

Police

authority

inspection

report

Greater Manchester
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Executive summary

- 1 The Greater Manchester Police Authority (the Authority) is performing adequately overall and improving. It holds the Chief Constable to account for the performance of the Greater Manchester Police Force (the Force). The Authority has a rigorous and transparent approach to appointing senior officers and is forming a more cohesive chief officer team with the energy, drive and intellect to make the step change in performance that is required. Strong, constructive relationships exist between the Authority and key stakeholders and these bring significant benefits in terms of influence and access to partnership resources. The Authority invests in extensive and effective communication and engagement activities that build its understanding of how local people perceive the quality of service they receive from the Force. This has led to some positive interventions that have improved policing outcomes. The Authority now needs to ensure that this activity is properly targeted. It needs to provide clarity about what it is seeking to achieve and undertake a comprehensive assessment of the factors that might impede progress towards this. It can then determine the degree and direction of change required to tackle these issues, harness and allocate the necessary resources and exercise effective challenge to ensure that desired outcomes are achieved. There is a particular need to strengthen performance management arrangements to address the Force's current significant under-performance in respect of volume crime.
- 2 Leadership of the Authority by the Chair and Vice Chair is strong and is underpinned by a determination to secure effective Neighbourhood Policing throughout Greater Manchester. The Chair has a high profile locally, regionally and nationally and the Chief Executive exerts considerable influence through her other role as Chief Executive of Salford City Council. The value of the strong connection that the Authority has with the political structures within Greater Manchester is evidenced through the negotiation of a three-year agreement on the police precept and chairing of the newly formed Public Protection Commission (PPC) which puts the Authority at the heart of a new drive to increase community safety across Greater Manchester.
- 3 Awareness of the Authority and its activities is raised through innovative communication and marketing. The Authority responds to the diversity within its communities and targets community engagement and consultation towards groups that are considered 'hard to reach', notably young people. It is aware of the adverse effects that some policing activities (such as counter-terrorism operations) can have. The Authority assesses the impact of such activities on those communities directly affected. Particular attention is directed to assessing how well the policing needs of vulnerable people, including children, members of black and minority ethnic (BME) communities and those with disabilities, are met. The Authority harnesses the talent and commitment of local people to act as volunteers, supporting its oversight of the welfare of detainees in police custody and of animals owned by the Force. The Authority has a unique scheme whereby volunteers act as appropriate adults to support vulnerable people in custody.

Executive summary

- 4 The Authority operates a comprehensive Personal Development Review (PDR) process for members, who have good access to training and are supported by sound advice and information from Authority staff. Through its committees and governance structures the Authority holds the Force to account for both performance and improvement planning. The scrutiny process has led to improved performance in some areas, for example on call handling times and reducing nuisance from off-road biking. The Authority monitors complaints effectively and promotes high standards of behaviour within the Force.
- 5 The Authority has a record of good financial management and has set ambitious targets for efficiency savings. It is overseeing a programme of fundamental service reviews to improve efficiency and effectiveness and redirect resources into Neighbourhood Policing. Police estate has been enhanced in recent years with the opening of several new buildings which provide access to general and specialist facilities, and the construction of a new police headquarters has just commenced.
- 6 There are four key areas for improvement.
 - The Authority needs to formulate a clear vision for the policing of Greater Manchester. This should define the style and standard of policing that the Authority aspires to achieve in the foreseeable future.
 - The Authority should engage fully with the Force in strategic planning to determine the degree and direction of change that is achievable and affordable – as reflected in the priorities and targets included in the Policing Plan. Only then can it be confident that resources are being applied to maximum effect, to obtain the best outcomes for local people.
 - The Authority needs to increase the effectiveness of its performance management activities, supplementing its current arrangements so as to increase the frequency and penetration of its scrutiny. Greater engagement with the Force's own performance management structures and with the community safety partnerships would provide insight into the barriers to improvement and additional opportunities to identify and address them.
 - The Authority has yet to fully implement its plans to rationalise and co-ordinate its consultation and engagement activities with those of the Force and other community safety partners. This is necessary to avoid duplication and ensure that a comprehensive picture of public opinion is available to use for strategic planning and service delivery.

- 7** There are other areas for improvement. Some link to the increased demands recently placed on police authorities and, in the case of Greater Manchester Police Authority, additional pressures brought about because a number of experienced members are coming to the end of their terms of office. This reinforces the need for full, strategically focussed participation by all members. For the most part, these matters are already recognised by the Authority and it has started to take action to address them.
- The Authority needs to review its approach to risk management to ensure it has identified and has arrangements in place to control the key risks it faces. This will help the Authority to ensure it is directing its attention towards those issues that present the greatest threat to improved policing.
 - A more consistent application of strategic leadership across its membership would increase the capacity of the Authority to undertake consultation and exercise effective oversight.
 - More encouragement should be given to members to play a fuller role in community engagement and in performance management at a Basic Command Unit (BCU) level.
 - The Authority should improve its own accountability to the public by making monitoring information readily available on its website.
 - A better understanding of how the costs and outcomes of its activities compare with those of similar organisations would assist the Authority in determining whether it is achieving value for money within both the Force and the Authority.
 - Regional and local collaboration is becoming increasingly significant in delivering robust and cost effective services. The Authority must be satisfied that it has sufficient oversight of developments in this area and that anticipated savings are realised.
- 8** The Authority has shown that it is receptive to suggestions for improvement. It genuinely welcomed the inspection as an opportunity to develop its governance arrangements and improve its oversight of Greater Manchester Police. This is a sound basis for future progress.

