

# Operating Model

## 12 Month Transition Assessment



Cheshire  
Constabulary





# 1 Introduction

The Constabulary launched its new policing model in July 2015.

The new model was designed to improve our ability to support the most vulnerable victims in our communities. It was designed to modernise policing practice across the force: bringing specialist teams together, flattening the management structure, and creating a dedicated proactive policing unit to tackle serious crime more effectively, while also providing more resources to support an enhanced approach to community policing. It also enabled the force to meet the unprecedented financial challenge of austerity, while simultaneously directing as much resource as possible to frontline policing.

Extensive analysis and meticulous planning were undertaken to develop the new model. This included developing a number of assumptions that would underpin the way the force would operate within the new model, including 'modelling' different shift patterns, response time, the number of deployment bases and so on. These assumptions also included the widespread adoption of mobile technology, the capacity of new central units to support local policing units, and the ability to absorb a significant number of new recruits within the frontline.

It is now over a year since the model was introduced. From the outset we committed to reviewing the effectiveness of the model at three, six and 12 months. The three-month review provided senior officers with a snapshot of how the model was being embedded; at six months we undertook a survey of officers and staff to understand their perceptions of the impact of new working arrangements, with the results – and our

actions in response – fed back to officers and staff; and at twelve months we asked management consultants Ernst & Young to undertake an independent, external assessment of the impact of the model.

It is clear from the evidence that officers and staff throughout the force have worked hard to make the model work. Despite the transition and resource pressures there has not been any significant adverse impacts on service levels. Incident response times have reduced slightly on those seen prior to transition, but are still at – or near – the levels we historically deliver. Crime rates and detection rates have not significantly altered, and public perception appears, if anything to have improved slightly.

This does not mean however that the implementation of the model has been without challenge. We know that officers and staff feel under pressure, and that key support measures have not been delivered as quickly as we anticipated: for instance, mobile technology is only now being rolled out across local policing units; the occurrence management unit, established to remove some of the bureaucratic burden from frontline officers, has taken longer to reach capacity than we anticipated.

All of these issues are examined in this review of the first 12 months of the new model. It includes detailed feedback from Ernst & Young. It reflects on what key performance data says about our ability to meet service commitments. And it looks at those issues which still need to be improved to ensure that officers and staff have not just 'adopted' the model, but that they have truly 'adapted' to new ways of working across the force<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Ernst & Young Operating Model project report page 14.

# 2 Development of the new model

In 2014 the new Chief Constable outlined his 'We're here' commitments, which underpin the Constabulary's promise to the people of Cheshire.

These commitments were informed by the Police & Crime Plan, the risks set out in the Constabulary's Strategic Risk and Threat Assessment, and national issues identified through the Strategic Policing Requirement.

The Chief Constable's commitments placed a clear emphasis on strengthening neighbourhood policing by increasing the number of frontline police officers; supporting the most vulnerable in our communities, especially victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault, and child sexual exploitation; and enhancing our proactive policing work to tackle the most serious offenders in our communities.

Transforming the policing model was also driven by the need of the Constabulary to find further savings of £13.5m (7 per cent) in its annual budget, in response to central government budget reductions.

In preparation for the development of the new model the Constabulary established a series of 'design principles' which would enable it to support its aspirations. These were:

- **Public Focus:** Victim-centred, visible and responsive to communities
- **Service Delivery:** Proactive, pre-emptive and preventative
- **Culture, Values and Leadership:** Open and transparent, accountable and innovative
- **Our People:** Skilled, mobile and empowered

- **Partnerships:** Collaborative, joined up public orientated efficient services
- **Data:** Accessible information, at the right time to make the right decisions
- **Technology:** Interoperable, accessible and secure
- **Assets:** Modern, well equipped and used infrastructure

In addition, officers and staff would be either centrally or locally managed, based on the following rationale:

## Central management:

- Where there was a strong need for **consistency** in delivery across the force area
- Where there was a large influence / impact of the **partnership footprint** or need for integration with partnership resources
- Where there was a significant affordability issue or significant **cost benefits**.
- Where there was an ability to drive future opportunities for **collaboration** with others.

## Local management:

- Where there is a strong need for **local relationships** / alignment of boundaries key to building partnerships.
- Where proximity is a critical factor for **effectiveness**.
- Where close geographic relationship with the **public** is critical.

