

PRIME MINISTER

CRIME

You will recall that the Home Office set up a working party under Sir Brian Cubbon on crime prevention. They have now produced their report, a copy of which is attached, and are producing a number of courses of action (see paragraph 18 of the report which is flagged). Principle amongst these is the establishment within the Home Office of a crime prevention unit which would bring together the various threads of policy in the department and would have the responsibility to promote crime prevention policy. Also suggested is a circular to local authorities advising how:

- (i) local services should cooperate in introducing a much greater element of crime prevention into their activities, eg ensuring that improvements in lighting are concentrated in areas where street crime is highest; and
- (ii) advising on ways of reducing opportunities for vandalism and theft.

The object of the circular is essentially to make local authorities and services aware that their activities have an effect on crime, an understanding which has been virtually entirely lacking in the past. A classic example was the tower block architecture of the 1950s which simply invited vandalism.

29 July 1983

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From The Secretary of State for Wales

The Rt Hon Nicholas Edwards MP

27 July 1983

De Leon

29/7

CRIME

I am glad to give the assurance requested in your letter of 6 July that I endorse the analysis of the Working Group's report and their proposals for further action.

The general tenor of the report matches the philosophy we have tried to follow in Wales since 1979 in developing integrated policies. This has been particularly effective in relation to young offenders where we have had some useful exercises involving all the relevant agencies in developing an integrated approach to children in trouble. We are of course keeping crime prevention very much in mind in all our policy considerations.

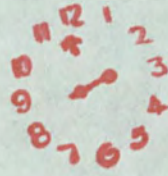
I support your intention to issue a joint circular although there are some small amendments which I should like incorporated to reflect the position in Wales more accurately. Perhaps we can leave it to our officials to sort out these details.

I am copying this to recipients of your letter of 6 July.

J → c
"De"

The Rt Hon Leon Brittan QC MP
Home Secretary

28 JUL 1983





QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

6 July 1983

R. Keir

CRIME

You now have the final report of the official Working Group which describes how Departments and local agencies outside the criminal justice field could help to reduce crime. I am most grateful to all those who have co-operated in this exercise.

I am very attracted by the approach taken by the Group. In my speech in the debate on the Address on 23 June I said that I intended to give a high priority to crime prevention.

I should be glad to know that you and other colleagues endorse the detailed analysis in the Group's report and their proposals for future action. Clearly, the police will remain a key service in tackling crime; but I believe that we must recognise that in the long-term they are unlikely to make real headway unless all agencies and the community work with them. Action at the local level is the key and I hope that the proposed circular to local authorities and others can be issued in September. The Home Office will now undertake the necessary outside consultations on the draft without committing Ministers to the present text.

I shall consider how, in addition to the circular, the other material and analysis in the Group's Report might be published about the same time.

I am taking the opportunity to announce today, in advance of the circular, the establishment in the Home Office of the Crime Prevention Unit mentioned in paragraph 15 of the report.

I hope, too, after these initiatives have been launched, that this approach to crime reduction will be a theme which will be taken up by the Government on the widest possible front and that we will all seek to play an active part in promoting it both within our Departments and in speeches inside and outside Parliament.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Prime Minister (with a copy of the report), to the Secretaries of State for the Environment, Employment, Social Services, Scotland and Wales and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours
R. Keir

CRIME

REPORT TO MINISTERS

1. Departments have been considering in recent months what agencies outside the ordinary ambit of the criminal justice system were doing, and could currently do, to help to reduce crime in England and Wales. The purpose of this report is, looking further ahead, to signpost what more can be done in future.

2. We begin from the premise that neither central government nor local services are as crime conscious as they could be. Crime is a complex phenomenon with many roots. There are factors associated with law-breaking in the character, history and background of individuals. There are other factors affecting the incidence of crime in the physical environment. We acknowledge that the services concerned with the education, guidance, or support of individuals or families are already a positive force for good; but we are clear that they could do still more to promote responsible behaviour, positive attitudes and respect for the law. We also take the view that more should be done to ensure that the environment is not conducive to anti-social behaviour and offers adequate opportunities for non-criminal activities. For effective action here we must look to the physical design and planning of the environment and to the provision and management of local services, both public and private. There is an unexpectedly wide range of measures that can be taken to reduce crime, some of them simple and involving little additional cost.