Table 1 Summary of inspection scores

Key questions	Score
How does the police authority ensure that both it and the force have the leadership, capacity and capability needed to deliver good quality service outcomes on behalf of the public?	2
How effective is the police authority in scrutinising and ensuring the force delivers the priority services that matter to local people?	1
How well does the police authority achieve results through community engagement and partnerships to deliver its ambitions and strategic priorities?	2
How effective is the police authority in ensuring a clear and sustained focus on value for money to secure a good deal for the public?	2
Overall score	2

Setting strategic direction and priorities

How does the Police Authority ensure that both it and the force have the leadership, capacity and capability needed to deliver good quality service outcomes on behalf of the public?

- 9 The Authority is performing adequately in this area. In order to improve it must clearly describe the policing service it wants to deliver, ensuring this vision takes full account of community aspirations. It must then ensure these public views are properly reflected in policing priorities by participating in a strategic planning process that enables it to generate the targets and milestones necessary to make progress and determine the resources required to achieve this. This is linked to a need to review its approach to risk management so that it can be confident that all its resources and activities are properly directed. This work must complement the Force's own processes. The Authority has a constructive working relationship with the Force and provided it with much needed continuity and support through an extremely difficult period following the death of the then Chief Constable in 2008. The Authority has an effective recruitment process, with a clear view of the type of candidate it is seeking. This is helping build a more cohesive chief officer management team, capable of leading the Force through an extensive and complex change process. It has sound human resources (HR) practices, provides good support on diversity issues and has promoted high professional standards within the Force. The Authority has a relatively high public profile within Greater Manchester, built on creative marketing and enhanced through the recruitment and management of volunteers who deliver excellent public service outcomes as well as promoting the work of the Authority. However, the Authority could do more to harness the talents of its members and ensure its governance arrangements provide assurance that its processes are transparent and effective.

Strengths

- 10** The Authority has an effective and well-established recruitment process for chief officers. The appointment of the Chief Constable in July 2008 was followed by those of a Deputy and two Assistant Chief Constables. Careful consideration was given to the role profile for each post to ensure the recruitment of officers capable of delivering the step change needed for Greater Manchester Police, accelerating development of Neighbourhood Policing and building a cohesive, effective team with the right balance of skills. The Authority involves representatives from its staff associations and networks, as well as other senior officers, to increase transparency. The Authority also plays a full part in recruitment to other senior appointments. It was through Authority influence that the vacant post of Director of HR was converted into that of Assistant Chief Officer (ACO) People and Change to strengthen the ability of the senior team to manage and direct its extensive business change programme. This shows that the Authority understands the needs of the organisation and has successfully applied its expertise in this area.
- 11** The Authority participates in the Chief Constable's Performance Development Review (PDR) process. Authority members support the Leadership and Excellent People programme by sitting on chief superintendent, superintendent and chief inspector promotion panels. This reflects the importance the Authority places on leadership and serves as a means of achieving the objective of raising leadership within the Force to a consistent high level. The Authority actively challenges the Force to achieve greater diversity. For example, the Human Resources Committee set a stretch target for the recruitment of BME staff and regularly monitors against this. This helped to increase recruitment from BME groups from 5.2 per cent of appointments in 2007/08 to 7 per cent for April - September 2009. Representation of women in the workforce continues to improve, as does the progression of staff from BME communities.
- 12** The Authority provides good support for diversity within the Force. The lead member for equalities has regular contact with senior officers leading on diversity and equality issues and chairs a regular meeting with representatives from staff networks to discuss diversity issues. These discussions led, for example, to Authority concern about a disproportionate number of BME officers suspended from duty, an issue which is now being explored. Actions such as these reflect the Authority's commitment to ensuring that officers and support staff from BME groups will be treated fairly and with respect. The Authority also undertakes reality checks and monitors internal staff survey findings to maintain improvements made since the 'Secret Policeman' documentary exposed inappropriate behaviour by some officers.

- 13** The Authority attracts and supports a range of volunteers who contribute well to improved community safety outcomes. Their activities are monitored and co-ordinated by the Authority's Volunteers Steering Group, that reports into the Citizen Focus and Communications Committee. Individuals recruited to the four Strategic Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs), for Race, Disability, Youth and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender, play an active role in testing policies, acting as conduits into their communities and informing incident management. The views of these groups are respected and valued by the Authority and the Force. An innovative scheme to recruit and train volunteers to act as appropriate adults was launched in 2005. These volunteers, who are scheduled alongside those paid to carry out this work, undertake to attend at a custody suite within one and a half hours of being contacted. Access to these additional resources means that vulnerable detainees receive the support they need and generates savings in officer time. This is notable practice and represents a very tangible and valuable contribution to partnership working in Greater Manchester. The Authority has recently recruited volunteers to an Animal Welfare Scheme to ensure the animals kept by the Force are properly cared for.
- 14** The Authority has a relatively high public profile and is well resourced. The Chair of the Authority represents police authorities at a national and regional level and has a strong local profile. The Authority has a clear distinctive brand and markets itself well through a variety of media, including its website, DVDs and advertisements on the local television channel, Channel M. Agendas for all public meetings contain an item that invites questions and these demonstrate good local awareness of the Authority and what it sets out to achieve. The Authority benefits from occupying premises obtained at a relatively low rental and has invested the savings into the secretariat. A full PDR scheme is in place for staff. Officer roles are aligned with governance arrangements, strategic aims and member responsibilities, and briefings are provided before every meeting.
- 15** Authority members have good access to training and support. A comprehensive PDR process is in place for members, who discuss their personal development needs with a lead officer twice a year and have an annual interview with the Chair and Vice Chair. Training plans are then developed to meet individual and collective needs. The quality of this process has been recognised by the award of the North West Employers Organisation Member Development Charter.

