Police Performance Management: Practical Guidance for Police Authorities

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This guide has been produced by the Home Office Police Standards Unit and the Association of Police Authorities with the help of PA Consulting. We are very grateful for the contributions provided by all police authorities and other contributors during the development of this guidance.
Foreword

Police performance makes headline news: it affects people’s daily lives. There are many stakeholders in police performance, but the most important are those served by police forces: the local people themselves. Police authorities, as the representatives of local communities, have responsibility to hold the chief officer to account for policing delivery, on behalf of their communities. Police authorities need to satisfy themselves that the chief officer is delivering an efficient and effective service to the public.

Following performance management principles allows police authorities and forces to continuously improve the service that is provided to local people. This guidance (and its shorter companion reference guide) has been produced to assist police authorities to understand and develop their role – which is complementary to that of the force – in ensuring an effective police performance management regime.

The guide is structured around ten hallmarks of effective performance management developed from research that involved all police authorities. The guide includes case studies and examples provided by police authorities to illustrate the hallmarks in good practice. Commitment to achieving the standards conveyed in the hallmarks will make a significant contribution to the effectiveness of police authorities in fulfilling their important role in police performance management. The guide is intended to form a comprehensive repository of good practice. Authorities will want to prioritise their efforts and focus on the parts of the guidance that will be of greatest benefit to them, and the self-assessment section at the end of the document should help here.

Government plans to restructure the police service are likely to bring significant changes and this guidance is intended to help add value to the new police structures we are likely to see as a result. In particular, the hallmarks and principles in the main guide and the self-assessment section in the appendices will be a useful reference when considering the types of performance management arrangements needed by strategic police authorities in their oversight of strategic police forces.

We are very grateful to all those within police authorities, police forces and our other stakeholder organisations for their support and contributions to this guide, and hope that it will be of practical use to police authority members and officers both now and in the future.

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Hallmarks of effective performance management by police authorities

1. The authority leads in setting policing priorities and targets, and sets the agenda for monitoring delivery (section 2.1.3)

2. Performance management coverage is comprehensive. The authority considers the performance of all the functions of the force (section 2.2.3)

3. The authority is engaged in working with partners to influence delivery on community priorities (section 2.5)

4. Members understand their performance management role and what they need to do to be able to fulfil it (section 3.2.1)

5. Members have the appropriate level of professional expertise available within the authority to support them (section 3.3.1)

6. Authority members and officers are supportive but challenging in their key relationship with the chief officer. This key relationship enables the authority to work with the force without becoming too close to it (section 3.4.1)

7. Members lead the review of performance through effective questioning and rigorous follow-up during meetings with the force (section 4.1)

8. The authority sets aside adequate time for the consideration of performance and makes best use of that time through focus and preparation (section 4.2)

9. The authority understands its performance information and uses it as a tool for scrutinising and managing performance (section 5.1)

10. The authority requests and receives timely, accurate and relevant performance data, analysis and information (section 5.3)
1. Introduction

The purpose of this guidance is to distil learning on the police authority role in police performance management. It is intended to inform all police authority members and officers, although much of the detail will be of most interest to those with primary responsibilities in the performance management side of authority business. The guide aims to combine detail on the key principles of the authority role with practical ideas and tips for carrying out the authority’s performance management role effectively.

The guide has been produced by the Association of Police Authorities and the Home Office Police Standards Unit with the help of PA Consulting. The guide is evidence-based: it builds on surveys of authority members and officers, workshops, and visits to a number of authorities (which included interviews with key authority members and officers, discussions with force representatives, and observations of meetings). Each of the 43 authorities in England and Wales contributed to the work in some way. The guide has also been reviewed by the Association of Chief Police Officers and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary.

The guide is split into six separate sections which are colour-coded for ease of reference:

- The first section (chapter 2) describes what the role of police authorities is in police performance management
- The following three sections describe how authorities go about fulfilling their role by people and relationships (chapter 3), structures and processes (chapter 4), and data, analysis and reporting (chapter 5)
- The final section (appendices A to F) provides detailed descriptions and other information to supplement the main chapters. The final appendix (G) is a self-assessment section, which authorities can use to help see which parts of the guidance might be of most relevance or help to them.

Each of the main sections contain:

- **Hallmarks** of effective practice for authorities in performance management. There are ten of these in total, which summarise the key aspects of the authority role in performance management that are explored in the guide; they flow from the good practice that was collected during the research for this guidance. The same research highlighted that most authorities do not exhibit all of these hallmarks, and that some authorities do not exhibit several of them. The hallmarks provide a quick way for authorities to check whether they are covering all the essential aspects of their performance management role, and to target their ongoing development accordingly
- **Case studies** and **examples** from authorities, which illustrate the application of some of the principles that are outlined
- **Checklists** and **advantages and disadvantages** of different ways of working.
2. Performance management: why police authorities?

Police performance makes headline news: it affects people’s daily lives. There are many stakeholders in police performance, but the most important are those served by police forces: the local people themselves. Police authorities, as the representatives of the local communities, have a wide role in securing an efficient and effective police service, and performance management goes to the heart of police authorities’ purpose.

This chapter sets out what is meant by performance management in this guidance, and the authorities’ role in it. The rest of this guidance focuses on the how – practical ways authorities can and should go about fulfilling that role, developing their capability and relationship with forces, and learning from the experiences of their peers.

2.1 Police performance management

2.1.1 What do we mean by police performance?

The police have a key role within society in tackling crime and ensuring community safety. They are one of the most fundamental and recognisable service providers in our local communities, and their responsibilities extend across a very broad range of activities. Just a few of the things for which we rely on the police include:

- Preventing crime of all types, from shoplifting to fraud
- Catching criminals and helping see that they are brought to justice
- Disrupting organised criminal groups and tackling cross-border criminality
- Providing reassurance (e.g. through a visible police presence) and helping reduce the fear of crime
- Promoting public safety (e.g. through stopping dangerous drivers or managing public disorder and anti-social behaviour).

Police performance in its simplest form just means how well the police carry out and deliver the wide variety of things for which they have responsibility. “Performance” does not mean “performance indicators” (i.e. numbers and statistics), although this is a common assumption – for example when people equate simple crime statistics with police performance. Performance indicators (defined in section 2.2 below) merely help us examine what performance actually is, and may not cover all of the areas for which the police are responsible, unless they have been specifically put in place.

2.1.2 What do we mean by performance management?

Performance management is the practice of using information about past and current performance, and the factors that might affect future performance, to decide which actions to take to make that future performance better than it might otherwise be. It can be helpful to see performance management as a cyclical process, which involves at its most basic level:

- Setting priorities and planning
• Quantifying expectations for the level of performance that should be seen through delivery of the plan (i.e. agreeing targets)
• Monitoring delivery, in terms of both progress against delivery of the plan and actual results that are seen
• Reviewing and learning from the progress that has been made, and feeding this information into the next cycle to inform the next set of priorities.

Successful performance management is dependent on:

• Performance **measurement** – the collection of data about performance, and the processing of this information into a usable form (e.g. as performance indicators)
• Performance **monitoring** – examining the output of performance measurement in order to make judgements about the level of performance (e.g. is performance getting better or worse?; is it worse or better than what we would expect?)

Successful performance **management** builds on the output of performance measurement and monitoring: decisions and actions are taken as a result of the description of performance that is yielded by these two steps.

**Performance management is important because it goes to the heart of how resources are used.** Normally the demands on a service (i.e. outcomes that the users want) will exceed the resources that are available to deliver them. This means that choices must be made about what things will be done, how things will be done, when things will be done, how well things will be done, what things will not be done and when things will stop being done. The consequence of the choices that must be made are that resources can be used inefficiently, ineffectively or unequitably if an organisation is not very careful. Following performance management principles helps an organisation make better choices, because decisions around the use of resources are based on evidence and feedback.

Performance management can and should operate at every level – from an individual taking actions to improve the way they do their job, through teams focusing their effort to best effect, all the way to an organisation taking steps to improve the delivery of the high-level outcomes that it wants.
2.1.3 What is the role of police authorities in police performance management?

This section sets out the role of the police authority in performance management, and the police force’s role and why it is different. This section also defines some terminology used in describing the police authority’s role.

Police authorities have a role in the overall performance management of force activity. Police authorities are required by statute to:

- Secure the maintenance of an efficient and effective police service
- Achieve continuous improvements in policing performance
- Obtain the views of local people on policing matters.

(A description of some of the key current statutory duties and responsibilities of police authorities is provided in appendix B.)

Police authorities are therefore key stakeholders in the management of police performance. However, the authority role is not to repeat or replicate the in-force performance management regime: authorities do not directly manage police resources at an operational level.

Over recent years, many forces have made considerable progress in establishing performance management structures and processes and in developing a culture focused on performance. The chief officer\(^1\) leads the force’s internal performance management arrangements, and, together with the rest of the command team, is central to the performance management of the force. This guidance is for police authorities, and does not attempt to provide guidance on the internal performance management of police forces, although in many of the areas discussed in this document the force too has an essential role in managing performance.\(^2\) (Police authorities will also need to be satisfied that forces’ performance management arrangements are fit for purpose.)

The police authority adds value to its communities by ensuring that the force is operating efficiently and effectively, satisfying itself that:

- Police resources are being directed to address the issues of greatest concern or importance (i.e. priorities determined by local consultation and political imperative as well as by operational considerations) in a balanced way
- Once resources are directed towards the issues of concern (i.e. priorities), that they are helping to achieve desirable results (outputs and outcomes) and that these results are being achieved by both efficient and ethical means.

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1 This guidance will use the term “chief officer” to refer to the commissioners of the Metropolitan Police Service and City of London Police, and the chief constables of other forces.

2 For guidance on the force’s role and developing performance management within forces, please see Managing Police Performance: A Practical Guide to Performance Management, produced by the Police Standards Unit and partners, available on the Home Office police website http://www.police.homeoffice.gov.uk
The way in which the authority carries out these responsibilities should also add value to the force. The authority has an active role in police performance management.

**The overall authority role in police performance management is therefore:**

- **Planning and setting priorities and targets (enshrined in the Local Policing Plan):**
  - Consulting with the public on policing matters
  - Co-ordinating partner agency contributions to policing priorities
  - Considering how the Home Secretary’s national policing priorities should be applied to the local force
  - Determining local priorities, and setting performance targets and the budget to match.

- Monitoring performance against the policing plan (see the definition of performance monitoring in section 2.1.2 above) and ensuring that the force is managing performance on a day-to-day basis, so as to ensure delivery:
  - Regularly reviewing force performance against its commitments
  - Using information about performance to ask questions of the force to find out how and why that level of performance was achieved
  - Using the performance information and answers from the force to come to conclusions about the efficiency and effectiveness of an aspect of policing
  - Identifying and praising good performance and encouraging the sharing of good practice across the force and with other forces
  - Requiring the force to come up with solutions for improving performance in areas of priority
  - Monitoring external performance information on the force [e.g. from Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary, HMIC, or the Police Standards Unit, PSU] and asking for support if necessary

- **Learning, consultation and feedback:**
  - Reporting back to the public on achievement against the annual local policing plan
  - Taking forward the learning and experience from one performance cycle (year) into the next, to inform future policing priorities and planning.

Some people take the view that the authority role extends only to **performance monitoring**. However, while performance monitoring (as defined in section 2.1.2) is something that the authority does do, its role and activity clearly extends beyond this to planning, identifying and setting priorities, target setting, ensuring delivery of the policing plan, and consulting with and reporting back to communities. The authority monitors performance in order to ensure that the force is managing performance and to inform future priorities – i.e. performance monitoring is not an end in itself, but a means to an end.

The different and complementary roles of the authority and the force, and how they fit into the police performance management cycle operating at force level, are highlighted in the diagram overleaf. This broad role of police authorities in...
police performance management is enshrined in our first hallmark, and explored in subsequent sections. The authority and force both have key roles to play in the management of performance, but the authority must ensure that its priorities (those of the people that it represents) are addressed, and therefore it must show leadership in the planning and monitoring processes.

**Hallmark 1**

The authority leads in setting policing priorities and targets, and sets the agenda for monitoring delivery

The police authority also has a key role in appointing chief officers and is also involved in the appraisal of the chief officer. These activities are also linked to the role of the authority in the management of force performance and are outlined in section 3.5 below.
Terminology surrounding the police authority role in performance management

Different people have different views about whether police authorities “do” performance management. As illustrated above, although the authority is not of course involved in the direct management of the force, and therefore in ongoing operational performance management, it does have a key role to play in performance management in the broadest sense – the overall cycle of performance management at force level. It is in this sense that the term “performance management” is used in this guidance.

Other terms are sometimes used to describe the police authority’s role in managing performance, and they are used inconsistently, so the definitions followed in this guidance are given in the table below.

| Scrutiny of performance is frequently used in two senses: |
| Holding the chief officer to account is another concept that is used frequently without an agreed definition of what it means in terms of authority activity. |
| The term critical friend is also used to describe the authority’s role: the authority acts as a critical friend to the police force. |
| • Scrutinising performance is often used to mean the same as monitoring: it has the sense of examining performance in detail |
| • In the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) and the Greater Manchester Police Authority (GMPA), a scrutiny is an authority-led project or investigation into a theme or area of policing that includes investigating the wider implications of the topic for the community and partner agencies. Scrutinies at the MPA and GMPA have included Stop and Search, Rape Investigation and Victim Care. |
| • Reviewing the force’s achievements in agreed areas of performance |
| • Requiring the chief officer to account for any areas where performance is not meeting targets or is lower than expected, and requesting solutions for improving poor performance. |
| • In the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) and the Greater Manchester Police Authority (GMPA), a scrutiny is an authority-led project or investigation into a theme or area of policing that includes investigating the wider implications of the topic for the community and partner agencies. Scrutinies at the MPA and GMPA have included Stop and Search, Rape Investigation and Victim Care. |
| Authorities with very different approaches all use the term to describe themselves. It is more useful to describe what authorities that are effective at performance management can and should do. |
| Instead of using the term critical friend, this guidance aims to set out the role of the authority in terms of activities. |
2.2 Planning, setting priorities and target setting

Effective planning and priority setting form the foundation of the police authority role in performance management. A policing plan that provides for the priorities of local communities, balanced against all the other considerations to which the authority must give weight, is the basis for the authority ensuring delivery of a police service that meets the needs of its communities. Drafting the local policing plan is the statutory responsibility of the chief officer, with approval resting with the police authority, and so authorities and forces will need to work closely during this stage of the performance management cycle. The authority needs to ensure that it is satisfied with the local policing plan as drafted by the chief officer, as the rest of the performance management cycle is based on and flows from it.

Guidance on drafting the local policing plan is available on the Home Office website [see appendix E]. The current guidance sets the local policing plan within the context of Best Value, and includes both statutory and non-statutory guidance for authorities.

During the planning process, the authority needs to consider a range of priorities and viewpoints, and ensure that the local policing plan takes account of them all. They include:

- National strategic policing priorities (issues of concern nationally that will be common to all force areas, albeit to different degrees)
- Local policing priorities (issues of specific concern to the local force area)
- Partner policing priorities (issues of specific concern to policing partners – this is described in more detail in section 2.5 below)
- Operational needs, as determined by the force (the force will use the National Intelligence Model (NIM) to inform its judgement on operational needs – see the boxed description of NIM later in this section).

Once these priorities have been established, the authority can agree performance indicators and appropriate targets for evaluating progress against them. More information on target setting is available in appendix F. The case study at the end of this section illustrates how West Yorkshire Police Authority increased its influence over the planning process, developing its knowledge to the point where it could contribute to discussions with the force about the level of performance targets for the following year.
What is meant by...?

**Priority:** an area of focus for a force, an aspect of policing, sometimes referred to as a theme, e.g. youth victimisation. These are the issues that are considered the most important for the organisation to pursue (often through the commitment of resources). A common problem is “we have too many priorities – everything is a priority!” It is therefore part of the police authority’s role to balance the priorities emerging at the national and local level and those identified by partners.

**Objective:** a specific aim that addresses a priority and states what is to be achieved or how it is to be achieved, e.g. to reduce the number of robberies where an under-16-year-old is the victim. More than one objective may be associated with a priority. Objectives should usually be SMART: specific, measurable, actionable, realistic and time-bound.

**Performance indicator:** a measurement of the desired outcome that gives evidence of how well an objective is being achieved (although this may be indirect or incomplete evidence), e.g. the number of robberies recorded by the police where the victim is under 16. Performance indicators are also referred to as measures or metrics. For further information on what performance indicators can and cannot tell us, and the important distinction between apparent performance and actual performance, see section 5.2.

**Target:** specifies the desired level of performance using the measure, e.g. reduce the number of robberies where an under-16-year-old is the victim by 5% on the previous year’s performance.

**Output:** something that the force “produces” in order to achieve the outcome, e.g. more patrols in areas where under-16 robberies are common. It is important to understand the difference between an output and an outcome – although outputs can be a useful measure of what is being done, they do not typically show whether this is achieving the objective.

**Outcome:** related to the objectives (see definition above). An outcome is what will happen if objectives have been achieved, e.g. less age-related crime. Outcomes can include things like reduced fear of crime or increased public satisfaction, but many outcomes, of which these are examples, are strongly influenced by other factors outside the force’s or authority’s control. In these cases assessments of performance may need to include a consideration of the related outputs as well as of these factors.

The level of authority involvement in the planning process varies across authorities and many authorities are actively increasing their involvement. All authorities should aspire to being fully involved in the planning process, with the most developed authorities taking a leading role within it – as was stated in hallmark 1.
Local Area Agreements: a consideration for planning

Local Area Agreements (LAAs), whose development is overseen by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), are intended to be mechanisms for delivering better local service outcomes through better co-ordination between central government and local authorities and their partners. While central government will continue to set high-level strategic priorities, the intention behind the LAA policy is to explore the scope for central government departments to devolve detailed day-to-day control of their programmes and to move towards stronger partnership working with local authorities. This is to be achieved through agreements negotiated between local partners and Government Offices (GOs) (on behalf of central government), specifying a range of agreed outcomes shared by all delivery partners, with associated indicators, targets and funding streams.

The LAAs are structured around four blocks: children and young people; safer and stronger communities; healthier communities and older people; and economic development and enterprise. These blocks embrace a wide range of issues that matter to people and determine their quality of life.

At the heart of the LAA concept is the pulling together of different funding streams to support the delivery of collective targets. Although police forces and police authorities are expected to be partners in LAAs, core police funding is not included in the pooled resources and the Home Office expects to continue to make independent assessments of policing performance. However, police authorities will need to give due consideration to any LAA that is in place for the area when setting priorities for the force.

2.2.1 National strategic policing priorities

Each year the Home Secretary sets out the key national strategic priorities for the police service. These are informed by the Association of Chief Police Officers’ (ACPO’s) National Strategic Assessment, the Government’s Public Service Agreements (PSAs) and other relevant sources. The Home Secretary also sets out the Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) that will feed the annual assessment generated through the Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF, see section 2.2.3 below). In arriving at local policing plans, authorities and forces need to ensure that the national strategic priorities are adequately addressed.
Authorities will want to consider current performance against national strategic priorities, by looking at forces’ performance on each of the SPIs, and using the assessment of forces’ overall performance in the Baseline Assessments provided by HMIC. This will enable the authority to assess how the performance of its force compares with that of other forces, and whether there are particular areas for improvement that should be included in the local policing plan.

Other external considerations may also apply when drawing up the policing plan, for example if there are national performance improvement initiatives being promoted by other bodies, such as the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) or the PSU, or if any recent HMIC inspection has identified specific areas for improvement. Information on national bodies influencing the police performance regime is given in appendix C.

### 2.2.2 Local policing priorities

The authority will need to consider how the national strategic policing priorities should be balanced against specific local concerns in the local policing plan. These local priorities may come from:

- Results of consultation
- Local political imperatives
- Feedback from the previous performance cycle (i.e. what performance has been)
- Local operational and environmental threats and opportunities
- Consideration of partners’ policing issues (see section 2.5 below).

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**What is NIM and what should we use it for?**

NIM is a business process for policing activity. Use of NIM promotes an intelligence-led approach to decision making in order to determine the proactive deployment of resources to address policing priorities. The process is conducted at three levels, representing the extent and impact of the issue or problem. Broadly, Level 1 represents local issues capable of being managed by local resources; Level 2 represents force, inter-force and regional criminality, which usually requires additional resources; and Level 3 represents the most serious and organised crime.

NIM is based around a series of structures and analytical products that facilitate decision making. For example, a key intelligence-based analytical product is the “Strategic Assessment”, which is used to set the “Control Strategy”, i.e. the priorities for prevention, intelligence gathering and enforcement. Police authority members and officers should have some familiarity with the principles of NIM, and, in particular, the Strategic Assessment, because of their important role in planning and driving operational performance.

Further information on NIM is available from the Home Office website: http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/operational-policing/
The tripartite resource, *Setting Local Priorities and Assessing Performance for PPAF’s Local Policing Domain: Good Practice Guidance for Police Authorities and Police Forces*, includes guidance on:

- Determining local priorities
- Setting objectives and determining the measures
- How to set appropriate targets
- How to assess performance against local priorities in the PPAF’s local policing domain
- A self-assessment checklist for good practice in setting local priorities.

### 2.2.3 Considering all aspects of policing performance

The police authority’s role in ensuring efficient and effective policing for the local area encompasses all the force’s activity, from crime reduction and protective services through to financial management and equality and diversity. Importantly, authorities must **consider** all aspects of police performance:

- When determining priorities for the force
- When monitoring performance and ensuring delivery.

Authorities need to be able to pick up performance issues – good and bad – in all aspects of the force’s business. This does not mean that the authority is involved at a detailed level in all aspects of force performance, but it does mean that the authority needs to satisfy itself that problems do not slip “under the radar” just because they are in an area which does not receive a lot of authority attention. A **risk management**-based approach to monitoring performance and ensuring delivery (see section 4.3 below) can help the authority give each area of performance **appropriate** attention.

This gives us our second hallmark:

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**Hallmark 2**

**Performance management coverage is comprehensive.**

*The authority considers the performance of all the functions of the force*

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An illustration of the breadth of policing functions where performance needs to be considered is given in the PPAF diagram below. Not all areas of police work are currently reflected in the national picture of performance in terms of performance indicators, but considering the coverage of the framework should help authorities think about all the possible areas of performance that might be of interest.
The Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF)

The PPAF was developed by the Home Office with support from HMIC, the Association of Police Authorities (APA) and ACPO. It aims to support improved policing performance through improved performance management, by providing a framework for assessment of performance that covers all relevant policing business.

At a national level, the framework is populated by a suite of performance indicators and HMIC judgements that focus on key policing outcomes, and these are used to assess the performance of police forces in England and Wales. The PPAF also includes a “local policing domain” – unique to each force – which contains performance indicators identified by the authority and based on local priorities for improvement. The PPAF is used by the Home Office, both to direct national performance improvement activities and to publish, annually, performance assessments of every force for the public to see.

At the time of writing, the PPAF does not cover all aspects of policing performance but, through development and consultation with partners, the framework is developing to ensure that the most appropriate assessments can be made. The move to more strategic forces will lead to changes to the framework and to the indicators used nationally from 2007/08. The latest information will always be available on the Home Office policing website.

