

# Community Safety Partnerships Consultation

## **The Government has committed to freeing up and improving Community Safety Partnerships.**

In July 2010 the Government outlined its proposals for police reform in the consultation document, 'Policing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Reconnecting police and the people'.

Chapter 5, 'Tackling crime together', sets out the Government's commitment to improving the partnership between the police and the public and to helping partners work together to solve local issues.

The Government identifies that Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) have been effective in preventing crime but that they need to have more freedom and flexibility. While the core statutory duty for key partners to work together will be retained, unnecessary prescription and bureaucracy should be removed so that partners can develop the structures best suited for their own circumstances and priorities.

## **To do this we intend to reduce the regulations which prescribe the way Community Safety Partnerships operate**

Details of regulations we propose to repeal / retain are set out on pages 2 to 5.

We would like your views on the proposals for repealing / retaining certain regulations, including:

- Any risks associated with repealing regulations as proposed
- Any other regulations you think could / should be repealed without having a detrimental impact on local partnership working

We will be consulting separately in Wales as some of these regulations are separate or apply differently in Wales.

Please send your responses to [paula.milner@gowm.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:paula.milner@gowm.gsi.gov.uk) by **close, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2010.**

## Regulations to be repealed / retained

<b>1. Purpose of regulations: Prescribes list of bodies CSPs must cooperate with and invite to participate</b>	
Summary	These regulations prescribe descriptions of persons or bodies with whom the responsible authorities are required to cooperate in the formulation and implementation of strategies for the reduction of crime and disorder within local government areas. The list includes parish councils, governing bodies of schools, social landlords and voluntary organisations.
Statutory Instruments	<a href="#">2452/1998</a> , <a href="#">2513/1998</a> & <a href="#">483/1999</a> (hyperlinks to Statutory Instruments on <a href="http://www.opsi.gov.uk">www.opsi.gov.uk</a> )
Recommendation	<b>Repeal all</b> These regulations are unnecessarily prescriptive and partners are best placed to decide which persons or bodies they should involve in the formulation and implementation of strategies.
<b>Q. Do you agree with the recommendation above?</b>	
<p>The Redditch Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel, Redditch Borough Council's designated Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee, is concerned about this proposal to repeal the prescribed list of bodies that responsible authorities must co-operate with and invite to participate in the formulation and implementation of strategies for the reduction of crime and disorder. The Panel therefore does not agree with this recommendation.</p>	
<b>Q. What, if any, are the risks associated with repealing these regulations?</b>	
<p>The Panel believes that there are risks involved in repealing these regulations. There are a large number of organisations that are currently classified as 'co-operating bodies'. A number of these bodies recognise the value of working with local Community Safety Partnerships. Unfortunately, however, sometimes some of these bodies are less co-operative. Under these circumstances the regulations provide a useful lever to encourage the co-operating bodies to work with the Partnership to the benefit of community safety in the local community. In particular, we are concerned that registered landlords might be less inclined to work with Community Safety Partnerships if the regulations were to be repealed. This could have serious implications with regards to the ability of Community Safety Partnerships to tackle anti-social behaviour in local areas.</p>	

<b>2. Purpose of regulations: Requires CSPs to complete strategic assessments, produce partnership plans, consult the community, share information and have in place arrangements for appointing a chair</b>	
Statutory Instruments	<a href="#">1830/2007</a> & <a href="#">647/2010</a> (England)
Recommendation	<p><b>Repeal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requirement for the strategy group to have arrangements in place for the functions of the chair (Regulation 3: subsection 4)</li> <li>• Requirement for the strategy group to meet from time to time (Regulation 3: subsection 5)</li> <li>• Requirement for strategy group to consider whether the group have the right skills and knowledge (Regulation 3: subsection 7)</li> <li>• Requirement for the county strategy group to have arrangements in place for the functions of the chair (Regulation 8: subsection 3)</li> <li>• Requirement for the county strategy group to meet from time to time (Regulation 8: subsection)</li> <li>• Requirement for strategy group to hold public meetings, that the meetings should be attended by certain people and that the public should be informed about the meetings (Regulation 12: subsection 4)</li> <li>• Requirement for the strategy group to consider the extent to which local people might assist them in preparing the partnership plan (Regulation 13)</li> </ul> <p>We consider that these regulations are overly prescriptive.</p> <p><b>Retain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requirement for strategic assessments</li> <li>• Requirement for partnership plans</li> <li>• Requirement for CSPs to consult the community</li> </ul> <p>We consider that regulations that set out a need for CSPs to formulate and implement strategies and that support the role of CSPs in engaging with the community are still helpful to ensure a level of consistency of approach.</p>
<b>Q. Do you agree with the recommendations above?</b>	
<p>The Redditch Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel believe that the requirements which may be repealed represent the minimum operating standards for local Community Safety Partnerships. Under these circumstances repealing these requirements would appear to be questionable as they should be shaping the standard governance frameworks for Community Safety Partnerships in the country. The Panel believes that retaining these requirements would be useful as they provide public reassurance of quality control and good governance for local Community Safety Partnerships.</p>	