Setting strategic direction and priorities

16 The Authority promotes high standards of behaviour within the Force. The Authority and the Force have agreed an anti-fraud and corruption policy and have whistle-blowing arrangements in place together with a formal protocol between the two parties on the reporting and investigation of financial irregularities. The Complaints and Professional Standards Committee oversees the complaints process within the Force. Members have received training from the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) and have robust procedures for selecting complaint files to dip sample and review to provide assurance that the system operates properly. Monitoring of trends in public complaints is thorough and has led, for example, to an extensive programme of training for operational officers (often attended by Authority members) to rectify an increase in complaints of incivility. This demonstrates how the Authority acts to increase public confidence in policing. The Authority has an excellent relationship with the IPCC and works with them to maintain proper oversight of complaints and ensure 'lessons learned' are embedded within the organisation.

Areas for improvement

17 The main challenge for the Authority is to formulate a clear vision and then develop its strategic planning process so it can respond to anticipated local, regional and national challenges. A structured planning cycle is needed to link budget strategy discussions to a well-defined ambition for the policing of Greater Manchester so that sustained and noticeable improvements are achieved.

18 Although the Authority has endorsed the Force vision and agreed the priorities presented in the 2009-2011 Policing Plan, there is no consistent view across the membership about what the policing of Greater Manchester should look like and how this balances competing local, regional and national demands. Without clarity of vision there is no benchmark to test against when making decisions about priorities and therefore no coherent rationale for directing resources within both the Authority and the Force.

19 The Authority does not set the strategic direction for the Force. The Authority did not contribute to the updating of the 2008-2011 Policing Plan and had no firm arrangements in place to enable it to engage more effectively with the Force in the 2010/11 planning round. This means the public cannot be certain that the Authority has understood their policing needs and formulated plans that will deliver improvements in those things that matter to local people.

20 The Authority does not set challenging targets that will deliver improved policing outcomes. In the absence of a rigorous strategic planning process, members were not in a position to engage directly in the determination of Policing Plan targets for 2009-2012. Targets proposed by the Chief Constable following an internal process, that took account of consultation findings, were subsequently agreed by the Authority without full consideration by them of capacity, capability and potential threat, harm and risk. As a result, there is no certainty that the targets set matched the aspirations of local people in terms of the degree or nature of performance improvement being sought.

- 21** The Authority's resources and activities are not sufficiently aligned to risk. The Authority has produced a strategic risk register but it fails to reflect some of the key risks it faces, such as the reputational risk associated with failure to reduce volume crime. As a result, the Authority's governance arrangements do not necessarily focus on mitigating those risks that pose the greatest threats to the delivery of effective policing. This means that scrutiny, consultation and engagement activity may not be targeted on the issues that most impact on local people.
- 22** The Authority's membership profile is insufficiently diverse and this risks impacting adversely on the confidence of people from BME communities that the Authority understands their concerns. Recent recruitment exercises attracted a very diverse pool of applicants, but this did not translate into further BME appointments. The Authority should explore ways of ensuring that all candidates are given appropriate support throughout the recruitment process.
- 23** The contribution of members is variable. The Chair is well supported by the Vice Chair and a number of very active members but several of these are coming towards the end of their terms of office. More needs to be done to spread responsibility and workload across the membership and encourage all members to acquire the skills and experience necessary to exercise leadership.
- 24** The Authority has weak arrangements in respect of its own accountability to the public. It does not publish information about member attendance, allowances, expenses or responsibilities on its website. Monitoring data is also not provided on the website in respect of its Single Equality Scheme. The Authority should consider the role of the Standards Committee in the promotion of better governance to increase visibility to the public of the way the Authority operates in these areas.

Performance scrutiny

How effective is the Police Authority in scrutinising and ensuring the force delivers the priority services that matter to local people?

- 25** The Authority is performing poorly in this area. The Force delivers a high quality response to major incidents and serious crime but rates of volume crime and perceptions of anti-social behaviour are amongst the worst in the country. The Authority monitors this performance through its regular committee meetings, when chief officers are called to account, and continues to develop its scrutiny process, targeted on selected aspects of policing. However the Authority's performance management arrangements have too little focus on the imperative to reduce volume crime, are insufficiently dynamic and are disconnected from those of the Force and partners. Although some improvements have been introduced recently, to make further progress the Authority should take full advantage of opportunities to participate directly in other performance management structures, such as those in place within the Force. Learning from this can then be applied to improve the process for selection of areas for in-depth scrutiny and to inject greater rigour into performance management at both the more local and regional level.

