

## **Review of Information Sharing**

1. In December 2001 the then District Commander Kevin Pitt and the Council's Chief Executive George Garlick signed an Information Sharing Protocol in line with recommendations in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Section 14 of this protocol states:
  - 'Any partner may make suggestions for amendments to the protocol at any time'
  - To enable partners to exchange views prior to changes being made it is suggested that such changes should be discussed at the appropriate forum'
2. This protocol remained in place without review until June 2006 when we were advised that Cleveland Police were reviewing all Information Protocols to ensure that they were operating in line with MOPI guidance.
3. MOPI (Management of Police Information) was drawn up in 2006 in part in response to recommendations in the Bichard Inquiry which followed the Soham (Ian Huntley) murders. Sir Michael Bichard had called for a code of practice to be produced covering record creation, review, retention, deletion and information sharing.
4. As a result of this a draft protocol covering information sharing between RSLs and Cleveland Police was sent to the Community Safety section in July 2006 to be signed by the Council's Chief Executive. There were a number of errors in the protocol that were fed back to the protocol author in Information Security but no further draft was received.
5. In August 2006 the Cleveland Police Information Security Officer advised us that a general review of third party access across the force area would commence in Stockton. It was not clear how long the review would take but we were assured that we would receive a copy of the outcome. To date no further information has been received.
6. During this time the level of access to police information has reduced and is not consistent across the force with Hartlepool, Middlesbrough and Redcar community safety analysts all having access to more police IT systems than that enjoyed by our analyst.
7. The issue of information sharing has been raised by all CDRP leads in the Cleveland Force area with Government Office for the North East and in response to this they will be commissioning a consultant to look at the sharing of personal data across the whole region. The remit of the

consultant will be to identify best practice in the region, currently demonstrated in the Northumbria force area, and also barriers to the sharing of personal data.

8. Members will be aware that under the Police and Justice Act 2006 we are required to produce a yearly Partnership Strategic Assessment that will influence our operational activity. As discussed in agenda item number 14 it is recommended that this should be done using Victim, Offender and Location as the template our ability to do this without access to appropriate and relevant personal data is hampered.
9. A memo was sent from the Neighbourhood Policing Programme Manager to the information security section of Cleveland Police on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2008. The memo raises concerns expressed by CDRP leads about information sharing and highlights that the HMIC inspection of Neighbourhood Policing (April 2007) identified this as an area for improvement. This memo and a draft protocol were passed on to Stockton on the 15<sup>th</sup> July. The draft protocol is attached at Appendix 1.
10. The Community Safety Manager and the Community Safety Analyst have reviewed the protocol and make the following suggestions:
  - a) Under 1.1 add 'the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area'. (Amendment to the Crime and Disorder Act Section 17 from the Police and Justice Act 2006)
  - b) We need to incorporate the requirement to produce a Partnership Strategic Assessment into point 2.1.
  - c) At 4.1 add the Police and Justice Act 2006.
  - c) Page 6 the term Data would be better than Evidence.
  - d) Under 5.2 we would suggest adding:
    - Personal data for use by CDRP analysts to enable them to compile Partnership Strategic Assessments and other intelligence products as requested by partnership tasking groups.
  - e) The Landlord Liaison Scheme provides information to landlords to enable them to house prospective tenants appropriately. Due to restrictions introduced by Cleveland Police Information Security, since July 2006 we have been unable to provide this service to private landlords in Stockton however the service continues to be provided in Middlesbrough. A further restriction was put into place in Stockton only allowing a 'crime check' to be carried out on behalf of Registered Social Landlords when we have produced a business case for each request. A Choice Based Letting scheme is being proposed across the

Tees Valley initially for social housing. As part of this process such requests will be made for all prospective tenants accessing housing via this scheme. An aim of the scheme is to roll it out to the private rented sector. Under 5.3.1 a further restriction is proposed that information cannot be passed to a third party without the written consent of the agency providing the data. We believe that this clause will further restrict our ability to provide the Landlord Liaison Scheme in a timely fashion and inhibit the development of the Choice Based Letting scheme and we suggest that this point should be removed or amended to facilitate rather than restrict this process.

- e) At 5.4 it is suggested that the Single Point of Contact for the partnership should be the Community Safety Manager.
- f) At 5.5 it is stipulated that 'all requests for information must be made in writing on the appropriate form...' Requests cannot be made by fax and should not be via e mail. This will make the process very time consuming and will adversely affect operational activity therefore we would suggest that this is reconsidered and that an option to carry out this function within the district is considered.
- g) We welcome the retention of the information previously used in clause 14 of our original agreement, now shown at point 9.

11. Members are asked to:

- a) Consider the draft protocol attached at Appendix 1 and how it affects our ability to prepare the Partnership Strategic Assessment, other partnership intelligence products and operational activity.
- b) Endorse the proposal that the Community Safety Manager should be the Single Point of Contact for reviews to the Information Sharing Protocol.
- c) Consider and comment on the suggestions made to the protocol and endorse a partnership response to the Neighbourhood Policing Programme Manager.

Community Safety Manager  
31<sup>st</sup> July 2008