Measuring performance
Measuring Performance

This section of the guide covers the following main performance and performance related areas:

- Introduction
- Managing and evaluating neighbourhood policing (NP) performance
- Measuring NP
- Quantitative indicators for NP
- Qualitative indicators for NP
- Understanding NP performance
- Neighbourhood priority case study

Recent developments:

15th July 2010:

The findings from the British Crime Survey and police recorded crime published.

These indicators show there were high levels of agreement that the police treat people with respect (84%) and fairly (65%) as well as understanding the issues that affect the local community (67%). There was less confidence that the police could be relied on to deal with minor crimes (48%) or be there when needed (50%), although increases were observed for both measures between the 2008/09 and 2009/10 BCS.

These figures also showed an increase in victim satisfaction, with an 11 point increase in those “very satisfied” over two years.
Introduction

This section of the guide is based on a programme of research conducted by the NPIA Citizen Focus & Neighbourhood Policing Programme (CF & NPP) team and partners, including pilot forces, with the aim of assisting the police service in measuring the performance of neighbourhood policing activity.

This guidance is the culmination of the knowledge and understanding gained from that research. It aims to provide police managers with focused and relevant theoretical knowledge, supported by practical examples based on this work.

Using this guidance, forces that do not have tried and tested performance management processes for neighbourhood policing can select the most relevant and appropriate performance indicators to adopt, and the most appropriate level of measurement – individual, team, neighbourhood, Basic Command Unit (BCU) or force.

Some may already have more sophisticated partnership performance arrangements.

The police’s management of performance is a rapidly developing area, which will continue to evolve for the foreseeable future.

Central government is advocating a change in the balance of accountability that has grown up over the last few years, with a shift away from central direction combined with a greater emphasis on tackling local issues and promoting stronger local accountability.

Delivering on local priorities through neighbourhood policing sits at the heart of these changes in policing – so effective management of the performance of neighbourhood policing teams is fundamental to the success of the changing approach.
Neighbourhood policing is a business approach that aims to ensure improved performance on a range of policing outcomes. If properly implemented, neighbourhood policing will make people feel safe and be safe by delivering improvements in:

- crime reduction
- public confidence
- feelings of safety; and
- perceptions of anti-social behaviour

These outcomes will result from neighbourhood policing activity that includes:

- Increased visibility and familiarity of officers/PCSOs in the local area, which allows engagement with the community to identify their priorities for action, which allows targeted problem-solving with partners and communities to tackle the issues which matter most in communities.
Introduction continued

The 10 key principles that underpin the delivery of an effective neighbourhood policing approach include performance management:

- (Neighbourhood policing) ... should be subject to rigorous performance management including clear performance monitoring against a local plan and commitments made to neighbourhoods.
- Neighbourhood policing requires local measures that monitor public priorities, interventions against these (including partner and public participation) and feedback received from the public.
- Neighbourhood policing requires the ability to monitor performance at every level. Performance data should be accessible on a geographic, team and individual basis.
- The personal performance development review should incorporate individual progress against neighbourhood policing priorities.
Measuring Performance

Crime maps and information provision

Background

Closely linked to the area of performance measurement, is the provision of information to local people and communities.

All forces in England and Wales were required to implement crime maps by the end of December 2008.

This requirement was highlighted by the recent policing Green Paper ‘From the Neighbourhood to the National – Policing our Communities Together’ in which the chapter 1 response said “Local people must get as much information as possible, including ‘crime maps’, regular updates on local action taken and follow-up for victims and witnesses.” Other influences on the provision of crime maps have been: the Smith review of crime statistics (November 2006), which recommended “that police forces should work with their partner local service providers to produce relevant information in mapped form on… websites”.

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Crime mapping

The national crime mapping site was launched in October 2009. By February 2010 the site had received over 1 million visitors who had viewed over 10 million pages of information. The site continues to provide a mix of crime and antisocial behaviour data at neighbourhood level and links to neighbourhood policing information including contact details, local priority details and actions taken against those priorities as well as meeting dates and policing pledge information.

In February 2010 the site received its first upgrade. Following feedback from the public the colour scheme was changed to make it easier to differentiate between levels of crime as well as providing a facility for the information contained within the system to be automatically sent to other sites. This is enabling crime information to be integrated into smaller sites and combined with other information. Finally the NPIA has launched a mobile version of the crime map. Users can now get their local information through the new generation of smart phones. Users with suitable phones will automatically be given the details for the area they are in as well as directions to the nearest Police station from where they are located.

During 2010-11 the crime map will be linked to a national public facing court results website which will look and feel the same as the crime map. The NPIA will continue to assist the Ministry of Justice in developing this system.
Managing and evaluating NP Performance


Performance

Performance basically means how well the things that the police have responsibility for are being delivered. ‘Performance’ does not mean ‘performance indicators’, although simple crime statistics are often mistakenly taken on face value as how the police are performing. Performance indicators merely help us to examine what performance actually is, and may not cover all areas of police activity.