Strengths

- 26** The Authority operates an intensive scrutiny process that has delivered some real benefits to local people. Issues of concern highlighted through consultation or reports to committees are explored by panels of members through an in-depth scrutiny of topics such as 'Missing from Home' procedures and policing of the night-time economy. The process provides members with a detailed insight into current practice and an opportunity to influence future service delivery. The scrutiny conducted into call handling (later extended to call resolution) arose from concerns about the difficulties people faced when trying to contact the Force with a call for service. It resulted in a wholesale remodelling of call taking and incident attendance (directed by a programme board chaired by the Chair of the Police Authority), which has significantly improved response times and raised performance in relation to the Policing Pledge, a national set of promises to the public which every force has signed up to. This is a clear example of Authority scrutiny directly leading to improved public confidence and enhanced performance in selected priority service areas.
- 27** The Authority is working to improve the quality of information available to tackle crime. It has invested in the Greater Manchester Against Crime (GMAC) unit, which is now improving the data analysis and data sharing available to community safety partners. A partnership officer from the Authority works within the unit. Since GMAC was made responsible to the PPC (which is chaired by the Chair of the Police Authority) the quality and relevance of the information it generates, such as neighbourhood profiles and a joint strategic assessment, is improving. Authority support for GMAC has created a resource that is now generating intelligence products that add value to BCU and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) operations.

- 28** Authority scrutiny is enhanced through a comprehensive briefing process. Members routinely receive personal briefings from Authority officers ahead of meetings. Officers are able to supplement the information provided by the Force with insights gained from attending Force and partnership meetings. They extract the key issues from often lengthy reports and direct attention to the main areas for scrutiny. This sharper focus ensures that members use the time available in meetings more effectively and leads to a generally very good standard of pertinent and probing questioning. However, this needs to be tied into a better process for identifying key risks to ensure all priority areas are subject to effective scrutiny.
- 29** The Authority maintains oversight of covert activity and holds the Chief Constable to account for delivery of Protective Services. Three members of the Authority and its two most senior officers have been 'developed vetted', which gives them access to highly sensitive and otherwise restricted information about ongoing investigations, such as counter-terrorism operations and murder enquiries. These members and officers meet regularly with senior officers from the Force to discuss current operations and satisfy themselves that the actions taken can be justified and that community impact has been properly assessed. This provides reassurance that human rights are being protected and that actions are proportionate and in the public interest.
- 30** The Authority is improving its governance structures to make its performance scrutiny more robust and increase opportunities to exercise effective challenge. The full Authority receives reports from the Chief Constable on performance against the Policing Plan at its regular public meetings. Particular areas of concern are referred to the Scrutiny Committee for more detailed examination, and other committees monitor performance in areas that fall within their terms of reference. Each BCU commander is held to account annually through detailed questioning by the whole membership. Members draw well on their local experience to challenge the position presented by the Force. The standard of questioning is generally high, although the Authority recognises that debate sometimes stops short of requiring the Force to take action. The Authority is addressing this through the briefing process. This formal scrutiny is now supplemented by monthly meetings between members of the Authority and the Chief Constable. These allow the Authority to be kept up to date with performance trends and alerted to emerging issues. A recently formed Joint Officer Group, comprising the Deputy Chief Constable and senior officers from the Authority, is working to improve agenda planning and the flow of quality information. These new arrangements go some way towards strengthening the Authority's ability to challenge and press for performance improvement.

Areas for improvement

- 31** The Authority's performance management arrangements are insufficiently dynamic and are disconnected from those of the Force. The Authority's governance arrangements provide for regular, formal scrutiny of performance but this is too inflexible and infrequent to properly address the current significant performance risks. Present arrangements reflect the relationship between the Authority and the Force under the previous Chief Constable. The new chief officer team recognise the added weight the Authority could bring and are anxious for members to engage more directly in the Force's own performance management arrangements. This additional exposure to performance review, particularly at a BCU level, would provide members with a far deeper understanding of what drives good operational performance and which parts of the organisation most need to improve. This knowledge can then be applied to increase the challenge to poor performance within the Force and its partnerships.
- 32** Authority involvement at BCU and CDRP level is inconsistent. The performance of the Force is the sum of the performance of its BCUs and will improve only if the results from the weakest are brought nearer to the level of the best. The active engagement of some members demonstrates how this can support and drive local performance improvement. A more consistent, regular and intrusive presence by Authority members at BCU and CDRP level will strengthen the attempts of senior management to deliver consistent, sustained improvement across the Force. There is a role for members in testing whether priorities, for example in relation to the policing model, are being communicated and implemented. Issues arising at the BCU level can then be progressed locally through the partnerships and brought into strategic discussions at meetings of the Authority and the PPC.
- 33** Performance information available to the Authority is inadequate to direct scrutiny activity and decision making effectively. The information presented to the Authority through reports to its committees is of variable quality, with often too much detail obscuring the key trends. Failure of a report to provide the required information can result in ineffective and inconclusive debate and the deferring of remedial action. The Authority needs to be clearer and more prescriptive about the purpose and content of reports and operate a quality assurance process to ensure those appearing on agendas are fit for purpose.
- 34** Scrutiny of regional policing arrangements is also under-developed. A formal governance structure is now in place through the North West Regional Collaboration Joint Committee, but this is recent and members do not all yet have a clear understanding of its role and its relevance to the work of the Authority. Besides consideration of collaboration activity and outcomes, the Authority could use these meetings for a degree of public scrutiny of Protective Services. This would provide some reassurance to the public that major and sensitive operations are subject to effective oversight.

