Making delegation work: Guidance for the police service on delegation to Basic Command Units and support departments

September 2006
Foreword

Basic Command Units (BCUs) are at the core of today’s police service. Officers and staff in BCUs, supported by their colleagues in specialised departments, provide the frontline service which the public relies on. It is absolutely essential therefore that they have the delegated powers and budgets they need to enable them do this as effectively and efficiently as possible.

There are many benefits to be gained from effective delegation and devolvement to BCU commanders. Giving commanders the delegated authority to direct their resources to local priorities can lead to more effective partnership working and better responsiveness to local needs. Increased innovation is another frequently mentioned benefit. Delegation is key to enabling commanders, officers and staff to deliver results on the ground.

Successful delegation is about creating a balance, though. For the force as a whole to work effectively, there is a need for uniformity in its standards and procedures, and for some functions and budgets to be kept centrally – or even shared with other forces or organisations – in order to benefit from economies of scale. Delegation needs to balanced by support from, and accountability to the centre. This guidance should help forces to make sure that this balance is the right one for their circumstances, and that the right structures and processes are in place to make it work.

This balance is also important to ensure that BCUs have the resources and ability to tackle volume crime and disorder and deliver neighbourhood policing, while Force HQs are able to counter serious and organised crime.

Delegation forms a central and interconnected part of the wider police reform programme. Many aspects of that programme need BCU commanders to have a high level of delegated authority. Putting the principles and recommendations outlined in this guidance into practice will be an important step in continuing the process of reform, and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary will be looking to see the extent to which forces do this as part of their assessment regime.

I am very pleased to present this guidance to you, and I hope that it will be of use to you as you continue to deliver the best possible service to our communities.

Tony McNulty MP
Minister of State for Policing, Security and Community Safety
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1. Introduction

1.1 Intended audience, aims and scope of this guidance

This guide is intended for police authorities, chief officer teams, BCU commanders and heads of departments. Its aims are to:

• Assist forces to create the right balance between delegated and centralised functions and budgets;
• Demonstrate how forces could increase levels of delegation where appropriate, while ensuring that corporacy and economies of scale are not lost;
• Identify the key enablers of successful delegation.

It has also been produced to address the high degree of variation in levels of delegation which exists around the country, and because of the negative experience which several forces have had with delegation in the past.

For the purposes of this guidance, delegation means giving to BCU commanders and heads of departments management responsibility for various functions, powers and budgets, and holding them responsible in turn for various outcomes.

The guidance focuses on delegation to BCUs, although the key principles of aligning financial and operational responsibility should apply throughout the force. Many central departments will also benefit from delegation, and BCU commanders and heads of departments should ensure that delegation and the key enablers are replicated within their units. It is also acknowledged that the extent of delegation to BCUs will be dependent upon the wider financial arrangements and governance of the force, set by the police authority.

The guide draws on case studies to demonstrate how delegation and the key enablers have been implemented in practice. The intention here is to allow forces to see how delegation might work in areas they had themselves not considered suitable. It is recognised, however, that a ‘one-size-fits-all’ model is not appropriate, and that levels of delegation will vary according to local circumstances.

The guide is divided into four main sections.

• The Introduction looks at the benefits of delegation as well as the pitfalls to avoid, and how delegation fits into the wider policing context. It also introduces the key enablers of successful delegation – leadership; accountability; and the right operating framework;
• Section 2 examines these key enablers in more detail and looks at how they impact on the organisational relationships and responsibilities within a delegated force;
• Section 3 looks at which functions, processes and budgets are suitable for delegation;
• Section 4 concentrates on managing resources within a delegated environment;
• Section 5 provides a checklist for successful delegation, based on the key enablers.

1.2 Delegation in the police service

1.2.1 Benefits to be gained

Two of the main benefits of delegation are its effect on motivation and innovation. Motivation is increased by the sense of empowerment delegation brings to
commanders, officers and staff. Delegation has been found by HM Treasury to be the second highest factor for motivating staff, from both the staff and managers’ perspectives. Also, ‘delegation can increase commitment at the local level’, as employees are more likely to feel involved and engaged if they feel they are being trusted with important responsibilities or activities.

Delegation is also frequently noted for its effect on increasing innovation. When accountability for performance is linked to delegation, officers and staff have the opportunity and motivation to seek new projects which will increase their performance and the service they provide to local communities. If some efficiency gains can be kept and reinvested by BCUs, there can also be more incentive for officers and staff to be innovative in looking for where those efficiencies can be made.

In addition to increasing motivation and innovation, the operational benefits which delegation can bring include the following:

- **More effective partnership work** – Good partnership working requires commanders to have the ability to direct resources (within defined parameters, and within a corporate approach) to partnership projects which will have a local impact, without having to refer up the chain of command on every occasion. This has been recognised by HMIC.

- **Less force bureaucracy** – Delegation can significantly reduce bureaucracy by enabling quicker decision making and rationalised processes. Commanders can, for example, make instant decisions on resource use within defined corporate parameters, instead of always having to bid for force funds.

- **Greater scrutiny of expenditure** – Delegation brings budgetary control closer to the point of expenditure. This can lead to greater scrutiny of that expenditure, through which opportunities for efficiency gains (whether cash savings or, for example, officer time released for more productive activity) can be identified.

- **Greater impact for BCU resources** – Delegation means police resources can have a greater impact at BCU level, for example by allowing BCUs to redirect gains made in one area towards other local priorities.

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3 HMIC. 2000. Calling time on crime.
What can the effects be of not delegating?

• Budgets and resources can become divorced from the reality of policing on the ground;
• Commanders can find that working with partners is less effective if they are unable to take decisions or commit funds without repeated reference to higher levels;
• Commanders and departmental heads can suffer from frustration at their inability to manage resources to meet local needs, particularly given the high levels of delegated responsibility enjoyed by colleagues in other forces and by those with whom they engage in partnerships;
• Without the responsibility of managing an operationally significant budget (including police pay), Commanders and departmental heads can feel that there is no imperative on them to produce performance in line with budget;
• Where one budget line is devolved but another, related line is held centrally, commanders and departmental heads may demand extra resources from the centrally-held budget to avoid incurring expenditure in the devolved budget. This does not allow for a rational use of overall resources;
• Commanders and departmental heads may feel that they are not sufficiently trusted by the force command team, and that there is not a sufficiently open and professional relationship;
• Commanders and departmental heads may feel detached from the strategic direction of the force.

1.2.2 Managing the risks

Delegation is not a panacea. Poorly managed, delegation can seriously affect performance so it is important to identify the possible pitfalls involved in delegation and plan to avoid them. Successful delegation is a matter of recognising and managing down or avoiding the risks, in order to maximise the benefits.

• Maintain corporacy – corporacy needs to be maintained so that:
  – certain ‘business critical’ common standards and operational practices are applied across the force;
  – BCUs do not view their own priorities as being more important than those facing the force as a whole;
  – good practice is shared;
  – the ACPO team has the ability to exercise an effective level of strategic command.

Taken as a whole, if BCUs begin to operate as if they were almost independent of each other and of the force as a whole, then performance will suffer.
Warning signs of a lack of corporacy

- Good practice not being shared and adopted across BCUs;
- Lack of minimum corporate standards and standard operating procedures, or poor monitoring and compliance of these;
- BCUs spending money outside force-wide (or national) contracts;
- BCUs not supporting each other when necessary in everyday situations;
- Inappropriate numbers of specialists in BCUs;
- Central departments struggle to get resources from BCUs to deal with cross-BCU issues, for example Level 2 and serious crime;
- Commanders and departmental heads spend large amounts of time discussing the minutiae of budget allocations;
- Training and development opportunities not equally available across BCUs;
- Lack of connection between corporate objectives and outcomes.

- **Maintain economies of scale** – ‘Economies of scale’ arise when goods or services are produced on a larger scale, with reduced average input costs. There are areas in the police service where it will be essential to maintain economies of scale to ensure value for money. In these circumstances, it is likely that control will need to be maintained centrally. Procurement is a good example of this. As highlighted by HMIC, ‘there is a balance to be struck between providing the freedom to control and manage, and the imperative wherever possible to achieve economies of scale in the running of the organisation’. It is important to realise that delegated and devolved services can sometimes lead to higher costs while providing an improved service. Successful delegation requires a careful and considered balance and linkage between centralised economies of scale (including the possibility of shared services between forces), and devolved services close to the frontline.

- **Maintain critical mass** – Delegating some functions to BCUs may lead to a loss of the critical mass needed to make that function effective. An example might be that some BCUs might not have enough firearms incidents to give firearms officers delegated to that BCU enough experience to maintain their operational effectiveness. In this case the force may decide that the function should remain central to retain the critical mass, or it may use other means, such as officers shadowing incidents in other BCUs, to maintain the necessary experience.

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1.2.3 How does delegation fit with wider policing issues?

Delegation to BCUs is of relevance to a diverse range of issues facing the police service, including the examples looked at below:

- **Neighbourhood policing** – Both the police service and the Government are committed to bringing neighbourhood policing to all communities by 2008. Effective neighbourhood policing depends on BCUs being able to understand and reflect local conditions in the design of policing services, and to be flexible and adaptive. Decentralisation of responsibility and decision-making authority to neighbourhood level is an essential facet of neighbourhood policing.

- **Local accountability** – BCU Commanders will continue to be under the direction and control of their Chief Constable and be accountable to them for the discharge of their functions. Accountability to the local communities will be through both the police authority and the strengthening of the partnership provisions at the BCU/CDRP level. This will be done through a package of measures introduced under the Crime and Disorder Act Review recommendations.

- **Local Area Agreements (LAAs)** – LAAs are very much geared towards giving local people more say in the way that public services are delivered in their area, and should certainly help to make services more responsive to local needs. Negotiations with central government on outcomes and targets to be included in the LAA are led by the Local Strategic Partnership (in two-tier areas, this will be the county-level LSP, rather than those operating at district level), and CDRPs are key players, because they are responsible for ensuring delivery of agreed LAA outcomes relating to Safer and Stronger Communities. Various central government funding streams are now automatically pooled in LAAs. This does not include the BCU Fund, but BCU commanders or chief constables have the discretion to pool this locally if they wish, and careful consideration should be given as to whether to do this: funds which support local services can often be deployed more effectively in this way, as partners including the police, local authorities, and health services can benefit from less ring-fenced funding, less red tape and more flexibility in how they work together.

- **Shared services and the need for efficiency** – Particularly in the light of Sir Peter Gershon’s review of efficiency in the public services, it is clear that creating economies of scale is a necessary part of increasing efficiency in the police. Care should be taken that delegation does not lead to unnecessary duplication of tasks, or a loss of value for money. Possibilities for shared services at a national level for supportive functions such as finance and human resources are being explored, as mentioned in the Police Minister’s letter to chiefs and chairs on 31st July 2006. This letter also made clear that forces should be innovative in pursuing this and other models of collaboration where appropriate to create efficiencies.

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5 NCPE. 2005. Practice advice on professionalizing the business of neighbourhood policing.
7 Available at: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk./media/B2C/11/efficiency_review120704.pdf
• **Police and public sector reform** – Delegation forms a central part of the police reform programme, and is one of the Prime Minister’s four principles of public sector reform along with National Standards, Flexibility, and Choice. Delegation is necessary to give ‘local leaders responsibility and accountability for delivery, and the opportunity to design and develop services around the needs of local people’\(^8\). In the policing context, the Office of Public Services Reform has said that Basic Command Units ‘should have the freedoms they need wherever possible to meet the demands of the public on the ground’\(^9\).

• **HMIC inspections** – The principles in this guidance can be seen throughout the ‘Baseline Framework 2006: Key Frameworks’\(^10\), ‘Going Local 3’\(^11\), and the Audit Commission’s ‘Use of Resources Assessment’\(^12\). In particular, the 2006 Baseline Framework states that inspections will be looking for adherence to this guidance in assessing whether the force has ‘appropriate budget devolvement to BCUs and departments with sound arrangements for monitoring and control’. This follows a history of HMIC and Audit Commission recommendations in support of delegation and devolvement going back to the early 1990s.

### 1.3 Making delegation work: The Key Enablers

This guide is focused on making delegation work. Key to this are the relationships and responsibilities within a force, together with the key enablers that need to be in place to manage down the risks and maximise the benefits of delegation. The diagram below illustrates the three key enablers (identified through research conducted for the Police Standards Unit), and what they mean for the responsibilities of four main components of force organisation: the police authority; the chief officer team; force HQ and support departments; and territorial BCUs. This diagram thus forms a basic framework for successful delegation.

