



23rd March 2010

**Dear Local Authority Chief Executives, Chief Constables/Commissioners, Chairs of Police Authorities and Chairs of Community Safety Partnerships,**

## **SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN DEALING WITH ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND CRIME**

Making people feel safe and confident in their communities is a priority we all share. It can only be addressed successfully through strong local partnership working – particularly between local authorities and the police. That is why (building on the recent letters from David Hanson to the police about performance management on public confidence) we are writing to you today to set out our commitment to providing a strong and co-ordinated improvement offer for places and partnerships which you can access to drive this agenda locally.

Nationally the Government has set a target to improve public confidence so that by 2012 60 per cent of people are confident that the police and local councils are dealing with the crime and antisocial behaviour issues that matter locally. This is measured at Police Force level through the British Crime Survey. Individual police forces have also been set targets to improve public confidence based on the British Crime Survey measure. Good progress in this area has already been made with an increase to 50% nationally. Locally, it is pleasing that 80% of local partnerships have included a confidence related target in their Local Area Agreement. The performance of partnerships is assessed through Comprehensive Area Assessment.

To drive delivery of the confidence target, local areas may now want to consider how they can innovatively build on their current arrangements to meet the partnership challenge. To help support this, we are committed to ensuring the way in which we provide support is efficient and effective, so that you can be sure you get the right support at the right time. To help you improve public confidence we have drawn together in the attached annex<sup>1</sup> the improvement support that is available from us. Key aspects of this for partners and partnerships include:

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<sup>1</sup> A similar annex was also attached in the letter from David Hanson to Chief Constables/Commissioners and Chairs of Police Authorities on 3<sup>rd</sup> February.

- Support from a range of improvement bodies. This includes support from the Improvement and Development Agency, National Policing Improvement Agency, Regional Improvement & Efficiency Partnerships and learning from the Local Innovation Scheme theme on public confidence. In line with the Local Performance Framework, the intention is that this should be a locally led approach enabling you to agree your support needs and ensure they are shaped around your particular local circumstances.
- Central Support to Community Safety Partnerships from the Home Office and Government Offices. Whilst partnerships can and should access, and organise support locally, central support will also be made available through the Home Office's CoMPAsS<sup>2</sup> process for any partnerships that might benefit from additional assistance in meeting their confidence targets.

In addition, the Home Office has supported police forces to carry out local confidence surveys that provide data at Community Safety Partnership level. The first set of data from these surveys is now on police force websites. All of these surveys must contain the question on public confidence and will therefore provide you with data on a quarterly basis that will supplement data from the Place Survey.

Tackling anti-social behaviour is of course central to increasing public confidence in local partnerships. All Community Safety Partnerships have been challenged to set and publicise minimum standards of service on anti-social behaviour and we are grateful to the vast majority who now have them in place. Following this challenge, a further 'public offer' was set out on 9<sup>th</sup> March to meet the public's expectation that complaints about anti-social behaviour will be dealt with speedily and professionally. Building on existing good practice, partnership agencies under these minimum standards should respond to all anti-social behaviour reports within 24 hours; every victim of anti-social behaviour should be given the name of the caseworker dealing with the incident; a case review between victim and caseworker should take place at least monthly; and monthly anti-social behaviour community meetings should also take place. Many of these commitments grow out of the policing pledge approach for the police, and partnerships have flexibility to decide how to meet these locally.

We are continuing to offer a range of support to partnerships to deliver minimum standards and respond to local anti-social behaviour challenges:

- Training events in every region aimed at practitioners and residents to raise awareness of tools and powers and allow them to come together to discuss collective solutions to anti-social behaviour problems;
- More intensive support and funding available to those areas that have high perceptions of anti-social behaviour and/or which have made tackling anti-social behaviour a priority in their Local Area Agreement
- Leafleting in targeted areas to raise public awareness of where to go and get help for anti-social behaviour problems locally.

The *Justice Seen, Justice Done* programme also forms a key part of our strategy to build public confidence in the criminal justice system. Louise Casey will shortly send out a

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<sup>2</sup> CoMPAsS stands for Coordinated Management of PSA Analysis and Support. More information on CoMPAsS is contained in The New Performance Landscape for Crime and Policing - a description of the crime and policing performance management landscape following the 2008 Policing Green Paper

series of fact sheets summarising evidence and local practice from the programme.

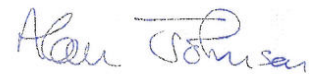
As we mentioned in our recent letter about the *Safe and Confident Neighbourhoods Strategy*, keeping neighbourhoods safe and confident is crucial in driving strong and prosperous communities. It is essential that local authorities, the police and the public work together to deliver this vision. We have already seen a great deal of good work taking place to improve public confidence, and we strongly encourage you to maintain the good progress being made and thank you for your continued support and co-operation on this extremely important agenda.

We are copying this letter to Regional Improvement & Efficiency Partnerships, the Improvement & Development Agency, the National Policing Improvement Agency, Audit Commission, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, and Government Offices.

Yours sincerely



**JOHN DENHAM**



**ALAN JOHNSON**