



Devon & Cornwall
Police Authority

Strategic Plan

2008-2011

Introduction

This Plan

This Strategy Plan sets out a planning framework to guide the direction and activities of the Authority over the period of 2008 to 2011. The Plan should be read in conjunction with the Authority's Annual Business Plan.

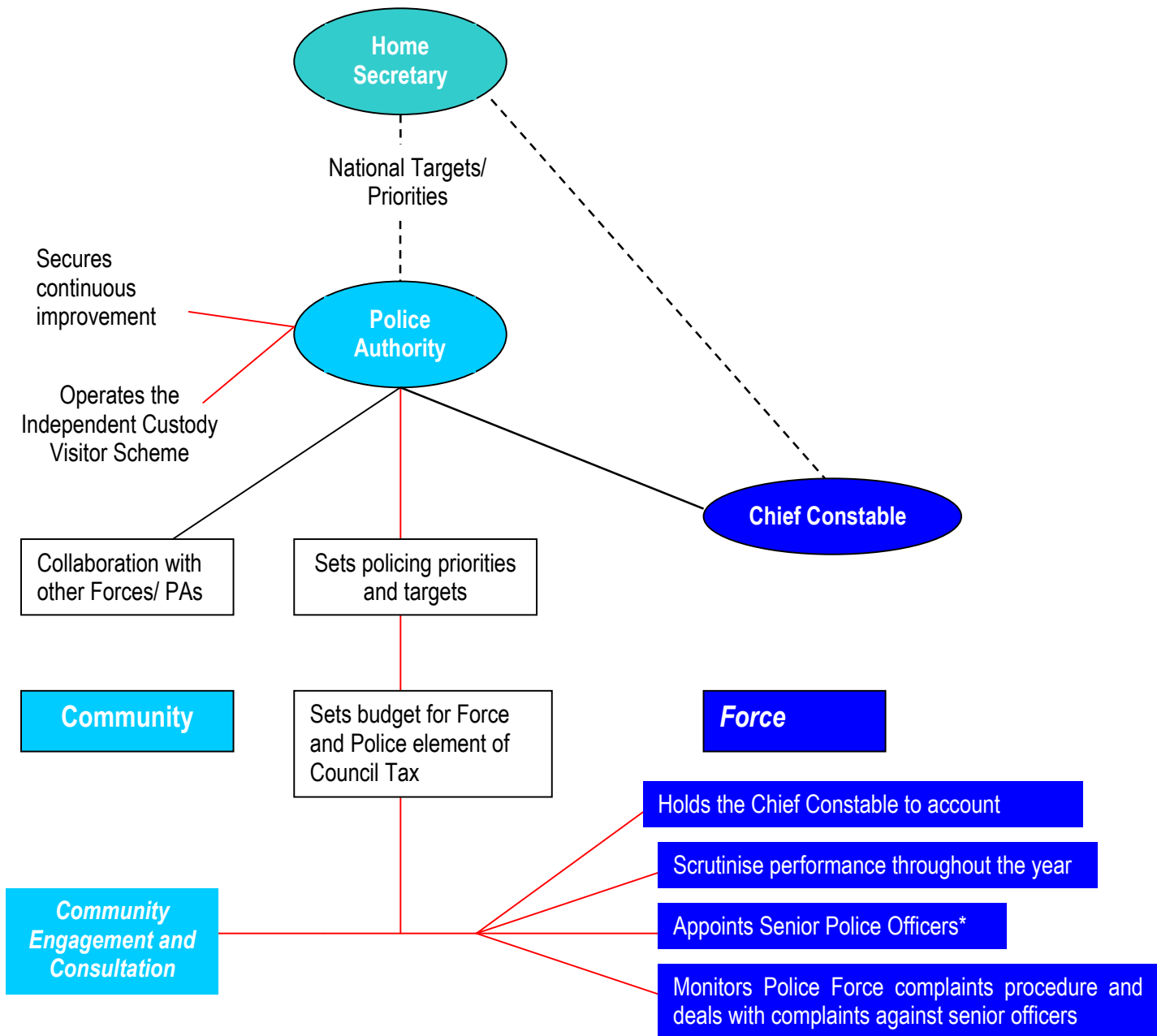
The Plan contains our vision and priorities or 'strategic objectives' for the future. It also includes some of the key actions we will pursue to achieve these objectives. Other actions may of course be identified through the action planning process that will follow the publication of this Plan.