Police efficiency targets

One of the elements of the performance management focus for police authorities should be police efficiency. Efficiency gains should be seen as a way of enhancing performance through improved resources for the front line and effective prioritisation. The link between efficiency and performance is central to the police authority role.
Case study: Giving the authority a voice in planning – setting targets that support performance improvements

What was the issue?
For several years, West Yorkshire Police Authority’s contribution to the annual policing plan centred on members expressing their views about what the emphasis of the document should be (based on the results of local consultation) and suggestions about style and format. While this enabled them to influence what was included as an objective and target, they lacked the information and expertise necessary to challenge the level at which most targets were set.

What did the authority do and how did the force respond?
The authority had made a number of changes to the way it supported members:

• A new team of research officers supporting and briefing members
• Regular, independent analysis based on iQuanta data
• Attendance of members at the force’s performance review meetings.

As a result, members had developed their understanding of policing processes and “what works” to the point where they felt able to contribute to a debate about what performance improvement was possible from a given level of resources and they felt able to participate in all stages of the target-setting process.

This coincided with a period of potential budget growth. The authority approached the force with the proposition that they should collectively work through two sets of targets, one based on a standstill budget and one based on growth. If the force could demonstrate sufficient value from the growth, then the authority would provide the required budget.

The force undertook analysis of each of 28 potential targets, showing current trends, identifying opportunities for improvement and estimating the impact of resource changes. This analysis was presented to a group of authority members and staff over a day. The focus of the day was on setting an appropriate level for each target that reflected both the priority attached to the target and the potential to make progress. Authority members and officers were able to challenge both the assumptions and the approach taken for each target in turn.

For example, police authority members were able to apply their knowledge of the process changes under way in communications and the additional staffing being directed into that area to argue for a step change in call-handling performance. This resulted in a stretch of four percentage points on the percentage of 999 calls answered within 15 seconds and of two percentage points on the percentage of incidents graded “immediate” answered within the target time.

While challenging, the target-setting session was not confrontational. Shared sessions such as this can fail when one side controls the information and holds all the knowledge. The knowledge base of both authority members and officers made for a mature debate, targets were argued down as well as up, and there was a good understanding of the capacity of the organisation to deliver.
What were the benefits?

The process helped build trust and respect between the authority and the force. Both sides accepted the integrity of the targets that resulted. This joint ownership of the targets sharpened the focus of performance monitoring over the coming year: there was a genuine interest in explaining over- or under-achievement against the targets.

Target setting was tied directly in to budget setting. Previously, growth funding had been delegated to the chief officer and it was impossible to determine the “value added” by each element of additional funding. The calculation of agreed stretch targets, supported by a report describing the application of each tranche of growth, made the benefits visible to both the authority and the wider public. The authority was able to point out to local people not only what their money was being spent on, but what that extra money was delivering for them.

The resulting targets in call handling sent a clear message to communities that the authority and force were responding to the clear concerns that had been expressed about performance in this area.

What follow-up action has the authority taken or planned?

The success of this first exercise encouraged both parties to build target-setting workshops into the annual planning cycle.

The challenge for the authority is to retain the robustness of the process. There is always a danger of being too accepting of what is presented. Retaining the expertise of officers and members is crucial, as is the linkage to resources. Having to justify the effect on performance of a variation in resourcing (either up or down) encourages proper scrutiny of the modelling process and justification of the resulting targets.

2.3 Ensuring delivery

The local policing plan enshrines the authority’s and the force’s aims for the year, and sets out exactly what the force commits to achieving with the resources it is given. The policing plan is the authority’s main reference point for ensuring delivery against local priorities and those set at a national level. Authorities must nevertheless keep a watchful eye on performance issues beyond the targets in the plan, in line with the need for comprehensive coverage of performance highlighted by hallmark 2.

Ensuring delivery of policing services involves monitoring performance, questioning and probing members of the force about performance levels achieved, understanding the force’s performance and how different areas of performance are interlinked, and driving performance improvements in areas of authority concern. The authority should set the agenda for this process, as highlighted in hallmark 1. The authority will also want to identify and praise good performance, and support the force in sharing good practice both across basic command units (BCUs), and more extensively with other forces. These considerations and alternative structures and processes for monitoring performance and ensuring delivery are explored more fully in chapter 4 and chapter 5.
2.4 Learning, consultation and feeding back

2.4.1 The authority’s consultation role

To bring the performance cycle to a close and move forward into planning for the next year, the police authority needs to ensure that learning from the current year is fed into the next planning phase. The authority’s main role in this area of performance management is consultation, which is also part of the authority’s statutory role. The APA has issued guidance on consultation, including Involving Communities in Police Learning and Development: A Guide, available on the APA website.

There are extensive resources available on consulting communities, and many authorities have put considerable effort into developing this area themselves. Further suggested resources are listed in appendix E.

2.4.2 Communicating performance to local communities

Having ensured delivery of policing services to local communities, police authorities need to tell local people about policing performance. Many police authorities have found it difficult to raise the public profile of the authority and inform local people of policing performance and the role the authority plays in it. Many police authorities rely on their consultation mechanisms and annual reports or newsletters sent out with the local authority’s council tax communications. A small number of police authorities are trying innovative ways to communicate the work they do to local people – for an example, see the case study below describing how Essex Police Authority used its new press and public relations officer to develop media campaigns that got the Authority’s messages across to the public. This is an area for development for many authorities.

Local policing summaries

From 1 April 2006, police authorities are required to produce an annual local policing summary and send it to each household in their area.

The Government recognises that certain police forces and authorities are already communicating policing performance to their local communities, and there are some impressive examples of good practice around the country. However, the picture is mixed and the information provided does not always amount to a consistent and objective appraisal.

The summaries are intended to provide communities with better and more objective information on how they are being policed. Such a dialogue is an important prerequisite in stimulating local communities to become more actively involved in policing concerns, which is a fundamental tenet of the Government’s Police Reform Programme.

Guidance has been provided to police authorities outlining the requirement, the minimum standards and other categories of information to include. The guidance, background and a sample report are available on the Home Office website at: http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/police-reform/reform-programme/citizen-focus/Local-Policing-Summaries/
Case study: Using the media to improve the authority’s communication with local communities

What was the issue?
In response to a national drive for police authorities to improve their public profile and the provision of information on policing and crime to the public, and following a Best Value review of Essex Police Authority, Essex Police and Essex Police Authority together identified the need for a dedicated media and public relations (PR) service for the authority.

What did the police authority do and how did the force respond?
The authority appointed a dedicated media and PR officer in September 2004. The responsibilities of the role include:

- Maximising positive messages about force and authority achievements and ensuring that force and authority messages are consistent
- Developing appropriate communication channels to support the authority’s consultative role
- Developing and maintaining effective methods of internal communication to ensure that authority members and police staff are kept informed about authority work.

Together with the force, the new officer devised a PR campaign, “Days of Action”, to publicise the joint authority and force pledge to move officers to the front line and improve police performance in making arrests. The authority and force had already gained media coverage through a joint press conference and press releases. The campaign supported these, targeting police magazines and newspapers, local TV and radio, the force and authority websites and internal communications. The force’s and authority’s co-ordinated approach aimed to raise the authority’s profile and increase communication between the police and the local community. The “Days of Action” campaign publicised and supported the introduction of a new policing style.

What were the benefits?
Positive feedback was received from the public via the authority and force websites. Through the media and PR officer, feedback was shared with the local media, which were encouraged to write follow-up stories to reassure the public and improve confidence in local policing.

What follow-up action has the police authority taken or planned?
The authority continues to use the media to communicate good or improving performance to the public. The chair of the authority regularly appears on local radio and alongside the chief officer in public. Future projects include an intranet site to boost the authority’s profile within the force and a DVD that will be shown to new recruits.

2.5 Involving partners in the performance management cycle
Many local policing issues affect and are affected by issues outside the traditional scope of police business. Policing is part of a complex system which links socio-economic, educational, health and other factors in how communities work and interact, and needs in one area can often be fully addressed only by taking other factors into account. Partner working is an attempt to harness the systemic nature of policing problems and those addressed by other services and improve delivery.
across all of them – and therefore the authority must be engaged in this activity, as highlighted by the third hallmark:

### Hallmark 3

**The authority is engaged in working with partners to influence delivery on community priorities**

Partnership working is highlighted in crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) and community safety partnerships (CSPs), but police authorities also work with partners in other services. The case study from Sussex Police Authority, below, describes how that authority co-ordinated and led partners from the public and private sector to improve services to vulnerable children.

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### Case study: Working with partners to reduce crime and better support children who are at risk

**What was the issue?**

Sussex Police Authority became concerned that a disproportionate volume of Missing Person Reports (MISPERs), anti-social behaviour and criminal behaviour were originating from a small number of repeat offenders residing in a small number of private children’s homes in a seaside town in Sussex. In addition, the authority had anecdotal reports that members of the police force were becoming increasingly frustrated with the amount of time taken up with dealing with these vulnerable children and the impact their behaviour was having on the wider community.

It became clear that the behaviour exhibited by a minority of these children was having a disproportionate impact on local communities. Their behaviour made them even more vulnerable, both to involvement in the criminal justice system (CJS) and to contact with adult criminals, such as through “grooming”. There was also a high risk of their becoming victims of serious crime, and the authority was determined to do something quickly to reduce this risk.

The chairman of the authority, who was also a senior member of the county council concerned, was keen to facilitate a change in the way partners approached the issue of looked-after children in Sussex. The force was keen to make changes and welcomed the influence that the chairman could bring to bear.

**What did the authority and the force do?**

The authority and the force hosted a children’s home partnership seminar, which was attended by both council officers and private care providers. This event opened a dialogue between partners and established the common goals of:

- Reducing the crime and anti-social behaviour linked to these children
- Reducing the risk to the children themselves.
The seminar uncovered issues of grave concern to the partners – such as the increase in numbers of children placed from outside Sussex, often many miles away from their home and family networks. The partners agreed a protocol on the management of children missing from the care homes, which would include an appropriate assessment of the risk to the child.

Following this seminar, the chairman of the authority wrote to the Home Secretary highlighting the partners’ concerns. The matter was passed to the Minister for Children, Young People and Families. There was also interest from the media: BBC Radio 4’s “Today” programme reported on the issue.

Sussex Police Authority hosted a visit of officers from the Department for Education and Skills to see for themselves the issues faced by these children, the communities and partners, to make clear to them the impact on children of being placed miles from their family network.

The force established a police community support officer (PCSO) whose beat was primarily to establish and maintain a relationship with the private care homes in the town, to repair relationships between the care homes and the police, and to foster a greater understanding between the organisations.

The chairman reported on this activity to the public meetings of the authority to raise the issue with a broader audience, both within the force and publicly. The authority appointed a Lead Member for Children, with a supporting Deputy Lead Member.

The Deputy Lead Member for Children, in his capacity as Cabinet Member for Children and Young People’s Services in West Sussex County Council, chairs a committee of representatives from councils across Sussex, Sussex Police, private care providers and the Children’s Society. These partners allocated funding to a project to identify the working practices that would best reduce the risk to looked-after children in Sussex.

**What were the benefits?**

Following the “Today” programme, the chairman and policy officer, local Member of Parliament and local authority and police representatives met with the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families, who acknowledged the problem and pledged action on reducing the number of placements out of local areas.

Initial indications from the project on working practices suggest that the role of the PCSO has been very well received by all partners, including the looked-after children themselves, and MISPER incidents and anti-social behaviour involving the children have been reduced.

The issue of the risk to looked-after children in Sussex, particularly those who are placed from outside the area, was raised as a priority for leading agencies in the county. The authority’s role in bringing together the key organisations and raising the issue in the media and with government has been recognised as influential in maintaining the momentum and ensuring that best practice is shared across Sussex.
What follow-up action has the authority taken or planned?

The Lead Member for Children will continue to monitor the impact in Sussex of the policy of some local authorities to place children out of their own county. The work of the West Sussex committee will continue, identifying and sharing best practice across Sussex. The authority, through their representation on the county’s children’s trusts, will continue to champion the issue and support the police force.

2.5.1 Police authority membership of CDRPs/CSPs

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended by the Police Reform Act 2002 sets out statutory requirements for responsible authorities to work with other local agencies and organisations to develop and implement strategies to tackle crime and disorder and misuse of drugs in their area. These statutory partnerships are known as CDRPs in England and CSPs in Wales. The responsible authorities in these partnerships are:

- The police
- Local authorities
- Fire authorities
- Police authorities
- Local health boards (Wales) or primary care trusts (England).

Working together, these responsible authorities are required to:

- Carry out an audit to identify crime and disorder and misuse of drugs problems in their area
- Develop strategies that deal effectively with them
- Work in co-operation with local education and probation authorities
- Invite co-operation from a range of local private, voluntary and other public and community groups, including the community itself.

The level of police authority involvement in CDRPs/CSPs is currently mixed. Historic reasons in the locality account for many differences, while geography can account for others, for example:

- **Cambridgeshire** has a high level of member involvement in CDRPs, but already had a strong model in place prior to the Crime and Disorder Act. Several police authority members have chaired CDRPs
- **Devon and Cornwall** contains 17 partnerships in its wide geographical area. This would generate a significant workload if police authority members were to be engaged in each one.

Difficulty in establishing the value of being involved in CDRPs/CSPs may also be inhibiting involvement. The key points that lead to successful engagement are:

- A formal decision assigning a police authority member responsibility for a CDRP/CSP
• A formal feedback mechanism, such as a pro forma filled in by the member who attends the CDRP/CSP meetings and sent to a designated panel or committee at the police authority, ideally supported by CDRP/CSP-level analysis by an officer of the police authority. Police authority members might establish contacts at CDRPs/CSPs and build up learning as individuals, but without an agreed mechanism and structure for receiving and disseminating what they learn, the police authority cannot effectively utilise the links being built up.

Active engagement with partnerships, supported by effective mechanisms that spread knowledge among members, can offer benefits to police authority performance management by:

• Improving understanding of the relationships between partners’ joint and different targets
• Improving understanding of crime and disorder issues within communities
• Improving understanding of the various opportunities and levers that are available for performance improvement.

2.5.2 Local strategic partnerships

A local strategic partnership (LSP) is a single non-statutory, multi-agency body, which matches local authority boundaries and aims to bring together at a local level the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors.

LSPs are key to tackling deep-seated, multi-faceted problems, requiring a range of responses from different bodies. Local partners working through a LSP will be expected to take many of the major decisions about priorities for their local area. The purpose of LSPs is to provide an opportunity to define and deliver local priorities across an area rather than work being confined to separate agencies. Further information relating to LSPs can be obtained from the Department for Communities and Local Government’s website.³

LAAs are giving LSPs more significance for police authorities (see box on LAAs in section 2.2).

2.5.3 Local criminal justice boards

At a local level, the work of the CJS agencies is co-ordinated by local criminal justice boards (LCJBs) across England and Wales. These boards bring together the chief officers of the CJS agencies to co-ordinate activity and share responsibility for delivering criminal justice in their areas. Specifically, the LCJB is charged with local delivery of the following CJS objectives:

• Improving the delivery of justice
• Improving the service provided to victims and witnesses
• Improving public confidence.

³ For example, the national policy document Local Strategic Partnerships – Government Guidance, published in March 2001, http://www.communities.gov.uk
Although police authorities are not statutory partners on these boards, it is very important that they maintain regular contact with their LCJBs. In some cases police authorities have full membership on their LCJBs, some attend only strategic decision-making meetings, and others have minimal involvement. Police authorities need to ensure that they are included on any consultation relating to CJS matters, the LCJB strategy and any CJS targets (particularly those for the police service), and they should regularly monitor CJS performance.

2.5.4 Target setting in partnership

The police authority has a role to play during the planning cycle in negotiating targets with other partners (e.g. CDRPs and LCJBs). Different partners have different accountability mechanisms, therefore there is potential for tension between the setting of targets for CDRPs/CSPs (which will impact on the focus and efforts of BCUs) and the targets set for a force by the police authority (which will need to be achieved through the collective efforts of BCUs). In their performance management role, members therefore have an important part to play in understanding both sets of requirements and in achieving sensible and valuable targets overall for their communities. Appropriate partnership targets may also be included in the Local Policing domain of the PPAF, if relevant.

Example: Ensuring that appropriate targets are agreed between the force or authority and the GO

In 2005, the GO for the North West worked directly with BCU commanders in Greater Manchester, using CDRPs, to set targets for the delivery of policing services. GMPA became alerted to this and wanted to become more involved in the target-setting process: both the Chair of the authority and the Chief Constable of the force met the local director of the GO for the North West to start a more corporate engagement. In 2006, GMPA has been closely involved from the start of the target-setting discussions. Its involvement helps ensure that the targets set are as consistent as possible across the force, that the targets negotiated with the GO are aligned with the local policing plan, and that the plan is constructed around these targets.
2.6 Developing the authority capability and capacity in performance management

2.6.1 How have authorities developed their performance management approach?

Many police authorities have been developing their approach to performance management over recent years. The path that authorities have typically followed is shown in the diagram below.

Many authorities started from a position of low resources, with structures and processes that took up a lot of the authority’s time and energy, rather than being enablers that helped the authority focus effectively on policing performance. Many authorities have made great progress towards becoming more effective at driving performance improvement on behalf of the local community; however, a relatively small number of authorities have mature performance management processes in place, supported by an effective officer team. The following chapters of this guidance focus on the enablers of effective performance management – people and relationships, structures and processes, data, analysis and reporting – to help authorities develop further along this path.
2.6.2 What does force restructuring mean for performance management by police authorities?

The restructuring of police forces will make a fundamental difference to policing. The role of police authorities in enabling the changes and creating the improvement required is significant. The police authority performance management role will need to be not only looking to the future but also ensuring that the process of restructuring does not distract from performance during the period of change.

Post-restructuring, the functions of strategic police authorities will primarily remain as set out in the Police Act 1996 and elsewhere. The proposals in the Police and Justice Bill allow the detail of any additional functions to be set out in secondary legislation. There will be a renewed focus on the critical strategic issues, namely setting the overarching priorities for the force, appointing the chief officer (and other ACPO ranks) and holding him or her to account, setting the budget for the force and determining the level of precept. Part of authorities’ strategic-level duties are likely to involve a stronger focus on Level 2 (cross-border) issues, both in terms of setting strategic direction in conjunction with neighbouring areas and in performance monitoring at this level. This increased focus on Level 2 policing will need to take place in tandem with continued performance management of Level 1 (local or BCU) policing.

The principles for good police authority performance management remain the same whatever structures are in place for applying them. The following sections of the guidance may be particularly useful to refer to when considering performance management arrangements for strategic police authorities:

- The performance management style the strategic authority wants to adopt and its relationship with the force (sections 3.1 and 3.4)
- The role of members with responsibility for performance management at all stages of the performance management cycle and all levels of policing (section 3.2)
- The level of resource needed by the strategic police authority to ensure effective performance management of the strategic force (section 3.3)
- The performance management structures needing to be established, both informal and formal, at the strategic level and at the sub-force level (chapter 4).

The hallmarks and self-assessment section (appendix G) in this guidance may be useful as a checklist when considering the necessary performance management arrangements for strategic police authorities.
3. People and relationships

People and their relationships are the most important aspect of the police authority’s performance management capability, but the area in which it is most difficult to identify how and why some practices are more effective than others. When researching this guidance, many police authorities identified having individuals capable of operating at a senior level, who were committed and passionate about policing performance, as the most important factor in their effectiveness as an authority. While effective and committed individuals can often make a big difference in the effectiveness of the whole authority, authorities may also want to consider what they can do as an organisation, to derive the most benefit from this important enabler.

This chapter outlines the approach of police authorities to their working relationships – the “style” they adopt in their interactions with the force that characterises the relationships between individuals in the authority and in the force – and the ways individuals contribute to the authority as a whole. The chapter also considers the relationship the authority has with the chief officer, its role in the selection of chief officers and its proposed role in the appraisal of chief officers at commissioner/chief constable rank.

3.1 Developing an effective working style

Police authorities vary widely in style – how they interpret and approach their role in performance management, their interactions with the force and how they try to influence the force. The style adopted by the authority is the product of its own and the force’s people – both as individuals and how they work together – and its structures and processes. The spectrum of practice varies, from very supportive to very challenging. Which style is most appropriate and gets best results depends strongly on the composition of the authority and the chief officer team: different individuals respond to different styles. Other considerations will include the force’s position in the development of its performance processes and culture, and the working relationships between individual authority members and officers and members of the force. The important thing to note is that an authority can actively vary its style, approaching different situations in different ways.

Authorities will benefit from actively considering and periodically reviewing the style they take – both as individuals and collectively – and how effective that style is at helping them achieve their aims in performance management.

“Supportive” style

What this guidance refers to as a supportive style is characterised by:

- The authority avoiding a confrontational approach – seeking to keep more assertive questioning out of the public eye, so that the force and the authority are not seen as opposing each other in public
- The authority finding ways to work with the force – members supporting their local basic command unit (BCU) commanders and the authority supporting chief officers in public forums.

A supportive style is likely to be more appropriate when the force is high-performing, the relationship between the force and the authority is open and relaxed, members of the force at all levels know and accept the authority’s role, and the force has a mature performance culture. The authority can have a key role in helping identify and spread good practice in such a force. A supportive style is also likely to be appropriate when the local community places a high value on
reassurance, in areas where crime is low and the force’s performance is good but the public has a high fear of crime. The supportive style can contribute to the reassurance of the local community.

**Advantages of a supportive style:**

+ Can support a better working relationship – less confrontational and less prone to the authority getting a defensive or closed response from the force
+ Can discuss difficult areas before they grow into big issues that are hard to deal with.

**Disadvantages of a supportive style:**

- May be difficult to be sufficiently challenging on poor performance – so the authority cannot drive up performance when it dips
- The police authority role is to represent the public, who are not always satisfied with their policing – so being seen to be challenging is also likely to be important
- The boundary between the authority and the force may become unclear – the relationship between members and chief officers may then become “cosy”, compromising the authority’s ability to fulfil its role
- Can be hard to change when things go “the wrong way”.

**“Challenging” style**

What this guidance refers to as a **challenging style** is characterised by:

- Taking a strong (but balanced) tone in discussions, e.g. in performance committees
- Being prepared to push the boundary between force and authority – members asking detailed questions, even at the risk of getting some “push-back” if the questions become too operational
- Sometimes being very forceful (although most authorities with a challenging style have said that they still try to avoid being seen as aggressive).

A challenging style can be appropriate, for example when the local community demands it: to reflect community expectations. One authority also found that adopting a challenging style was effective as a contrast to its usual, more supportive style. The authority had become concerned about an area of the force’s performance which was not at expected levels, and the force was not prioritising improvement in that area. The authority reported that being very challenging on this area emphasised that this was a high-priority area for the authority. This effectively signalled to the force that the authority wanted it to focus on improvements in that area.

**Advantages of a challenging style:**

+ Using an assertive style can emphasise and reinforce the authority’s role and raise the authority’s profile
+ The style needs to be knowledge-based, with challenges that focus on policing outcomes, and avoid getting into technical arguments. When it is based on information, the challenging approach can be more effective at influencing the force and changing its direction where necessary.
Disadvantages of a challenging style:
- The authority needs resources to build up its knowledge base and to be able to ask more searching questions – it may need to do its own research into certain topics
- A challenging style does not work if it ends up in arguments – one authority said “we found we kept having arguments that no one won”
- The style can lead to a force feeling embattled or losing respect for the authority – some officers respond well to a very challenging style, some don’t.