## 2.1 Testing our assumptions

To underpin these design principles, the Constabulary undertook significant analysis to understand how new structures would need to be designed and resourced to meet calls on police service.

Workforce numbers were calculated against demand, and assumptions made as to the work that would be undertaken in new central units (see Occurrence Management and Custody Investigation Teams, below) designed to remove some of the burden that had previously rested with response officers. In addition, the Constabulary incorporated its plans to provide mobile tablets, which would enable frontline officers, for the first time, to undertake a range of tasks in the field without returning to stations.

Additional scrutiny of these assumptions was undertaken by leading experts Process Evolution, who mapped the geography of Cheshire and analysed shift and response patterns against a 'single deployment' model.

Following detailed analysis, the key features of the proposed new model would be the:

- Creation of a single Local Policing Command with eight geographic **Local Policing Units**, an Operations / Proactive function ('**Taskforce**'), and a **Partnership** function, responsible for coordinating our work with other agencies in the public and voluntary sector.
- Introduction of **single deployment bases** for each Local Policing Unit, supported by a network of police stations and police community posts.
- Establishment of a single **Public Protection Directorate**, bringing together a number of specialist officers that were, previously, managed across a number of different teams.
- Creation of a central **Crime Operations Directorate** for officers and staff responsible

for investigating major and serious offences, as well as the Intelligence and Forensics functions.

- Creation of a **Custody Investigation Team** under the Criminal Justice and Custody function, to provide a service to Local Policing Units dealing with a proportion of detainees and associated case files.
- Creation of a **Public Contact and Occurrence Management Unit** which brought responsibility for call, dispatch, public contact points / help desks under a single command, and also provided for investment in an Occurrence Management Unit to reduce the burden on officers to undertake certain IT activities within Niche – including crime recording.

Alongside the development of the design principles and the analysis of resources needed within the new model, extensive consultation was carried out with stakeholders and staff.

## 2.2 Ellesmere Port / Neston pilot

As part of detailed planning for the new model, a pilot was undertaken in the Ellesmere Port / Neston area, to test assumptions about Local Policing Units, as a precursor to force-wide adoption.

Central to this was the use of a single deployment base, where officers and PCSOs 'book in' at each LPU, briefed on operational priorities, and then deployed to their beat areas.

The key aim of single deployment – tested and proven during the Ellesmere Port / Neston pilot – was to help breakdown 'silo' working as teams came together in one 'open plan' location. This would lead to better communication between officers and staff, and harvest more shared intelligence, which is essential to the proactive policing model envisaged, and would lead to more effective daily supervision and briefing of officers and staff.

# 3 Implementation of the new model

This new structure was launched in July 2015, but with a clear message to officers and staff that the formal 'launch' was only the beginning of the transition to come, not the end. Over the course of the following nine months an extra 70 officers were recruited, buildings redesigned to facilitate single centre deployment, and additional vehicles rolled out.

Implementation of the new structures took place against a backdrop of almost unprecedented demand for the Constabulary: the fatal explosion at a Wood Flour Mill in Bosley in July, an air crash at Oulton Park later that month, and two major incidents on the M56 in August. These events did, however, demonstrate the ability of the new model to respond to major incidents effectively and efficiently.

Throughout the financial year 2015/16, the transition to the new model involved recruiting and training additional police officer and police staff posts. During much of the initial transition period (between July 2015 and January 2016), many units were operating below the levels intended.

## Frontline policing

In June 2015, under the previous policing model, the Constabulary had 803 police constables in post in neighbourhood policing (against a budgeted establishment of 836). A year later, under the new Local Policing model, there were 877 constables in post (against a budgeted establishment of 901). This represents a 9% increase (74 officers) in the number of locally-based constables in post between the two models.

## Public protection

Similarly, there were 147 police officers in post (against a budgeted establishment of 136 posts)

across both central and area-based public protection units under the predecessor model. By June 2016 there were a total of 161 police officers in post (against a budgeted establishment of 168 posts). This represents an increase of just over 9% in the number of public protection officers between the two models.

As of 29 June 2016, the Constabulary had 1,975 police officers in post, just 11 under the budgeted establishment for that date, and 70 more than under the previous model.

## 3.1 Monitoring implementation

The Constabulary's leadership has monitored the impact of the new model throughout the implementation.