Performance management is about reviewing current performance in context, looking at how things are likely to develop and deciding on actions to improve future performance.

It can be helpful to view performance management as a cyclical process which, at the most basic level, involves:

- identifying priorities, setting objectives and planning for delivery
- taking actions to deliver against the plan, whilst monitoring both progress against delivery of the plan and actual results
- reviewing the learning from progress that has been made and feeding this information into the next cycle, to inform the next set of priorities and the approach to delivering them.

This basic cycle can be applied to all levels – from a force-level annual policing cycle through to the day-to-day responses to the changing priorities of a neighbourhood policing team. Because decisions are then based on solid evidence and feedback applying performance management principles helps both organisations and individuals to make better choices about how to use resources.
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); and
- **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 better or worse than expected?

Successful performance management builds on performance measurement and monitoring. The changing picture of performance that emerges from these two steps provides the evidence base for future decisions and actions.

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**Measuring Performance**

People are often confused about how to use performance indicators and how they fit in to the wider picture of managing day-to-day business. Unless they are clear about how to interpret indicators to achieve improvement in performance they risk ‘hitting the target but missing the point’.

A **priority** is an area of focus (for a BCU, partnership, team, etc.). Not everything can be a priority – intelligence, information and consultation determine which issues are the most important to tackle (often through the commitment of resources).

An **objective** is a specific aim that addresses a priority and states what is to be achieved and how it is to be achieved. More than one objective may be associated with a priority.

Objectives should usually be **SMART**:

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**ctionable
- **R**ealistic
- **T**ime-bound
It is important to distinguish between action and achievement. Actions or activities controlled by the organisation can be described as:

- **inputs** – for example, number of officers and PCSOs available and the amount of funding.
- **outputs** – for example, hours of foot patrol, meetings attended, and problem-solving initiatives recorded.
- The results or achievements from the organisation’s activity can be described as:
- **outcomes** – for example, levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, fear of crime, and confidence in the police.

There is rarely a perfect link between outputs and outcomes, because there will be other influences on the outcome besides police actions.

A performance indicator is a quantitative measurement of a desired outcome that gives evidence for how well an objective is being achieved; it is both indirect and incomplete – other information is needed to make sense of it.

A performance indicator can have an associated target – a numerical level or direction of change to be achieved in a given time, i.e. how the indicator is expected to change if the objective is achieved.

Performance indicators relate either to:

- activities (output indicators)
- or the effects of those activities (outcome indicators).

Performance indicators can be useful but can also be misleading. To obtain the benefits while avoiding the pitfalls, it is helpful to make a distinction between apparent and actual performance.

At performance review meetings phrases such as ‘performance is up this month’ are commonly heard. This usually means that a performance indicator has moved in the desired direction but this does not necessarily mean that performance has improved.

A performance indicator should be seen as representing (‘indicating’) apparent performance because it can be influenced by a range of circumstances – environmental change, recording practices, the actions of other agencies, even random fluctuation.

Road traffic collisions are an obvious example because results can be influenced by the weather.

This year’s figures may be lower than last year’s, but if last year’s were unusually high because of a lengthy period of severe weather, this positive performance indicator does not necessarily mean that police performance has improved.

A judgement of actual performance relates directly to the activities carried out by the organisation.

Apparent performance can be measured numerically through the performance indicators but actual performance is a qualitative judgement, an interpretation of the results of the performance indicators. Evaluation is needed to judge actual performance.
Evaluation: What and Why?

Evaluation is a form of empirical research which attempts to attribute changes to an intervention. If an intervention or initiative fails to have the desired effect, evaluation should help to determine whether:

- the initiative is wrong in principle
- the principles have not been appropriately adapted to local circumstances; or
- the initiative has not been properly put into practice (‘implementation failure’)

New or accepted practice is evaluated to determine whether an intervention works to a sufficient degree and with enough detail to allow managers to decide whether to:

- continue with the initiative
- introduce it elsewhere
- implement changes to make it more effective
- adapt it to local circumstances

This view of evaluation has two clear implications. Firstly, other possible reasons for improvement or deterioration in an indicator should be considered alongside neighbourhood policing. Secondly, the police manager will want to be as confident as possible that they can make the connection between the activities of their staff and the change in performance. To use managerial terminology, outputs need to be measured and related to the outcomes.
Evaluation of Neighbourhood Policing

The impact of neighbourhood policing at ward level was evaluated through the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP). This was a robust planned evaluation which involved:

- measuring outcomes before and after implementation in neighbourhood policing sites and comparable sites
- collection of data about environmental changes to allow context to be taken into account, and
- collection of data relating to policing activities – what was done, how and where, to develop understanding of the mechanism by which the outputs may influence the outcomes.

As a result of this, the police service can have confidence that implementing neighbourhood policing – visibility, engagement and problem-solving which addresses local priorities – can deliver positive change across a range of outcomes. Visibility is necessary, but not sufficient on its own to positively influence public perceptions.