Engaging with communities

How well does the Police Authority achieve results through community engagement and partnerships to deliver its ambitions and strategic priorities?

- 35** The Authority is performing adequately in this area. It has formed excellent strategic alliances within the Greater Manchester local authority structures and has used these to improve community safety outcomes. It adopts an innovative approach to community engagement, which has allowed it to engage effectively with some hard to reach groups and deliver some community safety outcomes. The Authority works with its communities to ensure counter-terrorism activity has least possible adverse impact. The Authority could do more to co-ordinate its consultation and engagement activity with that of its partners and to ensure the findings are acted upon. Members also need to become more directly involved in consultation and partnership activity and to ensure that the Authority's engagement activity is comprehensive and properly focussed.

Strengths

- 36** The Authority has developed an excellent working relationship with the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) and has used this to deliver increased funding to the Force and, consequently, improved community safety outcomes. In 2008/09, to coincide with the start of the current three-year grant settlement, the Authority entered into negotiation with AGMA with a view to securing agreement for a three-year precept deal. The basis of the agreement was that, in return for precept increases of 7.5 per cent per year over the years to 2010/11, the Authority would provide additional officers in identified priority communities and guarantee delivery of defined, improved community safety outcomes, such as a reduction in volume crime. Continuation of the funding has been dependent on AGMA being satisfied that these improvements have been forthcoming. This agreement, which is the first to be negotiated by a police authority, reflects the maturity of the AGMA strategic partnership and the influence of the Authority and its senior officers. It has delivered increased and certain funding during an otherwise turbulent period.
- 37** The Authority exerts positive influence on developing the community safety agenda across Greater Manchester. The Authority's Chief Executive holds the community safety brief for AGMA and has been instrumental in the formation of the PPC, created to help drive improved community safety outcomes across Greater Manchester. The PPC is chaired by the Chair of the Police Authority, which puts the Authority at the heart of this joint endeavour. Funding has already been attracted to carry out work in priority neighbourhoods, those that need to improve the most if Greater Manchester is to prosper. Discussions on the development of a neighbourhood management model that blurs the boundaries between the agencies are ongoing. Although it is early days, this harnessing of resources, combined with effective accountability arrangements, has the potential to stimulate a new phase of partnership working that will deliver sustained and significant improvements.

Engaging with communities

- 38** The Authority undertakes some high quality, innovative community engagement that directly contributes to improved community safety outcomes. Authority staff have delivered a wide range of events, newsletters, leaflets, DVDs and promotional films, all of which are produced to very high standard. The 2008/09 Annual Report took the form of an advertisement on the local television channel in an attempt to reach the maximum audience possible. Initiatives such as this raise awareness of the Authority and encourage communication and engagement. Work with young people, who are often hard to engage using conventional consultation approaches, includes a large scale youth survey, 'You Choose' consultation events and the 'Changing Faces' initiative. This recruited 13 young people to engage with peers on ways to resist pressure to engage in violent extremism. This shows the Authority has targeted its engagement activity on those vulnerable groups who are often the most difficult to reach.
- 39** The Authority has ensured that outcomes of community consultation and engagement are addressed. The Authority responded to public concern about call handling through its call resolution project. In relation to anti-social behaviour, the most frequently raised issue in public consultation was off-road biking. This led to the Authority taking direct action with the Force to address this nuisance, including the production of toolkits for use by CDRPs and public participation through a 'Name and Shame' campaign. Preventative and enforcement activity still features in local policing plans. This shows that the Authority has taken action to improve public confidence and tackled issues that matter to local people.
- 40** The Authority is active in community reassurance following counter-terrorism operations. Authority members are kept informed of these and other operations that might impact on specific communities and engage so as to mitigate adverse effects. Following high profile arrests made during Islam Awareness Week, the Authority intervened to calm community anxiety and prevent disorder. Post incident consultation meetings are held to understand the impact these operations have and ensure future operations are conducted sensitively. These actions contribute to improved confidence in the police and greater community cohesion.

Areas for improvement

- 41** The Authority needs to move forward by joining up its consultation and engagement activities with those of partners and ensuring the findings inform strategy, plans and action. The Authority has recognised this and recently agreed to progress a Joint Involvement Strategy. This aims to reduce the potential duplication of resources arising from uncoordinated activity and the Authority is moving to agree firstly with the Force, and then with community safety partners, how consultation activity should be shared and results used. Progress towards this would benefit all parties by reducing costs and eliminating redundant activity. It would also help ensure that the strategic implications of consultation findings are teased out and used to determine policing priorities and direct policing activity.
- 42** The rationale for involvement in community safety projects is unclear. The Authority has been proactive in bidding for funding and undertaking projects, such as the Knife Enabled Crime Project, that deliver community safety outcomes. Whilst this work is hugely appreciated, the extent to which it represents core business for a police authority is questionable. The Authority must be assured that its community engagement programme is both fully comprehensive and represents the best use of its resources, based on consideration of alternative approaches, such as using influence to ensure such activity is commissioned through the partnerships. Any resources released within the Authority could then be re-directed to areas that have greater significance for police authorities, such as providing feedback to communities.
- 43** Authority representation and influence on CDRPs is variable and direct involvement in consultation activity is limited. Some CDRP partners speak highly of the Authority's engagement and consider members to be key players but representation on others is more recent and less effective. This weakens the Authority's influence in these localities. The Authority could use its more experienced representatives to assist others to play a more pivotal role. Similarly, there is inconsistent and limited member involvement in engagement activity. Whilst the time that members can devote to this is necessarily restricted, there is no substitute for hearing opinions directly and being seen to engage in person. Consideration might be given to reviewing the balance of engagement activity across the membership and between officers and members.
- 44** Communication with and between IAGs is limited. The four strategic IAGs operate well but do so in isolation and with only occasional attendance from members. Meetings between Chairs are now being scheduled to improve links between the Authority's strategic IAGs and the Force's divisional and branch IAGs and this will help ensure that concerns are shared and strategic issues addressed. Greater member involvement would both reinforce the value of their work to these volunteers and provide a more direct conduit into Authority decision making.