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10 Available at: [http://inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/methodologies/baseline-introduction/ba-methodology-06/?version=1](http://inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/methodologies/baseline-introduction/ba-methodology-06/?version=1)
## Enablers of Delegation

### Leadership
- **Police Authority**
  - Governance of the force:
    - Set LPP in consultation with chief constable (CC)
    - Delegate financial management to CC as appropriate, within a formal framework

### Accountability
- Hold CC to account by:
  - Monitoring force performance against LPP
  - Scrutinising use of financial & other resources

### Operating framework
- Establish delegation framework:
  - Set out financial control arrangements in consultation with CC
  - Set overall force budget

### Chief Officers
- Exercise strategic leadership of force:
  - Show trust in commanders & department heads
  - Demonstrate transformational leadership
  - Set corporate vision
- Hold commanders / heads accountable by implementing:
  - Effective performance management
  - Effective internal inspection
  - Use of PDRs
- Set corporate strategy and targets:
  - Agree resource allocation, targets & budgets in consultation with commanders / heads
  - Agree limits of delegation

### Force HQ & Support Departments
- Lead departments in accordance with corporate strategy and vision
- Directly manage specialists not held at BCU level
- Form appropriate management link with BCU specialists:
  - Ensure career development
  - Share good practice
  - Ensure corporacy
- Ensure financial / HR training for commanders / heads required
- Ensure financial and HR professional support for commanders / heads
- Develop performance management regime with commanders for BCU specialists
- Ensure effective performance management regime exists for support departments
- Monitor compliance with force policy
- Monitor resource use by BCU, and departments
- Ensure all budget holders have access to financial IT system
- Accountable to chief officers for performance
- Agree, set and communicate policy:
  - Develop minimum standards
  - Define limits of delegation
- Negotiate targets in conjunction with commanders for BCU specialists
- Provide support to departments and BCUs in response to need:
  - Demonstrate customer service ethos
  - Ensure effective communication channels with BCUs
- Input into force budget & target setting, and planning processes

### BCU Commanders
- Lead BCU in accordance with corporate strategy and vision
- Manage functions and specialists which have a direct impact on core BCU roles
- Delegate decisions and resources within the BCU to align financial and operational responsibility
- Ensure effective operation of performance management regime within the BCU
- Accountable to chief officers for performance
- Negotiate targets in conjunction with relevant HQ department for BCU specialists
- Develop ‘intelligent client’ relationship and effective communication with departments
- Provide officers when needed in accordance with agreed framework
- Input into force budget & target setting, and planning processes
2. Organisational relationships and responsibilities

2.1 KEY ENABLER: Leadership

2.1.1 The relationship between chief officers and BCU Commanders/Heads of Departments

For delegation to be effective the corporate vision, strategy and needs have to be driven forward throughout the force. The role of the chief officer team is paramount in providing that vision and strategy, and in ensuring its consistent implementation.

In order to produce a relevant and effective vision and strategy, the planning process needs to be informed by the policing realities on the ground, through the involvement of BCU commanders and department heads. BCU commanders then have the task of implementing the force strategy and Local Policing Plan in locally appropriate ways.

2.1.2 What does effective leadership look like?

The leadership role of the force’s chief officer team is key. From the list of key enablers for effective delegation, leadership is the one highlighted consistently as being the most important. Strong leadership is however needed at all levels – from the ACPO team in showing a clear and consistent message that they have a vision and strategy for the force which they will see implemented; and from BCU commanders and departmental heads in inspiring their units to deliver performance and respond to local needs, while putting the force strategy into effect.

Work carried out in 2004 by the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate on leadership in the police service\(^\text{13}\) identified 53 specific behaviours as being related to effective leadership. Fifty of these behaviours closely match the style of leadership described as ‘transformational’. The 14 dimensions of transformational leadership are shown below, taken from the same publication:

- Genuine concern for others’ well-being and their development;
- Empowers, delegates, develops potential;
- Transparency, honesty, consistency;
- Integrity and openness to ideas and advice;
- Accessible, approachable;
- Inspirational communicator, networker and achiever;
- Unites through a joint vision;
- Clarifies individual and team direction, priorities and purposes;
- Creates a supportive learning and self-development environment;
- Manages change sensitively and skilfully;
- Charismatic, in-touch;
- Encourages questioning and critical and strategic thinking;
- Analytical and creative thinker.

Further details on this research can be found in Annex 2. These characteristics were found to be relevant to leadership throughout the police service, including at both force and BCU level. Research on empowerment sponsored by the Police Standards Unit in 2003\(^\text{14}\), produced the following working definition of transformational leadership within the police context:

'Leadership involving the empowerment of all employees, locating authority, discretion and decision making to appropriate levels in the service; and active consideration and support for creativity and innovation within a learning organisation.'

The question of trust is another important aspect of leadership which is an essential factor for effective delegation. By delegating, chief officers demonstrate that they trust their commanders to fulfil their delegated responsibilities. Similarly, for delegation to work once it is in place, chief officers need to have trust in their commanders that they are maintaining a corporate approach. This is assisted by having a robust performance management regime in place to identify and address issues of concern. The BCU commanders need to have trust in the ACPO team that they will be given the scope to respond appropriately to local priorities, and also that they will be supported with force resources when necessary. Trust is therefore a two-way process.

2.1.3 Allowing upwards influence: the BCU’s influence on the strategic direction of the force

The Audit Commission’s 2001 report on HQ support for BCUs\(^\text{15}\) recommended that

'Forces and authorities should consider ways to ensure that BCUs are the drivers of force policy, not merely its recipients. This might involve, for example, including BCU commanders alongside chief officers on the force’s top policy team, providing opportunities for BCUs to share ideas, or encouraging BCU staff to scrutinise both HQ support activities and each other’

As well as being involved in driving force policy, it is also recommended that BCUs and departments play a key role in the force planning and target setting processes. Strategic planning and target setting need to take account of, and reconcile the tensions between national and local priorities, and BCU commanders have a valuable role to play in informing this process and ensuring that their local priorities are given the necessary weight. It is also important that financial and HR plans are integrated with the corporate strategy, and BCUs which work with devolved budgets should be able to take an active role in producing budgetary and HR plans which will help to align force-wide operational and financial planning.


Case study: North Wales Police

North Wales Police devolves the police pay budget to BCUs (see section 3.6.3). The force regard this as an important part of including BCUs in the overall planning process. The planning process is integral to the successful operation of the devolved budgets, as all decision-making is operationally led.

BCUs submit a projection plan outlining their operational plan and resource requirements in September after consulting staff and external stakeholders. The Chief Constable then screens and prioritises the plans. When Government funding is confirmed, BCU plans are reconsidered and the Chief Constable convenes a meeting to determine strategic direction and to set the budgets. BCU commanders and departmental heads are given a one-line budget. The Local Policing Plan is then finalised with the Police Authority, based on the local plans and national priorities. Finally, in May a review is conducted of the previous year’s operational achievements and spending of all budget holders to assess whether the planning process worked. Any lessons to be learned can then be incorporated into the following year’s planning process.

The planning process requires commanders to ensure that the principles of Best Value are adhered to, and provides the means for the Chief Constable to give strategic direction to the force as well as making BCU commanders and departmental heads responsible for the planning and delivery of their own business within an overall Force policy.

The divisional projection plan contains within it an HR plan, which states the number of posts of each rank, any difference from the previous year, and a justification for that difference. Reference needs to be made to the Force Human Resources Plan, owned by the central HR unit. The corresponding financial bid is also set out. Once this is agreed, commanders will be held accountable for it. There is some flexibility in setting strength and rank mix for commanders, as adjustments can be made in support units to compensate for changes in front line needs to meet the overall force establishment. Divisions direct the recruiting flow by stating how many probationers they require and at what times of the year. From April 2005 training has been carried out in-house, so intakes can be better matched to leaving numbers.

It is believed in the force that devolving budgets – the police pay budget in particular – allows commanders to get the best out of the resources available in order to improve the quality and effectiveness of delivery. Successful delegation leads to empowerment and confidence: ‘When [our officers] are feeling 10 foot tall, they have a greater appetite for delivering better services’.
2.2 KEY ENABLER: The operating framework of the force

2.2.1 Maintaining corporacy and the strategic direction of the force

Using a high level of delegation appropriate to the individual circumstances of the force is likely to be the most effective long-term method of management within the police service. But it is not the only method, and there will be times when it may be necessary for the chief officer team to retain or even bring back aspects of force management under more direct control. This could be in response to poor performance, or a change in the local, regional or national context in which the force operates.

Under normal circumstances, however, it is important that chief officers and BCU commanders and departmental heads have a shared understanding of the roles and responsibilities which delegation brings. An essential component to this is having an operating framework in place. The definition of a transparent operating framework which emerged from previous research stated that it “defines the limits of delegation and devolvement within a corporate force structure, while ensuring an appropriate balance between national and local priorities.”

Forces were surveyed in February 2005 on the extent of delegation. According to this, approximately 60% of forces used operating frameworks. They were asked which areas their frameworks covered, and the results are shown in Figure 2:

Figure 2: Areas covered in operating frameworks

This chart illustrates that there are still many areas of force policy relevant to how BCU operates in relation to each other and to force HQ that are contained in other documents, or on which there is no set policy at all. Where policies are contained in different documents, it could be the case that bringing them together under the umbrella of the force operating framework might simplify the number

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17 PSU. 2005. Questionnaire on the extent of delegation and financial devolvement to BCUs.
of documents and protocols which BCU commanders need to work with. Such an action could also reinforce the policies themselves, and clarify the roles and responsibilities of all concerned.

The operating framework is a key element in ensuring that a corporate approach is maintained where necessary. Different forces will have different ideas on what elements of the force need to be mandated and what can be left to the discretion of BCU commanders. However, in those forces where the ACPO team or HMIC inspections have noted some of the warning signs of a lack of corporacy noted in Section 1.2.2, the operating framework could be revised to include the corporate expectations in this area. As the operating framework serves to set the limit on the delegated powers which commanders have, in many ways it is therefore the true measure of how empowered commanders and department heads are.

Case study: Lancashire Constabulary

Lancashire Constabulary has in place a 'Divisional Operating Policy'. This is a comprehensive document which sets out explicitly the expectations which the force places on BCUs to maintain corporate standards in most of the categories in the chart above. Lancashire operates in a very devolved regime, and so such a document is a useful means of maintaining corporacy. The stated aims of the document are:

- To ensure that divisional commanders have a clear understanding of the boundaries of divisional autonomy and corporate policy;
- To ensure that divisional structures are capable of meeting the needs of the Constabulary’s philosophy of geographic policing and an intelligence-led problem solving approach to policing;
- To ensure that divisional structures are capable of meeting the corporate needs of the Constabulary in respect of the conduct of major crime investigations and the policing of public disorder in Lancashire;
- To ensure that divisional structures enable the force to meet its national commitments to provide mutual aid support for incidents of public disorder.

Once an operating framework is in place, steps need to be taken to communicate it around the force, and monitor compliance. Effective communication of the operating framework is key to ensuring its relevance and uptake. Keeping within it should be viewed as a standard operating procedure by commanders and heads of department, and an essential part of maintaining trust and morale by chief officers. At the same time, the framework needs to be flexible enough that it can evolve to match changing circumstances, and not act as an impediment to creativity and innovation.

2.2.2 The relationship between BCUs and support departments

Support departments have different roles to play: in particular providing key operational support to BCUs and for force-wide policing operations but also in developing policy and managing corporate projects, auditing compliance and providing back office services. When providing services to BCUs, it is important that
these departments understand what services the BCUs require. BCUs therefore need to be pro-active in articulating their needs to the departments and ensuring that these are reflected in the departments’ performance management framework. Guidance on performance management for support departments will be produced by the Home Office in due course.

Service Level Agreements (SLAs) can be a useful means of outlining the standard and type of services which will be provided. When the Audit Commission looked at HQ support to BCUs\textsuperscript{18}, it found that many SLAs were regarded as being of little practical value beyond the initial negotiation. To be effective, SLAs must be managed, reviewed and updated when necessary, and BCUs should be driving the process to ensure that the SLAs fully reflect their needs. Where SLAs exist, they should also form part of the performance management regime to ensure that they are being met.

More generally, the Audit Commission’s recommendation that BCUs develop an ‘intelligent client’ relationship with support departments is endorsed. This implies that the BCUs act to shape the services which support departments provide, and think about how they could make better use of HQ resources to deliver their own objectives. For example, one BCU commander described how when the training budget was held centrally, the training department would advertise courses and stipulate the numbers required from each BCU to fill them. This meant that BCU needs were not taken into account, and as a result there was a high level of drop-out from the courses. With training now partly devolved, instead of being directed to fill a certain number of places on a previously planned central course, BCU commanders approach the training department with a request to run particular courses for a certain number of people. Drop-outs fell and satisfaction with the training services department increased.