3.2 The role of members

3.2.1 Members’ duties in performance management

Members will have different levels of involvement in performance management, but performance management is so much a part of the authority’s role that it is likely that in many authorities a majority or all members will need to have an understanding of performance issues at some level. This section therefore explores the fourth hallmark:

**Hallmark 4**

Members understand their performance management role and what they need to do to be able to fulfil it

The box below indicates how and why members in various roles will need to integrate performance management into their role.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member role</th>
<th>Involvement in performance management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Members of main performance committee(s)</td>
<td>These members form the backbone of the authority’s performance management capability. They are the authority’s voice on performance, having the information needed to manage performance and, on the committee, can exert the influence the authority needs to drive improvements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee chair (especially the chair of the main performance committee)</td>
<td>The role of the chair and what it involves is described more fully in section 4.2.2 below. The chair of the performance committee will need an especially strong understanding of performance – both of the principles of performance management and of the performance of the force – because the chair is key in ensuring an effective performance meeting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Special interest or lead members, BCU link members, authority representatives on crime and disorder reduction partnerships/community safety partnerships (CDRPs/CSPs)

Lead members will need an understanding of the performance of the force in their area, whether functional (e.g. crime, roads policing or human resources (HR)) or geographical (e.g. BCU). The lead member will need to understand what drives force performance in their topic or geographical area and be able to feed that knowledge and any issues that arise into the performance committee or other structures as necessary. Representatives of the authority on external bodies (e.g. CDRPs/CSPs) will need to be sure that the authority both influences and is influenced by those bodies.

Members involved in planning, e.g. setting priorities and targets

Performance management in the broadest sense includes planning – see chapter 2 above. These members will need a good understanding of performance principles and the force’s current performance, so that this experience can be fed into the planning cycle for the following year to ensure that resources are directed towards future priorities.

How do members know what their role is in performance management?

If members are to carry out their role effectively, then they need to know what is required of them. The authority should set out clearly the various roles of its members and what meetings and other activities are associated with each role. Typically, this will involve the sorts of activities set out below. These may seem basic, but in authorities with busy members it can be easy for some activities to be neglected: this is why it is important to include them in members’ role descriptions. Members will probably need to:

- **Prepare**: allocate sufficient time to preparing for meetings – e.g. by reading papers for committee meetings, getting officer briefings or checking performance reports (e.g. by looking on iQuanta) and preparing lines of questioning for areas they want to probe
- **Attend all meetings** of the authority committees to which they belong
- **Attend other authority meetings and sessions** – e.g. those associated with special interest or lead member schemes
- **Make site visits to ‘link BCUs’** and meet with BCU commanders
- **Meet regularly with members of the force** – e.g. in finance, HR or corporate development/performance review departments. These might be informal meetings to keep informed about force activity or as follow-up to formal meetings of the authority
- **Attend any CDRP/CSP meetings** at which they represent the authority
- **Make time for development activities** (see section 3.2.2 below).
**Example: Providing members with essential information about the authority’s approach to performance management**

Cumbria Police Authority had appointed a new performance officer. As part of her role, the officer developed a members’ handbook for the audit and performance committee. The handbook brought together essential reference material for members of the committee in one short document. The handbook included:

- Names and contact details of the committee members
- A summary of how performance monitoring was carried out in Cumbria
- A guide to the Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) domains
- National policing priorities, Cumbria’s policing priorities for the year and local CDRP strategies
- Reminders of the targets set by the authority for the year
- A guide to reading force performance reports
- A guide to most similar groups (see appendix F)
- A short guide to iQuanta
- Recent Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) gradings
- A glossary.

This was a fairly simple document which nevertheless provided benefits: members had a convenient resource at their fingertips, bringing together information that might not otherwise have been so easy for them to find.

### 3.2.2 Member learning – developing skills, knowledge and experience

New members arrive regularly, and in the same authority members usually rotate between different roles – typically needing different skills and knowledge. The authority needs to have mechanisms in place to ensure that members have the skills and knowledge they need to carry out their role, and are given the opportunity to develop any that they do not already have when they start a new role.

Members will develop experience as they go along. Some authorities do not have much formal development in place for members, relying on “on-the-job” learning. However, relying on learning on the job may mean that member learning takes up a significant part of the time allocated for meetings with the force. A separate programme of member development activities means that members are better equipped in their formal interactions with the force, and the objectives of meetings whose purpose is holding the force to account are better met.

**Examples of development structures**

Authorities provide a range of activities to develop the knowledge and skills of their members:

- **External training:** the Association of Police Authorities provides training in performance management, “Can You Manage It?” – see appendix E for further details
• **Internal training and seminars:** some authorities have set up a programme of seminars or internal training sessions, separate from the “holding to account” process (performance committee and associated structures), which aims to increase members’ knowledge in a particular subject area.

Example: Developing members’ skills and knowledge using seminars

South Wales Police Authority has introduced a programme of regular seminars. The seminars provide an opportunity for members to receive more detailed briefings on topics such as:

- Operational aspects of force activity, e.g. the role and function of individual departments within the force
- Specific current issues affecting the organisation
- Induction or refresher training for new and existing members on their role and that of the authority
- The budget
- HMIC inspection reports.

While authority meetings and committees provide some opportunity to discuss issues, there is insufficient time in those meetings to gain an in-depth appreciation of the business. Matters such as those listed above are better examined in a seminar. The seminars enhance members’ understanding of what each force department does and the main issues affecting the organisation, which in turn enables members to make better-informed decisions about the issues that affect those departments. The seminar programme is particularly helpful to new members.

Since much of the specialist input is delivered by police officers and police staff, it is essential that the seminar programme is fully supported by the force. The topics to be covered are agreed in advance between the chief executive and the deputy chief constable. The programme is seen as a mutually beneficial joint initiative.

### 3.2.3 The competency framework and evaluation of member contributions

**Definition:** a competency is a type of behaviour that an individual must have or acquire, to input into a situation in order to achieve high levels of performance in that situation.

(Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development)

**Competencies** are the behaviours that members need to have or develop in order to fulfil their role on the police authority effectively, not only in public meetings but also in private or informal meetings with members of the force and during everyday interactions. Carrying out an evaluation of a member’s contributions based on a competency framework for that member’s role is a good way of reviewing how effectively members fulfil their roles, in order to identify their development needs. Such a process also contributes to ensuring that the authority is managing its own performance.
Some authorities have recently introduced a formal competency framework for members. A competency framework makes it clear to individual members and the authority how members are expected to perform their role.

**Why might an authority use member competency frameworks?**

Competency frameworks are commonly used for organisations with employees. It is recognised that being a police authority member is not a “professional role”: members have a different role in securing public accountability. Nevertheless, a competency framework is useful to a police authority because:

- It makes explicit to the authority what gaps exist in the skills and experience of its members, helping the authority recruit new members that fill those gaps or develop existing members
- It makes clear to members what is expected of them – members have personal objectives that are linked to the objectives of the authority as a whole
- A competency framework provides a sound basis for the evaluation of member contributions, which enables members to develop their skills and experience individually and collectively
- In introducing an explicit framework for managing and assuring the performance of its own processes, the authority shows the force that it is committed to performance management in its own organisation. This might enhance the force–authority relationship and the force’s view of the authority.

**Examples of authority practice**

A small number of police authorities have introduced a competency-based system. This is a new area for most authorities and the idea of personal review may be unfamiliar or seem strange to some members. The following case study shows how one authority has experienced the benefits of using a competency framework and their own performance and development review system.

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**Case study: Using a competency-based approach to support member development**

**What was the issue?**

In 2004, North Yorkshire Police Authority (NYPA) developed a system they refer to as a Performance and Development Review (PDR) scheme for members, to review their performance against allocated roles and to inform individual member development plans – this was in response to a key corporate objective to “professionalise” the role of members. Following the first year of the PDR scheme’s operation, members called for a more robust benchmark for required performance, to make the exercise less subjective. NYPA adopted a competency-based framework that formed a new basis for member PDRs.
What did the police authority do?

The clerk adapted the National Competency Framework for Chief Officers for use in connection with the various roles carried out by members. Within the overall framework, key competencies were identified that all members needed to be able to demonstrate, while other competencies were identified for specific roles in the authority.

NYPA adopted these sets of competencies as part of the PDR scheme and they are now used by members to self-assess their own performance, prior to discussion (usually with the chairman and vice-chairman) at their annual PDR. Individual development plans are then drawn up, either to address areas of perceived competency deficiency for the roles undertaken, or to develop competencies for roles members aspire to in the future.

What were the benefits?

As well as providing a clearer understanding among members of the requirements and skills necessary for specific roles in the authority, members found that this new basis of the PDR scheme provided a better focus for discussion at PDRs and therefore better targeted individual development plans. In addition, it provided the clerk with a clearer indication of the training, communication and infrastructural needs of NYPA moving forward.

While the competencies have yet to be used in connection with the appointment of new members, NYPA intends doing so in the future. This will bring the additional benefits of a more robust process for member appointment (possibly through involvement of NYPA’s standards committee).

What follow-up action has the police authority taken or planned?

NYPA’s leadership board carries out annual reviews of the efficacy of the PDR process and the authority is investigating ways to ensure that the competencies remain valid and credible.

Feedback from the force and partners, although informal at this stage, indicates that the authority’s reputation for professionalism and grasp of issues is growing, leading to greater influence being exerted by NYPA on the force and externally.

3.3 Authority resources

3.3.1 Planning authority resources

In order for authorities to manage force performance effectively, they must have access to appropriate professional resources and expertise to provide members with the advice they need. Authorities should plan what resources they require for performance management and, in doing so, they should consider the number and type of officers with responsibility for performance management that the authority employs or has access to, the type of support they provide, and the member profile.
The importance of having appropriate support for members is enshrined in the fifth Hallmark:

**Hallmark 5**

Members have the appropriate level of professional expertise available within the authority to support them.

It is recommended that authorities regularly review the level of resources and expertise they can access for advice and support on performance management. This does not necessarily mean that an authority needs a large team of officers but it does need to be sure that it has the necessary expertise available to advise and support members on performance management. This is particularly pertinent in relation to the formation of strategic police authorities: strategic authorities should ensure that adequate officer resource on performance management issues is included when considering the overall resources required for each new authority. Throughout this guidance there are case studies that show the value that performance officers can add to authorities.

The sort of performance management support that authorities should consider aspiring to when reviewing the resources they have available in this area includes:

- A range of expert teams supporting the different authority functions, in addition to the authority’s executive team (i.e. chief executive, treasurer, monitoring officer, etc)
- The equivalent of at least one full-time performance officer/adviser, or a team of officers/performance experts
- Access to analysis independent to that of the force, possibly producing the main performance report internally, providing extra information in the form of newsletters, and leading independent work (“scrutiny” projects)
- Provision of member learning and development activities, e.g. seminars and training sessions.

With appropriate levels of officer resource, the authority does not need to rely on the force for producing performance analysis. The authority can produce its own analysis when necessary, for example by using a mix of force data and external information such as iQuanta and PPAF assessments. This also means that the authority can undertake work (such as relating to its scrutiny role) without imposing extra burdens on the force. Members can then be confident that the performance information provided comes from as objective a viewpoint as possible.

Authorities whose members have considerable expertise on performance issues, for example because of their previous background and experience, may well be able to effectively exercise their performance management functions with a lower level of resource or specialist officer support. However, an authority with access to appropriate professional resources to support members on performance issues will not need to rely on having any members with particular expertise in this area.
and individuals with other experience and expertise will also be able to fulfil the role of an authority member effectively. It also means that the authority has greater resilience: its capacity to hold the force to account on performance issues will not rely on a few individual members. And it provides for greater continuity and capability over time, since the authority will be better able to cope with sudden changes in membership, which is a feature of the appointments process, and other changes which may affect the authority’s working in the longer term.

Access to its own source of performance management advice enables the authority to complement, and add value in, its role of scrutinising force performance. Authorities rightly place great value on good working relationships with the force but equally they need to be able to question, probe and investigate performance rigorously in order to properly fulfil their role in holding the force to account for the service delivered to communities. Authorities with access to their own effective support and advice on performance issues will be able to more actively choose how best to hold the force to account and be more confident in adopting the style and approach most applicable to a particular circumstance or forum, including public forums.

The risks of having insufficient officer resources assigned to performance management are:

- The authority has to rely on the force being willing and able to provide it with performance information
- The authority risks members being insufficiently supported in their roles, or relies on members who do not need much expert support or advice (for example members who already have the experience, expertise and personal skills required):
  - The authority needs to find these individuals on a regular basis, and keep them
  - Authorities have only limited input into the selection of their own members and therefore have to find ways of filling any gaps in their expertise through the limited influence they have in the appointment of members
  - Members may be less representative of local communities, since they are likely to be drawn from a small number of people with senior-level management experience
- The reliance of the authority on a close working relationship with the force may make it difficult for the authority to take an independent view, especially if a conflict arises between the authority and the force.

There is a risk that if authorities do not give sufficient thought to the level of expertise and resource needed to effectively assist members in their performance management role, then this support is likely to emerge in a more ad hoc and unplanned way. Authorities should therefore give serious consideration to regularly reviewing the level and nature of support provided to members on performance issues and to defining what they wish to achieve. Any such review should, of course, include a cost-benefit analysis of any potential changes.
### 3.3.2 What is the role of the police authority performance officer?

Over recent years, many authorities have recognised the need to have access to their own professional advice on performance management, independent of the force. Many authorities have recently appointed an officer with responsibility for performance, but the amount of support available for members still varies widely, as illustrated in the diagram below.

#### The performance officer role

In many authorities, the performance officer is a relatively new role and is often combined with other responsibilities. Not all authorities with a performance officer have a clear role description for that officer. This can raise problems:

- A newly appointed officer may spend a considerable amount of time working out their own role
- Members may not get support in the areas in which they need it most
- An authority that recruits a performance officer without setting out clearly the role they expect that officer to fulfil risks appointing an officer who is not the best individual to carry out the job.

Authorities would benefit from considering what the role of the performance officer is, what support they require and what skills and experience the officer needs.

The range of responsibilities undertaken by performance officers is highly variable and reflects how far the authority has got in developing its approach to performance management and how much resource the authority has allocated to performance management.

The range of responsibilities of performance officers across authorities is, again, highly variable – the box overleaf gives an indication of this range.

- All support for performance is provided by the chief executive
- Support to members is largely restricted to servicing of committees, with little or no briefing or advice provided to members
- Officer may be at the level of deputy chief executive, policy officer or analyst
- Not all officers supporting members on performance have an analytical or performance background, but some level of briefing and advice can be provided
- Officer usually briefs members on performance issues
- Officer may act as a proxy for members in meetings or discussions with the force regarding performance
- With good levels of resourcing and officers recruited with specialist skills in performance, the authority is well supported and able to carry out a significant amount of independent analysis or special projects

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An officer whose responsibility includes performance as a major part of their role

Full-time or nearly full-time performance officer

Team of officers supporting members on performance issues

No performance officer/policy officer with responsibility for performance
What do performance officers do? Examples of performance officer responsibilities across authorities

- Develop and then produce independent performance reports using iQuanta – for the performance committee meetings with the force, as regular bulletins for all members, and/or as articles for authority newsletters or other internal publications.
- Review the force performance report before the performance committee – e.g. the performance officer may receive the performance report from the force in advance and request more detail from the force on areas that they identify for potential challenge. This has the benefit of getting more information for members immediately rather than waiting for the meeting so that areas for further challenge can be identified or ruled out.
- Represent members by asking questions at performance committee meetings – in many authorities officers do not ask questions in public committee meetings, but in others officers do represent members in this way.
- Brief members on force performance, identifying themes for challenge.
- Provide clarifications on performance issues at meetings.
- Work with the force to develop the commentary the force provides on performance.
- Support member learning – e.g. establishing induction processes, leading seminars, or coaching and advising members on challenge techniques (e.g. how to approach areas of dipping performance, possible force responses and how members might deal with them).
- Support other authority structures and processes (this will be described in more detail in chapter 4 below).
- Lead the authority’s independent work (“scrutiny” projects) – this is described more fully in section 4.1.5 below.

The following example illustrates how one authority approached a review of its role, aims and objectives, and the support model it required to enable members to achieve them.
**Example: Reviewing the authority’s role and support structures**

South Yorkshire Police Authority (SYPA) was finding that its structures were overly bureaucratic, with a disproportionate amount of effort expended on running processes, rather than getting value from them. The authority embarked on an extensive review of the way it did business. As a result, SYPA found that it needed to redefine not only how it intended to fulfil its own responsibilities, but also the type and level of support it would need from its officers.

The authority produced a Service Level Agreement, which documented:

- The authority’s role, how it would structure itself and the responsibilities of members
- Support provided by officers to the authority’s committee Chairs, lead members and individual members
- Support provided by officers in the authority’s main areas of activity (planning, priority setting, target setting, financial management, performance management, etc) including costs. The exercise demonstrated to the authority the need for more officer support in performance management and two new roles were created
- Internal performance management: how the authority proposed to manage its own performance according to the Service Level Agreement.

It is still too early for SYPA to be certain of the benefits attributable to the Service Level Agreement, but the authority has a renewed clarity of purpose and will be providing an increased level of support to members.

### 3.4 Building effective relationships with the force

Police authorities are responsible for appointing chief officers, but building up an effective working relationship is not always easy. While it is recognised that it might be damaging to public confidence in the police for the authority to be seen to oppose the force in public, it is essential that the public is confident that the authority is properly holding the force to account. The authority’s relationship with the force should be close enough to facilitate the force and the authority working together with mutual respect, but not at the expense of the authority failing to uncover performance failures or to publicly hold the force to account for them. This section looks at what characterises a good working relationship between force and authority.

#### 3.4.1 What is an effective working relationship?

One of the most important characteristics of an effective authority is its relationship with the chief officer, which influences and underlines its relationship with the whole force. All the authorities contacted in developing this guidance said that it was essential to effective authority working, and therefore the sixth hallmark summarises this.
Hallmark 6

Authority members and officers are supportive but challenging in their key relationship with the chief officer. This key relationship enables the authority to work with the force without becoming too close to it.

Almost all authorities contacted also said that they had a good working relationship with their force, and that the relationship was open and honest. However, even when an authority feels it has an open and honest working relationship with the force, it does not follow that the force views the relationship in the same way. During the research for this guidance, it became clear that in some cases authorities viewed themselves as effective at performance management but their forces did not regard the authority as effective or contributing to the force carrying out its role.

It can be hard for an authority to fully appreciate how the force perceives them, particularly in terms of the value the authority adds to force activity and whether the force understands the benefits that its efforts to work with the authority bring to the authority. Building an effective relationship with the chief officer and force must start with a joint understanding of the authority’s role, and be followed by other steps to develop the relationship.

3.4.2 Developing the authority’s working relationships

Because relationship building is so dependent on individuals and how they work together, it is hard to identify what authorities can do to develop their relationship with the force and the chief officer and make it more productive. However, the following characteristics were commonly observed in authorities whose performance management function was more developed and will provide a steer to authorities seeking to develop this area:

- **The police authority:**
  - Is clear about what its role is, and what “holding to account” and “securing efficient and effective policing” means for them. The force shares this view of the authority’s role
  - Has informal links with the force and does not communicate with the force solely on a formal basis through meetings – members and officers also have regular informal access to members of the force at all levels

- **Members:**
  - Are knowledgeable about policing – they have earned the respect of the chief officer, who values the authority’s input
  - Are confident enough to ask challenging questions of the chief officer and other police officers without damaging the relationship
  - Provide ideas and support, from their wider involvement in the community and public services, that help their force tackle performance issues
• The force:
  – The chief officer and other nominated officers (e.g. the deputy chief constable) attend performance committee and any other meetings to which they are invited
  – The role of the authority in the performance management context is clearly communicated to the chief officer team, BCU commanders and other key members of the force. Members of the force understand the authority’s remit and support it
  – The chief officer supports members’ working relationships with BCU commanders

• The force and the police authority:
  – The chief officer and the chair of the police authority appear together in public at high-profile events, press conferences, etc.
  – The relationship with the force is two-way – the force is able to ask the authority why it is interested in exploring a particular issue, and the authority is prepared to explain its interest, in order to ensure that force and authority time is used most productively.

An authority that is clear about its aims and objectives in performance management, whose members are informed, supported and knowledgeable and who are supportive of the chief officer as well as challenging, is in a good position to build effective working relationships with the force at all levels.

3.5 Recruitment and appraisal of chief officers

Appointing chief officers is a key authority responsibility, and the authority should consider carefully the performance needs of the force during the process.

The basic procedure for recruiting chief officers (chief constable, deputy chief constable and assistant chief constable) is outlined in the flow chart overleaf. The police authority does not currently have a statutory responsibility for appointing police staff at Association of Chief Police Officer ranks (e.g. the force’s director of finance or other roles usually taken by police staff), although as a matter of good practice police authorities would usually be involved in some way.

Authorities need to ensure that they have the capability to undertake the recruitment and selection of chief officers and that this capability is up to date. All members and officers involved in the selection of chief officers should have appropriate training, even if they have a background in recruitment and selection, since the appointment is such a key responsibility and needs to be specific to policing.

Authorities in the position of recruiting and selecting a new chief constable will need to pay particular attention to the relationship they want to build with the new chief. This is a period of opportunity, when the authority can reassess how it interacts with the force and put a renewed emphasis on its role in performance management.
During the period of change, the authority will also need to ensure that it maintains its focus on the priorities it has already identified, and that any change in priorities is the result of the rigorous planning process outlined in section 2.2 above. The case study below shows how one authority used the opportunity of changes in the command team to refocus both the force and the authority on performance improvement.

As the officer with overall responsibility for the performance of the force, the chief officer’s objectives are likely to have strong links to force performance objectives. With HMIC, police authorities are involved in appraisals of chief officers. There is a gradual transfer of this responsibility from regional inspectors to police authority chairs, and authorities will need to build up their capability in appraising chief officers.
Case study: Recruiting chief officers to focus on performance improvement

What was the issue?

Towards the end of the tenure of the previous chief constable, a police force had a range of poor performance issues. The police authority was experiencing a patchy working relationship with the chief constable and wanted to make sure that it established an effective working relationship with the new chief, and that the areas of poor performance were addressed.

What did the police authority do?

The authority wanted to take the opportunity to renew its own and the force’s focus on performance. To start with, the authority reviewed how well its own structures supported performance management. This led to a changed committee structure, including the formation of a performance and audit committee to help the authority focus more effectively on performance.

A strategic review of the force’s senior management team was also undertaken. This identified the following needs:

- When recruiting a new chief constable, the authority wanted to focus on the performance improvement aspect of the role and the skills to rebuild the relationship between the authority and the constabulary
- New posts were to be created on the force’s senior management team: strategic director of HR and strategic director of finance.

To fill the senior management team with the right people, the authority had to show strong leadership:

- To help it appoint individuals with the right skills, the authority used a recruitment consultancy to fill both the new strategic roles. Both were filled by individuals from senior positions in the private sector (one a former executive director)
- The authority recruited a new deputy chief constable, with an extended remit covering performance improvement (not previously part of the role)
- The authority also created a third assistant chief constable post with the remit of crime and criminal justice. The authority had the support of HMIC in creating the new role.

What were the benefits?

The authority found that its new performance and audit committee enabled it to give performance the attention and focus that it wanted. The force’s performance also improved, receiving HMIC commendation for improved service.

What follow-up action has the police authority taken or planned?