At ward level, neighbourhood policing activity can be fairly concentrated, but at BCU and force level, with other priorities to consider, the implementation of neighbourhood policing may be more difficult.

While BCU Commanders do not need to evaluate neighbourhood policing from scratch, they do need to know whether neighbourhood policing outcomes are being achieved – and, if not, what action they should take.

This, of course, applies to any area of performance, such as addressing priority crimes.
The relationship between activity/outputs and low and high level outcomes needs to be clearly understood.

High level and low level outcomes

Any activity can have immediate effects – ‘low level’ outcomes – and broader, longer term or more remote effects, ‘high level’ outcomes.

In the context of neighbourhood policing, a BCU may have an objective with a target: to increase public confidence (the outcome) through increasing foot patrol (the output). However, there are likely to be other influences on the public confidence indicator, for example victim satisfaction and experience of crime which may dilute the influence of foot patrol.

Only targeted patrols in hotspots (as opposed to random patrols) can actually reduce crime. In order to affect public confidence (high level outcome), the foot patrol must first be perceived by the public (low level outcome).

Public perception of foot patrol is more directly linked to the activity, and consequently more likely to be affected by police action. (The links between the three indicators (foot-patrols, engagement and problem solving) have been empirically established by the NRPP.)

Foot patrol might also improve people’s confidence in the police through another mechanism, such as the patrolling officers identifying and solving more local problems, which in turn leads people to conclude that the police are doing a good job.

High level and low level outcomes and the related output can be identified:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public confidence</th>
<th>high level outcome indicator</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>more remote from the activity influenced by greater variety of factors</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception of foot patrol</th>
<th>low level outcome indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>closer to the activity more directly influenced by the activity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foot patrol</th>
<th>output indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a measure of the policing activity itself</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For any high level outcome indicator, there are likely to be other lower level indicators which need to be measured to inform decisions about action. The lower the level of the indicator, the more confidently we can interpret the results. For example, increased foot patrol may not lead to increased perception of foot patrols, because the patrols are not being noticed. This information can be acted upon, with patrol times and places changed.

But if increased perception of foot patrol does not lead to increased confidence, there is more uncertainty in the interpretation.

Again, the patrols may be in the wrong place or at the wrong time. Or something else, such as increased crime or reduced satisfaction with services to callers and victims, may be affecting confidence.

Without having information relating to the low level outcome indicator, it is more difficult to interpret the high level indicator.

Effective evaluation depends on having information allowing us to plot the route from action (output) to high level effect (outcome), providing a feedback loop to inform improvements in practice. Suggested indicators are provided in the next section.

Organisational level

Those responsible for assessing neighbourhood policing performance will need to decide whether to evaluate at force, BCU or neighbourhood level.

Where evaluation is undertaken at the level of selected neighbourhoods, there may be a bias towards success created by intense activity, which is diluted at the higher levels of BCU or force. Neighbourhoods may be selected for evaluation because they have particularly sizeable problems and the scrutiny of this evaluation can motivate people to work harder.

The apparent effects of neighbourhood policing may be reduced when the results from evaluated neighbourhoods are combined with other neighbourhoods where there is no evaluation. This helps to explain why results may be good at local level but disappointing at BCU or force level.

Forces and BCUs will vary in the staffing and resources that they apply and in how this type of work becomes known. Analysts will talk about results analysis, for example.

The extent of evaluation required can be decided by thinking about the level of risk involved – is the tactic to be used innovative and high risk or high cost, so that finding out about its effectiveness is particularly important? Are there competing demands on resources, so that the relative effectiveness and efficiency of the tactic needs to be established?
### Managing and evaluating NP Performance

**Organisational level**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ADVANTAGES</th>
<th>DISADVANTAGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Force level</td>
<td>All existing indicators are reported at force level.</td>
<td>Difficult at this level to attribute any observed change to the specific activities of neighbourhood policing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corresponds to aspiration that neighbourhood policing will lead to improvements in overall police force performance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCU level</td>
<td>Likely to allow an assessment of different approaches to implementation.</td>
<td>Some neighbourhood policing indicators, particularly those derived from the BCS, not available at BCU level. Additional survey work needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood level</td>
<td>Provides the most detailed picture of the nature of neighbourhood policing team activity, and the effects of those activities.</td>
<td>Outcome measures not routinely collected. If surveys are required, neighbourhood level evaluation will be selective and decisions will be required about how many and which neighbourhoods will be selected for evaluation, (possibly on basis of high levels of crime and disorder, or to test different implementation approaches).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Managing and evaluating NP Performance

continued

Use of Surveys

Evaluation involves collecting information on outputs and outcomes, as well as additional information relating to context, to allow the results to be interpreted. The pilot forces agreed that management of neighbourhood policing performance depends on understanding public perceptions at BCU level, which are best addressed using questionnaire surveys. Any additional surveys at BCU level should take account of wider force or police authority community engagement and consultation surveys.