Effective communication between BCUs and departments is essential to the success of the relationship between them. This includes a tasking and coordinating process for operational support departments which is fully in line with BCU needs, and a means of ensuring that support departments are kept aware of changing BCU priorities. For example, a centralised despatch unit will need close liaison with BCUs because different BCU priorities might require different despatch responses.

2.2.3 Abstractions and recharging

One common source of tension between BCUs and HQ departments is over abstractions for major inquiries and other incidents. A survey from 2003\textsuperscript{19} showed that 81% of respondents (BCU commanders) experienced abstraction rates due to HQ requirements of up to 10% of their establishment. While abstractions to major inquiries are to some extent inevitable, BCUs need to have some input into the force abstraction policy, which should be monitored to ensure that all BCUs are contributing fairly, and that abstractions are not placing too heavy a burden on the BCUs. The abstraction policy needs to be explicit, perhaps as part of the operating framework. Lancashire Constabulary’s Divisional Operating Policy, for example,

\textsuperscript{18} Audit Commission. 2001. Best Foot Forward: HQ support for police BCUs.

sets out what resources will be provided centrally, and what resources host divisions will be expected to provide in the event of a major enquiry.

**Recharging**

Internal recharging can be a useful means of compensating BCUs for abstractions, and of ensuring that the costs of services are appreciated by all sections of the force. On the other hand, if applied at too low a scale, it can lead to excessive bureaucracy and parochialism. Good financial management systems are required to make it work, and limits need to be set (for example no recharging for sums below £1,000) to avoid bureaucracy. Some examples of different arrangements for recharging:

- Planned operations only;
- Overtime on planned operations only;
- Attachments for more than 6 months only;
- Formal secondments only;
- By agreement between BCUs.

### 2.2.4 The role of central departments

There are certain areas which need to be kept central even within a highly delegated environment. Central departments should always be responsible for the following functions:

- **Setting of policy and minimum standards** – BCUs need to have input into the policy-making process, in order for them to have confidence that the policies are both efficient and fair. However, responsibility for actually making force-wide policy should rest with the appropriate central department. Central ownership of policy can help to ensure that the policy is kept up to date with best practice, that it is communicated effectively, and that it is carried out across the force.

- **Auditing of compliance with policy** – once policy is decided upon it is important that its use is audited centrally to ensure that the minimum standards of the force are complied with. Non-compliance should be raised at performance management reviews and justified by those involved.
Case study: West Yorkshire Police

West Yorkshire Police recently established a central Custody Policy Unit (CPU) in recognition of the need for corporate standards in the custody function. The CPU sets corporate policy for training, procurement, buildings and estate, and health and safety. It has been instrumental in arranging a contract for healthcare including forensic medical examiners for prisoners and complainants where National Health Service provision is not available or appropriate. The CPU also manages implementation and upgrades of the custody IT system. CPU acts as liaison with the Independent Custody Visitors’ Committee. The day-to-day running of custody remains at BCU level, preserving the ability to respond to local needs. Corporate policy is communicated via monthly meetings with BCU commanders, and email to custody inspectors.

As well as setting policy, the CPU carries out themed visits and annually completes a full audit of every custody area. Regular spot checks are conducted to supplement this. The results from these reviews are reported back to the relevant BCU commander, with an emphasis on improvement rather than identifying poor procedure. The Estates department in conjunction with the CPU and Professional Standards department carries out a regular review of the cell areas in order to ensure that preventative maintenance can be identified and undertaken whilst the Professional Standards department ensure compliance with policy, etc. Additionally, a bi-monthly strategic meeting takes place for all commanders hosted by the ACC to discuss issues identified through the spot checks and the emergence of national issues and policies, and agree actions. On other months, a custody user group meeting is arranged with representatives from BCUs, buildings, procurement, the Police Authority, etc, to discuss implementation of the actions identified through the strategic meeting.

- **Head of profession for BCU specialists** – central departments should consider forming an appropriate management link (for example ‘dotted-line’ management) for specialists at BCU level. Such specialists include local finance and HR managers, as well as operational specialists such as SOCOs, custody staff, dog handlers, etc, which might be delegated to BCUs. The central department or head of profession should be responsible for quality assurance of the work of the specialists, for ensuring that corporate standards are met, and provide opportunities for career development and the sharing of good practice. They should also negotiate targets for specialists in conjunction with the BCU commanders, as many of these targets may be of a technical nature.
• **Back office** processes – including the payroll and procurement. Sir Peter Gershon’s report into public sector efficiency\(^{20}\) highlighted the need for greater professionalism in public sector procurement. It is essential that wherever possible procurement takes advantage of the greater commercial leverage which derives from force-wide, regional or national procurement frameworks. Operating a central procurement system within a force and close monitoring to pick up “off contract” spend does not go against the principles of delegation. The decision to spend money should rest with the delegated budget holder, but once that decision is made, then as HMIC has commented ‘purchases should take place within a professional procurement framework’\(^{21}\).

• **Management of specialist functions not held at BCU level** – Some functions are not suitable for delegation to BCUs, either because forces would lose economies of scale or critical mass in doing so, or because they reflect the force’s need to deal with serious and Level 2 crime. Such functions therefore need to be either managed centrally, or by an operations support department with a similar structure to the territorial BCUs.

### 2.3 KEY ENabler: Effective accountability

Accountability in this context covers performance management and personal appraisal. Both these are an essential part of ensuring that the benefits of delegation are matched to the responsibilities that go with it.

Guidance on effective force performance management is comprehensively covered in the Police and Crime Standards Directorate’s separate guide, ‘Managing Police Performance: a practical guide to performance management’\(^{22}\), which includes detailed information on how managers can be effectively held to account for the decisions they make and the responsibilities they hold. The hallmarks of an effective performance management framework, taken from the guide, are below:

1. Clarity about the roles and responsibilities of the police authority, chief constable and managers at all levels for performance.
2. A framework which links performance to corporate planning, budgeting and resource management.
3. Chief Constable ownership and active involvement in the force’s performance review process.
4. Performance review structures which hold staff to account, replicated from top to bottom and across operational and support departments.
5. Recognition of good performance but with a relentless follow-up where performance falls short.
6. A culture of continuous improvement evident throughout the organisation.
7. Clearly articulated priorities which are widely understood by officers and staff at every level.
8. Individual PDR objectives and appraisal linked directly to performance.
9. Timely, accurate and relevant data is used to inform decision making.
10. Performance data is easily captured and clearly reported.

\(^{20}\) Available at: [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/B2C/11/efficiency_review120704.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/B2C/11/efficiency_review120704.pdf)


These hallmarks cover the processes, people, and data and systems which are necessary to make performance management work. A core part of performance management, and central to the need for accountability, is the performance review meeting. ‘Managing Police Performance’ discusses how these meetings can be held to best effect, and while the precise structure may differ from force to force, successful versions would contain most of the following elements:

An effective force-level performance meeting is:

• Chaired by a chief officer, preferably the Chief or Deputy (particularly in a ‘less mature’ performance management regime);
• Attended by BCU commanders and departmental heads of support branches;
• Aligned with NIM’s Strategic Assessment;
• All attendees have access to the same accurate, consistent, and timely performance data under discussion;
• Good performance is highlighted and discussed as well as poor performance;
• Where poor performance is identified a problem solving approach is used – plans are made to tackle it, and support and assistance are offered where appropriate;
• Recent performance interventions are reviewed and revised where necessary;
• Clear actions and next steps are agreed – with a relentless follow-up on previous actions;
• Actions are relentlessly followed up and progress discussed in the next meeting.

It is expected that these force-level meetings would be held at least monthly; most forces supplement them with meetings between individual BCU commanders/heads of departments and members of the ACPO team. The same process should also be replicated by BCU commanders within the BCU.

The guide highlights the debate around the ‘CompStat’ process (including a caution about some of its negative aspects), and recommends an informal contract between ACPO officers and BCU commanders ‘to set parameters, requirements and expectations’ for the performance review process, which might include the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The ACPO team will:</th>
<th>BCU Commanders will:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hold Cdrs to account in a manner that is robust but not aggressive</td>
<td>Recognise the significance of the review meeting for force performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlight and praise good performance – and its links to force objectives</td>
<td>Come to meetings prepared to explain performance – good and bad – and to detail actions taken in response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer support and assistance for tackling any poor performance identified</td>
<td>Implement action plan agreed at the meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold Cdrs accountable for only those outcomes or processes that they can influence</td>
<td>Identify any support needs to deliver action plans at the meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow up on previous actions agreed with Cdrs</td>
<td>Follow up on previous actions agreed with ACPO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure managers have access to the same timely and accurate performance data</td>
<td>Ensure plans and performance issues are cascaded down within the BCU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Internal inspection

While performance review meetings can make sure that the targets are met, it is also important in a delegated regime to have a fully effective internal inspection system in operation, to ensure that minimum standards are being implemented across the force. BCUs need the flexibility to adapt to their local needs, but internal inspections are needed as a form of quality assurance to make sure that the changes they make in posts and processes continue to conform to force-wide minimum standards. ‘Managing Police Performance’ describes the role internal inspection and intervention can play in a force, and mentions how ‘the robustness of internal inspection is a critical determinant of the [HMIC baseline assessment] grading’. The guide describes the key features which need to be considered when developing an internal inspection regime:

• How internal inspection activity is commissioned (is it risk-based? Driven by performance results?);
• Who commissions it and receives the results (ACPO team or others?);
• The person specification for internal inspection staff (what skills and experience are seen as relevant?);
• How internal inspection outcomes are actioned and followed through (are recommended changes or innovations put into effect?);
• How is inspection activity evaluated (is there a correlation between inspection outcomes and performance improvement?);
• How is internal inspection activity integrated with other types of internal and external assessment (e.g. audit, EFQM, best value reviews, independent inspection by HMIC, OSC and others?).

The guide also mentions that there is a risk of internal inspections becoming too bureaucratic and losing their perceived relevance. Forces need to guard against this.

Performance Development Reviews

Another aspect of accountability lies in Performance Development Reviews. These should contain clear objectives and targets which fit into the overall force strategy. They are an invaluable means of ensuring that the force ‘message’, the vision of the chief constable and the force’s targets are made relevant to all members of the force through personal objectives. For BCU commanders working with devolved budgets PDRs should also include delivering performance within budget as a key objective. Guidance to forces on the use of PDRs will shortly be issued by Skills for Justice.

Accountability to local communities

Following discussions with the Association of Police Authorities and others, and the review of the partnership provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act, a package of measures is being developed to strengthen accountability at CDRP level.

23 ibid, p. 35
BCU Commanders – as opposed to the CDRP of which they may be a part – will continue to be under the direction and control of their chief constable and be accountable to them for the discharge of their functions. This managerial accountability to the chief constable has to be matched by effective public accountability to the local community through both the police authority and other mechanisms such as those being developed.

In summary

- This chapter looked at the three key enablers of effective delegation. The section on leadership covered:
  - Characteristics of transformational leadership;
  - The importance of trust;
  - How BCUs and departments can influence the strategic direction of the force through inclusion in the planning and policy process.
- Looking at the role of operating frameworks, the next section examined:
  - Maintaining corporacy and the strategic direction of the force;
  - The areas typically included in operating frameworks;
  - Communication and monitoring of operating frameworks;
  - The relationship between BCUs and departments: developing the intelligent client role, and ensuring effective channels of communication;
  - Explicit and fair policy on abstractions and recharging;
  - The role of central departments within a delegated environment:
    - Setting policy and minimum standards (with input from BCUs);
    - Auditing compliance;
    - Head of profession role for BCU specialists, to ensure corporacy, quality assurance, the sharing of good practice, and career development.
  - Back office processes, such as procurement;
  - Management of specialists not held at BCU level, in order to preserve economies of scale or ability to deal with Level 2 and serious crime.
- The section on accountability emphasised the need in a delegated environment for:
  - robust performance management regime, based on the principles in `Managing Police Performance’;
  - internal inspections; and
  - the use of PDRs;
  - It also considered the effect of proposals for greater local accountability.
3. Deciding what to delegate: functions, processes and budgets

3.1 What should be delegated to BCUs?

As a general principle, there should be a presumption in favour of delegating to BCUs the functions, processes and budgets which have a direct effect on core BCU policing delivery – i.e. those involved in the prevention and investigation of crime and disorder, responding to neighbourhood policing priorities, and partnership problem solving.

The reasons why delegation of certain functions or budgets may not be appropriate in some cases will differ from force to force, and the balance between delegated and centralised activities will vary. The need for forces to manage serious and Level 2 crime, to co-ordinate activity across the force as a whole, and to engage with other forces regionally and nationally means that there will be some policing functions and budgets that are more appropriately managed at force rather than BCU level. Reasons of economy of scale may also dictate that others are also managed centrally – and indeed many forces are exploring how services can be shared across forces and regions, and even nationally, to maximise cost efficiency. These alternative models need to be carefully considered to ensure that the right balance and linkage is created between local decision-making and cost effectiveness.