Aims of the Plan

The aims of this Plan - and the planning process that has led to its production - are:

- To identify the key issues that we anticipate that the Police Authority will need to respond to over the next three years.
- To provide a new planning framework, including a vision, strategic objectives and actions, it will enable the Police Authority to work with the Constabulary, other partners and the local community to meet these challenges and provide the best possible policing service for the people of Devon, Cornwall, Plymouth, Torbay and the Isles of Scilly.
- To ensure the Police Authority is organised, and acts in a way, that enables it to satisfy its statutory responsibilities and 'add value' to policing in Devon, Cornwall, Plymouth, Torbay and the Isles of Scilly

This Plan has not of course been produced in isolation. It has been based on the views and aspirations of the people of Devon and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and the views and experience of Police Authority members and staff. The purpose and contents of this Plan are fully supported by the Police Authority and by the Chief Constable.



Policing in England and Wales operates within a tripartite structure. The elements of the structure are detailed below:

- Home Secretary responsible to Parliament for the overarching efficiency and effectiveness of the service as well as the maintenance of minimum service standards
- Police Authorities who set the strategic direction to ensure the provision of effective and efficient policing and consult with the public on policing matters
- Chief Constables who are responsible for the operational effectiveness of their Force

The Police Authority responsibilities are represented with red lines.

* Senior Officers refers to the Chief Constable, Deputy Chief Constable and the Assistant Chief Constables

The Authority's priorities for the future - a new strategic planning framework for the Police Authority

One of the main aims of this new planning process has been to identify key priorities or objectives for the Authority over the period of this Plan (2008/2011). These priorities must contribute towards the Authority's overall aim or 'vision' and will determine the individual practical actions that will be pursued to achieve this.

The Vision

The Vision Statement for the Police Authority is:

Endeavour to Ensure that the Community's Expectations for an Excellent Standard of Policing in Devon and Cornwall is delivered

Overall the Authority is keen to ensure that the Force will be customer focussed with all activity aimed at providing a high quality and consistent service to the public, whether it is dealing with serious crime or other matters which cause anxieties for our communities. The expectation is that the public will have confidence in the Force's ability to respond positively to their concerns because the Authority and Force will listen and engage with them and keep people informed of the services provided for them. Where appropriate the Force will actively engage in partnerships that facilitate the provision of an excellent service to the public and the delivery of clear operational outcomes.

The Authority firmly believes there is a need for police authorities to adopt a more 'strategic' approach to the way they do business and to manage their responsibilities in a more 'joined-up' way. This includes linking those key responsibilities - such as public consultation, budget and target setting, business improvement and performance management – that contribute to the strategic management of the Authority and Constabulary. It is the effective achievement of these tasks which will lead to the improvements in service delivery, its quality and the reassurance and satisfaction of communities across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Equally important, is the Authority's critical role in performance management and the belief that a planning process geared around a properly integrated 'strategic performance management system' is the best way of driving up performance and meeting organisational aims.

The Authority believes that it is only by managing its business in a more strategic way – and using performance management as a driver for this process – that the Authority can ensure it remains 'fit for purpose' in meeting the challenges of our role in the twenty-first century.

The Authority's Priorities

This vision is supported by seven priorities or 'strategic objectives' determined by the analysis carried out as part of our planning process. Six of these strategic objectives cover specific areas of activity or 'outcomes' from our work, whilst the seventh concerns the way the Authority organises itself to carry out this work.