On the arrival of the new chief constable, the authority held a strategic awayday for all members and for the chief officers’ group to set the tone for the future and agree a vision and strategic plan. The first awayday was a success and the following year a second, two-day strategic meeting was held.
4. Structures and processes

This chapter deals with the structures and processes used by police authorities for performance management. It focuses on the core structures that support the delivery part of the performance cycle (see diagram of the performance cycle in chapter 2 above).

Additional working groups or sub-committees can be put in place for planning and target setting so that the full authority may adopt the three-year strategy, the policing plan and targets with confidence. The structures for planning often reflect the nature of the relationship between the authority and its force, and the degree to which collaborative working is favoured (e.g. an informal joint working group) or a more formal separation of responsibilities (a committee or sub-committee receiving the chief constable’s draft proposals).

If separate structures are in place for planning and target setting, they need to be fully linked to the performance management structures dealing with service delivery. If not, the levels of performance understanding, of trends and levers for performance improvement that develop amongst those assessing delivery performance may not be fully utilised in setting effective plans and targets. Scope for improvement in this area was visible among some of the authorities who contributed to this guide.

Similar structures for performance management will get different results in different authorities. Focusing on how effectively an authority uses its structures and processes is as important as the structures themselves. A large number of authorities run meeting cycles which risk getting highly bureaucratic, with meetings not having a clear objective, and/or not clearly adding value to policing or helping the force to improve. This chapter provides examples which may be of use to authorities when they are reviewing their own performance management structures and processes.

4.1 Main structures used for ensuring delivery

During the delivery stage of the performance cycle, the force will be engaged in delivering policing services to local communities. The authority’s role lies in ensuring that the force delivers the performance to which the force and authority have committed in the local policing plan. The authority needs to monitor performance, ensure that the force has action plans in place to address any areas that are not on target, and possibly take an active (not operational) role in certain areas (this will be discussed in section 4.1.5 below). The importance of carrying out this role effectively is underlined by the seventh hallmark:

**Hallmark 7**

Members lead the review of performance through effective questioning and rigorous follow-up during meetings with the force

Chapter 4 focuses on the range of structures available to authorities that promote effective examination of performance by members and therefore assist members in leading the review of performance. Chapter 5 focuses on how members can lead the review of performance.

The diagram below shows how various different meetings that might be used by authorities for performance management could be used at different stages in the performance management
process (although no authority necessarily uses this exact system). When reviewing performance management structures and processes, authorities will need to take account of the purpose each meeting fulfils and its position in the authority’s overall performance management process. The potential role of each type of meeting is discussed in the remainder of this section.

### 4.1.1 The formal, public performance committee

The formal committee, held in public, with powers delegated from the full police authority, is a widespread mechanism for holding the chief officer to account. There is variation in practice regarding:

- **Terms of reference:** some authorities have a dedicated performance committee which discusses only policing performance. Typically, financial and human resources (HR) matters are dealt with by other committees in these authorities. A larger number of authorities combine performance with another authority function. Examples of committees are:
  - Scrutiny and Audit (Norfolk)
  - Audit and Performance (Cumbria)
  - Corporate Planning, Performance and Review (Greater Manchester Police Authority – GMPA)
  - Corporate Planning and Performance (Gwent)

- **Frequency:** typical committee meeting frequency is quarterly. Some authorities supplement the quarterly meeting with other updates more frequently, e.g. a monthly newsletter, or more frequent informal meetings

- **In some authorities, the formal performance committee is the main or only structure used to hold the force to account. In others, it forms part of a range of activities, with regular informal meetings also being used for holding the force to account.**
Advantages of the formal, public performance committee:
+ Members of the public can attend the committee if they wish to (the authority does have other ways to ensure wider communication of performance – e.g. the local policing summaries described in section 2.4.2)
+ The committee provides a public forum for the authority to praise good performance.

Disadvantages of the formal, public performance committee:
– The traditional structure of the formal committee may not allow enough time to get into performance problems and issues in depth
– All individuals speaking must be prepared and papers and presentations circulated in advance, and made available to the public – processes for informal forums can be less restrictive
– It is common for members to have difficulty being sufficiently challenging in public, whether or not any members of the public are present (since the meeting minutes are likely to be formally published), because:
  – Members can lack the skills and confidence to be publicly challenging
  – Members can feel the need for the authority to appear supportive of the force, and not undermine it in public.

4.1.2 The private meeting with the force
Some police authorities hold a private performance meeting with the force. The meeting is usually a smaller meeting than the formal committee, with the dates, agenda and minutes not formally published. There are two separate uses of the private meeting:

- **As the main forum for discussing performance and holding the force to account:** the private panel is a formal structure used instead of having a public committee, and feeds directly back into the full authority (a public forum for decision making)
- **As an informal meeting to supplement the formal committee:** The meeting is used for preparation or run-through of main issues, so that force and authority can resolve major questions or problems before the committee meeting, which is held in public. Some authorities that hold informal meetings as well as a formal committee say that “this is where the real holding to account happens”.

Advantages of the privately-held committee or panel:
+ Private setting can give some members greater confidence, making it easier for them to be challenging and ask more questions
+ Police force representatives feel less exposed, and so are willing to be more open than they would in a public forum, e.g. members of the force may be willing to discuss operational matters or other issues in more depth than they would in public
+ Both authority members and force may feel less need to present a united front, so both sides are more willing to disagree, or raise areas where they think they might disagree since they know they will have a chance to discuss them before the disagreement reaches the public domain
+ There may be more time to discuss particular aspects of performance
+ Although discussion of poor performance must not be restricted to private meetings, sensitive performance issues may be better resolved in a non-public forum.

Disadvantages of the privately-held committee or panel:
- The authority needs to balance the greater perceived freedom for discussion in a private forum against the responsibility to represent the public and publicly hold the chief officer to account. The privately-held meeting must not prevent the authority exposing poor performance in public: this is essential to the authority’s role in public accountability. A public performance committee can be a way of doing this
- A meeting held in private cannot have delegated decision-making powers: all decisions must be referred to the full authority (or other meeting held in public)
- If the private meeting is the main or sole forum for in-depth discussion of performance, the authority risks getting too “cosy” with the force, which may compromise its ability to be rigorous in its management of performance. This is also a risk if the private meeting becomes a joint preparation session for the formal committee, to the extent that the formal committee becomes, to a large extent, scripted.

Examples of privately-held committees or panels

**Surrey Police Authority**

The performance panel is held in private. It does not have delegated decision-making powers, but recommends decisions to the full authority.

**North Yorkshire Police Authority**

The performance management “thematic group”, held in private by a small number of members, is an informal forum for very robust challenge of the force’s performance. Other thematic groups such as finance and resources examine performance in other areas. The formal performance monitoring board is then held in public to fulfil the public accountability role.
The performance panel is held in private, with the force participation led by the deputy chief constable. The panel is a forum for authority and force joint working. The authority and force can do more in-depth work, for example discussing areas such as target setting, reviewing different options and their implications, taking the time to do additional analysis and discuss the results again, before the results are submitted to the full authority. In Thames Valley the performance panel is also a force-wide structure that links and sits on top of the basic command unit (BCU)-based committee structure.

4.1.3 Sub-force level forums

Public involvement in police authority forums is generally very limited, with the exception of specific consultation events. Attendance at authority meetings, open to the public, is rare. In moving to strategic police authorities, it is especially important that authorities review how they will remain connected to the communities they serve. The Home Office is taking forward recommendations from the review of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act to strengthen community safety accountability at the BCU/crime and disorder reduction partnership (CDRP) level. The Association of Police Authorities has also been engaged in pilots which look at strengthening police accountability and performance at the BCU level through a range of mechanisms. Examples from these pilots are set out below.

Example: Focusing on performance at the local level

Thames Valley Police Authority restructured along BCU lines in April 2005. Each of the force’s five BCUs is now monitored and scrutinised by its own BCU committee, and at a more local level, the authority has 16 local area policing boards. The 16 police areas are co-terminous with district councils and CDRPs.

Local area policing boards currently meet in private. The membership comprises at least one authority member, the local area commander, and six to ten representatives of the community. These individuals are drawn from local businesses, schools (including sixth form students) and representatives of community groups. The boards’ key responsibilities are to:

- Ensure that local policing is effective in its development of priorities to meet community concerns, and in achieving targets to address those concerns
- Assist in developing local priorities
- Provide local accountability for policing
- Monitor performance against targets and priorities
- Ensure there is effective local engagement and consultation by the local police and other key partners at a local level
- Work with local CDRPs.
Example: Developing the role of local-level structures

West Mercia Police Authority introduced community policing boards in 2001. In 2004, a Best Value review of the authority’s community engagement recognised that the statutory responsibility for partnership working now rested with the new CDRPs. As a result, the membership, protocol and terms of reference for community policing boards were changed, and stronger reporting back arrangements implemented. The new boards were re-focused on monitoring divisional activity, with the CDRPs focusing on partnership working. The new style boards met for the first time in June 2005, following a training seminar for all members.

Members of the new community policing boards are the local divisional commander, three police authority members, representatives from the three Police Independent Advisory Groups, Chamber of Commerce, Neighbourhood Watch Association and two independent community representatives.

The five boards meet twice a year and now:

- Monitor community engagement both by members of the authority and West Mercia Constabulary
- Monitor divisional performance
- Monitor press and public relations.

The input from the diverse members provides constabulary and authority with a “reality check” on what is or is not working on the ground: this sometimes highlights a difference between perception of the constabulary or authority and reality. The boards provide feedback and suggestions on what might work better in the local area. It is still too soon for the benefits of the community policing boards to be apparent. The authority will undertake an evaluation of their value in due course.

4.1.4 The members-only panel

Some police authorities have a meeting for members only, held before the meeting with the force (e.g. prior to the formal performance committee), to help members to prepare for it. This internal meeting is usually supported by a performance officer who may brief members and lead them in preparing areas for questioning. The chair of the committee may lead the panel and use the time to co-ordinate lines of questioning.

There may be some overlap between this pre-meeting, used to prepare the authority for the holding to account process, and the member-learning activities described in section 3.2.2 above. The pre-meeting may be an appropriate forum for some learning or coaching from the performance officer, depending on the aims and objectives of the meeting.
Advantages of the members-only panel:

+ As a group, all members of the performance committee have an opportunity to examine the performance report, statistics or other information. Many people find discussion an easier way to cover large amounts of information than reading.
+ The committee chair can organise the challenge that members want to take place at the committee, therefore knowing what kind of questioning members will want to pursue, and which follow-on questions might be required. The preparation means that members are better able to operate as a team, and can increase the level of discussion in the meeting with the force.
+ Provides an appropriate forum for member learning supported by officers, separate from the holding to account meeting with the force.

Disadvantages of the members-only panel:

– The additional meeting requires more time and is likely to be particularly difficult for authorities that cover large geographical areas because in these authorities many members have to travel long distances to get to meetings in different parts of the force.

Why it’s a good idea to keep “member learning” separate from “holding to account”

In some authorities, the member-learning element of authority business and the holding the force to account are not distinct, with the result that the performance committee is in part or even mostly a learning session for members. The force is not likely to be sufficiently scrutinised where this is the case, and officers of the force may perceive the authority to be ineffective if members do not appear to understand the business or challenge performance.

See section 3.2.2 for further discussion on the importance of member learning and development activities, and section 4.2.2 for detail on the chair’s role in keeping performance meetings focused on their objectives.

4.1.5 The “scrutiny” project and other authority-led activity

Some police authorities have started to do independent work on specific areas of performance, that which combines input from the force and authority, and that of delivery partners. The work typically takes the form of an investigative review, varying in duration from many months for a substantial, wide-ranging project at the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) to a single day for a small project at a small authority. The MPA and GMPA call their in-depth projects “scrutinies”. However, authority investigation is not only a tool that big, well-resourced authorities can use: smaller authorities with lower levels of resource are starting to use it too, as the case studies in this section show.
Advantages of authority-led investigation ("scrutiny" projects):

+ The proactive approach demonstrates to the force and other stakeholders that the authority is willing to contribute significant work, as well as request that the force do more work
+ If done properly, it should add value to the force
+ Increases the authority’s profile and demonstrates to local people what the authority does for them
+ Scrutiny projects widen the authority’s role beyond questioning, probing and challenging. With partners, the authority may contribute to identifying solutions to problems
+ This kind of work can be interesting and motivating for members as well as officers. Even authorities which do not have high levels of officer resource might see benefits in undertaking smaller, well-defined projects as the enthusiasm they generate can provide a boost for other authority work.

Disadvantages of authority-led investigation ("scrutiny" projects):

- Although it is possible for smaller authorities to undertake authority-led projects, authorities which are in the early stages of developing their performance management role are likely not to be able to attempt this kind of work. This is likely to be the case if the authority:
  - Does not have performance officers
  - Members are not yet sufficiently knowledgeable/skilled.

Note that these case studies have been chosen to illustrate how the authorities described took a proactive role and the benefits that this brought. The case studies are not promoting another authority undertaking its own work in that particular area of policing. Every authority will need to establish its own areas of local concern for potential investigation by the authority.

It is important for authorities to have a rigorous, evidence-based process for determining which areas to focus on in scrutinies or other authority-led work. Since they can take up a significant amount of resource and time, the authority should be clear about the importance of the project.

The MPA’s website provides a summary of each of the MPA’s scrutinies and the full reports can also be downloaded. A case study demonstrating the benefits seen by a smaller authority, conducting a smaller-scale project, is presented below.
Case study: Leading a project to identify performance improvements

What was the issue?

The Audit Commission reviews crime recording in police authorities. In 2004, Humberside Police Authority received a rating of green for data quality, and amber for management arrangements and police authority involvement.

However, in the months following the external audit, internal audits undertaken by the force crime registrar indicated that National Crime Reporting Standard (NCRS) compliance might be slipping in some of Humberside’s BCUs. The authority was informed of the possible slippage and became concerned that the action plan from the 2004 external audit was not being given priority by BCU managers.

What did the authority do?

The force’s chief officers agreed to police authority members and officers undertaking an independent audit of the NCRS situation, and reporting back directly to them on their findings. The force provided the assistance of their force crime registrar.

The authority’s performance and resources officer undertook a two-day audit on two of the largest BCUs with assistance from the force crime registrar. The purpose of the authority-led audit was to ascertain the commitment of management and police staff/officers to NCRS, in advance of the Audit Commission’s next review. It looked at "snapshot" data from the incident system and interviewed command centre and advice desk staff as well as the BCU management teams.

The authority-led audit looked at what each BCU had done to:

- Ensure the importance of NCRS was understood at all levels
- Put in place an efficient monitoring process.

The performance and resources officer produced a comprehensive report for members and chief officers of the force outlining the audit findings, observations and key recommendations to resolve issues.

How did the force respond?

Chief officers accepted the report’s findings and recommendations and made changes. A key change was to the force policy on generating crime reports from call logs (“criming”), to create a more corporate approach: all crime reports must now be generated within 24 hours of the call.
What were the benefits?

The authority involvement assisted the force in an area in which it needed help to improve performance. The authority resource was able to carry out work that the force had not been able to do, and suggest solutions for problems. The force crime registrar stated:

“As the force crime registrar I have welcomed the ongoing co-operation between the police authority and chief officers to produce and manage efficient reporting and recording procedures, which are seen as corporate and necessary for the force to have achieved a high level of crime data compliance. I see the inter-dependency of these two bodies in this area, as pivotal in achieving higher standards through understanding and mutual support. This co-operation facilitates the prompt and ethical recording of crime, which produces benefits for the community.”

NCRS compliance since the change has improved and this was validated by the Audit Commission’s 2005 audit. Humberside’s annual audit letter stated:

“We have recently completed the data analysis aspect of the data quality review. The testing found very high levels of National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) compliance. Whilst this has built on last year’s performance there is evidence that NCRS compliance deteriorated during the last 12 months of BCU restructuring. However, the changes to call handling and rigorous intervention by the authority procedures introduced in October have had a very positive effect. It is also hoped that this new approach will allow the force to improve public satisfaction in the long term. There is already clear evidence of greater incident prioritisation and management. It is vital that the authority continues to closely monitor ongoing performance to ensure that this level of compliance is maintained.”

What follow-up action has the authority taken or planned?

The performance and resources officer, on behalf of the lead members, will undertake a re-visit six months after implementation to ensure that the improvements are being sustained. This will provide assurance to the authority, chief officers and Audit Commission that the improvements are being sustained across the force.

4.2 Getting the most out of your structures and processes

Authorities can do a significant amount to ensure that they get the most out of their structures and processes for managing performance. This section looks at practical ways authorities can make sure that their performance management structures “work hard” – that authorities derive as much value as possible from them, as highlighted by the eighth hallmark:

Hallmark 8

The authority sets aside adequate time for the consideration of performance and makes best use of that time through focus and preparation.
This section concludes with a case study of Cambridgeshire Police Authority, an authority which, following Home Office engagement with its force, was reviewing its structures and processes and building a new support model, having a dedicated chief executive’s office for the first time.

4.2.1 Meeting arrangements that serve the meeting

Each meeting about performance will have a particular purpose. The meeting arrangements need to serve the purpose of the meeting, not the other way around. Recent changes in some authorities have been driven in part by the perception that their meetings had become too process-driven – that is, more effort was taken up servicing the meeting than was put into the content of the meeting.

Timing of meetings

Some authorities have found that they get more out of authority meetings, such as the performance committee, if those meetings are synchronised with the force’s meeting cycle.

Timeliness of performance data and reports

Many authorities have reviewed this to ensure that members scrutinise the most up-to-date data. The authority needs to ensure that the process for getting information to members does not introduce lags: e.g. one authority found that there was a lead time of many weeks between the end of the reporting period and the performance committee, brought about by the length of time taken for the force to produce its performance report, the chief officer to approve it, and for the papers to be distributed to members by post.

Managing the agenda

Many authorities have found that the agenda of the performance committee tends to be long, with meetings taking a long time or important items not being given the attention they need for in-depth discussion. The authority should be in control of the agenda and very clear what the objective of the meeting is, and not allow an over-full agenda to distract the meeting from its objective. There are several steps that authorities can take to manage an over-long agenda in a formal committee:

- **Split performance from other topics.** Some authorities combine performance with other functions in a single committee. If this gives the authority too little time to scrutinise performance, then it could move to a committee or meeting dedicated to performance
  - A disadvantage of this approach is that performance affects and is affected by many other areas of the authority’s business, so this can seem like an artificial and unhelpful split. To mitigate this, the authority needs strong links between the performance committee and other meetings (e.g. cross-membership between committees, processes for feeding into other meetings, etc.)

- **Deal with performance in other forums.** Other forums can be used to scrutinise specific areas in depth, as described in previous sections. Examples of this are informal meetings with the force, as described in section 4.1.2 above, and pre-preparation of members at members-only meeting, section 4.1.4 above
• **Remove items that do not lead to an action or decision.** There may be other ways the authority can deal with agenda items which are for information only, and do not require a decision or input from the committee: e.g. South Yorkshire Police Authority has no longer has items “for noting” at its performance committee.

• **Keep presentations to a minimum.** The authority should ensure that any presentations to the committee are short and to the point, covering specific areas of interest. A presentation can take up too much time on areas where performance does not need to be scrutinised in detail: the agenda should allow the committee to focus on those areas identified as requiring further probing and so the authority may need to discuss with the force the force’s approach to the authority’s meetings.

### 4.2.2 Making the meeting effective

Once the authority has determined a clear objective for the meeting, ensured that members are equipped to scrutinise and have officer support, and that the meeting arrangements support the objective of the meeting, it remains to make the meeting itself as effective as it can be. This is the responsibility of the chair.

**Role of the chair**

The performance section of a committee meeting, with the challenges of the current policing climate and demands of a national performance regime, requires specific things of the chair, which differ from a traditional chair’s role. Effective chairing helps the meeting to be more challenging and more productive, and enables the authority to operate as a team, which is much more powerful than unco-ordinated individuals. This section sets out the particular challenges and ways to overcome them, observed during the research for this guidance:

• **Co-ordinating the challenge:** the chair should know what the main areas of challenge on performance are going to be. This might come from:
  - The chair’s own reading and analysis of papers
  - Pre-brief or members-only panel – allows the chair to organise how the meeting will run (described in section 4.1.4 above), with support from officers

• **Ensuring that actions are taken:** performance often needs considerable amount of questioning and discussion. The chair will need to ensure that discussion is followed up by actions, where appropriate, and that these are fed into other authority meetings as required

• **Keeping discussion focused on scrutiny:** the chair will need to ensure that the meeting does not get distracted from its objective. Things to watch out for include:
  - Keeping the discussion strategic – the chair may need to move the meeting on if members are distracted by discussion of a specific crime or call to the force
- First answers to questions – it’s easy to accept the first answer to a question without thinking closely enough about whether the answer is sufficient. Through no fault of the person responding, the answer may not be specific or detailed enough, or it may lead to other questions. The chair has a vital role to play in ensuring that questions are not simply answered and the meeting moves on, but that there is enough opportunity for the authority to explore areas of concern fully.

- Tendency to spend a lot of time congratulating the force – while the authority should of course congratulate the force on good performance, in some cases reporting of good news from the more “glamorous” side of operational policing can be distracting, and the emphasis of the meeting is distorted.

- Keeping questioning organised: the chair might want to consider on an item by item basis whether questions should be taken as the person introducing the item goes through it, or all together at the end.

Questions at the end prevents discussion getting bogged down, or questions being asked that would have been answered later.

Questions as they go along for longer items, members might have to listen to a long period of talk, noting the things that they want to go back to, before being able to question the talker. It is then extremely difficult to challenge effectively all the areas that need it. It is harder to prioritise areas for questioning.

**Following up and feeding back to other police authority forums**

In addition to the chair ensuring that actions are taken appropriately, the authority needs to have a rigorous process in place for taking actions away and following up. The authority needs to ensure that its various meetings are “joined up”. These feedback mechanisms are also key to any authority activity that involves numbers of meetings with different individuals present at each one. This is especially important when the authority has separate committees for performance and planning since they are integrated parts of the performance management cycle discussed in chapter 2.

When the meeting cycle is quarterly, it can be ineffective to ask for actions/reports to go back to the next meeting. This may mean that it is another three months before anything happens on areas of poor performance, and the authority cannot influence its areas of concern. One authority addresses this by tailoring the response to the action: for example, where the authority has asked the force for some in-depth analysis on a topic, a smaller group of members might meet on a one-off basis, to discuss the analysis and ensure that any action required on the basis of it is taken immediately rather than waiting for the next committee meeting.

**Maintenance strategies for areas that have improved**

The authority needs to have a maintenance strategy for areas of performance that have improved, so that once the focus is off, performance does not dip again. This maintenance strategy is important, because unless the authority can move its focus
to new areas of concern, it will become bogged down with information on areas which are no longer failing. Some approaches include:

- Continued reporting focusing on the area of concern, but less frequent
- Adding performance indicators on the area of concern to the authority’s regular performance report, but not having special agenda items for discussion. The indicators will be checked, but the authority can rely on exception reporting of problems in those areas.

4.2.3 Improving the effectiveness of your structures and process – managing the change

While changing an authority’s structures to enable better scrutiny and holding to account can help the authority, it needs to consider the effect on the force as well. When making structural changes, the authority should make it clear to the force what it is doing and why. Change needs to be well thought through, as poorly planned or very frequent change can give the force an impression of a disorganised authority which lacks clarity of purpose and is not credible in a leading role in policing.

