clear that a way forward has to be found. Given the pressures

⁷ See the results of a poll conducted in the aftermath of the Stephen Lawrence 'bugging' allegations <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-23165983>

created by police budget cuts and the strong central steer to make savings, there also remains considerable pressure on forces and PCCs to increase radically the range of policing services that are outsourced to the private sector. However without serious consideration being given to the limits of what can be outsourced in policing, and principles to guide whatever outsourcing is to take place, there is a clear risk of ad hoc, unprincipled outsourcing being unleashed. We consider questions pertaining to resourcing in chapters two and eight.

Principles

The Commission's proposals will pay full heed to the social context within which policing takes place and respond to the challenges we have just described. But neither the Commission – nor the police – must become a prisoner of that context. Instead, the Commission charts a way forward showing how – against this backdrop – the police can best contribute to a safer, more cohesive and more just society. In order to do this, we have formulated some core principles of policing that provide our Report with an overarching vision of policing and guide its recommendations. These principles gave the Commission a clear sense of which aspects of our present policing arrangements are working well and ought to be preserved and identified areas of policing which require innovative thinking, fresh policy proposals, or new institutions.

Peelian Principles

One familiar step taken whenever a call is made to reform policing is to reach for what have come to be known as 'Peel's principles'. There is, as police historian Clive Emsley⁸ has noted, no evidence that they were written in 1829, or by Robert Peel, or indeed by either of the Metropolitan Police's (MPS) first two commissioners. Emsley argues that they were in fact given their first formulation by Charles Reith over a century later, before subsequently becoming a cliché of twentieth century policing textbooks. These principles have, nonetheless, become the key reference point for thinking about the fundamentals of modern British policing. They are outlined in box one.

Box 1: The Peelian Principles

1. To prevent crime and disorder, as an alternative to their repression by military force and severity of legal punishment.
2. To recognise always that the power of the police to fulfil their functions and duties is dependent on public approval of their existence, actions and behaviour, and on their ability to secure and maintain public respect.
3. To recognise always that to secure and maintain the respect and approval of the public means also the securing of the willing cooperation of the public in the task of securing observance of the law.
4. To recognise always that the extent to which the cooperation of the public can be secured diminishes, proportionately, the necessity of the use of physical force and compulsion for achieving police objectives.
5. To seek and preserve public favour, not by pandering to public opinion, but by constantly demonstrating absolutely impartial service to law, in complete independence of policy, and

⁸ Emsley, C. (2013) 'Peel's Principles, Police Principles', in J. Brown (ed) *The Future of Policing*. London: Routledge.

without regard to the justice or injustice of the substance of individual laws, by ready offering of individual service and friendship to all members of the public without regard to their wealth or social standing by ready exercise of courtesy and good humour; and by ready offering of individual sacrifice in protecting and preserving life.

6. To use physical force only when the exercise of persuasion, advice and warning is found to be insufficient to obtain public cooperation to an extent necessary to secure observance of law or restore order; and to use only the minimum degree of physical force which is necessary on any particular occasion for achieving a police objective.
7. To maintain at all times a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and that the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.
8. To recognise always the need for strict adherence to police-executive functions, and to refrain from even seeming to usurp the power of the judiciary of avenging individuals or the state, and authoritatively judging guilt and punishing the guilty.
9. To recognise always that the test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder and not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with them.

But how well do these principles serve us today? What should a contemporary application of the Peelian principles look like given the context and challenges we have described? Clive Emsley makes the further important point that it is difficult to find any modern liberal democratic state that does not subscribe to such principles for their policing institutions. This fact can be taken as an indication of the cogency and durability of the Peelian principles as a guide to what policing in a democracy ought to look like or aspire to. But it can also indicate that these principles are too general, or thin, to enable necessary distinctions to be drawn between different visions of policing that vie for attention within democratic societies. This is the view the Commission takes. Now is the time to take a long, hard look at the Peelian principles and examine whether they can be usefully updated for the times in which we live. Peel's principles are in many respects a product of their times. For instance they take little account of modern concepts such as human rights. They make no reference, for example, to how best to organise policing in a world where crime routinely crosses national borders, or how to equip the police for the demands of a knowledge society, or how to think about police relations with other policing providers.

In short, the Commission believes that the original Peelian principles are necessary, but not sufficient to articulate a 21st century vision of effective and legitimate policing that can have some purchase on the world we inhabit today, or to set that vision apart from competing alternatives. We think that the task of applying the Peelian principles to the twenty-first century requires us to do more than simply re-state and defend them. Rather, we have to revise and extend them. We need a set of fully contemporary principles that can provide a coherent account of what policing can best look like today. The remainder of the introduction is devoted to this task.