3. The continuing objective must be to ensure that the opportunities that undoubtedly exist for effective action against crime are recognised and exploited by every department and local service involved. This means that institutions must be organised to work effectively with one another and in ways that maximise their shared potential for controlling crime. And that the individuals working at ground level are encouraged wherever possible to adjust their present activities if, as we believe will often be the case, by so doing they can contribute to the reduction of crime without detriment to their respective services. The main participants in this are: local government services - housing environmental and planning, social services and education; the police and the probation services; and the voluntary sector.

4. We have made a start on a number of fronts.

5. The note attached at Annex A (Reducing Crime: The Findings of Research), seeks to fill a gap in the knowledge and imagination of central departments in respect of crime-related research. Paragraph 17 of the note draws attention to the fact that some sorts of crime can be reduced through the management, design or manipulation of the environment in which crimes occur. We believe that the development of this "situational" approach to prevention affords the best immediate prospect for significant crime reduction. We therefore intend that the insights provided in the note should inform policy and its public

justification and that Departmental understanding should be further enhanced by the dissemination within Whitehall of the results of future research in this area.

6. Some relevant Departments have Inspectorates which have an important part to play; although their roles are different, as are their relationships with the services they inspect, each is working at the interface of Whitehall and the local services. When we brought together representatives of the relevant Inspectorates, they agreed on the value of comprehensive approaches to crime reduction that would avoid the departmentalism that has hitherto characterised much of the work in this field. Currently some of the Inspectorates are considering how existing local initiatives in their various specialist fields could, with encouragement, co-operate with other local services so as to reduce the opportunity for an incidence of crime; and whether there are good practices at local and regional officer level that deserve to be disseminated to others working in the same fields in other parts of the country.

7. Two points of great importance emerge from the survey of research and from our discussions. First there is a case for developing and broadening the role of the police in crime prevention. At present, the specialist crime prevention officers, together with local crime prevention police, carry out invaluable work. Clearly this must continue. But it is important for all officers, uniform branch and CID, to develop the preventive element of their work. There is also a role for the police outside their traditional sphere: in local decision making, for example, in the area of planning and environmental policies; and in local activities eg in relation to the schools and youth work. We must therefore seek closer collaboration between the police and local agencies, community organisations and local authority departments. Properly developed, police expertise and local knowledge may well be a valuable input, for example designing and running housing estates, recreational centres and shopping precincts; and the police are well placed to support efforts, for example, to improve "problem" housing estates with advice on coping with local problems such as noise and vandalism. On a broader front, the police are also in a position to provide data on crime patterns which, taken together with other information (on eg housing stock, social amenities etc), could provide an informed basis for local initiatives against crime.

8. Secondly, this is not a matter of one agency always taking the lead but of all of them with a role to play working together to develop a framework and suitable administrative arrangements in which each can contribute openly and effectively to a common programme of crime reduction. Much useful work is already underway but, if inter-agency efforts of this kind are to make a really significant impact on crime, then changes in attitudes and procedures of the professional services, including the police and probation service, will be required.

9. There is no national plan which can simply be handed down to local services for implementation everywhere. The reasons for this are clear. Patterns of crime vary considerably between areas, indeed between neighbourhoods and are influenced by the nature of the neighbourhoods themselves. This being so, significant progress can be made only by

specific and carefully focussed local initiatives aimed at particular target groups or localities. Good schemes at the neighbourhood or housing estate level cannot be devised at the national level.

10. We identified young people as a particularly important group. All young people go through a difficult period in adolescence and many commit offenses of some sort. The vast majority grow out of criminality, but there is a danger that the wrong sort of reaction could propel some into further crime. DHSS has accordingly placed increasing emphasis on developing effective community-based diversionary programmes of intermediate treatment. Education and youth services have a key role. The comprehensive report of the Review Group on the Youth Service, and the report of a useful and timely survey of police liaison with the education service have recently been published. Both these reports emphasise the need for local initiative and co-operation and provide a good basis for carrying forward efforts in this vital area. In addition the DES has long encouraged the use of facilities in schools for community purposes where resources permit. The DES and the DOE are working up a proposal for a joint circular to local authorities to encourage them to do still more in securing such use of both educational and other facilities under their control. The DES has also recently issued updated guidance on some possible ways of reducing damage from vandalism in schools and colleges.