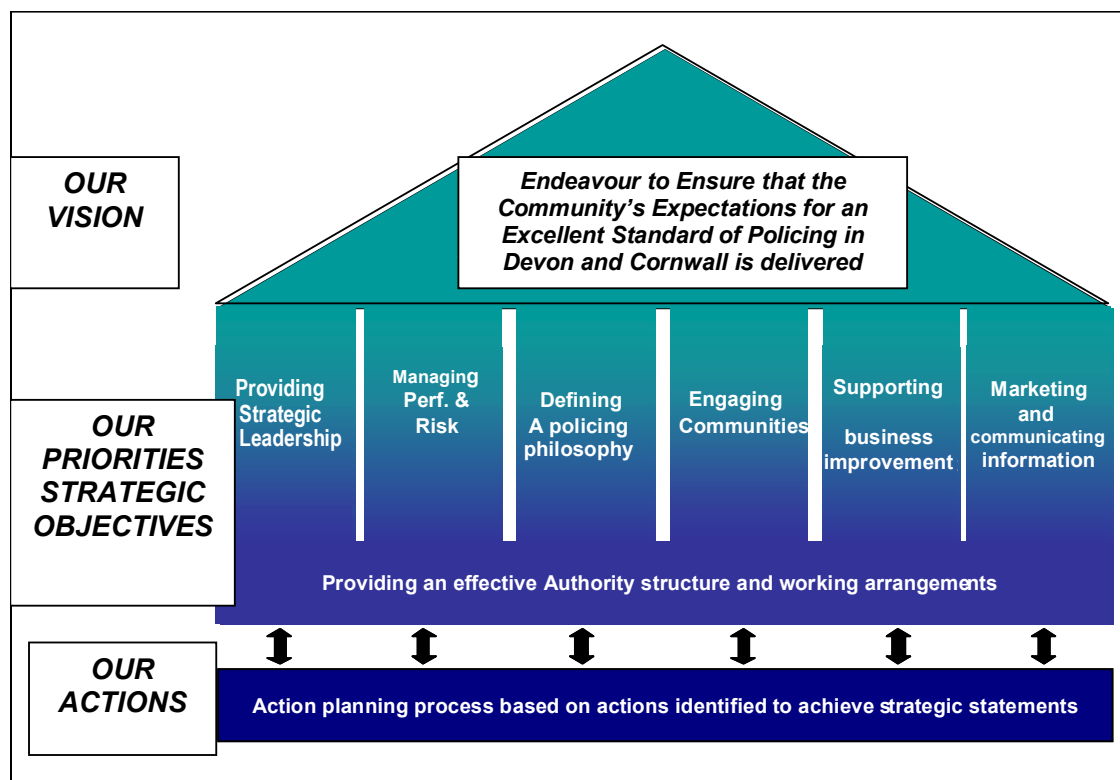
The seven priority areas are:

- Providing strategic leadership
- Managing performance and risk
- Defining a policing philosophy and style
- Engaging communities
- Supporting business improvement
- Marketing and communicating information
- Providing an effective Authority structure and working arrangements

The Action Plans

Each of these priorities is supported by a strategic statement and a series of actions. These actions will form the basis of the Authority's activities over the coming years. Specific responsibilities and timescales will be identified for each action and progress will be monitored on a regular basis. New actions will undoubtedly arise whilst others may be 'signed off' when completed.

This framework of objectives and actions and how they contribute to the Authority's mission is illustrated in the chart below.



The seven priorities are discussed in turn below. This includes a strategic statement for each and the key actions that have been identified at this stage.

PRIORITY 1 Providing Strategic Leadership

The Authority believes that it should play a key role in working with the Constabulary to provide leadership and direction to the Police service, and that this can only be achieved through the use of proper strategic management processes. In order to achieve this it is important that the Authority's strategic role is clearly defined and understood and that this is used to determine Member's involvement both within the Authority and in their working relationship with the Chief Constable and other Constabulary staff. This also requires clearly defined delegated responsibilities for the Chief Constable.

Linked to leadership it is important that the service to the public is not constrained by geographic and functional boundaries. The Force will therefore consist of the smallest practical number of BCUs and Delivery Units to facilitate effective and efficient service delivery to the public. Support provision to BCUs and Units will be streamlined and delivered from single structures to a professional common standard with Headquarters operating at the optimum size to deliver defined standards and services.