There are five basic questions which can be used to help decide whether there is a case for delegating a particular function, process or budget:

**Delegation should add value to the BCU...**

1. Would delegation of this function or budget improve the BCUs’ ability to carry out their core police functions?

... and to the function or budget which is delegated.

2. Would each BCU be able to at least maintain the level of service of this function?

**Delegation should bring best value for money.**

3. Is there a clear business case? If new costs are involved, can these be justified by the extra benefits delegation is expected to bring?

**Commanders or Department Heads should be able to manage not just monitor...**

4. Would the BCU commander have the freedom to make changes to the function or budget as they see fit in order to improve the overall level of service of the BCU?

... always within the corporate framework,

4.1 What restrictions are necessary for:

4.1.1 maintaining force-wide capability / mutual support?

4.1.2 maintaining compatibility of standards and equipment across the force?

4.1.3 to ensure the force as a whole gets the best value for money from its contracts and purchases?
and should have an appropriate level of training and support.

5. Are BCUs able to handle the extra burden of having responsibility for this function or budget, especially in terms of having sufficient numbers of sufficiently experienced/qualified staff?

3.2 Delegating control of operational specialists to BCUs

Functions which have a direct influence on core BCU roles are obvious candidates for delegation, giving BCU commanders the ability to make the crucial decisions about how they are used to support BCU priorities. Such functions include partnership work, community policing, PCSOs, attendance management and prisoner handling. These functions are already managed by BCUs in over 50% of forces, according to 2005 survey data (see the chart below).

Where specialists are delegated to BCUs, forces need to ensure that any extra costs involved with delegating them do not come at the expense of the core BCU roles. For example, the delegation of dog handlers to BCUs would not be recommended if the BCUs would have to give up detective posts to fund them. It is also important that consideration is given to the effect of utilising specialists for general BCU duties – an example might be that if roads policing was delegated to BCUs, there could be a tendency for one or more of the traffic cars to be diverted to general response, to the detriment of the roads policing function. However, as long as such management decisions are made within the context of an effective performance management regime, they should have an overall beneficial effect.

A central department or head of profession should be responsible for setting policy regarding specialists, and should form an appropriate management link to ensure that corporacy and quality of service is maintained, training coordinated, career development enhanced and good practice shared (see Section 2).

It is also important that the central head of profession and his or her staff are involved with the BCU commander in ensuring that the specialists are used to maximum effect. For example, Home Office research into the deployment of Crime Scene Examiners (CSEs) suggested that the highest levels of performance were achieved when the central Scientific Support Unit was involved with the BCU in its tasking and co-ordinating meetings and had input into the deployment of CSEs. This, and the overall approach to the integration of CSE in the investigative process was seen to have more influence on performance than whether CSEs were managed centrally or by BCUs.

Similarly, research carried out by Durham Constabulary in 2006 suggested that the effect on performance of delegating roads policing was complex, with reducing and investigating crime appearing stronger in those forces which had devolved structures, but specific roads policing measures being weaker. It seemed that a happy balance was possible, as long as there were specialist supervisors, clear deployment protocols and clarity of roles, robust performance management arrangements and a sign-up by local commanders to ensure that cross-border were force-wide issues were appropriately staffed. This reinforces the key enablers identified in Section 2.

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Figure 3: The balance between centralised and delegated support services

- Specialists can be deployed more rationally as a force-wide resource
- Fewer specialists are needed
- BCU commanders do not need to worry about cover, sickness, etc
- Managers of specialists have technical expertise
- Specialists work directly to BCU targets
- No extra level of management is necessary
- 'Down-time' can be used to contribute to general policing targets on BCUs
- Supervision can be higher for specialists not based at Force HQ

A balance needs to be struck between the benefits of support services being centralised (to the left), or held at territorial BCUs (to the right)

One benefit of delegating specialists to BCUs is that ‘down-time’, i.e. the time when they are neither training nor using their speciality in attending incidents, can be used to contribute to BCU targets and priorities. This is one reason for delegating even those specialists who have a more supporting than direct influence on BCU core roles, such as dog sections.

Case study: Lancashire Constabulary

Armed Response Vehicles (ARVs) are delegated to BCUs in Lancashire, meaning that each BCU would have at least one ARV on patrol at all times. This situation benefited BCUs as the ARVs could work towards BCU targets when not employed on firearms incidents, and the specialists could stay connected to BCU objectives. A force threat assessment decided that it was unnecessary to have that many ARVs on constant patrol across the force area, but instead of centralising the function to preserve critical mass, it was decided to operate a force-wide rota system to decide which BCUs’ ARVs would be on patrol at any one time. This measure not only provided savings and allowed for a central, rational use of resources, but also maintained the benefits of having the function delegated.
3.3 How widespread is the delegation of functions to BCUs?

The spread of functions totally delegated to BCUs, partially delegated, and not delegated is shown in the chart below, taken from a survey in 2005.

**Figure 4: Functions delegated to BCUs**

Many of these functions were less likely to be delegated to BCUs than in 2003, which possibly shows a trend to group functions together into a single operational support department, often with a similar status to territorial BCUs. Where this is the case, the need for effective communication between the operational support department and the territorial BCUs is to be reiterated as is the need for an effective performance management regime for the operational support department (see Section 2).

3.4 Delegating operational responsibility to BCUs

It is important that BCU commanders are able to make decisions on how resources are directed in response to local priorities, within the wider corporate framework. This decision-making ability is often linked to the delegation of certain budgets, such as the vehicle fleet budget (see Annex 1.2). When commanders have some control of this budget, they are able to choose the mix of vehicles from the force catalogue which best suits their local circumstances and priorities.

Having responsibility is not just about budgets, however. BCU commanders ought to be able to decide on the priorities for their area, set of course within the context of the Local and National Policing Plans, and after consultation. The fact that these priorities may differ from BCU to BCU emphasises the need for effective communication between BCUs and central departments.
3.5 Delegating the HR function

Many forces have decided that the most effective way of delivering HR services is to devolve much of the management of HR to BCUs, normally through HR managers situated at BCU level. According to the 2005 PSU survey, 70% of forces had such BCU HR managers. The majority (63%) of these local HR managers had a dotted line responsibility to the central/HQ HR department, which continues, even in a devolved regime, to have a vital role in setting policy and dealing with matters which could either affect the force as a whole, such as employment tribunals, or with areas which are best dealt with centrally for economies of scale, for example occupational health. To create further economies of scale, forces are also encouraged to explore the possibilities of forming partnerships with other forces to provide HR services on a shared regional basis.

The central department also has the responsibility to support and provide direction to the local HR managers, and there should be mechanisms for regular contact, especially where no dotted-line accountability exists.

The principal advantage of having local HR managers based in BCUs is that their proximity to the staff of the BCU makes it easier and quicker to resolve issues informally. Knowing the individuals concerned also means that advice given to commanders or to the central department can be more accurate. The local HR managers have a role in making sure that corporate policies are maintained across the force and in raising the standard of HR practices in BCUs where necessary.

There may of course be other ways to ensure that HR managers have the right level of visibility and access to BCU staff, perhaps by having HR managers shared by two or more BCUs, if the size of the BCUs warrants it. This may allow for greater economies of scale to be made. For most forces, however, it is recommended that the HR function is delegated with each BCU having its own HR manager, although we would also recommend that forces investigate how a shared services arrangement, which look to be an increasingly prominent feature of organisations in the future, could be entered into with neighbouring forces or even other agencies to maximise economies of scale for administrative and transactional work.

It is essential for both local HR and Finance managers that their roles are clearly focused on providing high quality professional advice to support BCU commanders and that they do not become a “dumping ground” for day-to-day management problems that ought properly to be dealt with by supervisors and line managers, or for administrative matters that could be dealt with more efficiently by combining services at a central location. Professional HR managers at both force HQ and on BCUs have the task of providing strategic management of HR issues at their different levels, and core professional expertise. Administrative and transactional work, on the other hand, will almost certainly be most efficiently carried out on a shared basis. One other important contributor to successful delegation of HR functions lies in integrated HR and Finance systems which enable a single, overall approach to resource management.

Annex 4 has a detailed case study of the delegated HR function in West Midlands Police.
3.6 Delegating budgets to BCUs

3.6.1 What budgets could be devolved?

The general principle is that budgets should be devolved to BCUs and departments unless there is a good reason not to. A 2005 PSU survey showed the following levels of budgetary devolvement:

With the exception of training and IT, all of these budgets show an increase in level of devolvement over the results from a 2002 survey.

3.6.2 Role of the police authority

Given the role of the police authority in securing efficiency, determining budgets and setting financial regulations for the force, it is essential that the authority is involved in plans for devolvement from the outset. Rules concerning virement and carry-forwards often reflect the police authority’s own financial regulations as part of its stewardship function, and so the Treasurer needs to be involved in setting these regulations at a level which supports flexibility for commanders.

3.6.3 Should the budget for police pay be devolved to BCUs?

There are many aspects to the management of the police pay budget which are clearly unsuitable for devolvement at the present time. Pay rates, for example, are currently set nationally and so cannot be delegated. Procedures for the allocation of various bonuses and extra payments are generally set at force level to avoid differences among BCUs which could prove divisive, as well as difficult to administer if staff transfer across BCUs.
However, there are aspects of the pay budget which could be suitable for devolvement, such as the management of numbers, rank and skill mix, and the ability to redeploy savings into other BCU projects. The positive experience of workforce modernisation initiatives demonstrates further possibilities which may become more widely available to forces. Management of these areas at BCU level naturally needs to be within boundaries set by Force HQ, but the ability to exercise some control over them is generally welcomed by BCU commanders as an important addition to their resource management ability. **It is therefore recommended that these aspects of the police pay budget are devolved to BCU commanders, and that they are held to account for officer numbers against their planned strength.**

Other aspects of the pay budget, such as the administration of bonuses and extra payments, could be considered for devolvement, but forces will need to give careful thought to whether the benefits of local decision-making in this area would outweigh the possible disadvantages, especially to employee relations across the force.

As of March 2005, 27 forces (63%) had devolved this side of police pay, whilst 16 had not. Some of the arguments against devolving police pay concern the need for some central control over staffing levels. However, many BCU commanders who have these aspects of police pay devolved to them have welcomed the ownership of this budget as part of a general sense of empowerment. A survey carried out in 2003\(^\text{25}\) found that only 1% of BCU commanders with responsibility for the pay budget felt they wanted less control of it, suggesting that for commanders at least, the need for some measure of corporate control over police officer numbers does not constitute a reason for not devolving the pay budget.

One of the advantages of devolving the police pay budget is that commanders and departmental heads will become more involved in the budgetary and HR planning process than they would otherwise be. This can benefit the force not only because the differing needs of the BCUs can be effectively represented in the planning process, but also because commanders’ sense of empowerment can increase as a result of their involvement. Commanders take on shared ownership of force policy, including for example a decision not to allow officer numbers to fall. Delegation of the police pay budget is also likely to encourage commanders to think constructively about the scope for and potential impact of making changes to the workforce mix. Of course this would have to be subject to any overall force policy on officer numbers.

Forces may feel that removing the large police pay budget from central control represents too much of a financial risk for the force. However, by having the right systems of professional support, training, IT, and accountability in place, central finance can continue to monitor BCU / departmental spending, and be confident that the right decisions are being made.

In summary

This chapter covered:

- **Five basic questions** which can be used to help decide whether there is a case for delegating particular functions;
- The **delegation of specialists** to BCUs, looking at the pros and cons of managing specialists centrally or at BCU level;
- The spread of **functions** which were delegated to BCUs in 2005;
- Delegation of the **HR function** was looked at, covering:
  - The **role of local HR managers** and the central HR department;
  - The **advantages** of having HR managers visible at local level;
  - The possibilities of shared HR services with other BCUs / forces;
- Finally, the delegation of budgets was looked at, covering:
  - The general presumption in favour of budgets being devolved;
  - The levels of devolvement which existed in 2005;
  - A recommendation to devolve certain aspects of the police pay budget, while holding commanders to account for officer numbers.
4. Managing resources in a delegated environment

4.1 Issues in managing resources

Delegating resources is crucial to giving commanders and heads of department the decision-making ability they need to manage performance. It also helps to ensure that commanders have a sufficiently high level of influence over the force budget setting and planning processes. Once resources have been delegated, however, it is essential that they are managed effectively. Of course the largest resource in any BCU will be the officers and staff who work there. Commanders should always bear in mind the value of officer and staff time. Decisions about how to deploy that time are likely to be the most important ones in terms both of performance and value for money.