Ensuring VFM and productivity

How effective is the Police Authority in ensuring a clear and sustained focus on VFM in order to secure a good deal for the public?

- 45** The Authority is performing adequately in this area. It has demonstrated sound financial management and has pursued efficiencies through procurement. The Authority is actively supporting the Force in its comprehensive and radical business change programme, designed to drive out inefficiency, improve productivity and redirect resources into priority areas. It is now looking to see how it can address significant policing challenges arising from potential resource reductions over the next few years. This requires a better understanding of the risks faced by the Force and the Authority and the opportunities available to deliver savings and efficiencies. The Authority can then play its full part in directing organisational change and ensuring that management of risk and achieving improved value for money receive proper consideration.

Strengths

- 46** The Authority plans well to meet medium term financial challenges. The three-year police precept deal negotiated with AGMA in 2008 has delivered above-inflation budget increases and provided very welcome stability. The success of this arrangement and the very positive relationship that exists between AGMA and the Authority bodes well for future precept negotiations. In anticipation of a much tighter financial outlook from 2010/11 onwards, the Authority has engaged with the Force in scenario planning looking up to ten years ahead. This early consideration of options will give the Authority the space it needs to plan for necessary savings.
- 47** The Authority has an ambitious estates strategy that is improving the stock of premises available for policing Greater Manchester. A new Serious and Organised Crime Division building has recently opened and use has been made of Private Finance Initiative (PFI) schemes (covering several new buildings) to provide a range of new facilities for local policing. The new PFI buildings have improved levels of accommodation for divisional policing and provided additional custody facilities. Work has recently commenced on a new headquarters building in North Manchester in a project that sits on the back of Home Office funding for the North West Regional Counter-Terrorism Unit. As well as delivering business benefits, these developments support local regeneration activity and are environmentally sound. Flexibility built into the accommodation should ensure the stock will adapt to meet changing policing needs.

- 48** The Authority has a good track record on meeting efficiency targets and is supporting the Force in its drive to improve the use of resources. The Force is on course to meet the three-year efficiency target of 9.3 per cent set in 2008 and the Authority recently supported an increase in the target to 10.3 per cent. This demonstrates the commitment of the Authority to secure efficiencies for the public. The Force has embarked on a significant change programme in an attempt to improve productivity and re-direct resources into front line services. It is reviewing all support processes and functions, looking to streamline activity in order to remove waste and better align demand and supply. The Authority has encouraged the Force to work closely with Lancashire Constabulary. This creates potential savings on management costs and also opportunities for shared learning that may bring further benefit. The Authority was instrumental in the appointment of the ACO People and Change who leads on the change programme, has been consistent in its desire to achieve productivity improvements and regularly challenges the degree and rate of progress. Achievements to date include the release of 30 officers in Tameside from response into Neighbourhood Policing Teams, in line with the Authority's and the public's priorities.
- 49** The Authority has adopted a proactive approach towards procurement and collaboration. The Force uses collaborative contracts with other police forces and public sector bodies where it can be demonstrated that the arrangements offer best value. Joining with the National Forensic Collaboration Contract, for example, generated efficiency savings estimated at £1.2 million, and the North West NHS Collaborative Procurement Hub (NWCPC) was used to establish a contract for Interpreter Services. The Authority is engaged in discussion with AGMA's Efficiency Commission to explore opportunities, including in relation to energy provision and vehicles, at a more local level. Collaboration between forces is developing, with progress in relation to cross-border crime, motorway policing and counter-terrorism, but discussion within the new Regional Joint Committee is still at an early stage. By taking a further step and building on these experiences to develop a more strategic approach, the Authority could be more confident that the operational and financial opportunities of collaboration are being effectively exploited.