<b>Q. What, if any, are the risks associated with repealing these regulations? (please specify which regulation the risk is associated with)</b>	
Community Safety Partnerships should already be complying with these requirements as a minimum standard governance arrangement. The Panel has every confidence that the Redditch Community Safety Partnership, for example, complies with these requirements. However, the Panel recognises that there is a risk that if these requirements were to be repealed the operation of some partnerships could be negatively effected.	
<b>3. Purpose of regulations: Requires named authorities to share depersonalised information each quarter</b>	
Statutory Instruments	<a href="#">1831/2007</a> , <a href="#">1406/2008</a> & <a href="#">656/2010</a>
Recommendation	<b>Retain</b> We consider that these regulations are necessary to ensure information is shared between partners. <b>Please note that we will be carrying out a separate, more detailed piece of work on information sharing to determine whether current powers and guidance are sufficient and appropriate.</b>
<b>Q. Do you agree with the recommendation above? Please provide any further thoughts on these regulations that will help us in developing the more detailed piece of work on information sharing.</b>	
The Redditch Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel agrees with this recommendation.	
<b>4. Purpose of regulations: Prescribes how the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny committee should operate</b>	
Statutory Instruments	<a href="#">942/2009</a> & <a href="#">616/2010</a>
Recommendation	<b>Repeal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulation for how the committee may co-opt additional members to serve on the committee (Regulation 3)</li> <li>• Requirement to meet annually (Regulation 4)</li> <li>• Requirement that any responses to the committee’s reports/recommendations should be in writing and submitted within 28 days (Regulation 7)</li> </ul> We consider that these regulations are overly prescriptive and that committees should be free to decide how they should operate.  <b>Retain</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requirement to share information</li> <li>• Regulation to allow committee to require an officer of a responsible authority to attend a committee</li> </ul>

meeting  
We consider these regulations are still helpful to ensure effective scrutiny and a level of consistency of approach.

**Q. Do you agree with the recommendation above?**

The Redditch Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel largely agrees with the recommendations outlined above, though suggests that a few points of clarification should be provided in any final guidance or legislation that will be issued.

The regulations with regards to co-opted membership currently exclude co-option from the local authority's Executive Committee. This corresponds with original requirements set out in the Local Government Act 2000 which separated the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny functions in local government. The Panel are questioning whether repealing the regulations on co-opted membership would provide Executive Committee members with an option to act as co-opted members of a designated crime and disorder scrutiny committee. The Panel would be concerned about this development as they agree that there should be a clear separation between the executive and Overview and Scrutiny. They are therefore suggesting that the Home Office should provide clarification about this matter when making any final decision on the subject.

The Redditch Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel established local arrangements for the frequency of meetings. The Panel agreed that in order to develop expertise in scrutinising the work of Community Safety Partnerships meetings would need to take place more frequently than once per annum. The Panel therefore has a requirement to meet a minimum of four times per year, though it is likely that the Panel will act flexibly and meet more regularly as and when required. The Panel concur that this flexibility is important and suitable for determination at the local level.

The requirement for responses to the Committee's recommendations and reports to be submitted within 28 days has always been interpreted flexibly by the Panel. The guidance issued by the Home Office originally stipulated that relevant partners "should submit a response within a period of 28 days from the date the report or recommendations are submitted (or if this is not possible as soon as reasonably possible thereafter)". (Home Office Guidance, May 2009). The Panel is aware of the competing priorities and duties impacting on both the Community Safety Partnership and local partner organisations. It therefore believes that the flexibility over the submission of responses to recommendations is reasonable, though there should remain a requirement for the Partnership and / or relevant partners to respond at some point to outline what action, if any, will be taken in response to the report and / or recommendations. This will ensure that the process remains as transparent as possible.

**Q. What, if any, are the risks associated with repealing these regulations?**

The Panel believe that there is a risk in some areas that by repealing the requirement to meet annually some local authorities will convene no meetings during the year to review the work of the local Community Safety Partnership.

**Q. Are there any other regulations that you think hinder the effective working of CSPs and should be repealed?**

The Panel has no further comments to add though would be prepared to contribute comments as part of any further consultation work that may occur in future.