Careful monitoring of budgets by the central finance department, along with professional support from local finance managers and training for BCU commanders in managing finance, should all help to ensure (and to reassure chief officers) that resources are being used efficiently and effectively.

4.1.1 Use of Activity-Based Costing (ABC)

Every force has now been supplied with ABC information from all forces. Detailed analysis has been provided, which should be a useful tool to help identify and monitor areas for efficiency gains, to exercise more effective control over the activities using BCU resources, and to examine the contribution and costs which central departments make to BCUs. While use of this data at BCU level is still being developed, it could play a useful part – in conjunction with other sources of information – in how a commander manages BCU resources in a delegated system.

Case study: North Wales Police

The force has been developing Activity Based Costing (ABC) for eight years. The aim has been to establish the link between performance and cost. Data is analysed to show the unit costs of all crimes, incidents and activities. It is used as a fundamental tool in planning, in project management, in process and best value reviews and in the preparation of business cases.

It is used to check the efficiency and effectiveness of departments’ processes and functions. ABC is an essential element in the development and delivery of efficiency and can be a critical tool for the BCU commander. ABC has played an important part in the review of all processes and has resulted in a comprehensive force Information Management strategy. All systems have been replaced to meet the doctrine of ‘mobility and self-service’. The systems provide complete horizontal electronic processes in the place of a series of silos and manual processes. These cover all operational requirements and data is captured once with no double keying. It has led to extensive restructuring of the force and allows officers access to all operational data on the move. The reviews have also led to a streamlining and integration of business systems in accordance with the same doctrine.
4.1.2 Managing vacancies within a devolved police pay budget

Many forces set pay budgets on the realistic assumption that vacancies will occur during the year and so a delegated budget is likely to be a lesser amount than the full annual cost of all the authorised posts in the BCU. Even so, the vacancies which occur naturally over the year may well allow for some savings to be made, which can be used for other BCU priorities if the pay budget is devolved. Deliberately keeping vacancies open needs to be challenged under this accountability, but at the same time there needs to be some flexibility over the natural vacancies which will occur during the year.

There may be a tendency for commanders to use cheaper, less experienced officers. Using standard costs [see Annex 1.1] is one way of removing the financial differences between using lesser and more experienced officers of the same rank, and would therefore reduce this risk of devolving.

There may also be concern over the ability of BCUs to alter officer numbers or the mix of skills or ranks. While it may be necessary to impose central limitations on officer numbers, a certain degree of flexibility can still be maintained which would allow BCUs to create savings from the natural vacancies which arise. Devolving police pay allows for these savings to be redirected to other projects which can impact on BCU performance. Minimum quotas of certain ranks and skills can be agreed between the force and BCU commanders [and included in the Operating Framework, see section 2.2], which can ensure that the force as a whole has the resilience it needs to respond to unforeseen events.

Case study: Lancashire Constabulary

The Divisional Operating Policy of Lancashire Constabulary sets out the need for the BCU commander to maintain certain posts. For example, commanders must ensure that a superintendent, chief inspector, inspector and detective inspector are available 24 hours a day. Furthermore, commanders must maintain detective posts at no less than 13% of the divisional constable strength. This ratio is to ensure that there are sufficient staff to respond ‘to corporate objectives in respect of volume crime, investigating divisional serious and series crime, and provide competent officers on a pro-rata basis to support other investigations.’ Further instructions are given around the number of search-trained, firearms-trained, roads policing officers, and public disorder support unit officers which divisions must maintain.

4.1.3 Managing rostering and deployment

A key HR aspect of resource management for BCU commanders should be to ensure that the deployment of the workforce is aligned to demand. Particularly in relation to response teams, Accenture’s Study of Police Resource Management and Rostering Arrangements26 contains valuable guidance on appropriate shift systems.

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Accenture’s report draws attention to the importance of being able to identify accurately the number of officers on duty at any one time, their key activities and the impact those activities have on performance. An increasingly useful source of data for these purposes is the Airwave call data record material supplied to every force on a monthly basis.

Case study: Essex Police

Airwave Call Data Records (CDRs) contain comprehensive information about every voice call made on the service. Analysis of CDRs can inform on all aspects of use of the system, allowing the identification of working pattern issues and opportunities. CDR information is essential in ensuring forces are using the system efficiently and not generating unnecessarily high charges. Examples of achieving real operational benefits include:

- Identification of an overworked officer (informing management action)
- Abuse of telephony via Airwave (leading to reduced telephone charges)
- Use of status message data to identify patterns of officer availability for deployment
- Identifying increased use of Airwave in other force areas (roaming).

In addition, some forces have used CDR data to historically plot activity at past policing events in order to streamline operational planning.

### 4.1.4 Budgetary Responsibility and Virement

The aim of budgetary devolvement is for BCU commanders to have bottom-line responsibility, meaning that how they organise the budget allocated to them is left to their discretion. Before forces reach this stage, however, it may be wise to set some sensible limitations on moving funds between budget lines (known as ‘viring’) so that BCU management teams can build up experience and expertise in managing their budgets.

There are many ways of setting limitations on how BCUs are able to vire between budgets. Sometimes this is done on a percentage basis, but more often a maximum cash figure is given. Sometimes the rules are more specific: in one force, for example, permission is only needed for virements above £10,000 between staff and other budgets. Other forces have a system of notification to central finance department for lower sums, but permission from the Director of Finance for higher sums. Sometimes it is helpful to have uni-directional limits on virement – for example virement might be allowed out of an overtime budget but not into it (or only subject to special permission).

### 4.1.5 Access to Financial Management IT System

Aligning financial and operational decision-making and responsibility is one of the key themes of effective delegation. For this to be realised, decision-makers need to have real-time, accurate, and relevant information. Adequate IT systems which can provide this data are therefore indispensable. The best systems are able to provide information at all levels, enabling commanders and senior managers to keep an overview as well as to drill down to specific budget heads in finance and team and
even individual level performance where necessary. This data is also necessary to inform the force accountability mechanisms.

‘Managing Police Performance: a practical guide to performance management’ contains some valuable advice on data and systems. The guide points out that the three most common problems associated with data and systems are:

- No coherent strategy for information management – a holistic approach that considers the needs of the end users;
- Users are overwhelmed with data – what users need is access to the information they need to guide their decisions, which can only be delivered through high quality data analysis and presentation;
- Inadequate systems that are not ‘joined-up’ – this has several negative consequences, such as data inconsistencies, data not being trusted, and too much time being spent on manually compiling, rationalising, and researching data from multiple systems.

The guide goes on to say that managers should have access to data that is:

- Clear;
- Concise;
- Timely, and;
- Reliable.

Case study: West Yorkshire Police

West Yorkshire Police uses a SunSystems package which gives commanders and financial managers instant online access to financial information. The Divisional Summary report is the most basic, and sets out the nine biggest devolved budget areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>X Division Expenditure Heading</th>
<th>Annual Budget</th>
<th>Budget for period</th>
<th>Expenditure for period</th>
<th>Cumulative budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Overspend (-) underspend</td>
<td>Commitment to date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heading</td>
<td>cumulative expenditure</td>
<td>Expenditure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>police pay</td>
<td>15310776</td>
<td>1325921</td>
<td>1293013</td>
<td>13992796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>support pay</td>
<td>3004220</td>
<td>279608</td>
<td>271519</td>
<td>2724611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>police overtime</td>
<td>784331</td>
<td>34288</td>
<td>29048</td>
<td>473891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>support overtime</td>
<td>75139</td>
<td>6300</td>
<td>11415</td>
<td>8839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>private mileages</td>
<td>40000</td>
<td>3333</td>
<td>2987</td>
<td>36667</td>
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<tr>
<td>general running costs</td>
<td>336980</td>
<td>24270</td>
<td>38918</td>
<td>311910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>travel &amp; subsistence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&amp; hospital</td>
<td>5600</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>5133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>printers recharge</td>
<td>20000</td>
<td>1667</td>
<td>1596</td>
<td>18333</td>
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<td>44633</td>
<td>44846</td>
<td>486195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>20108074</td>
<td>1720478</td>
<td>1693606</td>
<td>18358375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>income &amp; sponsorship</td>
<td>-774685</td>
<td>-10361</td>
<td>-14886</td>
<td>-592212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grand total</td>
<td>19333389</td>
<td>1710117</td>
<td>1678720</td>
<td>17766163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This summary can then be drilled down to provide a much greater level of detail when required, on all the different expenditure headings. For example, ‘Police overtime’ can be selected and reports created showing the breakdown to functions within the BCU, shifts and patrols within the function, right down to individual officers, type of overtime, reason worked, etc. This can then be used for the effective management of overtime and to ensure that a healthy work / life balance is being achieved.

The system is used locally for budget management and monitoring, and the central finance department will take information from it as the basis of their monthly financial report to the ACPO team, and the quarterly report to the police authority.

4.1.6 Carry-forwards

Limitations on carry-forwards of underspends will probably arise from the Police Authority’s own financial regulations. These regulations should be flexible enough to provide sufficient motivation for efficiencies to be made by BCUs. Limits on carry-forwards tend to be set between 1% and 2% of the total devolved budget, often with a cash equivalent given as well, and a stipulation as to whether the carry-forwards can be made to the higher or lower figure of the percentage or cash, e.g. underspends of £200,000 or 2%, whichever is the higher, may be carried forward. Other arrangements which exist in forces include the level of any carry-forward to be set by the Director of Finance depending on the overall force position, or that underspends are placed in a central fund for which BCUs bid for allocations. Some forces split the savings created from vacancies in the pay budget, e.g. with 60% being kept by the BCU and the rest going back to the centre. Overspends are generally carried forward, but not always; one force will only carry them forward if it is felt that the overspend could have been avoided. It is important however that budgetary devolution brings with it an appropriate level of financial discipline, and that BCUs do not expect central funds to make up for avoidable overspends.

4.1.7 Contingency reserves

The police authority, force HQ and central finance need to ensure in the budget allocation that there is enough money kept aside for contingencies, whilst at the same time ensuring that the situation does not arise that every budget holder is putting aside sizeable amounts of funding on a contingency basis. The holding of reserves should be as part of a wider force policy, and monitored centrally to ensure compliance. The authority is responsible for the level and nature of reserves held by the force.

4.1.8 Preparation of budgets

Budgets ought to be prepared using an objective basis (such as zero-based) rather than on an historical basis. Budget preparation should be made as transparent as possible, and involve all stakeholders including BCU commanders. This is necessary as the value of objective-based budgets lies in them being based on need, and commanders are best placed to know the needs of the areas they are responsible for. Having an appropriate level of professional financial support at
BCU level, and assistance from central finance departments will enable these budgets to be professionally prepared.

Moving from historically-based budgets to objective, needs-based budgets can be achieved by modifying the budget allocation by a percentage of the difference between the historical budget and the objective budget over a period of two to three years. In time this should allow for budgets to reflect demand more fairly and more accurately. The transparent and needs-based nature of this kind of budget preparation should lessen any difficulties involved in shifting resources during this transition.

The different budget setting processes across the country according to a 2005 PSU survey were found to fall into the following categories:

- Budgets are set using the previous year’s figures adjusted for growth and efficiency savings (approximately 30% of forces);
- The budget available for BCUs is decided using a version of the National Funding Formula (approximately 20% of forces);
- Budgets are zero-based each year (approximately 20% of forces);
- Bids are put forward by commanders (approximately 5% of forces).

Some forces (approximately 16%) use different methods for different budget lines.

### 4.1.9 Financial regulations and budgetary rules

The police authority will set the Financial Regulations for the force, under which all schemes of delegation must operate. These regulations are generally supplemented by more operationally based Financial Instructions.

In addition to an operating framework and the Financial Regulations set by the authority, forces working with devolved budgets will usually need a set of rules and guidelines to help BCU and departmental management teams manage their budgets effectively, efficiently and with due propriety. It is possible for a truly comprehensive budgetary guide to run to over 100 pages, but many forces prefer to use a much shorter version, containing the basic points and written in non-technical language.

Budgetary guidance would usually contain the following sorts of information:

- The rationale and aim of devolving budgets
- How budgets are classified – are there different rules for different types of budget?
- Limits on authority – whose permission / consultation is needed to go beyond what is in the guidance?
- Virement – maximum limit, and any special rules or exceptions
- Details of any specific budgets which might be ‘ring-fenced’
- Procurement policy – whose authority is required to purchase different levels of goods or services? Requirements to purchase only off force (or regional or national) contracts or frameworks.
- Income generation – are there any limits on this, and who retains the income generated?
• Contingency funds – how much should be kept at what level?
• Carry-forwards – what limits are there and are there any exceptions for carrying forward under and overspends?
• Efficiency targets – who is responsible for producing efficiency gains, and how much?
• Special rules and procedures for certain budgets, e.g. for police pay, what are the rules on secondments and abstractions?
• Budget monitoring arrangements – who has to be informed of what, and when?