Debriefing

As well as briefing members, there are benefits to debriefing after meetings, especially when the authority is using new structures and processes. A full review of new ways of working might need to be based on the experiences of a year or more: a debriefing after an individual meeting can provide a way for the authority to evaluate its meetings continuously, provide feedback to the chair for the next meeting, and feed into members’ individual learning and development. A debriefing encourages members to look at the authority’s performance, and ask themselves “did we really scrutinise performance?” and “did that meeting add value to the policing service provided to our community?”

Case study: Designing effective support structures for the authority

What was the issue?

During a difficult and highly publicised era for Cambridgeshire Constabulary, the police authority embarked upon a complete rethink of how it conducted its business. Issues of concern to the authority included:

- Only the main authority meeting was able to make decisions – referring decision making up to the full authority increased the administrative load on the authority
- The authority lacked processes for communicating across committees and feeding in from one meeting to another
- There was a need for members’ collective understanding of performance issues to be enhanced and more effectively distributed across the authority.
What did the authority do?

The authority developed a new committee structure, processes and support structure underpinned by a some key principles:

- Decision making was delegated from the full authority to its committees
- The number of committees was to be kept to the minimum
- Although each committee should have a designated list of attendees, all members would be able to input to any committee
- Each committee would have a designated deputy chair
- Guidance was drawn up on what was expected of members in conducting the business of the authority, and the links between members’ roles and their allowances were made explicit.

The authority created a scrutiny and audit committee to take the lead on performance issues. To prepare for the committee, the authority implemented a process of “advance challenge”:

- The authority’s performance adviser receives the force’s performance data and examines it with a member of the committee. The performance adviser and member develop an initial paper for the chief constable challenging aspects of performance. The chief constable provides a response to each challenge
- The force and the authority’s performance adviser then develop a joint report covering the main performance issues for the committee. The end product is a summary for members of the latest performance data, an examination of the issues the data raises, the authority’s points of challenge and the force’s response.

There was a greater focus on developing all members’ understanding of performance issues and providing them with support on performance. The authority also started to encourage informal communication channels to support formal communications, so, for example, every policing sector has an assigned member who provides an informal link between the sector and the authority.

A dedicated chief executive’s office

Following a period of joint clerkship with a neighbouring authority, the Cambridgeshire Police Authority established its own locally-based dedicated team. This has improved internal communications. The innovative performance challenge process, inherited from the joint clerkship, has been also been further refined to enhance its usefulness as a scrutiny tool for members.

How did the force respond?

The force was supportive of the new committee structure and the new way of working with the authority and its support team.

What were the benefits?

Members believe they are now in a better position to challenge the force on its performance because they are more informed. Meetings are shorter and more focused than before – for example, less time is spent on presentations, making more time available for discussing the issues.
Past policing performance in Cambridgeshire triggered improvement intervention, so when the authority speaks of greater confidence in its role through its new structures and systems, it is based on the experience of having worked through, with the force, some testing times.

Members have also felt the benefits of having dedicated support close by. The ability to “drop in” and discuss issues with their advisers has helped both members’ understanding and the ability of the authority to conduct its business in a timely manner.

**What follow-up action has the authority taken or planned?**

As the new structures, systems and support bed-in, the authority continues to refine and enhance them. One of the authority’s ongoing concerns is the amount of material that members are expected to read and understand: it is seeking ways to reduce this while ensuring that members are provided with the information they need.

### 4.3 Managing risk

While performance management needs to retain a balance between defending against risks (that could worsen performance) and seeking to exploit opportunities (that would transform performance), a robust risk management approach does allow a police authority to keep a watchful eye on priority issues for its attention, and ensuring delivery in its priority areas, as was suggested in the discussion of the police authority’s performance management role in section 2.2 above. A risk management approach can also help the authority at the planning and priority-setting stage of the performance management cycle, where the authority needs to balance all aspects of policing, also discussed in section 2.2 above.

An effective risk management process requires a **risk register**. The register contains a description of the risks, an evaluation of the degree of risk (i.e. likelihood, potential impact), and mitigating action planned or in place, across the whole business of a police force. The risk register therefore includes operational and non-operational (resourcing, technology, estates, systems, etc.) issues. Police forces will often keep a risk register to which the authority might contribute.

There is benefit in the police authority being involved in the risk management process, in contributing the authority’s own risks to the register, and in reviewing the highest rated risks as part of its performance management role. Members and police managers should be doing everything they possibly can to deliver performance improvement. Through understanding and managing risks, they can improve prioritisation of issues and the sustainability of improvements.

Some authorities are already incorporating an assessment of risks in their performance management processes. Both Norfolk and Lincolnshire Police Authorities have taken a role in the management of risks to their police forces – the roles are evolving. The presentation of risks to the authorities has added to members’ overall understanding of police business. The chief executives and the treasurers of the two authorities have key roles to play, through their responsibilities and professional advice role, in maintaining a dialogue on risk between members and the force.
4.4 The police authority role in BCU performance

4.4.1 The need for BCU-level performance management

The police authority role is to secure an efficient and effective police force, and hold the chief officer to account for the force’s performance. It is not enough for the police authority to concern itself with overall force performance because the authority needs to satisfy itself that consistent levels of performance are being delivered across the force at all levels. Police authorities therefore have a legitimate interest in the performance of individual BCUs, and should hold the chief officer to account for the performance of BCUs. The authority does not of course hold BCU commanders to account. It is the rightful role of the chief officer, and not the authority, to manage the performance of BCU commanders.

4.4.2 Ways that police authorities have approached BCU-level performance

The authority should have a good, up-to-date understanding of the performance of each BCU within its force area because this gives crucial insight into overall force performance. In order to have this, members and officers of the authority will need working relationships with BCU commanders. These relationships might take some time to establish as members need to develop a different kind of relationship from that which they have with the chief officer. The authority must avoid the pitfall of creating an alternative mechanism for BCU commanders to raise problems or complaints. At BCU level, members should focus on learning, understanding of how the BCU is managed, the particular performance challenges it faces and issues of concern for the community. Members can support and, in some authorities, discuss performance with BCU commanders, but not manage them or hold them to account.

As well as establishing working relationships with BCU commanders, the authority should use the information provided through those relationships to hold the chief officer to account for the performance of BCUs in the context of overall force performance, and taking into account how each BCU might be expected to perform (bearing in mind each will face different challenges). To do this, the authority will need structures and processes for reporting of BCU-level performance, and a forum for challenge of that performance.

Getting access to BCUs

Some authorities have encountered difficulties getting access to BCUs. For an authority that has not previously been engaged at BCU level, the authority is likely to need to build a strong, mutually respectful and trusting working relationship with the chief constable first, from which the authority can develop its role into closer involvement with BCUs.

Authorities approach BCU-level performance in a range of ways:

- BCU performance scrutinised by authority’s main performance committee, BCUs treated in rotation
• BCU-based structure: Thames Valley Police Authority’s new committee structure is based on BCUs (described in the example in section 4.1.3)
• Link member schemes: these are widespread, but in some authorities the links are little used. The scheme should enable link members to develop deep knowledge of their BCU, and regular meetings with BCU commanders help members to build a working relationship with them. The link member scheme should feed directly into the authority’s performance management processes
• Bulletins/newsletters: internal authority communications can help the authority disseminate information about BCUs across the membership.

Example: Defining a protocol for authority working with BCUs

Essex Police Authority has made improvements to its ability to scrutinise BCU performance. There is now a joint information sharing protocol in place between the force and the authority that sets down for both parties the working relationship between authority members and officers and BCU commanders and command teams. The protocol is set out in a short joint force/authority document, and aims to provide the authority with an improved understanding of operational policing at BCU level. It describes the access that members and officers should have to the BCU and the nature and frequency of their meetings. The protocol makes it clear to all concerned the principles behind the authority involvement in the BCUs and encourages information sharing in both directions.

4.5 Joint force and police authority working

In a number of police authorities, members and officers are invited to the force’s internal performance meetings. A force performance meeting is typically a compulsory meeting for all those police officers and equivalent police staff who lead business areas in the force. The meeting may involve a rigorous questioning by the command team in which each individual is required to account for him- or herself in front of their peers.

Authority attendance of the force’s meetings indicates a constructive relationship between the force and authority, and a commitment on the part of the force to developing the knowledge and understanding of members.

In many authorities where members attend force meetings, they do so as observers: since this is a force structure and not part of the authority’s holding to account mechanism, members do not question the police officers involved. Attending this kind of meeting on a regular basis enables members to:

• Develop a better appreciation of the way that the force is taking forward the priorities agreed in the policing plan
• Develop a greater understanding of the operational pressures faced by the force, which can help inform appropriate scrutiny in authority meetings
• See how the performance of BCUs and other departments within the force compares
• Gain a better appreciation of the structure of the force’s performance management regime, and how well it is working.
In a small number of authorities, members are invited to the force performance meeting as participants, and members are highly involved in force’s internal performance management arrangements:

- Attending force performance meetings can increase the authority’s involvement in and influence on force performance
- Authorities may need to exercise caution to avoid getting too close to the force and compromising the authority’s ability to hold the chief officer to account for decisions and actions that are taken by the force
- It is also a role that requires members with in-depth operational knowledge of the areas of performance under consideration, which many authorities do not yet have.

**Case study: Joint force and police authority working to improve performance**

**What was the issue?**

Surrey Police Authority and Surrey Police had identified a problem with response times to emergency calls. Public concern was expressed at community consultation groups and individual members of the public approached authority members. The authority’s performance panel found that performance in attending “immediate response” calls was low: 58% of calls were being attended to within the target time of 15 minutes at the beginning of 2003.

**What did the authority do?**

The force and authority jointly agreed that a Best Value review of targeted patrol teams (Surrey’s response teams) be carried out. A Best Value review was set up in July 2003, led by a force team. Three authority members sat on the review board and oversaw the review to ensure that it met authority requirements. In February 2004, a Best Value report was presented to the full authority together with an action plan for the 13 key recommendations made. The performance panel regularly monitored the action plan and performance progress.

In July 2005, all actions were completed and in October 2005, the full authority signed the Best Value review as closed, together with a cost-benefit analysis.

**How did the force respond?**

The force was keen to carry out the review and to implement the actions, and led the Best Value project. The force was pleased to have authority intervention, especially as some of the recommendations made required investment. The only difficulties encountered were around the differing perspectives of some members and the force on the service provided. The review dealt with this by seeking evidence for these perspectives and debating the recommendations in a workshop with all members and the chief officer group present.
What were the benefits?

Extra vehicles and other enhancements to the response function improved attendance rates within target times at "immediate response" incidents, from around 58% to over 80%. This was achieved without increasing the overall number of targeted patrol team officers, which would have moved officers from other important operational areas. An improved performance management regime has focused attention on operational performance within the response arena.

Some of the recommendations required investment (e.g. extra vehicles): in these areas, improvements could not have been achieved without authority involvement.

What follow-up action has the authority taken or planned?

The authority continues to monitor response times and customer satisfaction with attendance at incidents in its quarterly performance scorecard report from the force.
5. Data, analysis and reporting

This guidance has discussed the importance of both people and processes in enabling effective performance management by police authorities. However, the use of performance information is fundamental to successful performance management and both people and processes need to be supported by accurate and timely information in order to take effective decisions. The performance reports that the authority receives should therefore provide members with this support.

5.1 Performance information underpins performance management

To ensure that the authority is using information in the most effective way, authority members and officers need to understand how performance data should be analysed and how it can and should be used – hallmark nine.

Hallmark 9

The authority understands its performance information and uses it as a tool for scrutinising and managing performance

With this understanding, the authority will be best placed to ask for the right performance information, ensuring that it is analysed appropriately, and that it is derived from the most appropriate data sources. With these things in place, the authority will be able to:

• Ensure effective delivery on priorities through actively monitoring performance, recognising potential performance problems and ensuring that actions are taken by the force before it is too late. The police authority’s role is not a passive one: its monitoring of performance drives improvement
• Make appropriate decisions when planning and determining priorities, based on an understanding of the available evidence about the performance of the force.

For the purposes of this guidance, performance data is taken to mean the basic facts, measurements and statistics that are the starting point for any evidence-based consideration of performance.

Performance information is taken to imply something more sophisticated than simple data, i.e. it is the additional information that helps give meaning to performance data, therefore contributing to analysis and interpretation (such as contextual facts), and it can also mean the final product of the bringing together of the basic data and the contextual information (this might be considered a more “advanced” type of performance information).

The “Can You Manage It?” courses run through the Association of Police Authorities (APA) focus on equipping authority members and officers with an understanding of the effective use of performance data and information (more details can be found in appendix E).
5.2 Using performance information effectively

When looking at performance information, the key question that the authority needs to answer generally is “do we need to do anything in response to this?” Although this is easy to ask, it can be very difficult to answer correctly – because it can be very easy to misinterpret performance information, even when it looks fairly straightforward.

5.2.1 What performance indicators can tell us

A performance indicator is a representation of an area of performance that is of interest (e.g. a statistic), usually associated with a specific performance objective. Indicators tell us only about apparent performance – interpretation must be applied to performance indicators in order to get close to the picture of actual performance. Performance indicators can rarely be taken at face value, because there are always likely to be a number of possible interpretations for any pattern of information.

For example, if the number of robberies recorded by the force (a performance indicator) falls by 5%, this means that there is an apparent improvement in performance. It is possible that the force has successfully implemented a new initiative that prompted a change in actual performance. However, it is also possible that there has been a change in crime recording policy, some change in the environment which has started to discourage reporting of robberies, or simply that the change is down to the normal, random fluctuation of robbery levels over time. All of these things might alter apparent performance (the indicator) without any change in actual performance (the reality).

As authorities will generally be interested in changing performance as it actually relates to the local community (e.g. genuinely fewer robberies taking place, not just fewer robberies recorded), there is obviously a risk in accepting information from performance indicators at face value, without interpreting it to see if the desired outcomes have really been achieved. In this sense, always referring to performance indicators as indicators (rather than the alternative names “measures” or “metrics”) can be a helpful reminder of how to use them.

5.2.2 Understanding actual performance: the importance of analysis

For many desired outcomes, it may never be possible to get to the definitive picture of actual performance (for example, think how difficult it would be to know for sure how many drug misusers there were in a community). However, there are a number of things that can be done to help with the interpretation of performance indicators so as to be more confident of the picture of actual performance:

- **Benchmark performance indicators** against a set of “acceptance criteria” to ensure that either they best represent actual performance or authority members can be aware of the inbuilt limitations of the indicator from the start
- **Ensure that performance data is quality-assured** so that it is collected on a consistent basis to facilitate meaningful comparisons (over time or against peers)
Ensure that data is analysed appropriately. Appropriate analysis involves three principal stages:

1. **Understanding the patterns in the raw data** by using numerical techniques. It is important to consider looking at data using a variety of techniques (e.g. making comparisons over time, versus peers or against target trajectories; calculating whether changes are statistically significant) because it is rare that one method alone will allow all possible interpretations to be highlighted.

2. **Considering the possible competing interpretations** of the analysed data and, if necessary, finding further information to support or dismiss some of those interpretations.

3. **Drawing conclusions** using all of the available information, acknowledging any remaining uncertainty about the nature of actual performance. In drawing conclusions, it is important to guard against subconsciously favouring interpretations of performance data that support the outcome that was hoped for.

It is important that authority members and officers have a well-grounded understanding of what good analysis looks like, even if the analysis is not carried out by the authority itself. Exploring possible interpretations of performance data with a force will give members plenty of opportunities to ask searching but reasonable questions, ultimately helping provide reassurance that real improvements in performance are being made as the result of positive action by the force and their partners.

Arriving at conclusions based on careful analysis will therefore help authority members answer the question “do we need to do anything in response to this?” in both the regular monitoring of performance and in the determination of future priorities for the force.

Appendix F includes more information on performance indicators and analysis. The “Can You Manage It?” courses run through the APA for authority members and officers will help members and authorities learn to use performance information and analysis to best effect.

### 5.3 Defining your requirements for the performance report

Many authorities struggle with “too much data” – when the authority is not clear about how it wants to use data, there can be a tendency for it to ask for more and more, without focusing on the insight into performance the data should provide. Without a strong lead from the authority, many forces will provide data in quantities that overload members and officers – often in an attempt to be helpful. Clarity over why it needs a given piece of information will help the authority restrict its data requirements to the appropriate level necessary for it to carry out its duty.

#### Hallmark 10

The authority requests and receives timely, accurate and relevant performance data, analysis and information.
5.3.1 Why it is important for the police authority to be proactive in designing its performance report

Since the performance report is a tool to help the authority perform its role in scrutinising performance, the authority should take a leading role in deciding the content and format it requires. It is especially important for the authority to define what it wants from its performance report when the report is produced by the force. The authority should be clear, to itself and to the force, what each piece of information in the report is for, bearing in mind the principles of using information effectively outlined above. The authority should be willing to remove less important elements of the report, as well as add new elements, as the report should reflect the evolving focus of the authority’s performance management. If the authority does not lead in deciding what its performance report should look like, it risks getting a report from the force that contains just the information the force wants to provide (e.g. a replica of the force’s internal report), and with the force’s emphasis, not that of the authority. The case study below describes how Suffolk Police Authority recognised the need to improve its performance report and the importance of the authority determining what it needed in the report.

Broad principles for designing performance reports are provided in appendix F.

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**Case study: Taking the lead on designing the performance report**

**What was the issue?**

Early in 2004, Suffolk Police Authority’s monitoring and audit committee recognised that the content and format of the performance report it received from Suffolk Constabulary needed to be improved and that it was important for the authority to be more involved in determining its content. The committee wanted to ensure that the reports were presented in a way that was accessible to the public, included Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) measures and utilised the new information available from iQuanta.

**What did the police authority do?**

The monitoring and audit committee set up a working group of constabulary officers, members and authority officers, which explored how the new report could look and the variety of information and comparisons it could offer. The committee agreed key changes such as including comparative basic command unit (BCU) information and supporting commentary to place the statistics in context. The initial reports were revised and refined during the first few iterations.

The higher level of sophistication in the report has enhanced members’ understanding. To further improve authority knowledge and capability, the chair of the monitoring and audit committee and support officers undertook the APA “Can You Manage It?” training.
How did the force respond?

The constabulary was supportive of the authority’s need for more detailed and user-friendly reports and produced options of how improved reports could look and work. This was essential because the new way of working has undoubtedly increased the work involved in the preparation of performance reports. It has been challenging to get a helpful balance of data analysis and details of the action being taken to address problems without creating a huge report.

What were the benefits?

Having the authority involved in deciding the format and content of the reports has meant that members feel more ownership of them. The new reports require deeper engagement from both force and authority, but they better enable members to identify trends and understand where and, importantly, why the constabulary is or is not meeting its targets. Consequently, members have more understanding of the constabulary’s strengths and weaknesses. The monitoring and audit committee now makes more focused requests for further information or explanations regarding the actions being taken in response to performance issues.

What follow-up action has the police authority taken or planned?

In the last six months, there have been further discussions with the constabulary to improve the report’s executive summary and develop exception reporting in the key areas for improvement.

5.3.2 Commentary on performance information

The performance report should not just contain data (e.g. tables and charts). Data needs to be accompanied by commentary which describes the analysis of the data. However, note that commentary that merely describes the statistics is of limited use to the authority: it contains no more information than can be gained by looking at the data.

Useful commentary should include an interpretation of the data that tells members what is probably driving the downturn or upturn in the figures, detail activities already undertaken to correct any genuine downward trends, and explain any trade-off between areas of performance where there are limited resources. This level of commentary will usually need to be provided by the force, and the authority will want to study it carefully to make sure that interpretations and conclusions are reasonable and therefore that actions are appropriate and likely to deliver.

Authorities need to define the type of commentary they require and the level of detail it needs to contain. The type of commentary will depend on:

- The authority’s performance management structures – e.g. how frequent the meetings are, the amount of discussion that can be had face to face, other information sources used by members. The type and amount of commentary members need will depend on the context – if this is the only or main source of information for members about what the force is doing about performance, then they will need very full commentary

- Officer support – e.g. the level of briefing provided to members, the analysis provided by officers
• The preference of members for full or less full commentary – exception reporting (e.g. on extraordinary changes or emerging threats) can be used to ensure that commentary is targeted to low performance areas.

5.4 What are the best sources of performance information?

Performance information can – and should – come from a variety of sources. While raw data for most performance indicators will usually be derived from force systems, the authority should consider whether the force is best placed to meet all of its information needs. Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), the Audit Commission, local partners (e.g. the local authority), the Government Office and the Home Office iQuanta website may also provide the authority with vital information on performance, from data and basic analysis through to qualitative views.

In determining where to get information from, the authority needs to consider the need for timely and accurate information that covers all of the necessary areas of force performance, and allows for all perspectives to be considered. Many authorities focus on the Statutory Performance Indicators that are contained within the PPAF (as provided through annual publications and iQuanta). However, all authorities should also consider information on areas of priority that are not yet covered by PPAF indicators (e.g. Level 2 crime and protective services), or are of more relevance locally (e.g. data on a process that the authority is specifically funding the force to improve). This information need not be from performance indicators – it could be within narrative evidence.

Example: Focusing on Level 2 crime

Sussex Police Authority’s performance management processes include a strong focus on Level 2 crime (as defined by the National Intelligence Model (NIM), see section 2.2) and protective services. The planning and performance steering group is a joint working group with the force, meeting in private to lead on performance management and the planning process. The group does not meet in public because it discusses the force’s current operations in areas of major and organised crime, child protection, counter-terrorism and domestic violence. The group receives a briefing from the force’s criminal investigation department on current issues and major investigations. Members question performance and the way things are done.

Because the group reviews highly sensitive areas, the authority has had to break down barriers to communication by demonstrating that members are knowledgeable enough to contribute to the group. Over the past two years, the lead member scheme, whose members are very active, has greatly built up members’ knowledge and understanding of the business.

5.4.1 The force’s performance information

Some authorities rely on performance data, analysis and commentary provided by force staff, with little or no use made of external sources such as iQuanta. For authorities with a close relationship with the force and where the authority is satisfied that the force is generally performing well, this may work well.

The force’s performance information will often include information supplied through NIM – see section 2.2 for a description of NIM.
Advantages of using mostly or solely the force’s data and analysis:

+ Force data is usually more up to date than iQuanta – in some cases the authority can access information up to the previous day
+ Allows authority officers to focus on other activities that may bring more benefit, such as briefing members.

Disadvantages of using mostly or solely the force’s data and analysis:

- Relying on the force to provide data and analysis may make it difficult for the authority to be sufficiently independent, particularly in terms of highlighting potentially different interpretations of performance results
- Some authorities have full access to the force’s information systems – this is a lot of data, but is often not informative. The authority needs to ensure that it has processes in place that provide it with the information it needs – access to systems is not a substitute for information.

Activity Based Costing

Activity Based Costing (ABC) is a widely used costing system that seeks to place an accurate cost on what an organisation produces. In policing, the ABC model has been developed to calculate the costs of policing activities, thus enabling managers to continuously improve policing services. As such, and when used well, it is a valuable performance management tool.

ABC focuses down to BCU level and looks at the costs of specified policing activities and functions (e.g. visible patrol, crime incidents or non-crime incidents). The activity data is captured during activity analysis campaigns undertaken within each force area and aggregated up to give a forcewide picture. It includes all policing services delivered by BCU staff, as well as contributions from headquarters operational or organisational support units. Campaigns can also be undertaken to provide more in-depth information on specific functions (e.g. roads policing) or specific BCUs.