Some of the neighbourhood policing outcomes are also general policing outcomes measured using the British Crime Survey. However, BCS data is not available at BCU level, so the force may need to collect additional data. This may be done within existing programmes of questionnaire surveys, possibly involving partners or by taking a consortium approach to reduce the additional cost to a minimum. Some forces may wish to carry out new surveys at this level.

Measuring Neighbourhood Policing

The evaluation of the NRPP provided strong support for a focus on crime, ASB and public confidence outcomes in neighbourhood policing performance. These outcomes also found wide support amongst the performance pilot forces.

Forces also wanted to link activity with outcomes from individual, through team, up to force level, but to be free to choose their own indicators of activity.
Managing and evaluating NP Performance

Timing and Frequency

Repeated measurement is essential. At least two measurement points – before and after – are needed to begin to assess the effects of an intervention such as neighbourhood policing. For ongoing performance management BCUs may want at least annual measurement of public perceptions. Clearly, the more frequent the survey the greater the expense. However, if the interval between the surveys is too great, then their use in providing evaluation data is limited.

The timing of surveys should also take account of possible seasonal variations. Surveys held twelve months apart would avoid this variation. If a shorter interval is more appropriate, surveys six months apart would be better carried out in spring and autumn (where daylight hours would be similar) than in summer and winter.

The timing of existing force surveys may not be ideal and if these are used, BCUs should recognise that this increases the uncertainty of the results, and should pay careful attention to the interpretation of the findings and the collection and use of supplementary data.

Questionnaire Design

People’s experiences and views are very important in the evaluation of neighbourhood policing, and these views can only be sampled reliably using questionnaire surveys. But good questionnaires are difficult to design, and many surveys fail to give meaningful results because of poor questionnaire design. Indeed, some of the questionnaires used in the pilot evaluations suffered from common weaknesses. Guidance on asking good questions for the purposes of evaluation is covered in some detail in the more comprehensive report ‘The Neighbourhood Policing Programme Performance Evaluation Report’. Copies of this guide are available for download at www.neighbourhoodpolicing.co.uk
Managing and evaluating NP Performance

Recommended Indicators

The table below sets out recommended indicators and additional options for understanding success or diagnosing problems and shows links between the levels from individual up to force. The table draws on research, experience from the performance pilots and individual force case studies. The table is laid out to correspond with what is provided to the public by neighbourhood policing: access, influence, intervention and answers.

The preferred outcome indicators are mainly survey-based or are specific to priorities identified by local people. The activity indicators are usually described in a more general way because definitions and the means of collection of monitoring information will vary from force to force, and BCU to BCU.

Views vary, for example, about how important it is to measure time spent on patrol, and so this indicator is not recommended but suggested as an option. Patrol is necessary, but not sufficient: engagement and problem-solving are considered to be of greater importance, in that the overall outcomes cannot improve without these activities.

A neighbourhood policing team member is dedicated when they are working in their identified geographical neighbourhood to:

- engage with neighbourhood members and identify or resolve issues and priorities identified within the neighbourhood
- increase public confidence by reducing crime and disorder within that neighbourhood in line with their role profile and according to an intelligence-led patrol plan and when they are absent from the neighbourhood due to
  - activities directly related to the above, such as briefings, problem-solving meetings, relevant court appearances, preparation of case papers
  - rest day or annual leave
  - training for their neighbourhood policing role.

Any activity that is not included in this list is an abstraction (unless undertaken as paid overtime).

The next page sets out quantitative indicators expressed as outputs. It also lists sources of qualitative information that could be used to check the quality of some of the suggested outputs.
Managing and evaluating NP Performance

Quantitative Indicators for Neighbourhood Policing *(Recommended Indicators are in blue)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>INFLUENCE</th>
<th>ACCESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Individual** | • Volume, frequency and variety of engagement (e.g. meetings, KINs, community contact forms, EVAs)  
• Quality 5x5x5s | • Abstraction  
• % time spent on patrol  
• Frequency of contact with neighbourhood group (e.g. KIN)  
• Prompt reply to public contact (email, letter, phone, text) |
| **Team** | • Volume, frequency and variety of engagement (e.g. KINs, meetings, community contact forms, EVAs)  
• Quality 5x5x5s | • Abstraction  
• Vacancies  
• % time spent on patrol  
• Frequency of contact with neighbourhood group (e.g. KIN)  
• Prompt reply to public contact (email, etc) |
| **BCU**  | • % public think police understand issues that matter | • Abstraction  
• Vacancies  
• % public knowing how to contact neighbourhood team  
• Police visibility  
• % time spent on patrol |
| **Force** | • % public think police understand issues that matter | • Abstraction  
• Vacancies  
• % public knowing how to contact neighbourhood team  
• Police visibility  
• % time spent on patrol |
| **National** | • % public think police understand issues that matter | |

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Managing and evaluating NP Performance