Peelian Principles Today

In this report the Commission sets out the case for a revised and compelling vision of what British policing can become – and how policing can contribute to a better Britain. We offer a coherent, long-term model that is rooted in the Peelian tradition of British policing, but which seeks to apply Robert Peel’s founding principles to the challenges the police face today. This model of policing is one grounded in values that are widely shared among the British people and informed by good evidence of how the police can, with others, contribute to the creation of a safer, more cohesive and more just society.

We aim to create a police service that is professional, democratically accountable and which serves the common good. Our vision is of a police service with a social purpose that combines catching offenders with work to prevent crime and promote and maintain order in our communities. It means a service that listens closely to the demands of everyone while meeting the needs of victims and the most vulnerable in our society. This vision of policing is founded on eight key principles. These are listed in box two, and described below. In each case, we indicate how they build upon and extend the original Peelian principles.

Box 2: Peelian principles for today

1. The basic mission of the police is to improve the safety and well-being of the people by promoting measures to prevent crime, harm and disorder
2. The police must undertake their basic mission with the approval of, and in collaboration with, the public and other agencies.
3. The police must seek to carry out their tasks in ways that contribute to social cohesion and solidarity.
4. The police must treat all those with whom they come in to contact with fairness and respect.
5. The police must be answerable to law and democratically responsive to the people they serve.
6. The police must be organised to achieve the optimal balance between effectiveness, cost-efficiency, accountability and responsiveness.
7. All police work should be informed by the best available evidence.
8. Policing is undertaken by many providers, but it remains a public good.

1. **The basic mission of the police is to improve the safety and well-being of the people by promoting measures to prevent crime, harm and disorder:** Order, security and civil peace are the basic organising concerns of the police. A key component of the police role lies, and always will lie, in investigating crime and apprehending offenders. The police also have a significant part to play as one among a range of social institutions that prevent crime. However, dealing with crime forms one aspect of a wider police mandate that is concerned with the regulation of social conflict and management of order. In respect of these tasks, the police’s unique resource is the capacity, if required, to wield non-negotiable coercive force – though such force is to be used ‘only when the exercise of persuasion, advice and warning is found to be insufficient’. As such, the police have a vital civic role to play in sustaining conditions that enable

people to pursue their life projects and in ensuring equal access to the basic good of social order.

2. The police must undertake their basic mission with the approval of, and in collaboration with, the public and other agencies.

The police do not create order, they manage it. But they cannot do so alone. The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval and so far as possible the police should be representative of the communities they serve. The police must also act in partnership with other agencies. Crime and order are not matters that can be left to the police. Safe and just societies require the input of criminal justice agencies – prosecutors, courts, probation, prisons – with whom the police must collaborate. They also demand action from and partnership with other government agencies - education, health, social work, welfare, training, employment, housing and so on. Civil society organisations and citizens have an inescapable part to play in sustaining forms of informal social control on which formal policing depends and in the provision of vital public safety services. Good policing requires the police to foster and sustain collaboration in ways that galvanise social action against crime without either over-extending the reach of the police or overriding the purposes of other agencies.

3. The police must seek to carry out their tasks in ways that contribute to social cohesion and solidarity.

The police are both a minder and a reminder of community. Policing is one key institution through which members of a society express concern for one another and give institutional effect to that solidarity. This means that the varied tasks police officers undertake to control crime and manage order must be guided by recognition that the police are a means of repairing the trust that is breached by criminal harms. Police work needs to be conducted in ways that reinforce people's sense of secure belonging and their capacity to live together confidently with risk. Police resources must also track the distribution of criminal harm and be used to protect the most disadvantaged and vulnerable. Civic policing – and the wider criminal justice system of which it is a part - should undertake its necessary interventions in social life with the aim of leaving victims and communities better off as a result of that intervention.

4. The police must treat all those with whom they come in to contact with fairness and respect.

In a democracy it matters not only that the police control crime and maintain order, but also how they do so. Procedural fairness is an indispensable part of what it means to get the 'how' right. People's belief in the legitimacy of the police, and motivation to obey the law, depends greatly on how fairly they are treated during encounters with the police. People are also generally more concerned with the perceived fairness of such encounters – whether they 'had their say', and were treated with respect, by an impartial and open-minded officer – than with their outcomes. Every police-public interaction communicates a message about the police and what they stand for, and sends a signal to citizens about their membership of society and their place within it. These 'signals' have real (positive or negative) consequences for people's future willingness to trust and cooperate with the

police and for whether they think of the law as worthy of compliance because it represents moral values which they share. Treating people with fairness and dignity is thus a vital part of what effective and legitimate policing demands. It is a public good that can be supplied equally to all – at little cost. It is also a good whose benefits are experienced most intensely by individuals and groups whose sense of belonging is precarious and cannot be taken for granted. Procedural fairness should also inform the internal organisation of police forces – in terms of how officers and staff treat one another and are given a voice in decisions affecting their working lives.