This enables comparisons to be made over time across police forces and between BCUs, and provides managers with a suite of information on Best Value processes.

The benefits of ABC to police authorities are:

- It enables police authorities to see how resources are being used
- It helps identify scope for efficiency improvements
- It enables police forces to justify additional resources by presenting their current resource usage accurately and transparently
- It increases accountability and identifies gaps between resource usage and priorities
- It supports engagement with the public on how police resources are being used.

Further information and guidance on using ABC is available on the Home Office website – see appendix E.
5.4.2 Police authority data and analysis: iQuanta

The particular relationship between the authority and the force plays a big role in whether the authority can rely on the force for the provision of information. Many authorities highly value having their own information independent of the force. The introduction of iQuanta as a data source and tool for members and officers, independent of forces, now gives all authorities access to a wide range of data, down to BCU level. Most importantly, iQuanta gives authorities the ability to compare their force against similar forces using "most similar" families (see appendix F for more information).

Advantages of using iQuanta:

+ Authorities that had met resistance from their force in accessing certain kinds of information [e.g. BCU-level data] now get that information quickly and directly
+ Authority officers can use iQuanta to produce independent performance reports and brief members (but note disadvantages)
+ Authorities whose forces do not make much use of most similar family comparisons are able to use these important analyses. As well as providing performance benchmarks, they are the basis on which the force and its BCUs are judged externally, so authorities can use these comparisons to highlight areas of performance to explore that might not be flagged up by in-force data.

Disadvantages of using iQuanta:

- iQuanta data will not be as recent as the force’s own data on many indicators, which means that there is always a risk of the force claiming that things have changed more recently. This might lead to the authority being reassured without rigorous analysis of the data
- iQuanta provides only a subset of the comprehensive data to which the force can provide access [which may limit the options for analysis]
- iQuanta-based reports may be different from reports based around force data. iQuanta only provides the minimum acceptable level of performance data analysis – it cannot provide the possible interpretations of that basic analysis. A report put together by an authority officer may interpret the statistics and draw out areas for probing by members, but cannot explain why apparent performance is as it is. The force will still need to provide explanations of the statistics, either through a separate commentary or the authority’s other structures and processes.

5.4.3 Other sources of performance information

Although force systems and iQuanta might be the primary sources of performance data for the authority, information that can help interpret the performance data and highlight risks that are not ordinarily covered by the reach of the authority’s performance regime can be derived from many other places. Authority officers can use this information in drawing up reports and briefing members.
Some examples include:

- HMIC inspection reports (local force or BCU-based, nationwide thematic, or baseline)
- Home Office research studies (carried out by the Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate)
- Local criminal justice board quarterly performance reports (produced by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform)
- Crime and Disorder reduction partnership performance activity
- Audit Commission reports
- Diagnostics carried out by external consultants or the Police Standards Unit.

The case study below describes the approach of Cumbria Police Authority, which had recently appointed a performance officer and which moved from receiving a report devised by the force to one that better met members’ needs, based on data from iQuanta.

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**Case study: Using a performance officer to revise members’ performance reports**

**What was the issue?**

Prior to March 2005, the staff of four at Cumbria Police Authority did not include dedicated officer support for members on performance and relied on performance data supplied in a format devised by the constabulary. The authority, particularly the audit and performance committee, wanted a stronger authority focus on performance monitoring and wanted to review the information it used to do this.

**What did the police authority do?**

Having consulted with the constabulary, the authority recruited a performance management and policy adviser to improve members’ understanding of performance and enable the authority to hold the constabulary to account more effectively.

Members of the audit and performance committee reviewed the types of information required to fully discharge their monitoring responsibilities. At the same time, the new performance officer reviewed the report formats used by a number of other police authorities. The officer drafted a number of different example formats for members to consider. Members had differing expectations about the level of detail they felt they needed to hold the force to account, and varied preferences for graphical information and figures, which the officer combined in a new report format.
How did the force respond?

The constabulary did not want the new format to increase the demand on constabulary officers’ time. The authority agreed that the new performance officer would take responsibility for putting together the data for the report, using iQuanta. The focus of constabulary input changed, with effort shifting to providing short, written exception reports on those areas where performance was off-target or less than average in the force’s “most similar forces” group. The constabulary expressed some concern about the instances in which the authority would ask for exception reports. The constabulary and the authority resolved this by devising a joint protocol setting down the circumstances under which an exception report would be required. At the same time, the constabulary was setting up internal performance management processes. At the constabulary’s new quarterly performance meeting, senior officers present performance to their peers and commanding officers. The exception reports required by the authority have become an extension of the force’s internal processes, which has helped integrate force and authority performance management. Both police authority and constabulary scrutiny of performance focuses on areas of strong performance as well as considering the areas that are less strong.

What were the benefits?

Authority members now have a better understanding of performance, and particularly what the constabulary is doing to tackle areas of weakness, and has an improved knowledge of good practice. The audit and performance committee considers areas of weak performance in more detail and the discussion is more focused and productive.

What follow-up action has the police authority taken or planned?

The role of performance information in holding the constabulary to account and its presentation is under constant review.
## Appendix A: Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Activity Based Costing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>Assistant Chief Constable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACPO</td>
<td>Association of Chief Police Officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APA</td>
<td>Association of Police Authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCU</td>
<td>Basic Command Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDRP</td>
<td>Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (England)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CJS</td>
<td>Criminal Justice System – refers to the agencies such as the police, the courts, the Prison Service, the Crown Prosecution Service and the National Probation Service, who work together to deliver the criminal justice process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPOSA</td>
<td>Chief Police Officers’ Staff Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSP</td>
<td>Community Safety Partnership (Wales)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCC</td>
<td>Deputy Chief Constable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCLG</td>
<td>Department for Communities and Local Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPN</td>
<td>Fixed Penalty Notice (FPNs issued for recordable offences count as sanction detections)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMPA</td>
<td>Greater Manchester Police Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GO</td>
<td>Government Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HMIC</td>
<td>Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary – inspectors of police forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resources (personnel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iQuanta</td>
<td>Web-based system that provides high-level management information about police performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| LAA          | Local Area Agreement  
Outcome delivery agreement negotiated between local partners and Government Offices |
| LCJB         | Local Criminal Justice Board  
Boards that are made up of representatives from local CJS agencies and aim to co-ordinate CJS activity |
| Level 1 crime | Local/BCU level crime (does not cross borders) |
| Level 2 crime | Crime that crosses police borders |
| LSP          | Local Strategic Partnership  
A partnership between public, private, community and voluntary agencies to co-ordinate and drive the delivery of local services |
| MSF          | Most Similar Force |
| NCRS         | National Crime Recording Standard |
| NIM          | National Intelligence Model  
A model for policing that ensures information is fully researched, developed and analysed to provide intelligence that senior managers can use to provide strategic direction, make tactical resourcing decisions about operational policing and manage risk |
| PCSO         | Police Community Support Officer |
| PI           | Performance Indicator (also KPI: Key Performance Indicator and SPI: Statutory Performance Indicator) |
| PPAF         | Policing Performance Assessment Framework (see chapter 2) |
| PSAAs        | Public Service Agreements  
Service delivery targets agreed between Her Majesty’s Treasury and each government department |
| PSU (or PCSD) | Police Standards Unit (becoming part of the Police and Crime Standards Directorate) |
| Sanction detection | A detection in which a person was charged, reported for summons, cautioned or issued with a fixed penalty notice, or the offence was taken into consideration by a court. Street warnings for possession of cannabis are also counted as sanction detections |
| SAP          | Senior Appointments Panel |
| SPI          | Statutory Performance Indicator |
### Appendix B: Current legislation: the police authority role in performance management

The table below lists the key current legislation relating to the police authority’s role in performance management, as defined in this guide. The Association of Police Authorities will circulate separately information about changes in the forthcoming Police and Justice Bill.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relevant section of the legislation</th>
<th>Essence of the legislation/what this means</th>
<th>Corresponding performance management activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Police Act 1996</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Functions of Police Authorities</td>
<td>Maintaining an efficient and effective police force</td>
<td>Holding the force to account, managing performance and ensuring poor performance is addressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Policing Objectives</td>
<td>Determining objectives for policing</td>
<td>Setting priorities and targets for the force, with regard to national and local objectives and performance targets, in consultation with the chief officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Policing Plans</td>
<td>Setting the strategic direction of the force and issuing a local policing plan</td>
<td>Setting the three-year strategy and annual local policing plan to include statements of priorities for the year the financial resources available and allocation of those resources. Establishing performance targets and performance monitoring arrangements for national and local priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Reports by Police Authorities</td>
<td>Monitoring and managing performance against the local policing plan and publishing the results</td>
<td>Monitoring and managing performance against the local policing plan, reporting performance information to the public on the extent objectives have been met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant section of the legislation</td>
<td>Essence of the legislation/what this means</td>
<td>Corresponding performance management activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 11</td>
<td>Appointing the Chief Constable</td>
<td>Considering the performance needs of the force when appointing the Chief Constable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointment and Removal of Chief Constables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 14</td>
<td>Maintaining a police fund</td>
<td>Monitoring and managing a police budget, determining what financial resources are available through setting a precept and other means. Allocating those resources to best deliver the policing priorities for the area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Fund</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 22</td>
<td>Generally reporting on policing and any other matter required</td>
<td>Regular reports should be requested and received outlining how the force is meeting its local and national objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports by Chief Constables to Police Authorities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 96</td>
<td>Views and co-operation of people in the area concerning policing</td>
<td>Duty to consult local people on policing in the area and reflecting those views when setting local priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining the Views of the Community on Policing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government Act 1999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3</td>
<td>Securing continuous improvements in policing</td>
<td>Ensuring continuous improvements in policing with regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness in those functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Duty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4</td>
<td>National Performance Indicators and Standards</td>
<td>The police authority shall meet any applicable performance standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Indicators and Standards</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant section of the legislation</td>
<td>Essence of the legislation/what this means</td>
<td>Corresponding performance management activity</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by the Police Reform Act 2000)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Section 5</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorities responsible for Strategies</td>
<td>Establishing partnerships for crime and disorder reduction</td>
<td>Working with local responsible authorities to tackle crime and disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section 6</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulation and Implementation of Strategies</td>
<td>Formulating and implementing a strategy of reduction of crime and disorder in the area. Reviewing levels of patterns of crime and disorder in the area. Preparing an analysis of the results of the review and publishing the results.</td>
<td>With partners, conducting a review of the levels and patterns of crime and disorder in the area. Producing a three-year strategy that sets out the objectives to be pursued, plus long-term and short-term performance indicators. Whilst implementing the strategy, continually monitoring the effectiveness and making any changes necessary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C: Who sets the performance agenda at the national level?

This appendix provides a brief guide to the main organisations that influence the policing performance landscape at the national level. Authorities will be influenced by each of these organisations to a greater or lesser degree, but authorities also have a role in helping shape the national agenda by contributing to and/or challenging the policies and actions taken by national bodies (often through the Association of Police Authorities).

Performance management is a crucial element of the public sector modernisation agenda and a number of mechanisms and structures have been put in place nationally to promote successful delivery. For example, Public Service Agreements are a mechanism by which the key priorities for government (as agreed between the Treasury and other departments) are set out, and they provide a focus on a measurable outcome for the structures that have been put in place to drive performance. Other such mechanisms and structures are described in the entries below.

C.1 The Home Office

The Home Office, headed by the Home Secretary, is the government department responsible for ensuring that we live in a safe, just and tolerant society. The department is responsible for the police in England and Wales, national security, the justice system and immigration. At the highest level, the Home Office influences policing performance across the whole of England and Wales when the Home Secretary sets out annual priorities for the service.

The Crime Reduction and Community Safety Group (CRCSG) within the Home Office has principal responsibility for policing issues. At the time of writing, this group is undergoing restructuring in order to better align itself with the priorities for the delivery agenda over coming years.

Within the new structure, there are likely to be directorates responsible for policing policy (including responsibility for police reform and force reorganisation), police workforce modernisation, the crime and drugs strategy, and police and crime standards.

The Police and Crime Standards Directorate will bring together previously separate parts of CRCSG concerned with the management of performance delivery, including the Police Standards Unit (police performance) and the Partnership Performance and Support Unit (crime and disorder reduction partnership (CDRP) performance). It is intended that this new directorate will have responsibility for the overall measurement and monitoring of performance of the Home Office’s crime reduction and community safety objectives, as well as having some “operational” capacity to support delivery partners with the application of good practice in areas of priority.

The Police Standards Unit in particular has provided support to the police service by:

- Developing and applying performance monitoring and assessment tools (e.g. the Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) and the iQuanta website)
- Providing targeted support to areas identified as performing poorly in comparison with peers, as well as providing wider support to the service on thematic issues (e.g. sanction detections performance)
- Helping develop good practice (e.g. on forensics, performance management and citizen focus) and disseminating this to forces.
This work will continue within the new structure, although it is anticipated that the new directorate will work closely with the National Police Improvement Agency (see below) on issues of good practice.

The Police Performance Steering Group (PPSG) is a Home Office-led group whose purpose is to provide a national-level body that receives police performance information, assesses and interprets its meaning and then makes decisions and takes action based on its findings. It is the uppermost layer of the processes by which individual police forces are held to account for their performance, and is the group that directs much of the intensive support provided to forces from the Home Office.

The group brings together in one forum the performance interests and knowledge of Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary, the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Association of Police Authorities, the Prime Minister’s Delivery Unit, Her Majesty’s Treasury, the Office for Criminal Justice Reform and Research, Development and Statistics (a Home Office-wide service). It ensures that Ministers receive sound and considered advice on individual force performance concerns and reports on more general, national-level performance delivery matters.

PPSG communicates with forces and authorities on a periodic basis to congratulate them on areas of good performance, to share its regular assessments of all forces, and – where necessary – to tell them about areas that they have flagged up for any apparent deterioration in performance.

Government Offices in the regions also have staff with responsibility for Home Office outcomes (under a Home Office regional director). In particular, Government Offices work with CDRPs to translate the Government’s crime reduction and community safety priorities into requirements for each area (e.g. through local targets and Local Area Agreements).

C.2 The National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA)

The NPIA is a newly constituted body which will support self-improvement across the police service and drive forward the Home Secretary’s national critical programmes. It will incorporate functions from Centrex and the Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO) and some elements the Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers.

C.3 Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC)

The role of HMIC is to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of policing and law enforcement in England, Wales and Northern Ireland through assessment and inspection of organisations and functions for which it has responsibility. This is to ensure that performance is improved, good practice is spread, and standards are agreed, achieved and maintained. Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Constabulary (HMCIC) is the Home Secretary’s principal professional policing adviser, and is independent of both the Home Office and the police service.

HMIC’s inspection methodology is risk based, around:

- Baseline Assessment at force level
- Basic command unit (BCU) inspection
- Thematic inspection (i.e. one theme across a number of forces)
- A range of code compliance and audits
HMIC also has a “troubleshooting” role: as the Home Secretary’s principal policing adviser, HMIC may be directed to examine a particular force or issue. HMIC also advises the Home Secretary on senior police appointments, through the senior appointments panel. In addition to Home Office police forces, HMIC now inspects the Serious Organised Crime Agency, the Civil Nuclear Constabulary and a range of other police and police-related organisations.

HMIC will become part of the new Justice, Community Safety and Custody Inspectorate in due course.

C.4 The Office for Criminal Justice Reform (OCJR)

OCJR is the cross-departmental team that supports all criminal justice agencies in working together to provide an improved service to the public. As a cross-departmental organisation, OCJR reports to Ministers in the Home Office, the Department for Constitutional Affairs and the Office of the Attorney General. The police service is an integral part of the criminal justice system and must play its part in bringing to justice those who offend. The Government sets out specific objectives for the criminal justice system, and the police service contributes to their achievement.

The performance action team within OCJR supports local criminal justice boards (the local partnerships that collaborate to deliver these targets) to deliver improved performance against targets.

C.5 The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

The role of DCLG (formerly the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) is to help create sustainable communities, working with other government departments, local councils, businesses, the voluntary sector, and communities themselves. Sustainable communities are about those aspects of life that matter to people: decent homes at prices people can afford; good public transport, schools, hospitals and shops; the ability to have a say on the way their neighbourhood is run; and a clean, safe environment. Issues on safe environments and neighbourhood renewal aim to improve quality of life, an important component of which is tackling crime and disorder.

Within communities, local strategic partnerships and CDRPs take forward these agendas. Partnership working is vital, but it adds to the complexity of performance monitoring as each partner has both separate and joint performance targets that need to make sense in relation to one another.

C.6 The Association of Police Authorities (APA)

The APA is the national body which represents all police authorities in England and Wales, the Northern Ireland Policing Board and the British Transport Police Authority. The Civil Nuclear Police Authority and Centrex are associate (non-voting) members. The APA has two main roles:

- To act as the national voice for police authorities
- To support police authorities in improving how they carry out their role locally.

Further information on the APA Plenary, Executive and Secretariat can be found at www.apa.police.uk
The APA Performance Management Policy Group

The APA Secretariat services a number of policy groups on different subject areas on which all police authorities have a representative. The purpose of the policy groups is to develop, promote, review and monitor APA policies relating to each policy area and to provide support to police authorities on related matters. The APA Performance Management Policy Group meets quarterly and the key priorities for this group in 2006/07 are as follows:

- To assist police authorities in ensuring that they have effective models of performance management and scrutiny at BCU level
- To ensure that the national performance framework is balanced, with a focus on performance against local priorities
- To assist police authorities in ensuring that there is minimal disruption to the standards of policing performance experienced by communities during restructuring
- To provide practical assistance to police authorities to improve the effectiveness of their performance management of forces through the development of a good practice resource.

The APA also runs a PPAF focus group, which is a regular forum to update and consult police authorities on PPAF issues. All members of the Performance Management Policy Group are also invited to attend meetings (approximately quarterly) of this group.

C.7 The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO)

ACPO is an independent, professionally-led strategic body. In the public interest and in equal and active partnership with government and the APA, ACPO leads and co-ordinates the direction and development of the police service in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In times of national need, ACPO, on behalf of all chief officers, co-ordinates the strategic policing response.

ACPO’s members are police officers of assistant chief constable rank (commanders in the Metropolitan Police and City of London Police) and above, and senior police staff managers, from the 44 forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, plus national agencies such as the National Criminal Intelligence Service and the National Crime Squad and other forces such as the British Transport Police and States of Jersey Police.

The ACPO Performance Management Business Area

The ACPO Performance Management Business Area and its constituent portfolios seek to assist in the improvement of performance in policing through the development and maintenance of an effective performance management regime.

The business area works actively and collaboratively with tripartite (and other) partners in order to refine further central performance monitoring mechanisms such as the PPAF, to develop programmes to enhance service provision (e.g. the National Quality of Service Commitment), and to enhance the maturation of the standards and systems that provide performance data (such as the National Crime Recording Standard).
The national police performance landscape (June 2006)

Police Performance Steering Group (and PPAF Steering Group)

Police audit and inspection
- Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary
- Audit Commission

Chair and Secretariat
- Home Office: • Policing policy • Police standards (operational support) and performance measurement and assessment • Partnership support • Research, Development and Statistics

Service representation
- Association of Chief Police Officers
- Association of Police Authorities

Government partner representation
- Office for Criminal Justice Reform
- HM Treasury
- Prime Minister’s Delivery Unit

National Policing Improvement Agency
- Centrex
- Provision of good practice, training and IT systems

National Centre for Policing Excellence

Police Information Technology Organisation

Police forces and police authorities

Local criminal justice boards

Crime and disorder reduction partnerships

Regional Government Offices

Office for Criminal Justice Reform

Sanction Detections Working Group
- Offences brought to justice performance monitoring and support

Joint basic command unit/ crime and disorder reduction partnership performance monitoring and support

Home Office (Police and Crime Standards Directorate)

Department for Communities and Local Government
- Crime and disorder reduction partnership performance monitoring and Local Area Agreements

Government partner representation
- Quarterly monitoring of performance by force and theme
- Annual published national performance assessments
- Provision of good practice and targeted support

Home Office:
- Policing policy
- Partnership support
- Research, Development and Statistics

Department for Communities and Local Government
- Crime and disorder reduction partnership performance monitoring and Local Area Agreements

Office for Criminal Justice Reform
- Sanction Detections Working Group
Appendix D: Tips for effective questioning

Effective questioning, probing and challenging of performance information has been described as “an art” by some authorities involved in the research for this guidance. This appendix provides members and officers with some tips that other authorities have found useful in challenging force performance.

D.1 Getting to the heart of performance issues

As discussed in the introduction to this guidance and again in chapter 5, the fundamental basis of effective performance management is having an understanding of what lies behind a particular level of performance so that informed decisions can be taken in order to influence the direction of future performance.

Authority members will often be reliant on the force to provide the information that enables the drivers of performance to be understood. Members need this information in order to influence their views on priorities for the force and so that they can take a view on whether the force is operating efficiently and effectively. However, during the research for this guidance, some authorities reported that they sometimes have difficulty getting to the heart of performance issues because the force does not (for whatever reason) provide them with the information they really need (e.g. in response to questioning, or in a written report).

One of the ways in which authorities can “add value” and help forces address performance issues is by providing a forum for taking a step back and exploring problems from first principles. The simplest way to ensure that the force provides all the information that both it and the authority need to ensure that performance is understood and the right decisions are being taken is to return to the definition of analysis that was outlined in chapter 5, and ensure that all three stages have been completed:

**Stage 1:** Understand the patterns in the raw data by using numerical techniques.

**Stage 2:** Consider what the possible competing interpretations of the analysed information are, and, if necessary, find further information to support or dismiss some of those interpretations.

**Stage 3:** Draw conclusions using all the available information, acknowledging any remaining uncertainty about the nature of actual performance.

Robust decisions on what actions are appropriate can only be taken after analysis of the performance data has been carried out properly. Therefore, checking to see that all performance information presented to the authority by the force is the consequence of structured analysis and reasoned interpretation will allow authority members to spot areas for potential probing.

This general approach should be of assistance in many situations. However, some common “incomplete” answers to questions that authorities receive from forces, with possible follow-up questions, are given below:

- “We were concentrating on X so Y went down”
  - Has specific analysis been carried out to confirm that the changes in the two performance indicators are indeed linked?
– Have the drivers behind changes to both X and Y been fully explored (i.e. have all the possible interpretations for the change in performance indicator values been determined and discussed)?
– If X and Y are both police authority priorities, was this potential trade-off known in advance, and is it acceptable?

• “Performance is still close to that of the most similar force (MSF) average” (but this is still not very good/not on target for our force)
  – Why is performance at the level that it is?
  – What is the force doing to improve it?
  – In the light of understanding of the current level of performance and the efforts that the force has made, is the target still reasonable?

• “This is a national problem...” or “Everyone finds X difficult...”
  – What are the drivers behind the problem? (This should be easier to determine if it is common to many forces)
  – What is being done nationally to tackle the problem? (If nothing, why not?)
  – What can we learn from the other forces that are facing this problem (and who may have taken corrective action already)?

