



22nd April 2009

Dear Colleague,

GUIDANCE ON SETTING LOCAL PRIORITIES

This is a letter regarding the setting of local policing plan priorities for Police Forces in England and Wales. In 2007/08, the Home Office published a number of locally selected performance indicators and targets based on local consultation as part of the local domain of the then Policing Performance Assessments Framework (PPAF). In February 2008 the Home Office, HMIC, ACPO and the APA issued interim good practice guidance for police authorities and police forces on "Setting local policing plan priorities and assessing performance in APACS". Given the timing, the guidance was interim, pending the full implementation of the APACS (Assessments of Policing and Community Safety) framework.

The interim guidance contained two types of guidance:

- Guidance for setting and assessing local priority performance
- Guidance for selecting indicators for use within APACS

The Policing Green Paper – *From the National to the Local: Policing our Communities Together* – published in July 2008, announced that the Home Office would no longer make graded assessments under APACS, and that HMIC would have responsibility for providing the public with a view of the quality of policing in their local area. This means that APACS will no longer be an *assessment* framework, and will instead form a set of national performance indicators, providing a common basis of information for all with an interest in community safety.

HMIC are currently developing the *Rounded Assessment of Policing* which will provide the public with a view on the quality of policing in their area. As a result, the elements of the guidance which related to the submission of local priorities to the Home Office, for inclusion in a national assessment, no longer apply with immediate effect. In practise, this means:

- Forces and authorities will not be required to submit outturn data for 2008/09 against previously identified local priorities.
- Forces and authorities will not be required to submit local priorities for 2009/10 to the Home Office or HMIC.
- However, forces and authorities are still encouraged to identify and target improvement in local priorities as part of the annual policing planning cycle. HMIC – as part of their ongoing work with forces - will be looking for evidence that forces and authorities have rigorous processes in place for identifying priorities for improvement, planning and reviewing progress against those priorities, and engaging the public, both in the selection of priorities and in reporting progress against them. Unlike previous guidance, there are no restrictions on using targets against current performance indicators if the subject matter of the indicator is a local priority.

The guidance will soon be reissued as a joint best practise guide to assist police forces and their authorities in setting local priorities and targets but with references to the APACS assessment removed.



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