Areas for improvement

- 50** The Authority's risk management arrangements are immature and do not align with those of the Force. The Authority has constructed a strategic risk register but this has not identified all the key risks facing the organisation and does not assist in prioritisation of activity. Reconsideration would enable the Authority to be better sighted on its key strategic risks and the control strategies needed to mitigate them. Better alignment of the Authority and Force risk management processes should then inform the strategic planning and change process in terms of, for example, workforce mix and the balance between neighbourhood, response and specialist policing.
- 51** Financial benchmarking is limited and the Authority does not have a strategic overview of value for money. The Authority has not utilised benchmarking effectively across all its services and this precludes an objective view of whether value for money is being achieved. Benchmarking data has the potential to assist the Authority in determining whether the Force is cost-effective across all service areas and to identify whether further gains can be made.
- 52** In relation to its own budget, the Authority maintains a large secretariat and needs to be in a position to demonstrate that both the number and deployment of these staff represent the best use of resources. The recent publication of benchmarking data by the Association of Police Authority Chief Executives (APACE) provides a source of comparative information that can now be used as a starting point for testing value for money from the secretariat.
- 53** The Authority is insufficiently engaged in the governance of the strategic change programme. Members have been constant in their pressure on the Force to achieve efficiencies and receive progress reports through their committees and informal meetings, but this is a very complex programme that is radically changing the way policing is delivered and it is essential the Authority understands the full implications of the changes. Whilst Authority monitoring of detailed implementation is neither necessary nor helpful, oversight of the whole programme, testing that it is on track to deliver the defined benefits and identifying the barriers to progress, would give both the Authority and the Force greater assurance that desired outcomes will be obtained.

Next steps

- 54** We expect Greater Manchester Police Authority to address the areas for improvement identified in this report and secure targeted and continuous improvement. In doing so, the Police Authority should have regard to the wider improvement planning, support and intervention set out in the Home Office's performance framework and landscape for policing.
- 55** We will publish an interim national report shortly drawing on the findings from the first ten inspections. It will identify thematic issues relevant to all police authorities, helping to secure improvement and sharing of good practice. The Police Authority should refer to and use this report in shaping its improvement planning.

Appendix 1 – Context

The Region

- 56** Greater Manchester is a metropolitan county in North West England of some 496 square miles (1,285 square kilometres), with a population of 2.56 million. It encompasses one of the largest metropolitan areas in the United Kingdom and comprises ten metropolitan boroughs: Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan and the cities of Manchester and Salford. Greater Manchester is landlocked and borders Cheshire (to the south west and south), Derbyshire (to the south east), West Yorkshire (to the north east), Lancashire (to the north) and Merseyside (to the west). The Greater Manchester Urban Area is the third most populous conurbation in the UK.
- 57** Greater Manchester County Council was abolished in 1986, and the metropolitan boroughs are now effectively unitary authority areas; however several county-wide services are co-ordinated through the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA). AGMA is working towards the creation of a formal government structure that would allow it to operate as a City Region.
- 58** Greater Manchester contains a mix of high density urban areas, suburbs, semi-rural and rural locations but overwhelmingly the land use in the county is urban. It has a strong regional central business district, formed by Manchester city centre and the adjoining parts of Salford and Trafford, but each of the ten metropolitan districts has at least one major town centre. This complexity is reflected in the density of its transport network. The region is served by an extensive motorway system and rail system. Manchester Airport, the UK's second largest, handles approximately 19 million passengers each year.
- 59** Greater Manchester has a considerable 'transient' population with an estimated eight million people visiting the area's vibrant sporting, entertainment, business and educational facilities each year. The area is home to four universities and four premier league football clubs and hosts a number of high profile events, including the Party Conferences (Labour Party and Conservative Party), the Manchester International Festival and Manchester Gay Pride. There are more than 170 recognised tourist attractions in the region, as well as shopping and entertainment venues including the Trafford Centre and the MEN Arena, which is one of Europe's busiest entertainment venues. More than 100,000 students attend the area's universities and colleges.
- 60** Greater Manchester is home to a diverse population, with 8.49 per cent of the total population from a BME background. There are currently over 66 refugee nationalities in the county and the proportions of Muslims and Jews are nearly twice the national average. It contains pockets of extreme affluence and acute poverty. All ten boroughs fall into the bottom 50 per cent of deprived areas, as measured by the 2007 index of deprivation, and three, Manchester, Salford and Rochdale, feature in the bottom 10 per cent. These contrasts create tensions that manifest themselves in particular policing challenges.

61 The diversity of the county requires a varied and sensitive approach. The area is a focus for anti-terrorism activity and some districts, including the City of Manchester and Trafford, have experienced significant levels of gun and gang crime. Manchester, as the commercial centre, has particular problems of crime and anti-social behaviour. It is also home to a large gay community. The area is vulnerable to mobile criminals, using the extensive motorway network, and also to cross border crime, particularly from Merseyside and West Yorkshire. Work is on going to develop a Policing Model which is looking at how the Force responds to calls for assistance, manages demand, undertakes Neighbourhood Policing and investigates crime. This new model needs to address volume crime performance issues that are a cause for concern both locally and nationally.