Staff development will be supported to ensure they have the skills to contribute fully within their role and to develop and maximise their potential. High performing staff will be selected to champion standards and support training, induction and continuous development. People from diverse backgrounds will be encouraged to work for and with the Authority and Force.

The Strategic Objective is:

***“To increase appropriate Member involvement in strategic management responsibilities and ensure the Chief Constable has the appropriate delegated authority for the day-to-day management and delivery of the policing service in Devon and Cornwall*”**

In order to achieve this the Authority will pursue the following actions:

- review and clarify members roles and their working relationships with the Constabulary to ensure sufficient emphasis is placed on their strategic management responsibilities;
- provide Members with appropriate training/re-fresher training to fulfil their strategic management role within the planning process.
- Keep under review the delegated authorities provided to the Chief Constable to ensure they provide sufficient freedoms and flexibility for the management and delivery of high quality policing on a day-to-day basis.
- ensure that the strategic planning and risk management processes - and their associated plans and reports – are used as the decision-making and control framework within the Constabulary and Authority.

PRIORITY 2 Managing improving performance and effective risk management.

We are determined to become a robust and genuinely '*performance driven Police Authority*', in which the pursuit of performance improvement 'drives' the Authority's business, which in turn, drives performance improvement within the Constabulary. This will require members to adopt a more rigorous and robust scrutiny role, especially for key performance issues, whilst at the same time adopting a more flexible 'lighter touch' for other issues, especially those more concerned with process than outcomes. This will also require a 'mature' working relationship between Members and senior Constabulary staff, in which robust challenge co-exists alongside joint working, based on a mutual understanding and appreciation of respective roles and a shared commitment to provide the best possible policing service for the community.

The Strategic Objective is:

To become a robust genuinely performance-driven Police Authority with a culture and flexibility that enables members to maximise their contribution towards improved policing performance in Devon and Cornwall

In order to achieve this the Authority will pursue the following actions:

- ensure recognition within the Police Authority and Constabulary that performance management and scrutiny represents a pivotal focus of the Authority's work, and that this is reflected in the structure and working practices of the Authority and in the establishment and maintenance of working relationships between members, officers and senior officers in the Constabulary;
- improve mechanisms for identifying and triggering performance and risk issues for scrutiny and ensuring the Police Authority is more proactive in setting the performance management agenda with the Constabulary;
- ensure understanding of the inter-relationships between performance and risk management and that Members recognise the importance of focusing on the 'big issues' in both of these perspectives;
- provide Members with training/re-fresher training on their roles and responsibilities, including access to local and national monitoring tools and databases;
- ensure the Police Authority has sufficient resources to have access to its own knowledge base and expertise for the analysis and comparison of performance data;
- review in close co-operation with the Chief Constable and clarify the roles and responsibilities of Members and officers for performance management at the sub-Authority level (i.e. BCUs and CDRP's) ensuring these are fully understood by all Members of the Authority and the Constabulary because achievement of this will help input and influence on this objective;

- Exercise a similar scrutiny role over key central departments and support services too.

PRIORITY 3 *Defining a policing philosophy and style*

The Authority believes the future policing style and philosophy in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles should be based firmly on a continuance of a traditional commitment to a policing style based in local communities and being responsive to local people's needs and expectations. This is being developed further through the Constabulary's roll-out of neighbourhood policing and the recruitment of Police Community Support Officers, (PCSOs) and other staff. As a result, the Authority will actively support and encourage the network of neighbourhood policing beats and neighbourhood teams to reflect the desired community based 'policing style' in Devon and Cornwall and the Isles over the coming years.

The priority will be to deliver a visible service to the public utilising the maximum number of staff in uniform – a mixture of regular officers, PCSOs and Specials.

An Estates strategy is being developed to provide a flexible capacity to meet evolving operational and support requirements ranging from operational hubs to public service points. The opportunity to develop shared facilities with other local service providers will be actively sought in support of the 'one stop shop' concept for public access to services and joint operational bases.