A three-month review was undertaken to identify, and rectify, initial issues. Force performance data was analysed and showed that:

- Incident response times had fallen marginally from those the Constabulary had achieved just prior to the transition to new structures. However, incident times were still at, or near, those levels that the Constabulary had typically achieved in 2013, 2014 and early 2015
- Constabulary solved rates, and wider crime rates, remained steady
- Public perception of the effectiveness of the Constabulary, tracked through a survey of 600 residents, improved slightly.

Overall, service performance was little affected by the impact of the major restructuring of the Constabulary.

The Constabulary's leadership team recognised, however, that the implementation of the new model had impacted on the workload of existing, experienced officers and staff, in particular:

- Rapid recruitment to expand the number of frontline officers in Local Policing Units, as part of the commitment to increase frontline officers, had led to greater than anticipated demand on experienced officers to support probationary constables.
- Police officer recruitment affected several of our back office areas adversely, as existing back office staff applied successfully to become officers. These back office services were integral to the adoption of the new model, and due to vacancies could not, initially, provide the level of support to frontline officers anticipated.

The workload pressures on officers and staff were reflected in feedback, which formed the central element of the six-month review. The organisation sought the views of officers and staff operating in both the local policing units and in our central teams. More than 369 officers and staff responded to the survey.

Feedback showed that several of the cultural benefits identified as part of the model were starting to bear fruit. Officers and staff acknowledged the benefit of shared briefings and the better intelligence as a result of a single base. But it also highlighted a number of issues, many of which were 'hygiene factors' that impeded our

officers in their day-to-day roles. This included:

- The need for more vehicles at LPUs
- The need for more specially trained drivers, given the number of probationer constables coming into the force
- Concerns, particularly from PCSOs, that the single deployment model was affecting the time taken to get to beat areas

The survey also highlighted that officers and staff were unclear about how beat management – that is, the work undertaken by local policing units to work collaboratively within communities to tackle local issues and challenges – was to work consistently across the force, given the increased focus and greater resources dedicated to beat management when the model was implemented.

In response to both of these reviews, the Constabulary expedited plans that were always in place as part of the new model. This included increasing the rate of recruitment to the OMU; bringing forward fleet improvements to ensure that necessary vehicles were in place, as well as expanding the frequency of driver training.

The force also analysed deployment patterns to better understand the actual time spent in the field now that single bases were operational. Much of this evidence showed that there was little or no difference between the average time spent in the field than under the previous model; and the increased proportion of officers on the frontline meant this figure had increased overall.

# 4 12 month review

The 12-month review, which informs this paper, was conducted in June and July 2016, and involved a wide-ranging analysis of performance data, alongside the findings of an independent review by consultants Ernst & Young (EY).

EY was commissioned to:

“identify how successful the implementation and change towards the new operating model has been, and what options Cheshire Constabulary have to further realise those benefits.”

## 4.1 Service levels

Overall performance levels have continued to be maintained, despite the significant change associated with implementing the model.

**Table 1** shows emergency incident response service levels for each LPU for June 2013 through to June 2016, for comparison.

	Chester Grade 1 % within 15 minutes	Crewe Grade 1 % within 15 minutes	Ellesmere Port Grade 1 % within 15 minutes	Macclesfield Grade 1 % within 15 minutes	Northwich Grade 1 % within 15 minutes	Runcorn Grade 1 % within 15 minutes	Warrington Grade 1 % within 15 minutes	Widnes Grade 1 % within 15 minutes
12 months to June 2014	78.0	79.9	81.8	79.9	82.2	79.4	82.4	88.4
12 months to June 2015	86.3	90.0	92.9	90.2	91.2	92.2	92.0	94.6
12 months to June 2016	85.5	85.9	92.4	88.2	90.0	91.8	87.8	95.5
Difference between 2016 and 2015	-0.8	-4.1	-0.5	-2.1	-1.2	-0.4	-4.2	0.9
Difference between 2016 and 2014	7.6	6.0	10.5	8.3	7.8	12.4	5.4	7.1

## Response times

Emergency and priority incident response has fallen slightly from that seen in 2014/15 but is still higher than that seen for the two years between April 2011 and March 14, and is close to the service level expected in the model:

- Service level ambition for **emergency** incidents = 90% attended within 15 minutes
- Overall performance achieved = 88.5% between July 2015 and July 2016).
- The service level ambition for **priority** incidents = 80% attended within 60 minutes
- Overall performance achieved = 72.9% between July 2015 and July 2016).

**Table 2** shows three years priority incident response levels for each LPU for June 2013 through to June 2016, for comparison.