Quantitative Indicators for Neighbourhood Policing (Recommended Indicators are in blue)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS</th>
<th>INTERVENTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual</strong></td>
<td>• % priorities solved to public’s satisfaction – according to local records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• NIM problem-solving addressing priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Priority and role specific intervention, stops, arrests, alcohol seizures, PND, ABCs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Team</strong></td>
<td>• Priority-specific BCS comparator crime &amp; ASB incidents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• % priorities solved to public’s satisfaction – according to local records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Frequency, volume &amp; quality of feedback to public, e.g. blogs, newsletters, ringmaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• NIM problem-solving addressing priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Priority specific intervention, e.g. clean-up days, stops, arrests, alcohol seizures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BCU</strong></td>
<td>• Police doing good job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Priority-specific BCS comparator crime &amp; ASB incidents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• % priorities solved to public’s satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• % satisfaction of ASB callers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• % perceptions of ASB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• NIM problem-solving addressing priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Priority-specific intervention, e.g. clean-up days, alcohol seizure, stops, arrests, PND, ABCs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• % public say police tackling issues that matter*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Force</strong></td>
<td>• Local police doing good job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• BCS comparator crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• % satisfaction of ASB callers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• % perceptions of ASB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• % public say police tackling issues that matter*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National</strong></td>
<td>• Crime and ASB reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Confidence and satisfaction in the CJS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• % public think crime &amp; ASB issues that matter are being tackled in this area (non-agency specific) in line with PSA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KIN: Key Individual Network  •  EVA: Environmental Visual Audit  •  PND: Penalty Notice for Disorder  •  ABC: Activity Based Costing  •  CJS: Criminal Justice System
Qualitative Indicators for Neighbourhood Policing

Some indicators which were proposed as outcome measures as part of the pilot process are not recommended in the table. They would, however, play a part in establishing the context of neighbourhood policing and could be used to help diagnose whether it is making a difference to public confidence or where it might need to be targeted.

‘Context’ or ‘targeting’ indicators might include:
- Overall household and personal crime
- Residents’ fear of crime
- User satisfaction: victims of crime
- Public confidence that the police are dealing with minor crimes.

The next section explores how to use the full range of indicators in the performance management process.
Assessing the Real Impact of Neighbourhood Policing

BCU Commanders and other police managers need to assess, as far as practicable, whether neighbourhood policing outputs have actually affected the desired outcomes. This is particularly important to help us understand what to do if outcome measures show no change, or if they change in the wrong direction.

While demonstrating change is relatively easy, it is much more difficult to attribute that change to neighbourhood policing.

Suppose the following statistically significant change in confidence has been established after the introduction of neighbourhood policing:

Before: 64.4% confident                    After: 68.5% confident

It would be easy to conclude from this change that neighbourhood policing has been successful, but we cannot draw such simplistic conclusions, as there are other explanations for change:

• the change is because of neighbourhood policing
• the change may have happened anyway
• the change may be because of other things the police have done.

If we wish to establish which of these possible explanations is the right one we need more information – both quantitative and qualitative. We need to consider what sort of information we are likely to need for each of these explanations.
Understanding Neighbourhood Policing Performance continued

The change is because of neighbourhood policing

To support this interpretation, it should be possible to identify which elements or mechanisms of neighbourhood policing brought about the change.

Did the change result from:

- the simple effect of visible patrol?
- neighbourhood policing officers talking to more people, offering reassurance about the extent of local crime problems, and closing the gap between perception and reality?
- neighbourhood policing teams engaging in effective problem solving initiatives leading to improvements in the quality of life?
- a combination of all three?

To choose interpretations we need more information. For example, records of problem solving initiatives will show where they were undertaken, what neighbourhood problems they were aimed at, and how successful they were.

If greater improvements in confidence were achieved in areas where successful problem solving activity was undertaken, problem-solving seems to be the most plausible mechanism. But, if there is no link between areas with increased confidence and problem solving activity, this is not a plausible explanation.

On the other hand, if survey analysis reveals that people who had become more confident were both more likely to have spoken to a neighbourhood policing officer in the past three months, and more likely to rate local crime and disorder as ‘not a problem’, then this lends some support to the engagement and reassurance mechanism.

If there is no link between increased confidence and contact with neighbourhood policing activity, engagement and reassurance are not plausible as explanations.

A combination of patrol, engagement and problem-solving is plausible if the positive changes in confidence are all in areas where there is evidence of all three activities taking place.

The change may have happened anyway

To be confident that neighbourhood policing is the reason for improvement, we need to rule out the possibility that the changes may have happened anyway. In laboratory based evaluations this is done using control groups and strict testing conditions measures which are not possible in the real world of neighbourhood policing in BCUs. All we can do is to collect carefully designed additional data.
If pre-test data is collected during July and August when children and teenagers are off school and the weather encourages people to be out of doors, the data may show public perceptions of widespread, if low level, disorder. If neighbourhood policing is introduced, a post-test survey completed three months later – when children are back at school and the weather and daylight hours drive people indoors – we might identify a positive change in confidence. But the change could well be due to the timing of the pre-and post-test surveys, and not to neighbourhood policing.