The Strategic Objective is:

“To encourage and support the Constabulary and partners in developing a neighbourhood policing style that further embeds community-based policing in the heart of local communities in Devon and Cornwall”

To do this we will:-

- ensure that neighbourhood policing is recognised and updated by the Constabulary, partners and the community as a continuance of our commitment to community-based policing in Devon and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.
- ensure that the Force has neighbourhood beats that reflect a 'best fit' structure, based on recognised community areas and defined policing needs;
- ensure that the Force is appropriately resourcing the Neighbourhood Teams and that they are maintained with the appropriate staffing mix;
- undertake surveys to assess whether communities understand the nature of these teams, their responsibilities, and how their communities relate to them

- ensure that the Force encourages neighbourhood teams to maintain a focus on improving police visibility and accessibility, adopting a local community problem solving approach, including the use of restorative justice where appropriate;
- receive regular up-dates on the mechanisms in place to monitor the performance of individual neighbourhood teams.

PRIORITY 4 *Ensuring Community engagement*

The Authority believes there remains considerable scope for improving community engagement within Devon and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly . This includes better ways of involving more local people in the consultation process and improvement in the impact that public views have on decision-making processes within the Authority and Constabulary, at both the strategic and local levels. At the strategic level, this means more use of information on public views and priorities within the planning and performance management processes, and at the local level, the need for continued demonstrable responsiveness to community concerns and issues. In both cases, there is scope for improved feedback to the public.

Our Strategic Objective is:

“To enhance consultative arrangements with the public and provide genuine opportunities for community engagement and involvement to ensure that public views are properly considered within the strategic and local decision-making processes of the Police Authority and Constabulary”

In order to achieve the Authority will pursue the following actions:

- produce a clearly defined strategy for improving community engagement and consultation, setting out the respective Police Authority and Constabulary roles and responsibilities;
- ensure the results of all public consultation exercises are fed into the Authority’s planning and performance management frameworks as appropriate;
- improve feedback to those consulted on the outcome of consultation exercises and on the Authority/Constabulary’s response to issues and concerns raised by the public;
- ensure that lessons are learnt from pilot schemes and initiatives carried out in other parts of the country designed, to improve community consultation and engagement and incorporate ‘best practice’ within the community engagement strategy;
- ensure that neighbourhood policing teams pursue wherever possible local opportunities to improve community engagement and involvement, including opportunities to enhance trust, understanding and co-operation between the police service and local communities.

PRIORITY5 *Supporting continuous business improvement*

The Authority recognises that the pressure for further efficiency savings is unlikely to diminish in the future and that increased use of collaboration and shared services is likely to represent one of the few remaining areas for possible savings. The Force is committed to fully engaging with the regional collaboration programme and to actively exploring shared services opportunities with both private and public sector partners. Support provision will be provided by the most appropriate internal or external source.

The Authority is fully committed to contributing towards the business improvement process, either by providing direct support to the Constabulary on major strategic change projects, and/or by providing a scrutiny role on the realisation of business benefits from major projects.

The Strategic Objective is:

“To make a significant contribution towards the achievement of efficiency savings by supporting the Chief Constable in pursuing strategic improvement opportunities, including shared services and other strategic partnership arrangements and by scrutinising the realisation of business benefits from major change projects”

In order to achieve the Authority will pursue the following actions:

- ensure the Police Authority’s own working practices are efficient and effective through better targeting of activity, reduced bureaucracy and more timely decision making;
- introduce the use of ‘Task and Finish’ Groups (or similar) for business improvement projects wherever appropriate;
- more robust scrutiny of major strategic change projects carried out by the Constabulary, concentrating specifically on the extent to which forecast business benefits have been realised;
- support strategic business change projects within the Constabulary by acting as a ‘critical friend’ and/by providing other support and assistance as appropriate;
- take a strategic lead, working with the Constabulary, on any proposed shared service or strategic partnership arrangement that appears to provide significant and achievable business benefits to Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

PRIORITY 6 *Marketing and communicating information*

The Authority recognises the importance of good communication both between members and with the Constabulary and the need to improve public awareness of the Authority and its role, including information about police activity and performance. The Authority recognises that providing effective marketing and communication is partly about having the capacity to access professional skills and expertise. However, it also requires clear and consistent policies in communicating key messages and good working practices in dealing with the media and members of the public. The development of open communication methods will also facilitate and value staff contributing ideas and providing open and honest feedback.