	Chester Grade 2 % within 60 minutes	Crewe Grade 2 % within 60 minutes	Ellesmere Port Grade 2 % within 60 minutes	Macclesfield Grade 2 % within 60 minutes	Northwich Grade 2 % within 60 minutes	Runcorn Grade 2 % within 60 minutes	Warrington Grade 2 % within 60 minutes	Widnes Grade 2 % within 60 minutes
12 months to June 2014	55.6	51.1	53.8	52.8	65.1	49.5	55.5	56.2
12 months to June 2015	76.8	68.2	77.2	75.2	86.0	76.5	75.9	78.1
12 months to June 2016	81.7	67.1	77.9	69.4	80.5	76.7	67.7	76.9
Difference between 2016 and 2015	4.9	-1.1	0.7	-5.7	-5.5	0.2	-8.2	-1.2
Difference between 2016 and 2014	26.1	16.1	24.1	16.6	15.4	27.2	12.2	20.8

### Overall recorded crime

Overall recorded crime levels reduced slightly during the initial transition period and have subsequently remained consistent. Table 3 shows the total recorded crime for each LPU for the 12 months to July 2016 compared to the 12 months to July 2015.

ALL RECORDED CRIME					
LPU	12 mths to July 2014	12 mths to July 2015	12 mths to July 2016	% Change between 2016 and 2015	% Change between 2016 and 2014
CHESTER	9737	8098	7725	-4.6%	-16.8%
CREWE	10324	8551	9027	+5.6%	-17.2%
ELLESMERE PORT	5683	4621	4555	-1.4%	-18.7%
MACCLESFIELD	9104	7440	7891	+6.1%	-18.3%
NORTHWICH	5700	4719	4686	-0.7%	-17.2%
RUNCORN	5170	4353	3844	-11.7%	-15.8%
WARRINGTON	13706	11536	11588	+0.5%	-15.8%
WIDNES	5393	4301	4180	-2.8%	-20.2%
FORCE	64875	53646	53618	-0.1%	-17.3%

**Table 3** Overall Recorded Crime levels by LPU for 12 months to July 2014 to 12 months to July 2016.

Three LPUs showed an overall increase in crime between July 2015 and July 2016. Much of this increase can be accounted for by short term 'spikes' in particular offences; for instance a spate of criminal damage offences in Crewe central in November, or increased drug offences as a result of a music festival in Warrington south.



## Public perception

The Constabulary routinely surveys members of the public on their views on local policing. Surveys undertaken since the start of transition to the new model show:

- More of the Cheshire public feel that the Police are 'effectively dealing with the crime issues in their area' (86.1% for the year to June 2016, up from 81.7% for the year to June 2015)
- More of the Cheshire public feel that the Police are 'effectively dealing with ASB issues in their area' (78.3% for the year to June 2016, up from 75.3% for the year to June 2015)
- More of the Cheshire public feel that the Police 'in their area do a good or excellent job'. (78.1% for the year to June 2016, up from 75.8% for the year to June 2015)

## 4.2 The Ernst & Young review

As part of understanding the impact of the implementation of the new model, the Constabulary commissioned an independent review by Ernst and Young (EY), conducted during June and July 2016.

The review aimed to identify how successful the implementation of the new operating model had been, and the consultants' views of the options available to Cheshire Constabulary to further realise the benefits of the model. Much of the focus was on neighbourhood policing, and the single deployment model.

EY brought substantial expertise from their work with organisations across the public and private sector, and applied a tried and tested methodology to their analysis of the impact of the new model.

They focused on officers and staff involved in local policing, assessing their views on how successful the implementation and current operating environment has been for local policing. Further to

this, EY undertook an analysis of available data on the implementation and delivery of local policing, to form a view as to what extent the transition has been a success.

EY's key findings were:

- The overall transition to the model can be considered successful.
- That performance levels have not been adversely affected post implementation, demonstrating the success of the foundations in place.
- The single deployment base model has been successfully implemented and delivering the anticipated benefits, namely improved collaborative working.
- The single deployment bases continue to be a 'catalyst' for 'resistance' from some staff. Journey times, locations and facilities were cited as areas of concern.
- That [delays to] enabling technologies [ie. the roll-out of mobile technology] have prevented the full benefit of local policing from being realised.
- That organisational change could have been managed better to deliver further benefits.
- There has been a lack of engagement with some key stakeholders (officers and staff) impacted by the change to the Local Policing Unit approach.