Similarly a change might result from a general decline in criminal activity, but if people perceive a reduction in crime and are then asked to complete a questionnaire about their confidence in the police, they may attribute the reduced crime level to the police activity. The solution lies in the planned collection of appropriate additional information.

Background information on levels of crime – both generally and in the areas where neighbourhood policing has been introduced – is essential. Any information about public confidence derived from general force attitude surveys would also be important.

The change may be because of other things the police have done. Other police activities may have an effect on the outcome measures used to evaluate neighbourhood policing.
Understanding Neighbourhood Policing Performance

If there had been a police operation involving the high-profile arrest of drug dealers in a BCU, for example, or improvements in services to victims, this may increase people’s confidence, resulting in an observable change in pre and post-test measures of confidence. It may be difficult to separate policing activities into ‘neighbourhood policing’ and ‘non neighbourhood policing’, but it is important to keep careful records of other policing initiatives, activities, and noteworthy events (such as a high-profile arrest), so these can be taken into account in the interpretation of results.

Similarly the activities of other partners could affect people’s perceptions of quality of life or neighbourhood safety.

It is important to record such they are partnership activities and establish whether that form part of neighbourhood policing or whether they are entirely attributable to another partner.

Being prepared

Testing different explanations of change requires careful planning and anticipation of additional information needs, and the collection of relevant information using a detailed management information system. Questionnaires should be designed to allow competing interpretations to be tested. The police manager will want to identify other possible reasons for improvement and to ensure, with support from specialists, that the data is adequate to rule these out. Integrity is important – evaluation strives for truth and should not be information-based wish fulfilment. Proper evaluation is useful because positive results can identify scope for greater efficiency, and negative results can inform activity to address poor performance.
Performance management in practice

If a BCU Commander finds that apparent performance is not improving, they will need to find out if there is a problem and how it should be addressed. Suppose, for example, that public confidence is not increasing, despite the implementation of neighbourhood policing. How might this issue be approached?

Evidence suggests that public confidence is also likely to be influenced by victim satisfaction so checking what is happening to user satisfaction indicators would be a first step.

Are these heading in the right direction? If not, and if the commander is confident that neighbourhood policing activity is on track, the focus might shift to user satisfaction.

The same would apply to overall levels of crime and the other possible explanations discussed above.

If user satisfaction is improving and crime is reducing but confidence is static or moving in the wrong direction, the implementation of neighbourhood policing is worth exploring further.

This might happen through the National Intelligence Model (NIM) or performance management processes, depending on local arrangements.

Firstly, BCU level indicators can be checked. Drawing on the indicators suggested in this guide, a series of questions can be asked to begin to determine whether issues in the implementation of neighbourhood policing can explain why confidence is not increasing. In each case, the BCU Commander may need to compare results with a national average and with other similar geographic areas, or look at change over time. The left hand column in the box on the next two pages sets out the type of questions which might be asked and which indicators might help to answer them.

Negative or inconclusive responses to the questions will lead the BCU Commander to ask further questions of Chief Inspectors and Inspectors, who would then wish to ask questions of Sergeants, and so on to officer and PCSO level. At any stage it might be possible to identify obstacles to progress and tackle these by force or local action.

Chief Inspectors, Inspectors or Sergeants will have similar questions at a team or individual level and will also be largely responsible for assessments of the ‘quality’ of what is being delivered through the questions in the column on the right of the box.
## Exploring BCU Neighbourhood Policing Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS</th>
<th>QUALITATIVE INDICATORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Checking resources available for neighbourhood policing:  
  - are abstractions higher than permitted by targets or force policy?  
  - are there a higher level of vacancies in neighbourhood policing posts than elsewhere? | Checking whether resources available are accessible in the right places at the right times:  
  - do patrol plans reflect neighbourhood profiles? |
### ACCESS
- Checking whether the public are seeing officers patrolling and know how to contact them:
  - is any foot patrol being carried out?  
  - is the percentage of the public who notice officers patrolling less than about 20% (an approximate national average)?  
  - has it increased at all since neighbourhood policing was introduced?  
  - what percentage of the public know how to contact the neighbourhood team? Is it less than 50% (approx national average)?
### INFLUENCE
- Checking whether the public are provided with sufficient opportunities to engage and to set priorities:
  - how many meetings are being held (e.g. in each neighbourhood)?  
  - how many KINs are in place?  
  - how many EVAs have been completed?  
  - how many quality 5 x 5 x 5s have been completed?  
  - are any street briefings being held?  
  - are a variety of techniques used?  
  - is there a reasonable turn-out for public involvement events?  
  - are attendees representative of the local area?  
  - is the information from engagement activity being suitably collated to identify priorities?  
  - is information on local priorities and engagement opportunities regularly updated for the website and external communications?
## Exploring BCU Neighbourhood Policing Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS</th>
<th>QUALITATIVE INDICATORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTERVENTIONS</strong></td>
<td><strong>ANSWERS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking whether problem-solving activity is taking place:</td>
<td>Checking whether the problem-solving activity is of sufficient quality:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• how many priority-specific interventions have taken place</td>
<td>Are problems described in sufficient detail (time, location, victim, perpetrator) to allow a targeted response?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. in the last quarter)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking whether information on action is being fed back to the public:</td>
<td>Checking whether the public are able to find out what has been done to tackle priorities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• how many newsletters have been produced?</td>
<td>• is information on results being fed back to the public in a variety of ways?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• how many teams have blogs or ringmaster arrangements?</td>
<td>• is there coverage of local team activity in the local press?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking whether activity is leading to results:</td>
<td>What’s the tone of the coverage?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• have priority-specific recorded crime types reduced?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• have priority-specific ASB incidents reduced?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• what percentage of priorities identified by the public have been solved to the public’s satisfaction?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking whether the activity is actually having an impact:</td>
<td>Checking whether letters of thanks or complaint suggest about the quality of the service being delivered?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• what evidence is there that the impact of tactics is</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being monitored?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do letters of thanks or complaint suggest about the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quality of the service being delivered?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measuring Performance