**Case study: North Wales Police**

North Wales Police’s Budgetary Guide begins with a short introduction to the financial management strategy of the force, including achievements of the previous year. There are then set out nine basic budgeting principles on which the budget rules are founded, such as the fact that only revenue budgets are delegated.

The rules themselves are non-technical, are not lengthy and there is a summary at the end showing changes in the rules from the previous year. The rest of the guide takes the form of advice, including some ‘dos and don’ts’ for managing budgets, for example ‘do involve staff at all levels’ and ‘don’t spend savings before they have been made’. Finally, there is a list of names and contact numbers for staff in the central finance department and instructions on who to contact for different levels of support.

**4.1.10 Devolving administration**

It is important that when budgets are devolved to BCUs, the aim is to improve the ability of the BCU to carry out its functions, rather than merely to reduce a central administrative task by moving it elsewhere. Budgets which cannot be controlled at BCU level, for example pensions, are a good example of one expenditure type probably best not devolved.

**4.1.11 Moving towards greater devolvement**

In many cases forces pilot devolvement on one or more BCUs initially before deciding to roll out across the whole force. Where such an approach is adopted, a pilot needs to provide the chief officer team with information about the possible implications of devolvement for the force, including:

• Policy: how does delegation affect the force’s overarching aims and objectives?
• Financial: what are the costs of delegation, and what are the savings?
• Human resources: how will delegation affect workforce planning across the force? Will it be possible to recruit all the professional support necessary? Are there any redundancy issues to address?
• Learning and development: what induction and training packages are needed? How will training be managed to minimise abstractions?
• Reducing bureaucracy: how will delegation help to reduce force bureaucracy?
• Efficiency: how will delegation improve efficiency?
In addition, the critical success factors for the pilot need to be established so that the project can be objectively evaluated. For example, critical success factors used by Greater Manchester Police, who ran a devolvement pilot of three BCUs in 2004/5, looked at the professional quality of outputs from the BCUs, including the devolved finance and HR functions; the operational performance of the BCUs; and questionnaire / interview data on factors such as motivation, speed of decision making, etc.

A detailed case study showing how the Metropolitan Police Service set about its most recent phase of financial devolvement can be found in Annex 3.

As well as pilot projects, other means of preparing BCUs for receiving devolved budgets include:

- Shadowing the budget initially, i.e. the budget is disaggregated and each commander knows his or her allocation, and uses this to inform decisions without actual control of the budget passing from central finance. There are no carry-forwards;
- A higher level of financial restrictions initially, for example more restrictions on viring and carry-forwards;
- A higher level of central monitoring and advice.

4.2 Competencies and training required for financial and HR management

To have the confidence that HR and finance decisions can be competently managed at the BCU level, it is important that the BCU Commanders involved have the necessary capability. HR and finance decision-making is an important role of any senior private or public sector manager and it is important that commanders recognise and acknowledge their responsibilities in this regard. The Integrated Competency Framework produced by Skills for Justice\(^2\) lists the following competencies as necessary at BCU Commander level in the area of financial and human resources management. These are:

- Negotiate and secure adequate funding to achieve objectives;
- Allocate resources to match priorities;
- Monitor activities to ensure resources are used within budget and according to Best Value;
- Promote equal opportunities and rights in order to recruit and retain personnel from all communities;
- Ensure a fair and balanced approach to address performance which is below standard;
- Ensure any grievances have been correctly handled in accordance with organisational procedure.

For many commanders, training may well be required to ensure that they reach the standard of competency needed. It is also important that devolved budget holders understand the force financial position as a whole, and that the constraints placed upon them are put into context. An annual update would be one way of providing this.

The National Police Leadership Centre (part of Centrex) offer (from 2005/6) a module on its Strategic Leadership Development Programme (SLDP) entitled Managing Performance. This is intended for `chief inspectors, superintendents and police staff with responsibility for resource

\(^2\) Available at: www.skillsforjustice.com
management and operational performance’29, and has as its aim ‘to provide participants with the ability to make sound decisions relating to resources, based on the collection and interpretation of performance information relevant to their BCU / business unit’s objectives’. The objectives of the module, which lasts 5 days, include:

- Monitor compliance with quality assurance systems;
- Develop and maintain quality assurance systems;
- Secure finance and resources for the business unit;
- Manage the use of finance and resources;
- Make recommendations for expenditure;
- Evaluate and improve organisational performance;
- Manage the quality of service provision.

These objectives are all linked to the relevant sections of the Integrated Competency Framework.

In addition to this, and other modules on the SLDP programme which also cover HR issues, such as ‘Effective management of workplace relations’, many forces have their own internal training programmes to ensure that commanders, departmental heads, and senior staff have the necessary skills and knowledge.

As of March 2005, around 73% of forces provided such additional training for BCU commanders in finance and / or HR matters. The extent of this training ranged from informal sessions as and when required, to a week-long course (in Cleveland Police) run using external consultants. Other forces offered a variety of training, for example Bedfordshire Police had day-long inductions for new senior managers to the work of the finance and HR departments, and West Yorkshire Police organised extra coaching on the force finance system. Thames Valley Police run a bi-annual finance course. Many central finance departments will also run seminars throughout the year on particular matters of concern, such as Merseyside Police on using ABC, for example. Comments have been made that it can be difficult to secure the attendance of senior staff on courses and seminars such as these, and such training ought to be given a high priority.

The 2004 White Paper ‘Building Communities, Beating Crime’ committed the Government to developing enhanced training for BCU commanders, leading to a specialist qualification. While this training package is still in the development phase at the time of writing, it is expected to include sufficient content on finance and human resources management to enable commanders to carry out this part of their role effectively.

### 4.3 Professional support for BCU commanders

#### 4.3.1 Local finance and HR managers

Acquiring the competency to handle sizeable budgets and to manage large numbers of staff requires not just training but also an ability to recognise and utilise the right sort of local support which the BCU commander will require to discharge these functions. Many BCU commanders have a business manager (or similar) to support them, who is responsible for finance, HR, and administration. The need for a single postholder who can cover all of these areas of business or to split these functions with individual leads, will depend upon the size and circumstances of the BCU in question.

In 2004/5, Greater Manchester Police (GMP) carried out a pilot project to trial devolvement and assess the relative merits of different structures of professional support to BCU commanders. Three structures were modelled, as shown below:

Model A: HR manager reports to Qualified Accountant Business Manager

Model B: HR manager and Qualified Accountant both report to generalist Business Manager

Model C: HR Manager and Qualified Accountant Finance & Admin Manager both report to BCU commander
With Model A, the pilot suggested a tendency for the Business Manager to report on finance and the HR Manager to report on HR and – as both were members of the Senior Management Team -there was little justification for the difference in status between the two. The BCU which piloted Model B felt that the generalist Business Manager provided a useful role in bringing together finance and HR, but there was a query as to whether the extra tier of management was justified. The force therefore decided to adopt Model C for the force as a whole, as it was felt that HR needed to have equal status with the finance function at BCU level.

Implementing the senior structure and an accounting technician and HR officer of this model across the force would cost £31,000 per BCU or equivalent (after freeing up savings from central finance and HR departments). To be self-financing this means that each BCU would need to make an efficiency saving on a £20m budget of 0.16%. It was felt that having the enhanced financial capability of this model at BCU level would easily enable BCUs to identify savings to cover the cost of its implementation.

Roll-out of the model force-wide was undertaken in 2005.

To retain and motivate these key members of staff, it is important that the continuing professional development of the Finance and HR Managers is also considered and addressed. This is another reason for having an effective connection between them and the relevant central function.

Case study: West Yorkshire Police

The central finance department offers seminars for financial training for local finance managers. An example would be an annual event which is run on the closure of accounts, detailing what is required at the end of the financial year. The pace and style of delivery is varied throughout the seminar and as a lot of the main points are similar from year to year, a great deal of thought goes in to making the format of the training interesting and different from previous years. Other subjects which have been covered include training in the use of the force financial systems, accounting for external funding, overtime reduction and using budget templates.

All the seminars are deliberately made short and sharp, often with a quiz at the end. Attendance is normally 100%, and they are carried out with a sense of humour, covering just the essentials and involve no ‘technospeak’. The finance team work together in the preparation of the seminars to make them as interesting as possible – for example one year they followed the format of the TV quiz show ‘Who wants to be a millionaire?’

Feedback from the seminars has been excellent, and the very high attendance rate is attributed to the good working relationship which exists between the central finance department and local finance managers. The local managers understand the need for the seminars and appreciate the time and effort which is put into producing them.
In summary
This section looked at managing resources in a delegated environment. It covered in particular:

- The use of ABC;
- Managing vacancies in the police pay budget;
- The importance of understanding demand and matching deployment patterns to demand;
- The importance of a good understanding of which officers are on duty, when and of their key activities;
- Budgetary considerations such as virement, carry-forwards and the preparation of budgets;
- Ways of moving towards greater devolvement, for example using pilots.

It also covered what needs to happen for devolvement to be successful, for example:

- The competencies and training required in BCU commanders and heads of department;
- What professional support is needed for BCU commanders, and various models of providing that support;
- The importance of ensuring that professional support remains focused on delivering high quality advice to the BCU commander.
5. Delegation checklist

This checklist can be used by forces to assess the extent to which they have implemented the principles recommended in the guidance. A tick in each box would indicate a force with a very high level of effective and balanced delegation. More information on each point can be found in the appropriate sections.

A. Leadership

1. Do BCU commanders and heads of departments feel trusted by the chief officer team? [Section 2.1.2]
2. Do leaders at all levels demonstrate the qualities of transformational leadership? [Section 2.1.2]
3. Do BCU commanders and heads of department lead their units in accordance with the corporate strategy and vision? [Section 2.1.1]
4. Do central heads of profession or departments form the right management link (such as a ‘dotted-line’ arrangement) with specialists held at BCU level? [Section 2.2.4]
5. Do central heads of profession or departments ensure good practice is shared and adopted by BCU specialists? [Section 2.2.4]
6. Do central heads of profession or departments ensure corporate policies are maintained by BCU specialists? [Section 2.2.4]
7. Do central heads of profession or departments ensure career development and training for BCU specialists? [Section 2.2.4]
8. Do the central finance and HR departments ensure that BCU commanders have the training in finance / HR they need to address the competencies required? [Section 4.3]
9. Do BCU commanders manage specialist functions which have a direct impact on core BCU roles? [Section 3.2]
10. Do BCU commanders delegate resources and decision-making within the BCU? [Section 1.1]

B. Accountability

11. Has the force put in place a performance management regime which is consistent with the principles of ‘Managing Police Performance’? [Section 2.3]
12. Is the force internal inspection regime effective in ensuring compliance with minimum standards? [Section 2.3]
13. Is there a clear message from chief officers on the importance of the PDR regime? [Section 2.3]
14. Is there a performance management regime for support departments which follows the principles of ‘Managing Police Performance’ and has input from BCUs? [Section 2.2.2]
15. Are central departments effective in ensuring compliance with force policy across the force?  
Section 2.2.4

16. Is there adequate monitoring by central finance of delegated budgets?  
Section 4.1

17. Do all budget holders have access to the force financial IT system?  
Section 4.1.5

18. Is the performance management regime fully embedded below the BCU level?  
Section 2.3

C. Operating framework

19. Do BCU commanders and heads of departments provide input into the force planning processes?  
Section 2.1.3

20. Are central departments responsible for setting policy, minimum standards, and limits on delegation?  
Section 2.2.4

21. Do BCUs have input into the policy-making process?  
Section 2.1.3

22. Are targets for BCU specialists negotiated between BCU commanders and relevant heads of profession or central departments?  
Section 2.2.4

23. Do central departments provide support to BCUs in response to BCU needs using a customer service ethos?  
Section 2.2.2

24. Are there effective channels of communication between BCUs and between BCUs and departments?  
Section 2.2.2

25. Do BCUs develop an intelligent client relationship with departments?  
Section 2.2.2

26. Are abstractions managed according to clear protocols, and managed fairly to avoid overburdening BCUs?  
Section 2.2.3

D. What to delegate

27. Are functions and budgets which have a direct impact on BCU core roles delegated to BCUs?  
Section 3.2

28. Is there a business case for delegating these functions or budgets?  
Section 3.1

29. Do commanders or departments heads have the ability to actively manage the delegated function or budget?  
Section 3.1

30. Are there suitable policies in place to ensure force-wide capability for delegated functions?  
Section 3.1

31. Are there suitable policies in place to ensure compatibility of equipment and procedures across the force?  
Section 3.1

32. Is procurement carried out centrally wherever possible?  
Section 2.2.4

33. Do specialists contribute to BCU priorities during ‘down-time’?  
Section 3.2

34. Are commanders able to decide on the priorities for their area, within the local and national context?  
Section 3.4
35. Is the HR function devolved?