The Strategic Objective is:

“To raise the public profile of the Authority and its Members through more effective marketing and communications activities and to ensure good communications are maintained both between Members and between Members and the Constabulary”

In order to achieve this the Authority will pursue the following actions:

- ensure the Authority has the capacity to access professional marketing and communications skills and expertise when required;
- ensure that Members recognise the need to promote agreed ‘key messages’ in dealings with the media and the public etc
- produce a Marketing and Communications Strategy for the Authority which sets out agreed policies and protocols to be followed when dealing with marketing and communication issues, especially when liaising with the media;

PRIORITY 7 *Providing an effective Authority structure and working arrangements*

This is, arguably, the most immediate objective as it will largely determine our success in meeting the other priorities. One of the key aims of this new planning process is to ensure that Authority Members – both individually and collectively – are able to make the best possible contribution to policing in Devon and Cornwall. In order to achieve this it is essential that the Authority’s structure and working practices are ‘fit for purpose’ in dealing with the demands now being made and in the future.

The Authority has already recognised that there is a need to review how it carries out its business. This is partly to ensure that it is sufficiently responsive in terms of decision-making processes but also to balance the need for growing specialisation – due to the growing complexity of the Authority’s role. At the same time the Authority needs to ensure that all Members are fully involved

and aware of the Authority's business. There are also growing pressures to exercise an effective scrutiny role – at both the Force and BCU level. This should be aimed at improving both performance and value for money, and meeting the ongoing requirements for public consultation and community engagement.

A critical challenge is to utilise the skills and experience of individual Members fully and to ensure that all Members are able to make a maximum commitment and contribution to the work of the Authority. The Authority firmly believes that it needs to provide mechanisms for holding Members to account for their contribution in their role.

There is also a need to ensure that the Authority's support structure has sufficient capacity and resilience to meet the growing demands being made upon it. This is likely to give rise to a need for increased support resources and specialist expertise. Without this capacity the Authority will be less likely to meet the expectations of the anticipated inspection regime which will soon apply to Police Authorities.

The Strategic Objective is:

“To ensure the Authority has an effective structure, sound and clear working practices and appropriate staff resources to meet the demands being made upon it and to make the best possible contribution towards policing in Devon and Cornwall”.

In order to achieve this the Authority will pursue the following actions:

- review and clarify the current committee structure in the light of the possible need for an 'executive' or 'management group' together with more specific functional performance groups;
- ensure the impact of BCU performance meetings is reflected in any new structure, working practices and member responsibilities;
- carry out a skills audit of Members and provide training to meet any identified gaps;
- review the level of staff support resources in the light of growing demands and any new requirements resulting from changes in the Authority's structure and working practices;
- ensure the responsibilities and priorities contained in this Plan are used to determine a structure and working practices for the Authority that best meet these requirements
- a decision making process that will take account of, and whenever possible support, local economic and environmental issues

The next steps – making it happen

This Plan has set out a planning framework that we believe will help the Authority and the Constabulary meet the challenges of the years ahead and to continue to provide a policing service

that meets the needs and aspirations of the people of Devon and Cornwall. The Plan sets down the actions proposed by the Police Authority.

Any Plan is, however, only as good as the processes that led to its formulation and – more importantly – the processes that are put in place to implement the actions contained within it. Similarly, no Plan can be set in stone and it can only be effective if there are proper mechanisms for reviewing and revising the contents according to changing circumstances.

As a result, this Plan represents the start of the planning process rather than the end. The strategic objectives and proposed actions will now form the basis of further work by the Authority and Constabulary to identify how these can be implemented. These will be translated into Action Plans identifying individual responsibilities and timescales.

The Plan will also be updated on an annual basis, actions deleted as they are completed and new actions added as required.

Although a lot of work has already gone into the preparation of this Plan, it is clear that if the Authority is to achieve what it has set out to do, the real hard work starts now.