Neighbourhood Priority

For local neighbourhood evaluation, a range of indicators at team or individual level can be used to assess performance or evaluate impact. The following example highlights output and outcome performance indicators to assess progress in addressing a neighbourhood priority, in the key areas of influence, interventions and answers. From the top down, many of these could be aggregated for BCU and force level performance management. The list is provided as a menu, not to suggest that all the measures listed should be collected.

Neighbourhood Priority identified:

ASB outside Whitbury New Town Leisure Centre 6pm – 11pm on Fridays and Saturdays. Involving young people aged 11 to 16 causing criminal damage; under age alcohol use; litter; assaults; disorder and intimidation of centre users.
## Measuring Performance

### Influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTPUT – QUANTITATIVE</th>
<th>OUTPUT – QUALITATIVE</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volume and frequency of engagement:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Number and ratio of letters of complaint/thanks relating to the ASB, Supervisor’s assessment of quality of:</strong></td>
<td>Percentage of public that think police understand the issues that matter (only available at neighbourhood level if surveys are being used to evaluate impact locally)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• meetings with community members affected by the ASB</td>
<td>• engagement activity (e.g. that this priority was set by public not police or partners) intelligence submissions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• meetings with young people involved in ASB</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• meetings with leisure centre staff and other partners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• contact/meetings with relevant KINs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Environmental Visual Audits (EVAs) conducted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• representativeness of those engaged, compared to neighbourhood profile</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of intelligence submissions (QA’d):</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• community intelligence (i.e. information coming from community members directly or via police and partners)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• from partners (e.g. leisure centre staff)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• direct from neighbourhood policing team through personal observation or knowledge direct from other police sources – response officers, investigators, CHISs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTPUT – QUANTITATIVE</th>
<th>OUTPUT – QUALITATIVE</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NIM problem solving to address the identified priority:</td>
<td>Supervisor’s assessment of quality of:</td>
<td>Percentage of public that think police understand the issues that matter (only available at neighbourhood level if surveys are being used to evaluate impact locally)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- problem solving process initiated to identify response</td>
<td>- problem solving process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- involvement of public and partners in problem solving process</td>
<td>- recording of problem solving process and dissemination of good practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of priority-specific interventions (as decided through problem-solving process):</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sign off of problem solving by public on completion (can inform low level outcome indicator – percentage of priorities solved to public’s satisfaction)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- stops or searches</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- arrests, cautions, convictions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- alcohol seizures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- diversionary activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- educational activity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- community clean up events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- joint operations with other agencies (e.g. test purchasing at off licences)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- solo operations by other agencies (e.g. installation of improved lighting)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABCs and ASBOs (noting that declining numbers in a long term operation may be a positive performance indicator)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Answers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTPUT – QUANTITATIVE</th>
<th>OUTPUT – QUALITATIVE</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frequency and volume of feedback to the public:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Supervisor’s assessment of quality of:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Percentage of public saying police are tackling the issues that matter in the local area:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• at meetings</td>
<td>• direct communication of feedback on this priority by NP team</td>
<td>• percentage of public saying police are doing a good job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• through newsletters</td>
<td><strong>Level and ratio of letters of thanks/complaint in relation to the solution</strong></td>
<td>• percentage of ASB callers that are satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• through press, radio, TV (it can also be useful to assess the percentage of positive, negative and neutral coverage)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• percentage of public who perceive ASB to be getting worse or improving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through Ringmaster, blogs, text, website etc</td>
<td><strong>BCS comparator crime, specific to this priority or elements of it.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Detailed Map of Neighbourhood Policing Performance Indicators