5. The police must be answerable to law and democratically responsive to the people they serve.

Policing in a liberal democracy has to be transparent, accountable and responsive to the experiences and concerns of all. This requires that the police are subject to independent, impartial agencies of monitoring, oversight, inspection and redress – both official and unofficial. It demands that police work is carried out in accordance with the rule of law and basic human rights, and that enforcement mechanisms exist to protect these rights. It requires a regulatory framework that ensures minimum standards of delivery, fairness and coherence are sustained. It means that police officers have operational responsibility for their actions. But the police must not be counted solely among the ‘fixed’ rather than the ‘moving’ parts of the constitution. Police forces are public services that allocate scarce resources and choose between different priorities. These choices have real effects on the quality of people’s lives. Citizens thus have a legitimate stake in how strategic decisions are made and a reasonable expectation of being the authors as well as addressees of such decisions. Given this, mechanisms are required for ensuring that all those affected by policing have a voice in shaping priorities and practice. This can be done by electing individuals to a local political office responsible for establishing priorities and holding the police to account. In addition, it requires the existence of multiple settings in which affected parties can deliberate about/debate policing issues and how best to respond to them - whether through, for example, neighbourhood panels, citizen juries or participatory budgeting. Good policing depends upon the vitality and inclusiveness of these institutions of public engagement.

6. The police must be organised to achieve the optimal balance between effectiveness, cost-efficiency, accountability and responsiveness.

There is no single or ideal template for determining how best to organise policing. The police service needs to be organised in institutional arrangements that take full account of all relevant factors in play and the trade-offs that exist between them. Such factors include: changing patterns of criminal organisation and the propensity of criminal activity to flow across force boundaries and national borders (it no longer makes sense to tackle crime in one locality without reference to what is happening in other places); a requirement to deliver policing in ways that are cost-effective, avoid undue repetition of tasks and achieve necessary economies of scale; the imperative to ensure the effectiveness, accountability and responsiveness of policing units functioning at different scales; the capacity to deal with critical incidents, and the transaction costs and unintended consequences of ‘top-down’ reorganisation. The optimum mix of local, regional, national,

international and transnational police organisations must be determined with reference to these factors. Appropriate mechanisms of oversight, inspection, redress and democratic priority-setting are required at each level of operation.

7. All police work should be informed by the best available evidence.

Today the legitimacy of any public policy depends in part on being able to demonstrate that it is grounded in a reliable knowledge base. Police policies are no exception to this and nor should they be. Every police initiative can and should have to be justified in these terms. Police work must therefore be closely aligned – from the top of the organisation to the bottom – with evidence about what works to reduce crime and foster public security. Such evidence must assume a legitimate place among the range of considerations that properly inform police decision-making and become something to which officers routinely make reference. This demands a close and continuing relationship between the police and the producers and disseminators of such knowledge – in terms of training, career development, operational decision-making, priority-setting and horizon-scanning. Institutions are required which are able to foster the production, dissemination and public/expert discussion of relevant knowledge. Fair and effective policing needs an infrastructure of training, support and analysis to underpin and sustain it.

8. Policing is undertaken by many providers, but it remains a public good.

Policing is a public good and a core function of democratic government. It is not a tradable commodity and access to the goods that policing supplies - order and security - must not in a democracy be determined by people's willingness or ability to pay. Policing is not a public good in the technical sense of being non-excludable in its supply and non-rival in its consumption (like street lighting). It is a public good in the deeper sense of being connected to the idea that security is the elementary DNA of society – something that citizens prioritise and pursue in common even if they disagree on how this should be achieved. How policing is carried out is a sensitive indicator of how adequately any society attends to the security and well-being of all its members. This means that core frontline roles involving the use of warrantable powers should only be performed by the public police with direct and trusted lines of accountability. It does not mean that other policing tasks can only be carried out by the police. This has never been the case and it never will be. The private and third sectors have important and indispensable roles to play in reducing crime and providing security. But in this context, there is a vital public interest in shaping the overall pattern and coherence of policing services that has to be recognised and protected. The state must be the democratic anchor of plural policing provision. This requires regulatory processes that attend to the relation between criminal harm and the social distribution of policing; deliver accountable, transparent and cost-effective commissioning/procurement processes, and put in place the mechanism of effective monitoring, oversight and redress in respect of all organisations contracted to provide policing services or services for the police.

The Commission commends these revised Peelian principles as the basis from which to think about, and deliver, policing in ways which can meet the challenges faced by the police today. In the rest of this Report, we use these principles to spell out in greater detail our vision of a

democratic, professional police service committed to serving the common good, and to guide what we think is a coherent and attractive programme of police reform. It is a vision of policing grounded in values that are widely shared among British people and the best available evidence about how to deliver effective and legitimate policing.