• “There’s a drop this quarter but the overall trend is upwards”
  – It is important to complete a full analysis of the performance data before drawing conclusions, using all appropriate techniques. In this case, if the authority were concerned that the short-term trend was the beginning of a change for the worse, it would be prudent to ask whether the change was statistically significant (using “process control” methods, e.g. the significant change chart from iQuanta).
  – Does the change have a longer-term impact on the chances of achieving a longer-term target (i.e. will very much better performance be required in coming quarters, which will be difficult to achieve given current efforts)?
  – What actions are being taken by the force that have or have not led to this change?

• “X is no longer a priority”
  – On what basis has this been decided?
  – Has analysis been carried out to confirm that actual performance in X is now sufficiently high to warrant its lower priority?
  – What strategy is in place to manage the risk that X might become a problem again? (What are the early warning signs of this happening?)

• “We are not comparable with our MSF group because we are nothing like force X / force X records its crime incorrectly”
  – A force is not expected to be directly comparable with individual forces in its MSF: the average of MSF force characteristics is comparable
  – What direct evidence is there that other forces in the MSF group are recording crime incorrectly? (A poor National Crime Recording Standard audit does not automatically mean that crime is recorded incorrectly – insufficient management arrangements or audit trails can give this result)
  – What would a more appropriate peer comparison be in this case (and why)?
D.2 Useful questions for performance scrutiny

The following questions may be useful in a wide range of circumstances: they provide a potential list for members and officers to have “in the back pocket” to ask when they are presented with performance data. Authorities may wish to use these questions as the basis of a longer, locally-tailored list.

- Are we or are we not going to achieve the target this year?
- Why are there consistent differences in performance between basic command units (BCUs)?
- What corporate decisions can be taken to improve the performance of the X BCUs that are pulling down our overall performance?
- What is the National Intelligence Model Strategic Assessment saying about this issue?
- What have other police forces done to improve on this issue? Why can’t we do the same?
- Who is performing well in this area? Why aren’t we adopting the same practices?
- How do we best explain this issue to the public?
- Do we think the public will find this a reasonable/acceptable approach?
- Do we think the public will find the prioritisation of this issue acceptable?
- What is the longer-term trend?
- Will there be an impact on next year’s target setting?
- Are we fully engaging with partners in dealing with this issue?
- As authority members, is there any knowledge we can bring to this problem, or are there solutions we can help with through our wider professional or community roles?
Appendix E: Resources for performance management

E.1 Training

The Association of Police Authorities (APA) provides a training course for police authority members and officers, “Can You Manage It?”, to help them understand performance information and discharge their duties relating to performance, planning and accountability.

The courses comprise a series of introductory (foundation) modules and more specialised advanced modules. All these courses are available to be run regionally or in-house for individual police authorities. For further information, or to book places, please contact the APA.

Foundation modules

The foundation modules are aimed at all police authority members and staff and provide a comprehensive introduction to police performance measurement, monitoring and management. The courses assume no prior knowledge or experience in the field.

1. Basic concepts of performance management (one day)

An introduction to performance and the role of the police authority, including the distinctions between performance measurement; monitoring and management; inputs, outputs and outcomes; effectiveness and efficiency; planning in outline; local and national planning considerations; governance arrangements; and an introduction to the Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF).

2. Performance indicators and the planning process (one day)

An exploration of the planning process, focusing particularly on establishing objectives, performance indicators and targets.

3. Making sense of performance information (two days)

This module is for anyone who wishes to understand and respond appropriately to police performance reports. It addresses the way information should be analysed and presented to police authorities, and demonstrates how improvements in the analysis of performance information can contribute to more informed challenges and improved performance.

4. Towards improved performance (two days)

The final foundation module draws together the themes of the first three to focus on how genuine improvements can be achieved in performance measurement and management, and how this can lead to improvements in performance. It offers opportunity for discussion of the ways in which the police and authority work together, as well as offering advice on improving performance reports and a guide to using iQuanta.

Advanced modules

The advanced modules provide an opportunity for more detailed examination of the issues raised in the foundation modules. They are likely to be of interest mainly to officers and members in more specialised roles.
Examining processes and Best Value (two days)
This module gets beneath the surface of police performance, filling the gaps in the simple input-output-outcome model discussed in foundation modules 1 and 2. It includes a discussion of quality systems (including EFQM), processes and the evaluation of policing practices.

Statistical analysis of performance indicators (three days)
This module explores the use of statistical methods to go beyond the information provided by performance indicators to draw conclusions about actual performance. This includes methods for comparing over time, for exploring league table comparisons, for informing the setting of performance targets, and on statistical surveys.

Consultation – methods and strategies (two days)
This module examines principles of consultation, reviews consultation methods, and provides advice on designing and improving questionnaires and conducting focus groups.

Managing information and knowledge (one day)
This module is about using various sources of information, not only to plan and evaluate performance but also to anticipate possible opportunities and threats.

Police performance – looking to the future (one day)
The final module pulls together the material from the earlier modules and offers an opportunity for reflection on the police authority’s own performance, and its link with the performance of the police force.

E.2 Policing resources: websites
Websites were accessed and correct at the time of publication (June 2006). Some websites may change or be moved: if you have difficulty locating a specific document, please check with the organisation concerned.

Association of Police Authorities: the publications section includes the APA’s guidance on community engagement (Involving Communities in Police Learning and Development: A Guide), iQuanta (iQuanta: A Police Authority Guide) and other publications on aspects of the police authority role.
http://www.apa.police.uk/apa

Home Office police website: includes information on the units within the Home Office working on policing issues, as well as a variety of different resources for practitioners [see below] and links to other useful sites.
http://www.police.homeoffice.gov.uk

Police reform
http://www.police.homeoffice.gov.uk/police-reform/

Finance and business planning guidance: includes Best Value and planning guidance for police authorities and forces and the Activity Based Costing page.
http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/finance-and-business-planning/

Home Secretary’s priorities
http://www.police.homeoffice.gov.uk/national-policing-plan/
Performance measurement and assessment: including information on the PPAF, iQuanta and data quality assurance.
http://www.police.homeoffice.gov.uk/performance-and-measurement/

National Intelligence Model
http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/operational-policing/index.html/?version=1

Home Office Research, Development and Statistics: includes analysis and publications on crime levels.
http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/

iQuanta access
https://iquanta.net/
[requires username and password to log in – contact iquanta@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk]

Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary: includes information on HMIC’s functions, copies of reports, and detail on inspection methodologies.
http://www.inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/

Centrex: the central police learning and development authority, whose website includes codes of practice [see the Professional Practice/Doctrine section of the site] and other useful documents.
http://www.centrex.police.uk/

The Police Foundation: an independent organisation that researches and develops policy and practice on policing, community safety and criminal justice.
http://www.police-foundation.org.uk/site/police-foundation/home

Metropolitan Police Association: includes summaries of and full reports from the Metropolitan Police Authority’s scrutinies (described in chapter 4).
http://www.mpa.gov.uk/reports/

E.3 Policing resources: documents

Community Engagement in Policing: Lessons from the Literature, Andy Myhill, February 2006
http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/policing18.htm

Community Engagement in Policing website
http://www.communityengagement.police.uk/

The Role of Police Authorities in Public Engagement, Home Office online report 37/03
http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/rdsolr3703.pdf

Involving the Public: The Role of Police Authorities, Home Office development and practice report, 2003

Police Authorities’ Involvement in Local Strategic Partnerships, Local Government Association Research Briefing 5.03, July 2003
This report outlines the findings of an LGA survey in 2003
http://www.lga.gov.uk/Publication.asp?isSection=0&id=-A781A163
E.4 General online resources

A large number of websites provide general (non-policing-related) advice on performance management and statistics. A few sites that may be of interest to members and officers are listed below.

http://www.robertniles.com/stats/
This website was originally designed as an online tutorial for non-mathematician undergraduate students, and now explains basic concepts of descriptive statistics in plain English so that they can be understood by individuals in a wide range of fields. Explanations that authority members and officers might find useful include:

- Averages: the difference between mean and median
- Margin of error and confidence intervals
- Sample sizes.

http://chance.dartmouth.edu/chancewiki/
Chance News is an online newsletter that reviews current issues in the news that involve probability or statistical concepts. It aims to enhance the general public’s understanding. Members and officers should note that, as this is an American newsletter, the current affairs referred to are those in the American media.

http://www.edwardtufte.com
Edward Tufte specialises in the graphical presentation of complex information, producing inventive graphs on a range of topics. Tufte has also written thought-provoking books and articles about the dangers of misrepresented numbers and criticism of poor or misleading data presentation. His website collects writings, links to articles, and other information about the presentation of data. This resource is likely to be of most interest to authority officers with a specialised background or interest in statistics or the presentation of data.

E.5 Books

A large number of textbooks are available on statistics, including those that focus on their use in business and other organisations. The following are not textbooks but examples of informal books aimed at non-technical readers, explaining statistical concepts without a heavy use of mathematics.

Statistics without Tears: An Introduction for Non-Mathematicians, Derek Rowntree

This book aims to explain what statistics are and make them accessible to non-mathematicians by using words and diagrams to explain statistical concepts. This is a book for non-specialists who need to understand what statistics experts are telling them.
Reckoning with Risk: Learning to Live with Uncertainty, Gerd Gigerenzer

Ordinary people – even those such as scientists and doctors who deal with statistical concepts, such as probabilities, in their work – are frequently confused by statistics. This book aims to reduce that confusion, providing the reader with tools for understanding statistics. The book uses examples from the field of medicine to illustrate statistical ideas.

Understanding Variation: The Key to Managing Chaos, Donald J Wheeler [second edition]

This provides an introduction to understanding time series data so as to gain insight into when changes are real rather than random. This book will be useful to anyone with a basic familiarity with data who is looking for ways to make more of performance reports and make sense of performance data.
Appendix F: Performance reporting: structure and content

This appendix is intended to supplement the material presented in chapters 2 and 5 on understanding performance data and setting targets, in the context of defining the requirement for the performance reports received by the authority. It includes:

- Information on the principles behind a generic performance reporting structure
- How to set up performance indicators and translate priorities into targets for those indicators (which will therefore provide the starting point for the information in the performance report)
- A summary of key analytical techniques that performance management specialists will need to be aware of (the numerical techniques that can be used to highlight patterns in the raw data provided by performance indicators, which then need to be interpreted).

The "Can You Manage It?" courses run through the Association of Police Authorities (APA) have modules which can help authority members and officers learn more about using performance information and carrying out performance analysis (see appendix E).

F.1 Overview: principles of a performance management regime

The performance management regime of any organisation should both cover all the key areas of delivery and be simple enough to expedite efficient decision making. It should allow prioritisation, and enable rapid focus on specific topics whose current state might lead to significant risk (operational, delivery, reputational, financial, etc.).

Such requirements imply that the performance management structure should have close alignment with the overall strategy of the organisation. Alignment of management and staff objectives with the key indicators held within the framework, so that delivery for staff means delivery as defined by the framework, in turn means success in the overall strategy for the organisation.

F.1.1 Breadth of view

To achieve alignment between the performance goals and the strategy, people need a view of three organisational levels: their own and those immediately above and below.

In this example, “police force A” and its authority need to consider both the central government position and that of their operational command units when planning the strategy and performance management framework. Similarly, when monitoring performance, the force and the authority require information at force and basic command unit (BCU) level, and some information on the overall picture for England and Wales.
F.1.2 Insight and responsiveness
Given the correct breadth of view, the organisation also needs to see in the right amount of detail, with the correct frequency, so that it:

- Holds the delivery agents to account
- Spots risks in a timely manner
- Properly focuses action and prioritisation.

Most organisations use three types of reporting in combination to achieve this:

- Reporting by delivery theme (e.g. crime levels)
- Reporting by delivery area (e.g. across BCUs)
- Reporting by exception (e.g. significant changes in any area).

And these reports are considered at the three levels. In this way, the force and the authority in this example know where the government will be focusing attention and driving delivery, where key delivery risks are (by theme), and where they are concentrated (by area). They will also know if any new risks have come to light, through exception reporting.

F.1.3 Frequency of reporting
Typically, organisations will have a rolling reporting structure for themes and delivery areas. For example, a force might have a monthly performance board that considers BCUs on a rolling basis, key themes (such as the Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) domains of Reducing Crime, Investigating Crime, Promoting Safety, Providing Assistance, Citizen Focus, Local Policing and Resource Use) on a rolling basis, and an item for any exception reporting on key changes. Authorities use the structures described in chapter 4, often based around a regular meeting with the chief officer or senior officers of the force that provides a forum for holding the chief officer to account.

It is important that the authority considers their own priorities and the force’s position on performance more frequently than central government bodies (such as those described in appendix C), and is therefore not surprised by the view that central bodies take with respect to performance of the force.

The challenge for the authority is to construct a mechanism for performance reporting that does not simply replicate the force performance reporting regime (it is unlikely that the authority really needs all the detail that the force command team will need), but gives the breadth of view, insight and opportunity to respond to performance issues that members need in order to fulfil their role. This probably means that the authority will need to place greater emphasis on exception reporting (particularly in areas of priority) and think carefully about how to use the time it spends considering performance within individual themes or areas. If the authority has link members and/or members who attend force performance meetings, their experience can be used to guide the agenda for performance reporting to the wider authority.

F.2 Contents of performance reports
As discussed in chapter 5, it is important for the authority to be proactive in designing its performance report, to ensure that it is fit for purpose and has the right level of information for members to fulfil their role. The report will need to contain:
• Information on the indicators of performance that have been established around performance priorities (the product of numerical analysis of the data yielded by the performance indicators)
• Possible interpretations of the performance suggested by the performance indicators, with conclusions on which is the most likely interpretation and therefore what the actual performance is most likely to be
• If necessary, possible or justified, suggested action that needs to be taken (or should not be taken) on the basis of those conclusions.

The most important part of a performance report is the **summary**. What are the key messages? What should the reader care about? In performance reporting, summary information on the performance indicators can be presented in a visual format (such as the iQuanta overview chart, below) or written, often best as bullet points.

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### iQuanta overview chart

The iQuanta overview chart is an example of a format for summarising headline performance information.

For each unit (force/BCU), the chart shows the position relative to most similar peers and the direction of travel for each performance indicator. This allows the reader to get a high-level impression of areas of potential concern.

Although the iQuanta overview chart is a useful summary, particularly from the perspective of understanding how the Home Office might be viewing performance, an authority may need a different sort of overview in order to capture information around its priorities and progress against targets.

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Visual representations are powerful in this way as they can display a wide range of information and highlight areas of interest. However, a clear key is required, indicating the meaning of the components of the representation. In written performance reports it is important to be clear which areas have and have not been considered. In any event, the summary will also need to include written information that summarises the conclusions arising from the interpretation of the performance information.

Beneath the summary is the **main body** of the report, which is where the detail and discussion are set out. A mixture of visual representations and written information can often be used to broaden the appeal of a report. There is a risk that the same information is presented twice, so text and diagrams should complement each other, not cover the same ground. Text should avoid being a straight description of graphical information, and should concentrate on interpreting the performance information and drawing conclusions.

The structure should provide the reader with:

• Confidence that the report has covered the required ground (in the summary)
• An identification of key issues for attention (in the summary)
F.3 Essential techniques for defining performance information

This section sets out in more detail some of the principles that were discussed in chapter 5 for putting the right things in place to allow performance indicators to be useful in managing performance. Guidance in setting targets is included, as well as an overview of useful techniques for the numerical analysis of performance indicator data.

F.3.1 Defining indicators

Performance indicators, whether reported in the summary or in the main text of a performance report, should – at a minimum – meet a few key criteria. They should:

- Be directionally unambiguous (e.g. other considerations excepted, a reduction in the crime rate is always good, and up is always bad)
- Be clear and understood by all (e.g. victim satisfaction with the service provided by the police)
- Provide good and reliable high-quality information (data from core processes rather than anecdotes)
- Provide current data with minimal time lags
- Be directly relevant to key strategic goals.

**Definitions…**

For definitions of priority, objective, output and outcome, see section 2.2.

The performance indicators should form a coherent performance management framework for managing policing performance. This framework should cover the strategic aims of the authority, and at the top level be based on the outcomes the authority and the force are aiming to deliver, rather than on the processes. Measures of policing outputs, such as “the number of burglary investigations”, are not considered good standalone performance management metrics as they presuppose that a given output automatically leads to a desired outcome (i.e. fewer burglaries), but they can be useful as measures of efficiency or productivity. Some of the performance indicators included in the main body of an authority’s performance report might cover processes, and therefore act as diagnostics if delivery of the outcome is beginning to falter. Investigating these processes and other contextual information should then inform the recommendations for action. Furthermore, where the authority has specifically supported the force (e.g. through funding) to improve a particular policing process, then it would be sensible to receive performance information about it.

F.3.2 Quality assurance

The Audit Commission conducts a number of audits of various aspects of policing each year (such as the National Crime Recording Standard [NCRS] audit). Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) also carries out work on performance data quality assurance. These audits are intended to ensure compliance with guidance, codes and rules on the management and collection of data, ensuring that forces and authorities have applied procedures correctly. Data quality assurance by the Audit Commission is designed to allow the Home Office to be confident
that agreed procedures are in place and working properly and that data is collected and recorded in a standard manner. This allows robust comparisons to be made between forces and over time.

The audits carried out in this way inform the annual police performance assessments, with “poor” audit results resulting in capped grades in the assessments of those forces. The rationale is that there should be no incentive for poor-quality data collection. However, poor audit results do not necessarily mean that the data is incorrectly counted; it can mean that the management arrangements to ensure good quality are not properly embedded or that the audit trail for decisions does not meet the required standard.

There are also a number of guides for self-audit available from the National Centre for Policing Excellence (particularly regarding mandatory codes of practice), from the Police Standards Unit (about management data) and from HMIC (forming part of the self-assessment within the Baseline Assessment).

All of these audits, both mandatory and voluntary, are aimed at ensuring that proper processes are conducted and well managed. As a consequence of this good management, the data produced is reliable, accurate and able to withstand scrutiny. This is important for two reasons:

- If the authority can trust its performance management data, then it can take action based on its analysis
- A robust audit trail for data and decision making reduces operational and reputational risk.

All forces and authorities should ensure that the key deliverables within their local strategy are subject to quality assurance audit, allowing both good ongoing management and clear evidence of honest delivery.

### F.3.3 Setting targets

Setting targets is a mechanism for translating force and authority priorities into a form that allows monitoring of delivery against those priorities:

1. Agree priority
2. Define specific objective(s) associated with the priority
3. Associate performance indicator(s) with the objective
4. State desired future level of the indicator(s) [the target(s)]

Targets are a specific statement of what is to be achieved. However, it is important to remember when both setting targets and monitoring progress against them that they are based on performance indicators. This means that success or failure to achieve a target must be interpreted – the performance indicator might not show the desired level of (apparent) performance improvement, but in reality actual performance might be enough to satisfy the original objective. The same interpretation must be applied to targets that have been met.

There is no exact science behind target setting, and often targets will essentially be the result of informed guesswork. However, there are structures that can be applied when considering targets. Two forms of target setting can be used:

- Targets that support improvement in the relative performance of a service, e.g. relating to objectives around improving efficiency and productivity, and learning and applying existing good practice [i.e. managing what you have but better]
• Targets that support improvement in the **absolute** level of performance, through removing or better managing the environmental risks in order to change the demand for services (reducing the demand and therefore allowing current resources to be concentrated on the remaining issues).

In this way, targets can support objectives in being evidence-based, realistic, timebound and focused on specific actions.

For example, an objective to improve the facilities for youths to divert them from crime should expect an improvement in performance which might be in excess of similar areas elsewhere and raise the standard others can aspire to (an absolute target would be set in this case). However, a campaign to improve the current services by better targeting of resources would more likely result in an improved performance relative to peers rather than a step change in performance.

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**Relative targets and peer comparison – most similar forces**

**Most similar force** (MSF) groups are designed to give a peer comparison for relative performance, such that the **expected** performance of an individual force is the average of the group of similar forces. The individual forces in a group of MSFs are not identical to the force in question, but the average of their characteristics is very nearly identical. MSF groups are created using the same predictive indicators of demand that feature in the police funding formula, so there is an explicit link between expected demand, funding and expectations of performance.

Using the MSFs or peer groups at BCU and crime and disorder reduction partnership (CDRP) level, it is proven that a similar area, with similar demands, can reach a specific level of relative performance. The “most similar” concept provides the most sophisticated peer comparison available in policing at the moment. It is therefore not likely to be realistic to argue that a given level of performance relative to peers is **unachievable**, but only how long it should take to get there.

Importantly, when using such peer groups, authorities should not expect their forces to do better than average in every performance area simultaneously, because there is clearly a resource balance to be considered. However, a force could be expected to be around average in many areas and significantly above average in areas of key priority.

More information on most similar groupings can be found in the **Help** section of the iQuanta website, which explains how the groups are created, why each force (or BCU or CDRP) has a unique group and why some groups are different sizes and provides other information.

There are a number of ways of expressing the level at which targets are set:

• A **realistic** target is one you expect to achieve. Indeed it should be one that is achieved unless there is a significant disruption to the performance plan (or control strategy) and a deliberate re-prioritisation takes place. For example: “reaching close to the MSF average in all areas where we are below it, closing the gap at X% per year”

• A **stretching** target should be one that is possible, but it is more likely that, while progress will be made, it will not quite be reached in a given period. For example: “reaching 10% better than the MSF average in all crime areas this year”
• An **aspirational** target is one that is unlikely to be reached but shows a desire for continuous improvement. Aspirational targets are normally based on organisational vision. For example: “reduce crime to zero”

• **Directional** targets are similar to aspirational targets, but they are often perceived as more modest in both rate and end-state. For example: “we will reduce crime next year and the year after”

• **Maintenance** targets simply reflect the desire to maintain a given position, often while focusing on improvement elsewhere. Some maintenance targets are set around standards or codes. For example: “we will maintain our low levels of vehicle crime while driving down burglary” or “we will maintain our ‘excellent’ audit results in crime recording and detections”.

More information on setting targets is available in the guidance on the PPAF Local Policing domain, and on the APA’s “Can You Manage It?” courses.

**F.3.4 Avoiding perverse incentives – “don’t hit the target but miss the point”**

With target setting comes the risk of perverse incentives. A perverse incentive is when a sensible target is achieved through means that do not achieve the desired outcome. By definition, therefore, an outcome target cannot be perverse, but it can lead to behaviours that contradict other outcomes.

For example, a target to increase the sanction detection rate (an output) should be a prompt for improving investigative processes. However, pursued inappropriately, the target could lead to the inappropriate use of fixed penalty notices (and therefore increased recorded crime and more people being criminalised) if not managed well – an undesired result. A better target might be set around reducing crime, since this will always be a desired result (given good recording practice, assured by the data quality audit), so long as it does not divert too many resources from other priorities.

Authorities will generally be interested in ensuring that perverse incentives or behaviours do not impact on the delivery of the policing outcomes they want. This often requires examining diagnostic indicators and emphasises the need for full analysis of performance data. In the sanction detection rate example, a diagnostic indicator might be the relative mix of disposal types judged against peers and historical performance. In the crime reduction example above, a diagnostic indicator might be the crime recording audit, which helps ensure that the perverse incentive of hitting the target by recording crime differently is avoided.