36. Have opportunities for sharing HR and other services been explored?

37. Is there a general presumption in favour of devolving budgets?

38. Is the management of vacancies within the police pay budget devolved?

E. Resource management within a delegated environment

39. Is ABC used for BCU resource management?

40. Is deployment aligned to demand?

41. Are budgetary rules and guidance issued to all budget holders?

42. Have commanders and heads of department been adequately trained in finance / HR management?

43. Do commanders and heads of department receive adequate professional support in finance / HR management?
Annex 1

Delegating specific functions and budgets – checklists and points to consider

In addition to the more general delegation checklist in Section 5, this Annex contains seven further checklists together with points to consider looking at the delegation of some specific functions and budgets.

1.1 Police pay (see also sections 3.6.3 and 4.1.2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are BCU commanders allowed some flexibility over numbers during the year?</td>
<td></td>
<td>If No: Within a robust mechanism of accountability, there should be some room for manoeuvre over natural vacancies which occur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If Yes: Are there adequate reporting systems in place to ensure that overall force numbers can be controlled?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are BCU commanders involved in deciding what the optimum numbers of officers and staff are?</td>
<td></td>
<td>If No: Commanders ought to be involved in the HR planning process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do BCU commanders have a role in deciding how many probationers they will receive, and when?</td>
<td></td>
<td>If No: This could reduce the flexibility of holding the pay budget, and there might be advantage in putting in place a mechanism for BCU commanders to influence allocation of probationers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are BCUs given extra budget to cover staff costs if they become over-establishment because of probationers allocated to them centrally?</td>
<td></td>
<td>If No: It is worth considering this as a means of ensuring that BCUs are not forced to cut back in other areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do BCU commanders have some freedom to alter the rank mix of officers?</td>
<td></td>
<td>If No: limited ability to alter the rank mix can allow commanders to ensure that resources offer the best fit for local priorities, and can contribute to greater visibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there minimum requirements of numbers of different ranks to maintain force-wide capability and mutual support?</td>
<td></td>
<td>If No: This could leave the force unprepared for unforeseen calls on resources, and it is suggested that explicit and minimum numbers of different ranks be agreed between BCUs and force.</td>
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<td>Question</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.2 If BCUs civilianise officer posts to release funds for more frontline officers, is there an assessment made on the likelihood of the civilian staff budget remaining stable for a certain number of years? Also, is there a rigorous assessment of whether more frontline officers is the most cost effective way to redeploy resources and, if it is, in what roles they would have most impact on performance?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Are your recharging systems simple enough not to be a bureaucratic burden?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Do BCUs keep savings made from vacancies occurring during the year?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Do you use standard costs?</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>If No: If BCUs civilianise posts and then the civilian staff budget is cut, officers will need to be taken off frontline duties to cover them, meaning that service is lowered across the board and there are fewer frontline officers than before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>If No: See section 2.2.3 for examples of recharging policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>If No: Being under-strength may affect BCU performance, and it is suggested that the BCUs ought to be able to keep any savings made from the pay budget in order to compensate for this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>If No: If using actual costs is working well in your force, it might be better to stick to this system, but if there are questions around the time and bureaucracy involved in working with them at BCU level, it is worth examining whether the level of professional support given to commanders is adequate for using actual costs, and whether it might be simpler to move to a standard cost system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>If Yes: Commanders need to be held accountable for keeping to their strength plan in order to avoid vacancies being deliberately kept open.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
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<tr>
<td>If <strong>Yes</strong>: Standard costs are a useful means of making the budgeting process much simpler at BCU level. It can also remove the risk of commanders using cheaper, but less experienced officers over more expensive ones. However, the use of standard costs does mask the real spending implications of decisions, and it could be argued that a mature devolved regime would necessitate the use of actual rather than standard costs. It is suggested that the use of standard costs be reviewed to ensure that the benefits of it continue to outweigh the greater transparency of using actual costs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Vehicle fleet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> Are BCU commanders able to decide on the optimum mix of vehicles to have on their BCUs?</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> Is there a minimum number of certain types of vehicle which BCUs must keep to?</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>3. Does the leasing cost which BCUs pay for vehicles include tax, depreciation and all administration?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Is insurance a separate budget line devolved to BCUs?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Is fuel devolved to BCUs?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Is maintenance devolved to BCUs?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 7. Do your vehicles have an Automatic Vehicle Location System fitted?   |        | **If No**: Data from systems such as this can provide very valuable information to commanders on how the vehicles are being deployed, and can help to make the best use of this resource.  
**If Yes**: Make sure the data captured is used to plan vehicle use. |
| 8. Are BCU commanders able to hire vehicles which are not part of the force catalogue? |        | **If No**: As long as they coordinate their use through the central vehicle unit, commanders should be able to hire vehicles, as this can have an important effect on BCU performance.  
**If Yes**: The central vehicle unit should always be consulted to ensure that central contracts are used when available. |
| 9. Are BCU commanders provided with quality monthly fleet management information for decision making? |        | **If No**: It is difficult for BCUs to maximise the best use of resources if only financial information is available.  
**If Yes**: Does the fleet management information include fleet lists, planned replacement dates, vehicle utilisation information, fuel use and accident information, and is it in a user-friendly format? |
| 10. Does the force have a structure in place for the corporate review, monitoring and setting of fleet delegation standards? |        | **If No**: Such arrangements are necessary to ensure corporate and quality standards are maintained.  
**If Yes**: Are policies and procedures readily accessible, for example on the force intranet? |
### 1.3 HR function – see section 3.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 1. Do all BCU commanders have the support of a dedicated professional HR manager reporting to the BCU commander? | ❑      | If **No**: If this is because some commanders share HR managers between them, go to question 1.1.  
If it is because commanders are supported by a business manager whose remit includes HR, it is suggested that HR is increasingly a specialised professional function, requiring specialised, professional managers. It is possible that one business manager might not be able to adequately cover both finance and HR issues within a BCU. It may be worth comparing grievance and retention levels, for example, with other similar forces.  
If **Yes**: Go to question 2.                                          |
<p>| 1.1 Is the HR manager assigned to your BCU readily accessible to be able to deal with issues the moment they arise? | ❑      | If <strong>No</strong>: Your level of HR officer cover may not be sufficient to prevent initially resolvable issues becoming formal problems. |
| 2. Does the HR manager for your BCU have a ‘dotted line’ accountability to the central HR department? | ❑      | If <strong>No</strong>: Many forces use this system to ensure the professional responsibilities of a HR manager can be quality assured. It can also serve to ensure that corporate policies are adhered to, and that good practice and information are shared across the force. Some forces share PDR responsibilities between the BCU commander and the central HR manager. |
| 3. Does the HR manager for the BCU have regular (at least monthly) meetings with the central HR department? | ❑      | If <strong>No</strong>: Regular meetings are useful to ensure corporate standards are adhered to, and that local problems can be aired. Monthly meetings are typical in forces with successfully delegated HR functions. |
| 3.1 Are there dedicated supervisors in the central HR department who are able to provide advice to local HR managers as and when needed? | ❑      | If <strong>No</strong>: Such a system of support is advisable for the same reasons as having regular meetings, and should complement those meetings. |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Is there a clear career structure for HR managers, with suitable opportunities for professional development and training?</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>If No: HR is an increasingly specialised profession, and recruiting and retaining sufficiently experienced and qualified professionals will be difficult without a clear career structure and development opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Is the HR manager for the BCU responsible for employment tribunals and routine administrative work?</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>If Yes: These are matters which could reside with central HR department, for reasons of legal implication and complexity in the first case, and for administrative burden in the second. You should consider reassessing the roles of the local HR managers and central HR department. You could also consider whether a shared services agreement with other forces or organisations might be more efficient for dealing with routine administrative tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Does the HR manager for the BCU form part of the BCU senior management team?</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>If No: Go to question 6.1 If Yes: Go to question 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Is the BCU commander accessible at all times to the local HR manager?</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>If No: Local HR managers often need the same direct access to BCU commanders as commanders need with them, in order to deal with problems as rapidly as possible when they occur. It would probably be useful if the importance of the HR manager was positioned within the BCU, to the extent of forming part of the senior management team. If Yes: This is useful, but given the importance of HR in policing, it may be helpful to have the local HR manager form part of the BCU senior management team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Is there a clear understanding of the different roles of HR managers and line managers in the BCU?</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>If No: Roles should be made explicit to avoid HR managers becoming a ‘dumping ground’ for problems which should more properly sit with line managers. If Yes: This is important to prevent HR managers from becoming a ‘dumping ground’ for problems which should more properly sit with line managers. Roles may need to be reviewed from time to time.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### 1.4 Training

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Does the force delegate discretionary training to BCUs/Departments?</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>If No: Training requirements may differ from BCU to BCU. Delegating discretionary training to BCUs is one way of ensuring that training reflects the needs of specific BCUs and Departments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Does the force head of training coordinate all the training in the force?</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>If No: This is a useful way to maintain corporacy and adherence to the overall force training strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Can commanders vire funds out of their training budget?</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>If No: While this measure will prevent savings being made at the expense of training, there may be other ways to ensure that the overall force training strategy is being adhered to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do BCUs and departments act as ‘intelligent clients’ to the central training department, requesting courses to suit their needs rather than reacting to courses initiated by the centre?</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>If No: While there may be other means of ensuring that the training department meets the needs of the force at BCU and department level, this kind of relationship is a useful way of doing so.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.5 Call handling and despatch

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Does the force delegate call handling or despatch to BCUs?</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>If No: Go to question 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Are policy and standards set and monitored centrally?</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>If No: This is an essential means of ensuring that a corporate approach is set and maintained. Especially with the introduction of National Standards for Call Handling, standards should not differ across the force.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Is the deployment of central force resources monitored to ensure effective co-ordination?</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>If No: This can be an issue for devolved call handling and despatch.</td>
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</table>
### Forces with centralised call handling

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are there any means for BCU commanders to influence communications operations?</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>If <strong>No</strong>: Call handling and despatch service the needs of the force, and it is recommended that there are adequate communication channels between communications and BCUs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a written protocol setting out the roles and responsibilities of call handling/dispatch and BCUs?</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>If <strong>No</strong>: This can be a useful means to manage the relationship between central and devolved parts of the force.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.6 Custody and prisoner handling

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the force have a central unit responsible for setting policy and checking compliance with PACE and other legal obligations in custody suites?</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>If <strong>No</strong>: It is suggested this function is operated at Force HQ. There should very little room for manoeuvre in this area, and hence likely to be little benefit gained by managing it at BCU level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are custody sergeants and detention officers managed at BCU level?</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>If <strong>No</strong>: Forces should review supervision arrangements to ensure they are adequate to deal with welfare and line management issues. If <strong>Yes</strong>: Forces should ensure this arrangement is not causing problems for covering abstractions and sickness for the rest of the BCU, and that the specialist training of custody sergeants and detention officers is adequate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the force use dedicated prisoner handling units (PHUs)?</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>If <strong>No</strong>: Evidence would suggest that such units can have a positive effect on BCU performance, especially in terms of the quality of investigations. Short-term attachments to a PHU can also raise the skill levels of constables in interviewing and managing investigations. It would be wise to review whether to implement PHUs in the force. If <strong>Yes</strong>: As PHUs play a central role in contributing to BCU targets, so their management could be well placed at BCU.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the PHUs managed at BCU level?</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>If <strong>Yes</strong>: Forces should ensure that there is a link maintained to a central head of profession to ensure that corporate standards are maintained. If <strong>No</strong>: As PHUs play a central role in contributing to BCU targets, so their management could be well placed at BCU.</td>
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### 1.7 Specialist functions (see also section 3)