The Police Authority

- 62** Greater Manchester Police Authority is one of 43 Police Authorities in England and Wales. It is responsible for securing an efficient and effective police force for Greater Manchester and holding the Chief Constable to account. It has 19 members, comprising ten councillors nominated by local councils and nine independent members, one of whom is a lay justice. The Authority is chaired by a Manchester City councillor, Paul Murphy. Members are served by 35 directly employed staff, with approximately 15 others employed through a Service Level Agreement with Salford City Council. The Authority is led by its Chief Executive, who is also the Chief Executive of Salford City Council, supported by a full-time Executive Director.
- 63** The Authority supports Greater Manchester Police in its ambition to ‘be the most effective police force in the United Kingdom’, and supports the Force’s vision set out in the Greater Manchester Local Policing Plan 2009-2012. This encompasses three aims: Putting people first in everything we do, Working with and for the people of Greater Manchester to make communities safe and feel safer, and Being proud of delivering excellent services. Priorities are improving public confidence, improving customer service and contact, reducing serious and acquisitive crime and reducing violent crime. The plan emphasises the importance of effective partnerships in delivering improving services. Besides the ten local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) these include AGMA, composed of the ten council leaders plus the four Joint Authorities. AGMA has established seven commissions to tackle issues that affect the City Region.
- 64** The most recently established of these is the Public Protection Commission (PPC), which is chaired by the Chair of the Police Authority and seeks to pursue three strategic aims: ‘to protect our communities from terrorism, disasters and organised crime, to ensure excellence in crime and disorder reduction and community safety and to transform our service delivery to ensure services that best meet our communities’ needs and maximise our partnership delivery’. Access to and influence within AGMA and the PPC provides the Authority with an excellent platform for cohesive partnership working, allowing for mature debate about resources and direction of activity to improve community safety in line with its Multi Area Agreement.

Appendix 1 – Context

65 There is also a new North West Regional Collaboration Joint Committee, overseeing a strategic regional partnership to develop collaborative policing. Despite having the capacity to stand alone as a strategic Force, the Authority has sought to play a full part in developing collaborative arrangements with other forces. These include a joint procurement of forensic services and collaborative arrangements for motorway policing.

The Force

- 66** The Force deals with about 750 incidents per day. It is a large employer with over 13,200 staff made up of about 8,225 police officers and 5,000 police staff and Police Community Support Officers.
- 67** The death of the previous Chief Constable in March 2008 was traumatising for both the Force and the Authority. The subsequent investigation and the hiatus before the present Chief Constable took up post impeded attempts to lift policing performance. The Force has now embarked on a comprehensive change programme, designed to push more resources into front-line and, most particularly, Neighbourhood Policing in order to improve public satisfaction and deliver better policing outcomes.
- 68** The performance of Greater Manchester Police is variable. Performance in respect of major crime and Protective Services is good. The ‘Closing the Gap’ report identified the Force as one of only two forces in the country that are capable of providing a sufficient level of Protective Services. In 2008/09 it was one of only four police forces in England and Wales to be assessed by HMIC as ‘exceeding the standard’ for managing major crime. The Force performs less well in areas of more immediate concern to the public: Neighbourhood Policing and developing citizen focus. It is regularly at the bottom of its peer grouping for overall crime levels and rate of detection and also for performance against the national Single Confidence Target. HMIC rated the Force as ‘fair’ following the 2009 Policing Pledge inspection.
- 69** The Authority has strengthened its focus on Neighbourhood Policing as a way of addressing its priorities and reassuring local communities. It negotiated an innovative agreement with AGMA that secured precept increases of 7.5 per cent per year for each of the three years 2008/09 to 2010/11 in return for the delivery of improved performance in identified priority neighbourhoods. It now faces a longer-term challenge to align police expenditure to anticipated resource shortfalls in the medium term, while responding to national initiatives such as the Policing Pledge.

Appendix 2 – Methodology

- 1 This report summarises the joint Audit Commission and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary findings from the inspection of Greater Manchester Police Authority which took place in November 2009.
- 2 In July 2009, the Audit Commission and HMIC published the Police Authority Inspection framework
- 3 The inspection framework comprises four assessment areas:
 - **Setting strategic direction and priorities** - How does the Police Authority ensure that both it and the force have the leadership, capacity and capability needed to deliver good quality service outcomes on behalf of the public?
 - **Scrutinising performance outcomes** - How effective is the Police Authority in scrutinising and ensuring that the force delivers the priority services that matter to local people?
 - **Achieving results through community engagement and partnership** - How well does the Police Authority achieve results through community engagement and partnerships to deliver its ambitions and strategic priorities?
 - **Ensuring value for money (VFM) and productivity** - How effective is the Police Authority in ensuring a clear and sustained focus on VFM in order to secure a good deal for the public?
- 4 The Inspection team drew on a range of evidence to form judgements against each of the four assessment themes. This included key documentation that the Police Authority uses to run its business, interviews, focus groups, observations and reality testing with key Police Authority partners and stakeholders.
- 5 Each assessment theme was scored separately on a scale of 1 to 4 and is combined into an overall score. The scores of 1 to 4 for each theme represent the following descriptors of performance.

Score	Descriptor of performance	
1	Police authority does not meet minimum requirements for this theme	Performs poorly
2	Police authority meets most of the minimum requirements for this theme with some exceptions and areas of concern	Performs adequately
3	Police authority exceeds minimum requirements for this theme	Performs well
4	Police authority significantly exceeds minimum requirements for this theme	Performs excellently

Appendix 2 – Methodology

- 6 An accredited peer member inspector and a senior officer from a police authority supported the joint inspectorates during this inspection.
- 7 We have integrated quality assurance throughout the planning, fieldwork and reporting stages of the inspection. In particular, a quality assurance panel of the joint inspectorates ensured the consistency and robustness of the inspection team's judgements before the publication of reports. A suitably qualified peer joined the quality assurance panel as an observer.
- 8 HMIC and the Audit Commission are grateful for the support and co-operation of the Police Authority, its staff and officers, during the inspection.

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