**F.3.5 “Chance” or “natural variation”**

When setting targets and monitoring progress towards them, there is one final consideration: chance, or natural variation. If the level of an indicator changes, how does the authority know it is a real (not random) change or indeed a change related to the activity undertaken? These issues are addressed by both evidence and analysis. When setting a target, as mentioned above, the authority should satisfy itself that there is evidence that the action proposed to achieve the target will, in fact, lead to the outcome desired. Well-founded good practice in some areas of policing will usually be supported by evaluations in the literature. However, there are other areas where formal evaluations do not exist, and in these cases using peer networks to identify good practice becomes increasingly important.
Evidence of what works, whether from peers or literature, forms an important part of a performance regime. If performance in a target area is not improving, then the processes outlined in the good practice act as diagnostics to see where the problem is. If all these processes are in place but the performance trend is still in the wrong direction, then what other contextual factors could be important? These are questions the authority should be asking the force, or this information should be in performance reports.

This still leaves chance, randomness or natural variation. For a small local area, a single prolific offender will have a huge impact on crime reduction performance. For a force, a cluster of murders that occur by chance in a single month could abstract significant resources from other activities. When considering performance reports, authorities should be aware of the random contextual factors that might impact on good progress. When the force reports an exception (e.g. a failure to move towards a realistic performance target), then alongside diagnostic data on processes, the authority should consider evidence of whether such contextual factors (beyond the force’s immediate control) have affected performance.

Is a change real or random? Using “statistical significance”

If the recorded vehicle crime rate (per 1,000 residents) for a force changed from 14.5 to 20.0 over successive years, the likely conclusion would be that something had really changed. However, if the rate only changed from 14.5 to 14.6, concluding that there had really been a change in incidence of vehicle crime would seem unwise – the difference is probably just down to normal fluctuation in the level of the indicator. But what if the change was 14.5 to 15.0, or 15.5? Is this change consistent with expected natural variation, or is it a signal that there has been a real change in crime levels that needs to be explored?

Statistical techniques can often help to highlight where a change in a performance indicator is more likely to be down to random variation or to a real change. We can say whether a change is statistically significant or not, by working out the chances of the change being random – if there is a less than 5% chance of a change happening randomly, then we call it a statistically significant change. If a change is statistically significant, then there is probably a reason for it. If not, then it may be a waste of time trying to explain it, because the change could be entirely consistent with the natural variation in the indicator of interest.

A statistically significant difference is usually reported with a significance level. For example, if a finding is reported as “significant to the 5% (or 0.05) level”, there is a one in 20 chance that it is random. If a finding is significant to the 1% (0.01) level, there is a one in 100 chance that it is random, and so on.

Testing changes for statistical significance is a useful technique in exploring performance data, but the results must be used with caution. Just because something is “statistically significant” does not mean it is “significant” in the sense of being important – for example, a change in an indicator might be assessed as statistically significant, but that does not automatically mean that the probable magnitude of the change is something to be concerned about. Finding a change to be statistically significant also does not explain why there has been a change – more information will be needed to form conclusions about that. And in drawing those conclusions, it is important always to bear in mind that there is still a chance (however small) that the change is down to random variation.
An example of the application of the statistical significance technique to interpreting performance data is the iQuanta significant change chart below. In this case, recent crime rates (represented by the black line) are compared with historical fluctuations (the red and green “control lines” representing the limits of expected natural variation). When the black line crosses one of the control lines, it is a signal that a real change in the indicator may have taken place. In the example chart below, the black line representing recent data has crossed the lower green control line, which means that the change cannot be explained away as a typical variation and it is very likely that a real change in crime has taken place. (More information on this specific chart is available in the Help section of the iQuanta website.)

Survey data

Chance is also important when the authority considers outcomes relating to perception (fear of crime, victim satisfaction, etc.), or any area of business where performance indicators are based around surveys or sampling. For any survey, it is highly unlikely that all the people of interest (the whole “population”) have been asked or responded to the questionnaire. The response to a questionnaire is therefore (at best, depending on the questionnaire having been correctly executed in line with good surveying practice) a reasonable representation, but not an exact one, of the population.

Statistical techniques allow us to estimate the likely error in the survey results, i.e. how confident we can be that the result of the survey is close to the view of the whole population. This estimation of the error in the survey is called the confidence interval. For example, it might be reported that 75% ± 3% of burglary victims were satisfied with the overall service that they got from the police (“at the 95% probability level”). In this case, we can be reasonably sure (95% sure) that for all burglary victims (not just those surveyed) somewhere between 72% and 78% of them were satisfied with the service they got. The size of the sample for the survey has an impact on the size of the confidence interval for the results – the larger the survey, the more confidence that the results represent the position of the whole population, and therefore the smaller the confidence interval.

When considering survey-based data, it is very important to remember that the result is only an estimation of the position of the whole population. Authority members and officers should always expect to see confidence intervals included with survey results, and should see the confidence intervals as a reminder that conclusions should be drawn with caution.
The final thing to remember when looking to draw conclusions from survey data is that the confidence intervals must be taken into account when assessing whether there has genuinely been a change in results. For example, if 75% ± 3% of burglary victims were satisfied with the overall service they got from the police one year, and 77% ± 2% of victims were satisfied the following year, it is not possible to conclude that there has been a change, because the second year’s result lies within the confidence interval of the first. Statistical tests must be applied to the survey data to determine whether changes are statistically significant – it is not accurate to simply compare confidence intervals to see whether they overlap.

F.3.6 Methods of analysis

There are numerous ways to go about analysing performance data to highlight patterns and changes which then need to be interpreted, and it is not possible to provide exhaustive detail and explanation of these in this document. This section aims to highlight some of the key techniques that authority officers and members might wish to be aware of. The APA’s “Can You Manage It?” courses offer specific support to authorities looking to broaden their understanding of how to understand and apply some of these methods.

Analytical techniques generally fall into one of the following groups:

- Comparison with others
- Historical
- Forecasting trends
- Trajectory towards target
- Significant change
- Breakdown of components
- Frontier analysis.

Comparisons against others (either peers, nationally, or within a region or force) or agreed targets are very common. The key strength of such analysis is that it can show what is achievable for others and can help set benchmarks and demonstrate progress. The weakness is that these benchmarks are only realistic if the elements of the group are comparable – for example, a straight comparison between crime rates in different BCUs in a force is likely to be less robust than comparing each BCU against the crime rate of its “most similar” BCU average. Similarly, if a target is set but the peer group far outstrips the agreed target, there is a need to re-plan and agree more demanding, but clearly achievable, targets.

When looking at comparisons against others, several further analyses are often used:

- Distribution
- Quartiles
- Standard deviation
- Z-score.

A distribution is simply the spread of results, so if satisfaction of victims with the service provided varies from 60% to 80% in different regions, this is the distribution. Most people want their performance to be above the average (or mean) to show they are better than expected. However, a mean (or average) is only a true representation of the expected result if the distribution is symmetrical (or normal) about the mean. In some areas the most common result (or mode) is a more sensible aiming point. For example, for crime rates the average of peers is a reasonable
expectation, but for fixed penalty notices issued by an individual officer the mode sets a reasonable expectation as the mean may be skewed by either a few poor returns or a few very significant ones.

Another way distributions are described is by quartiles. A quartile simply breaks the distribution into four equal parts, so that one quarter of the results should fall into each quartile. When such an analysis is done, people are often most interested in the upper and lower quartiles (i.e. the top and bottom 25% respectively). This type of analysis quickly identifies the extremes, but the cut-off point can be arbitrary and relies on the peer group being truly comparable. It also relies on a fixed peer group: a force cannot be in the top quartile of its MSF family, for example, as it is not expected to be directly comparable with each individual member – rather the force is compared with the average of all members.

A more sophisticated approach is the standard deviation. This method calculates the average deviation from the average within a group (the mean deviation from the mean), and uses this to describe the width of the distribution and the relative likelihood of a result falling outside a specified range. For example, if the distribution is normal (i.e. symmetrical around the mean), then 59% of results will fall within one standard deviation of the mean and 95% within two standard deviations. This technique works well as long as the shape of the distribution is understood, and as long as the peer group is sensible. For example, if the force’s performance is two standard deviations below the expected crime rate (the expected rate being determined by the force’s MSF group), then it is performing as well as, or comparably well with, another force two standard deviations below their MSF average crime rate.

This leads directly on to the concept of a z-score. The z-score is simply the number of standard deviations the force is from the mean (average). Using z-scores the authority can compare forces in different peer groups by looking at how far they are from the expected level of performance. We can tell across these groups whose performance is most exceptional (positive or negative) and the probability of this level of performance occurring by chance. This technique lies at the heart of many analyses within the national police performance assessments.

Historical analysis (change over time) simply shows the progress of a given force or CDRP, for example, over time. It is possible to add “best fit” lines which also calculate the direction of travel and the rate of progress. The rate of progress should be at least three standard deviations different from the historical average in a single year if it is to be considered significant.

Historical charts are very useful for showing changes against the force’s previous performance as long as the recording mechanisms have not changed. In addition, it is important not to compare one calendar month directly with another – not only do they sometimes have different numbers of days, but often different numbers of weekends as well. This is also true when comparing a single month from one year with a single month from the previous year – in one third of cases the number of weekends will be different. To get around this problem it is essential to use either annual rolling totals or, when comparing within a year, quarterly totals (e.g. this quarter compared with the same quarter last year).

Forecasting trends are often put on charts to show the possible future direction of performance. The most common type used are trend lines – these show what performance would be if the historical trend over a number of previous months continued. Trend lines are not good forecasts and are not indicative of future performance. Forecasts can use historical data but, in addition
to the average trend, they should also look to factors such as seasonality. There are many forecasting techniques available, although they can be quite complex. Police forces may well undertake this kind of analysis. Forecasting can be useful in managing risk but the results are liable to misinterpretation unless the user understands the key strengths and weaknesses of the method being used.

**Trajectories** are often requested and displayed in performance charts. A **trajectory** is simply the expected performance if the delivery plan (or control strategy) is working as expected. Comparing actual performance against a trajectory on a performance chart shows if the delivery plan is on or off track, and the difference between the current position and the **trajectory** can be used to underpin an exception report – flagging all areas significantly “off trajectory”. Clearly, a trajectory is only as good as the control strategy or delivery plan.

**Significant change** charts are perhaps the hardest to understand of the common chart types. They are designed to show if performance for a given period is significantly different from the previous delivery and therefore whether that change is unlikely to be purely down to chance (see also section G.3.5). If used as exception reports, they show those areas where there is a significant variation in the rate of change (either upward or downward). **Significant change** charts show something has changed, but they do not show (by themselves) whether you are on or off trajectory, and, depending on the thresholds set, they can be made more or less sensitive to changes. The key to using these charts well is to set the threshold at a level where you receive a small number of reports each reporting period that you can investigate and action. There is no correct threshold, but they are useful tools in prioritising. Significant change charts are also often called **statistical process control** charts.

Another chart type often used is one that breaks down the **components** of a top-level indicator. Charts such as stacked bars or “pareto” charts show the major **components** of a larger, more strategic measure. In particular, these charts can show how the **component** mix is changing over time. For example, the crime mix within most forces has changed over the last three years as burglary and vehicle crime has reduced rapidly but the relative prominence of criminal damage has increased.

Finally, **frontier analysis** can also be used, most usefully when looking at the achievement of more than one target or outcome. A frontier analysis plots achievement of one target against another and tries to make visible if there are any trade-offs or synergies between the activities underpinning the outcomes, or the outcomes themselves. **Frontier analysis** is most useful when planning a strategy and learning lessons from previous experience.
Appendix G: Self-assessment for performance management

This section provides a self-assessment resource for authorities to use in reviewing their performance management arrangements and in prioritising areas for improvement. Authorities can use this resource as a simple checklist, or could add a scoring mechanism of their choice (e.g. 1–5, Excellent/Good/Fair/Poor) and supplement the score with evidence for the answer to each question. The important thing when conducting a self-assessment exercise in the authority is to ensure that as many people as possible complete the assessment (both members and officers) to ensure that the final result is the best reflection of the position the authority is in.

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<tr>
<th>Questions to ask</th>
<th>As a minimum we would expect to see</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Hallmark 1: The authority leads in setting policing priorities and targets, and sets the agenda for monitoring delivery</strong></td>
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| Has the authority defined its role (particularly within the performance management cycle)? Section 2.1 | • Members and officers of the authority all have a shared view of the authority’s role and the way that the authority fulfil its role.  
• Chief officers down to BCU commander level understand and accept the role of the police authority | • Members of the force at all levels understand and accept the role of the police authority  
• The authority has its own business plan in place and/or has completed the APA self-assessment exercise  
• The authority actively seeks ways to improve/include its performance management capability and promote a performance culture within the authority and the force |
| Is the authority actively involved in the planning process? Section 2.2 | • The authority and the force work together on planning and the authority is an active contributor to the local policing plan  
• The authority follows APA guidance on setting local priorities | • Authority shows leadership in the joint planning process |
<p>| Does the authority use the policing plan to monitor delivery? Section 2.3 | • Performance against policing plan priorities and targets is monitored at police authority committee meetings | |</p>
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| Does the authority set the agenda for monitoring delivery?                     | • The authority specifies how and when performance against delivery of targets should be reported on  
• Data requirements for performance committee reports are set by the authority                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Does the authority communicate force performance and its role in performance management to local people? Section 2.4 | • The authority is meeting the minimum standards for the provision of performance information to the public  
• The authority has reviewed its public profile and looks for ways to increase public awareness of the authority and its role in securing an effective and efficient force                                                                 | • The authority has used innovative ways to develop its communication with local people (e.g. by appointing a press officer)                                           |
| **Hallmark 2: Performance management coverage is comprehensive. The authority considers the performance of all the functions of the force** |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Does the authority consider priorities at all levels and all policing functions during the planning process? Sections 2.2, 2.5, 4.3 | • The authority considers national and local priorities and priorities identified by partners, and balances them in the local policing plan                                                                                                       | • The authority uses a risk-based methodology to identify priorities for the annual local policing plan                                                                                                                                   |
| Does the authority’s performance monitoring cover all functions of the force? Sections 2.2, 2.3, 4.3 | • The authority’s reporting structures routinely pick up performance issues (good and bad) in all functions of the force, using exception reporting or other means identified by the authority                                                                 | • The authority uses a risk-based methodology to direct the focus of its performance monitoring                                                                                                                                         |
### Hallmark 3: The authority is engaged in working with partners to influence delivery on community priorities

**Does the authority work with partners on performance matters?**

Section 2.5

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<td></td>
<td>• The authority influences and is influenced by partners in its CDRPs/CSPs in setting priorities and targets, monitoring of delivery and holding the force to account for delivery</td>
<td>• Members have a deep understanding of the links and relationships between the work of the force and other service providers, and actively seek ways that partners can work together and improve service delivery</td>
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<td>• The authority works with other partners, e.g. in health, education and social services, to help improve the delivery of policing and other services to local people</td>
<td>• Partners are actively involved in authority-led special projects (e.g. scrutiny projects) where relevant</td>
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<td>• Members have a deep understanding of the links and relationships between the work of the force and other service providers, and actively seek ways that partners can work together and improve service delivery</td>
<td>• The authority has regular contact with the LCJB and monitors CJS performance</td>
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### Hallmark 4: Members understand their performance management role and what they need to do to be able to fulfil it

**Has the authority considered which performance management style it should adopt?**

Section 3.1

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<td>• The authority has actively reviewed its performance management style and it is appropriate to its circumstances – the stage of development of performance management of both the force and the authority, the individuals involved in performance management. The authority is confident that its style gets results</td>
<td>• The authority has considered which style it uses in which types of situation and can adapt or modify it where necessary</td>
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<td>• The authority reviews its style on a regular basis</td>
<td>• The authority reviews its style on a regular basis</td>
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| Does the authority ensure that members understand their roles and are able to fulfil them effectively? Section 3.2 | • The authority has identified a member role structure  
• The authority has outlined what is expected of members in detailed role descriptions  
• The authority has a process in place to review and improve members’ performance and development needs  
• All members attend all the meetings of committees and other groups to which they belong  
• Members are prepared for meetings  
• The authority identifies where training or other development activities would help members become more effective and provides training or other suitable activities in those areas | • The authority has a competency framework for all member roles  
• Members’ own performance and development needs are assessed using a competency-based system  
• The authority provides an independent programme of seminars/workshop sessions for members, the aim of which is to explicitly foster member learning, and which are not part of the holding-to-account structures  
• Authority members and officers make use of external training opportunities, such as the APA’s “Can You Manage It?” courses or visits to other areas |
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| **Hallmark 5: Members have the appropriate level of professional expertise available within the authority to support them**  
Does the authority provide members with an appropriate level of officer support?  
Section 3.3 | - The authority has reviewed its performance management structures and processes and has defined the support model it aspires to provide, aligned to those structures and processes  
- The authority provides an appropriate level of officer support to members, based on its support model  
- The authority has officer support dedicated to performance management  
- The authority has defined its performance officer role(s) in terms of activities and responsibilities, and has outlined the competencies required of the individual(s) in that role | - The authority provides experienced, senior-level support to members on performance issues  
- Performance management is supported by officer(s) dedicated to performance, whose role includes analysis, briefing members and investigation of performance (in addition to any involvement in servicing committees)  
- The authority is resourced at a level that enables it to undertake independent work in performance (e.g. investigative projects on matters of concern to the authority and scrutiny projects) |

| **Hallmark 6: Authority members and officers are supportive but challenging in their key relationship with the chief officer. This key relationship enables the authority to work with the force without becoming too close to it**  
Does the authority have a working relationship with the chief officer that supports and challenges, and enables the authority to work closely with the force without getting too close to it?  
Section 3.4 | - The chief officer and any other nominated officers attend all the authority meetings to which they are invited  
- Members of the force understand the authority’s remit and support the authority in performing its role  
- The chief officer supports members’ working relationships with BCU commanders  
- The relationship is mutually trusting and respectful | - The authority has informal links with the force – members and officers have regular informal contact with members of the force at all levels  
- The chief officer and chair of the police authority appear together in public at high-profile events, press conferences, etc.  
- The relationship is two-way: there is an ongoing dialogue between the force and the authority about the value that the authority is adding |
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| Does the authority fulfil its obligations in the recruitment of chief officers? | • The authority has sufficient members trained in the recruitment and selection of chief officers to run a selection process  
• The authority has a plan in place for maintaining the number of members with the required training  
• The authority follows Home Office guidance on the appointment of chief officers  
• The authority considers force performance issues in recruitment activities | • The authority is starting to develop appraisal capability and plan for the appraisal of the chief officer, should the responsibility pass to police authorities as proposed |
| Section 3.5 | | |

**Hallmark 7: Members lead the review of performance through effective questioning and rigorous follow-up during meetings with the force**

| Do the authority’s forums for performance scrutiny (questioning of performance, discussion of performance issues) support the authority in performance management? | Members of the committee and other meetings attend all the meetings and are sufficiently prepared for in-depth discussions of performance  
• Members are appropriately supported in the preparation for the meeting by officer briefings or reports, pre-meetings or other structures  
• Members are knowledgeable and confident enough to ask appropriately challenging questions, evaluate the answers and follow up where necessary – the focus of scrutiny is not led by the force  
• The authority has considered where to discuss aspects of the force’s performance – in a public or private forum, or a combination of the two. The authority does not shy away from exploring poor performance publicly where necessary | Performance is discussed in both formal and informal forums with the force  
• The authority prepares for formal performance meetings with the force with a pre-meeting for members  
• The authority leads independent work (e.g. scrutiny projects) on key areas of performance  
• Members understand the key principles of performance analysis, enabling them to ask effective questions |
<p>| Section 4.1 | | |</p>
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<tr>
<td>Is the authority involved in force structures?</td>
<td>• Members have an understanding of the force’s internal performance management processes and culture</td>
<td>• Members and officers are invited to force performance management meetings</td>
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<td>Section 4.5</td>
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<td>Does the authority have effective structures in place for monitoring performance at BCU level?</td>
<td>• The authority regularly monitors the performance of each BCU and holds the chief officer to account for individual BCU performance</td>
<td>• The authority has reviewed local accountability and has evaluated its local-level structures and processes and may be trialling new structures to improve the accountability of the force to the public at the BCU and sub-BCU level</td>
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<td>Section 4.4</td>
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<td><strong>Hallmark 8: The authority sets aside adequate time for the consideration of performance and makes best use of that time through focus and preparation</strong></td>
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<td>Are the authority’s meetings on performance effective?</td>
<td>• All performance meetings have a clear objective</td>
<td>• The authority’s main performance group (e.g. the performance committee) has a planned work programme</td>
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<td>Section 4.2</td>
<td>• The authority has reviewed the timings of its performance meetings and has ensured that its meeting cycle is synchronised with that of the force</td>
<td>• The authority regularly evaluates how well its performance meetings meet their objectives, and makes appropriate changes if they do not</td>
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<td>• Agendas for meetings are of an appropriate length and do not contain items that do not contribute to the authority’s performance management role</td>
<td>• Holding-to-account meetings do not spend significant time on member learning to the detriment of the holding-to-account process</td>
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<td>• The authority allocates sufficient meeting time to performance issues for in-depth discussion of all areas of concern, at formal or informal meetings</td>
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<td>• Chairs of meetings that deal with performance co-ordinate the contribution of authority members and ensure that meeting time is used effectively</td>
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<td>• The authority has processes for feeding information between its various meetings/committees, ensuring that information is not lost and performance management processes are “joined up” with other processes (especially planning, but also budgeting, etc.)</td>
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<td>• The authority has a maintenance strategy for considering areas of performance that have improved</td>
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**Hallmark 9: The authority understands its performance information and uses it as a tool for scrutinising and managing performance**

**Do members have a basic understanding of data and performance information?**

Sections 5.1, 5.2

- Members involved in performance management are familiar with the basic concepts of data and performance information
- Members are offered APA performance management training ("Can You Manage It?") or an equivalent
- Members can understand their performance report, draw appropriate conclusions, and identify what further questions they need to ask the force and whether the authority needs to take action on the basis of the information in the report

- Key members have in-depth understanding of performance information and statistics and their use in performance management
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<th>Questions to ask</th>
<th>As a minimum we would expect to see</th>
<th>For good practice we would also expect</th>
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| Do officers have a sufficient understanding of data and performance information to support members? Sections 5.1, 5.2 | • Performance officer(s) have a strong grasp of the concepts of performance information  
• Performance officer(s) understand basic statistical concepts and can perform basic analysis and interpret statistical information for members  
• Performance officer(s) can draw out the main issues raised by the performance report and help members put together lines of questioning based on it | • Performance officer(s) have a strong analytical background and are very comfortable analysing data in detail |

**Hallmark 10: The authority requests and receives timely, accurate and relevant performance data, analysis and information**

| Does the authority’s performance reporting support its performance management role? Sections 5.3, 5.4 | • The authority has evaluated its data sources with reference to the policing plan objectives and has identified what information it will get from which source  
• The authority has access to iQuanta and regularly uses it, or an alternative identified by the authority  
• Performance reports are based on up-to-date data (whether prepared by force or authority staff)  
• The authority has specified or designed its own performance report (it is not the passive recipient of force data)  
• The authority actively requests additional information on areas it identifies for further examination | • The authority’s performance reporting covers Level 2 crime  
• The authority uses Activity Based Costing information in its planning processes and review of performance  
• The authority uses a wide range of sources of performance information to support its performance management role |
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<td>• The authority’s commentary on performance data includes appropriate analysis and interpretation of the figures – e.g. it describes what might be driving any upturns and downturns, and informs members about corrective action the force is taking</td>
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