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is the specialist function concerned (e.g. dog handlers, ARVs, SOCOs) delegated to territorial BCUs?</td>
<td>❑</td>
<td>If <strong>No</strong>: Go to question 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Is responsibility for setting and maintaining corporate policy and standards for this function held by a central professional head?</td>
<td>❑</td>
<td>If <strong>No</strong>: This is strongly recommend this as a means of ensuring that corporate standards are maintained across the force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Are regular meetings held between specialists from different BCUs in order to share good practice?</td>
<td>❑</td>
<td>If <strong>No</strong>: Having no means of sharing good practice is a warning sign that corporacy in the force is being eroded, so such a system ought to be strongly considered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Is there a 'dotted-line' of responsibility for specialists to a central head of profession as well as to the BCU commander?</td>
<td>❑</td>
<td>If <strong>No</strong>: Such a system is common in the case of other specialists working in BCUs, for example finance and HR managers. It is a good way of maintaining professional contact and is worth considering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Are targets and performance indicators for specialists agreed by the central head of profession and the BCU commander together?</td>
<td>❑</td>
<td>If <strong>No</strong>: Managing specialists often requires technical knowledge which BCU commanders might not have. There is a need therefore for targets and PIs to be informed by the head of profession.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Are there adequate mutual aid systems in place to ensure that cover can be maintained if a particular BCU has an unexpectedly high level of sickness and / or abstractions in its specialist functions?</td>
<td>❑</td>
<td>If <strong>No</strong>: The need to cover for sickness and abstractions can be one of the drawbacks of managing these functions at BCU level. If such arrangements for cover are not in place, this could be a sign of a lack of corporacy in the force.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Are officers able to obtain enough operational experience?</td>
<td>❑</td>
<td>If <strong>No</strong>: It is important that delegation does not restrict the operational experience of officers. There could be ways of sharing cover across the force so that specialists are not confined by the geographical boundaries of their BCU.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Are officers able to maintain national minimum standards and accreditation?</td>
<td>❑</td>
<td>If <strong>No</strong>: It is clearly vital that this occurs, particularly in critical areas such as firearms. This consideration needs to be factored in to a force’s planning on delegation of these functions.</td>
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<td>Question</td>
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<td>Comment</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Forces with centralised specialist functions</strong></td>
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</table>
| 9. Are heads of central departments held to account for performance?    | ☐      | If **No**: Central and operational support departments are often managed independently of the force performance management regime. It is vital that the principles set out in ‘Managing Police Performance: a practical guide to performance management’ are applied to operational support departments as well as territorial BCUs.  
If **Yes**: It is suggested that BCU commanders be involved in this process as the ‘customers’ of operational support. |
| 10. Is there an adequate level of local supervision for specialists not based at Force HQ? | ☐      | If **No**: Low levels of supervision can negate the advantages of having specialist functions at HQ rather than territorial BCU level.                                                                 |
| 11. Do police officer specialists work towards general policing targets whilst not engaged in their actual specialist function or training? | ☐      | If **No**: As highly trained police officers, specialists are a valuable resource and their time should be utilised as effectively as possible. Arrangements should be put in place to allow them to work on general police priorities – perhaps at BCU level – whenever possible. |
## Annex 2

**Leadership in the police: Comparison of the 14 dimensions of transformational leadership with the constructs used by police officers to describe effective leadership behaviours**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transformational Leadership</th>
<th>Effective leadership behaviours as defined by others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Genuine concern for others’ well-being and their development** | Takes account of staff welfare issues/compassionate and understanding  
Takes account of staff welfare in deploying staff  
Shows active interest in supporting front-line policing/gets involved and takes control when appropriate  
Caring/having appropriate priorities/puts other interests before own  
Provides physical and psychological back-up in difficult situations  
Represents staff concerns to higher authority  
Avoids making unreasonable demands on staff  
Displays consistently high professional standards/does not use bullying sets a good example to staff  
Develops individuals/guides/coaches/mentors/uses PDR effectively |
| **Empowers, delegates, develops potential** | Knows and utilises the skills of staff, uses effective delegation, trusts staff, encourages initiative  
Values and develops staff/team player/displays humility  
Shows interest in and acknowledges the work of staff, shows respect for individuals |
| **Transparency, honesty, consistency** | Setting and maintaining standards  
Challenges poor performance  
Challenges inappropriate behaviour  
Being consistently fair  
Consistent – no favourites  
Consistent – no mood swings  
Displays consistently high personal standards/sets a good example to staff |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transformational Leadership</th>
<th>Effective leadership behaviours as defined by others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Integrity and openness to ideas and advice | Open and honest  
Consultative/encourages participants/listens to others’ view/accepts negative feedback/values contributions |
| Accessible, approachable | Maintains visibility/interacts with staff/stays accessible  
Approachable on any topic |
| Inspirational communicator, networker and achiever | Generates support from community and from within police service using effective networking  
Able to communicate effectively with all ranks and members of the public. Has the common touch  
Displays enthusiasm and energy for tasks/has a positive ‘can do’ attitude/prepared to take the initiative and give a lead when appropriate/proactive approach  
Demonstrates follow-through, determined, persevering, reliable, meets deadlines |
| Unites through a joint vision | Provides clear direction/ensures common purpose  
Develops effective team-working  
Disseminates information effectively and appropriately |
| Clarifies individual and team direction, priorities and purposes | Provides adequate stability/not blowing in the wind  
Provides effective communication  
Provides effective and timely decisions when requested  
Provides useful guidance when requested  
Organised. Effectively manages time. Prioritises effectively  
Inspires confidence in command and control situations |
| Creates a supportive learning and self-development environment | Fosters a learning non-blaming environment  
Supporting and encouraging staff/creates positive comfortable working environment/helps staff to provide effective high quality service  
Accepts responsibility for staff, tasks and outcomes |
<p>| Manages change sensitively and skilfully | Effective negotiating style – internal and external |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transformational Leadership</th>
<th>Effective leadership behaviours as defined by others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charismatic, in-touch</td>
<td>Able to motivate through personal qualities/has charisma/presence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal qualities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good knowledge and skills base/sufficient breadth and depth of experience/has the confidence and respect of colleagues/credible in role/seen as operationally competent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages questioning and</td>
<td>Flexible. Receptive to new ideas. Adaptable. Confident to challenge tradition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>critical and strategic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thinking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical and creative</td>
<td>High intellectual capacity. Can deal with complexity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thinker</td>
<td>Visionary/innovative/creative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisive/risk-taking</td>
<td>Committed to supporting the achievement of organisational objectives/takes considered risks for the good of the organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has courage of own convictions. Stands up for beliefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has courage in the face of conflict. Prepared to deal with anything. Calm under pressure.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Makes effective assessment of problems and solutions/politically aware/sees wider issues/takes broader view/has sound judgement</td>
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Case study: Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)

Financial devolution in the MPS had already come a long way by 2000, when most small budget lines had been devolved. In 2001, external consultants were contracted by the service to assess which other budgets were suitable for devolvement.

This study decided that the following budgets were candidates for devolvement:

- Police pay;
- Property services, for example cleaning, energy, repairs;
- Commercial services, for example Forensic Medical Examiners (FMEs), interpreters;
- Forensics, for example crime scene examiners;
- Desktops – phones, faxes, etc.

To proceed with the devolvement of this group of budgets, it was decided that a number of Operational Command Units (OCUs, as BCUs are known in the MPS) would become ‘pathfinder’ sites (this term was deliberately chosen over ‘pilot’, as the task of the pathfinders was not so much to assess the merit or otherwise of devolvement, but rather to find through experience the possible problems and develop solutions to them, to avoid the rest of the service experiencing the same problems when it came to full roll-out). Six OCUs were initially chosen as pathfinders, and then later a central OCU was also added.

Desktop budgets were devolved MPS-wide from April 2002. Property Services, Commercial Services and Police Pay Budgets were devolved to the seven Pathfinder OCUs.

Property Services and Commercial Services budgets were devolved MPS wide in April 2003. Devolution of Police Pay was extended to a further four Borough OCUs and four Central OCUs. The Forensics Budget was devolved to the original seven Pathfinder OCUs.

Forensics was devolved MPS wide in April 2004, when Police Pay was extended to all Borough OCUs. Police pay was then devolved MPS-wide in April 2005.

The devolvement was overseen by a steering group which included representatives from the Project Sponsor, Metropolitan Police Authority, Greater London Authority, MPS Finance Services, MPS HR Directorate, the Police Federation, and Trade Union Side. The Pathfinder exercise was overseen by the Devolution Project Board, chaired by the Project Manager and comprising representatives from across the Pathfinder OCUs. An accountability framework was established which set out the roles and responsibilities of those involved in managing the devolved budgets. This is shown below (for Borough OCUs):
Other documents relating to devolution include the ‘Scheme of Devolved Financial Management’ which outlines the rules governing devolution, particular around Police Pay. Separately, there are ‘business rules’ for each of the devolved budgets.

One lesson which emerged from the pathfinders was that expectations need to be carefully managed throughout the process, as the need to follow force policy on procurement and civilianisation meant that commanders had less flexibility than they had imagined.

The MPS now has one of the highest levels of financial devolvement in the service in England and Wales.

The MPS Devolution Team can be contacted on 0207 161 2960.
Annex 4

The delegated HR function in West Midlands Police

Case study: West Midlands Police (WMP)

What did the force’s previous, centralised HR function look like?
Prior to delegation, WMP had a central HR function. All files were held at force HQ. Staff at the centre were predominantly lower grade police staff managed by police officers. At divisional level, a civilian Administration Support Manager (ASM) worked alongside the HR Superintendent. These ASMs handled mainly volume case work. An ACC was in charge of HR at force level. The force decided that improving the HR service would necessitate bringing in civilian HR professionals at the same time as devolving the function to BCUs. This happened in 1997.

What does the current, devolved HR function look like?
Each of the 21 Operational Command Units (as BCUs are known in WMP) has its own Local Personnel Manager (LPM), who is professionally qualified and supported by a Personnel Officer and a People Development Officer, responsible for training, plus two or three administrative assistants. These are all now specialised police staff posts. Additionally, each OCU has a police officer responsible for police training to complete the OCU HR team. Central HR staff now handle police officer recruitment and occupational health. The Director of Personnel reports to the Chief Constable and sits on the management board.

How did delegating HR add value to the HR function?
Benefits which WMP have highlighted include the following:

- HR now ‘sits in the right place’, near to the people out in the BCUs. LPMs can get to know the staff personally.
- Now that LPMs are in BCUs, it is far easier to ‘nip in the bud’ issues informally before they become formal grievances, to the satisfaction of all concerned.
- LPMs are able to provide professional HR advice direct to BCU commanders on matters such as health and safety, diversity and family-friendly working, employee relations, and leadership development.
- Bonus and SPP payments can be managed more effectively at local level, as individual circumstances are better appreciated, and force policy can be corporately applied through the LPMs.
- With their greater knowledge of individuals and circumstances, LPMs can give better, more timely advice to central Occupational Health practitioners, and can provide more accurate information on matters such as injuries and accidents.
- Having delegated responsibilities encourages innovation, and as ideas are routinely shared between LPMs, this innovation can lead to force-wide improvements.
How does delegating HR add value to the BCU in WMP?

- LPMs and their staff can provide a vital continuity in the HR side of OCUs, as officers and commanders tend to move around fairly frequently, on promotion, etc.
- LPMs can help professionalise local staff recruitment and interviewing practices. The positive effects of this will be seen in the future as the right people are increasingly placed in the right positions.
- One of the main roles of LPMs is in managing attendance, which now stands at an all-time high in the Force for police officers (at an average of 7.3 days per officer), with almost 50% qualifying for an ‘Always there’ annual award in 2003/4, compared with 24% in 1996/7.
- Closer support to line managers together with more local ownership of issues means there is the ability to deal with matters faster than had been the case.

How are corporacy and accountability maintained in WMP’s delegated HR function?

Corporate HR policy is expressed wherever possible in terms of outcomes rather than processes. This cuts down dramatically on the amount of administrative central guidance issued, which leaves the LPMs able to use their professional expertise in finding locally appropriate methods to implement central policy.

- LPMs are line-managed by the BCU commander, but there is a strong ‘dotted line’ link to central HR.
- All LPMs come together for a monthly meeting with the Director of Personnel, which provides a means of auditing and quality control of the LPMs. These meetings are a way of ensuring that central HR policy is understood and carried out – but as information flows in both directions, they are also a way of making sure that corporate policy is informed by events on the ground, and that good practice is shared.
- LPMs form part of the BCU senior management team. In this way, they are positioned to ensure that BCUs enact corporate HR policy.
- Local networking encourages the sharing of good practice across the force HR staff.
- LPMs are supported centrally by two personnel advisors, who act as the day-to-day link between LPMs and the corporate centre.
- If a BCU is having noticeable attendance or grievance problems, the LPM would be held to account by the Corporate Personnel Services Manager.

What factors are necessary for a delegated HR service to function effectively?

WMP have highlighted the following aspects of their delegated HR function which they feel were crucial to its success:

- A professional Director of Personnel with a place on the force management board is essential to make sure HR is given the importance it deserves.
- Similarly, the LPM needs to form part of the BCU SMT for the same reasons.
- A proper career structure for personnel officers is necessary, with support for professional training and development and opportunities for promotion.
• An appropriate level of strategic and technical support from the centre is required, so that LPMs are able to call on the centre when they need further advice, but are allowed to use their professional discretion and experience for the majority of cases.

• Robust mechanisms for maintaining corporacy (see above).

• A level of knowledge on the part of commanders about HR matters, either through formal training or coaching from LPMs.

• An understanding within the BCU of the role of LPMs – there is a danger that they will seen as a ‘dumping ground’ for problems which should be dealt with by line managers.