The review concluded that:

*"Cheshire Constabulary have successfully built the momentum for change, and have implemented a great deal of change that will support the continued transformation of their Local Policing Operating Model. To release the full benefit of this, there needs to be a period of adaptation focused on engaging Sergeants as the agents of change, and releasing the full value of the enabling technologies to deliver further benefits."*

# 5 Next steps in embedding the Model

As this report makes clear, the transition to the new model did not begin and end in July 2015. Recruitment, equipment and modernised systems would all take time to come on stream. Only now, for instance, are we deploying the mobile technology that is essential to increasing officer time in our communities.

Given this, we believe strongly that the overall transition to the model, and the financial savings that accrued as a result, has been successful. We thank all our officers and staff for enabling this to be achieved.

However, we also recognise that some of the assumptions built into the model were too optimistic, and we are now reviewing some of the features that officers and staff have highlighted as issues and which affects their performance and morale.

## Single deployment bases

The requirement for all officers and PCSOs to 'book on' at a single deployment base has had a number of benefits, not least in improving communication and collaboration between teams, and developing improved intelligence that has proved highly beneficial. However, it has also been logistically challenging and, we acknowledge, affected staff morale in some areas of the county. The effect of this has been magnified by delays to the adoption of mobile technology.

In response, the Constabulary is currently exploring a 'hybrid' model, which would enable some officers and staff to 'book on' at other stations / bases for some shifts.

## Custody

The original assumptions on the number of prisoners that would be dealt with by the Custody Investigation Team have proved optimistic. While there are undoubtedly benefits to the introduction of the team both in terms of releasing LPU officer time and investigation quality there is a need to reconsider the role and focus of the Team and the impact on resourcing levels for Local Policing Units

In response, the Constabulary is considering the most appropriate focus for the Custody Investigation Team and is revising the resource allocation model for Local Policing Units to account for this.

## Intelligence structures

A review of the changes made to the Force's 'Intelligence' structures and resources indicates that there is a need to improve structures and processes and to add a small number of police officer and staff resources in order to build capacity within Warrington and Macclesfield LPUs to tackle new and emerging threats such as modern slavery, child sexual exploitation and cyber-crime.

In response, the Constabulary has developed a plan to develop its 'Intelligence' structures and processes and is seeking to implement additional resource.

## Supporting sergeants

The Constabulary's focus during transition has been on the implementation of the appropriate structures and recruiting police officers and staff into positions. Much focus was also placed on equipping chief inspectors and inspectors to their roles. However, Engagement with some frontline officers and staff, and with first-line supervisors, could have been improved

In this regard officers and staff have, as EY labelled it, 'adopted' the new model, rather than 'adapted' to it.

In response, the Constabulary is developing a programme of activity to engage frontline staff and particularly sergeants as 'change agents' in order to ensure local working arrangements are 'adapted' to the new model.

## Mobile technology

The Constabulary's plans to provide all frontline officers with mobile tablets in autumn 2015 were delayed, following a reappraisal of the preferred technology. This affected the force's ability to introduce more flexible working, and therefore some features of the model upon which this had been predicated.

The Constabulary's mobile programme is now underway, however, with positive feedback from officers. The roll-out will conclude in late October, and we anticipate seeing many of the benefits of flexible working beginning to flow through over the coming months.

## Resourcing model

The Constabulary recognises that the resource modelling carried out, particularly in relation to incident response, needs to be reviewed, particularly the larger LPUs including Crewe, Macclesfield and Warrington.

In response, the Constabulary is remodeling the workforce assumptions, and in particular the balance between beat management and response teams.

## Developing our community policing approach

Providing greater capacity to support effective beat management was a core feature of both the public focus and service delivery features that underpin the LPU structure. While more resources were now in place, the force did not set out clearly enough how beat management would work consistently across the force. As a result, individual LPUs, and beat managers, adopted their own approaches.

In response, the Constabulary has for several months been identifying a 'best in class' approach to beat management, learning from other forces, the College of Policing and Academic work as well as our own experiences. Work is underway on our new approach so that it can be applied consistently throughout our local policing units. We are also considering how to best deploy and focus our Police Community Support Officers to meet community needs. This programme will be refined in coming months, to reflect the priorities of the new Police & Crime Commissioner and the focus he is placing on community engagement within the new Police & Crime Plan.