The case studies supplied by forces involved in the performance measurement pilots provide further information on how these indicators are used and recorded by these forces. They are available in the Neighbourhood Policing Programme Performance Evaluation Report at: www.neighbourhoodpolicing.co.uk/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>TYPE OF MEASURE</th>
<th>HOW MEASURED/RECORDED (EXAMPLES)</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstraction</td>
<td>Input – resource availability</td>
<td>Sickness absence. Monitoring information from officers on their abstraction to non NP duties</td>
<td>NP force performance pilots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of time spent on patrol</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Activity analysis; local PCSO monitoring</td>
<td>NP force performance pilots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of contact with neighbourhood group (e.g. KIN)</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Local NP databases</td>
<td>EPIC measures – MPS case study*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prompt reply to public contact (email, letter, phone, text)</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Local NP databases</td>
<td>NPP assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of public knowing how to contact neighbourhood team</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>BCS at force level. Survey activity within force required for BCU level</td>
<td>NP force performance pilots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police visibility (percentage of public who see officers patrolling at least one a week)</td>
<td>Low level outcome (mechanism)</td>
<td>Survey activity within force required for BCU level</td>
<td>NRPP research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Detailed Map of Neighbourhood Policing Performance Indicators

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<th>TYPE OF MEASURE</th>
<th>HOW MEASURED/RECORDED (EXAMPLES)</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volume, frequency and variety of engagement (e.g. meetings, KINs, community contact forms, EVAs)</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Individual, team and force records/databases</td>
<td>NRPP research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality 5x5x5s</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Intell database + QA activity</td>
<td>Surrey case study*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of public think police understand the issues that matter</td>
<td>Low level outcome (mechanism)</td>
<td>BCS at force level. Survey activity within force required for BCU level</td>
<td>BMRB** research, similar to NRPP indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIM problem-solving addressing priorities</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Problem solving database</td>
<td>NRPP evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority/role-specific intervention e.g. stops, arrests, alcohol seizures, PND, ABCs</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Individual, team and force records/databases</td>
<td>NRPP research and NPP assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of priorities solved to public’s satisfaction</td>
<td>Output or low level outcome</td>
<td>Sign off by public on problem solving database. Survey activity.</td>
<td>Staffordshire case study*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The Neighbourhood Policing Programme Performance Evaluation Report, available from [www.neighbourhoodpolicing.co.uk](http://www.neighbourhoodpolicing.co.uk)

** The British Market Research Bureau research commissioned by the Home Office to develop the KDIs for public confidence in PPAF (2005)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>TYPE OF MEASURE</th>
<th>HOW MEASURED/RECORDED (EXAMPLES)</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency, volume and variety of feedback to public, e.g. blogs, newsletters, ringmaster</td>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Individual, team and force records/databases</td>
<td>NRPP research and NPP assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of public saying police are tackling the issues that matter in the local area(^1)</td>
<td>Low level outcome</td>
<td>BCS at force level. Survey activity within force required for BCU level</td>
<td>BMRB(^*) research and similar indicator in NRPP evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local police doing good job</td>
<td>High level outcome</td>
<td>BCS at force level. Survey activity within force required for BCU level</td>
<td>NRPP research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of satisfaction of ASB callers</td>
<td>High level outcome</td>
<td>Survey activity for PPAF already in place at force level, additional required for BCU</td>
<td>BCU performance pilots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of perceptions of ASB</td>
<td>High level outcome</td>
<td>BCS at force level. Survey activity within force required for BCU level</td>
<td>NRPP research and BCU performance pilots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority specific BCS comparator crime</td>
<td>High level outcome</td>
<td>Existing performance management tools</td>
<td>NPP assessments and BCU performance pilots</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) To change to ‘public think crime & ASB issues that matter are being tackled in this area’ (non-agency specific) in line with PSA – from April 2008 BCS measurement of this indicator will begin in October 2007. The first six months of the data to March 2008 will be the baseline.
Conclusion

This section of the guide has drawn on practical knowledge derived from piloting the performance management of neighbourhood policing in 12 forces over an 18 month period, combined with coverage of recent developments in performance management, information provision and the effort to reduce bureaucracy.

It aims to make this practical understanding available to BCU managers so that forces can:

- select performance indicators that are relevant and appropriate to their own areas
- identify the most appropriate level of measurement from individual to force.

We have stressed that performance management and evaluation can take place at different organisational levels and to different degrees, from minimal monitoring by team leaders, to evaluation which tests out new tactics, compares the efficiency of different activities, or demonstrates that resources are being used efficiently at the neighbourhood level.

Police managers will need to liaise with analysts, performance management specialists and/or researchers, depending on force infrastructure, to gain support and assistance in selecting or designing performance indicators.

They will also need specialist support in gathering and analysing qualitative and quantitative data that is robust and detailed enough to identify changes in public confidence and, most importantly, the specific inputs, outputs and outcomes of neighbourhood policing that have contributed to these changes.

The owner of the above measuring performance section is:

nathaniel.smith@npia.pnn.police.uk
Other useful documents and sources

Neighbourhood policing — the Neighbourhood Policing Programme Performance Evaluation Report
www.neighbourhoodpolicing.co.uk

Evaluation of the National Reassurance Policing Programme
www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/hors296.pdf

National Quality of Service Commitment