11. Steps have been taken to ensure that full use is made of the opportunities under the Urban Programme. There has been an encouraging response to the Ministerial circulars and letters which have been sent to the appropriate local authorities and which contained references to schemes relevant to crime reduction. Annex B gives an indication of Urban Programme support for crime-related projects in 1983/84.

12. In addition to schemes within the Urban Programme, the Home Office, DOE, DHSS, MSC, DES the Welsh Office, local authorities, the probation and after-care services and the voluntary organisations all have relevant work in hand. For example, the DOE set up the Priority Estates Project in 1979, designed to secure improvements to the management and physical condition of "problem" council housing estates, including the reduction of crime and vandalism, and the achievement of a greater sense of security amongst residents. The ideas of this project are being taken up in many local authority areas. The DOE has also given a pump-priming grant over 4 years to help NACRO establish its Crime Prevention Unit to reduce vandalism and other crime through programmes of environmental improvement on housing estates. The Welsh Office is also well advanced with plans to sponsor similar projects in Wales. The DHSS are supporting a wide range of initiatives for the prevention and reduction of juvenile delinquency, such as the NACRO Juvenile Crime Unit which is being set up in 10 areas of the country to establish greater co-ordination and community involvement in dealing with juvenile crime. The employment programmes operated by DE and MSC make a contribution indirectly to crime prevention, although this is not their express purpose. The DES have encouraged work centred on schools and the youth services which show particular promise. Collaborative ventures managed by the probation services or jointly with other agencies both statutory and voluntary

have drawn on a variety of funding sources to develop a multiplicity of facilities providing work, accommodation, remedial education, day centres, counselling etc to meet specific local needs of offenders and those at risk. The number of victims support schemes is increasing with the help of the MSC and other sources: these schemes provide not only comfort and advice to those who have suffered a burglary or assault but also practical help in securing houses and dealing with the fear of crime which can have as much impact on people's daily lives as crime itself.

Future Action

13. These are just some of the ways in which we have sought to build in a practical way on the interim report. It will be important that those involved centrally do not lose sight of the objectives. The Inspectorates must continue to work together. But it is evident that as part of a comprehensive strategy we must now address a task more difficult than encouraging co-operation at the centre or the local take up of ad hoc schemes.

14. The Departments concerned now have to get the message across and understood at local level and generate a new mood. We must mobilise local services, voluntary bodies and community associations to co-operate together in identifying opportunities for crime reduction and in taking action on their own initiatives. This might be done in a variety of ways: by assisting authorities, the police and representatives of voluntary organisations with the organisation of workshops and seminars on crime prevention topics; and by the provision of illustrative material, possibly in the form of "checklists", which would encourage local officials and others to consider the development of preventive action. There is also a need for the dissemination of research information and "best practice" on crime reduction to those in the community who, because of the work they do or the positions they hold, can contribute to crime reduction.

15. To help the further development of crime prevention and to provide some central support in mobilising local efforts, the Home Office is making some internal adjustments designed to draw together the various relevant administrative and research activities already in hand in the Department and permit a more effective and better co-ordinated approach to the problem. In broad terms, the Home Office should then have some capacity to work with the police, local authorities and voluntary groups in designing, implementing and evaluating "demonstration" crime reduction projects; and to collect, evaluate and disseminate information about promising initiatives. At the right time, Ministers may wish to give this re-organised capacity the title "Crime Prevention Unit" and get some publicity for it.

16. The aim of all this activity must be to persuade those with responsibility in Whitehall and locally to make crime reduction integral to, and not an adjunct to, their policies and practices. This is not so much a matter of inventing new policies as of adapting existing ones. For the local authorities in particular this will mean incorporating crime prevention into their main programmes. There will be some costs: the kind of change in attitudes and practices that we are seeking will involve more time being given to our objectives, and in many cases new

administrative arrangements. The bill should not, however, be large; and it is clear that, given the present immense cost of crime, even modestly improved crime reduction holds the prospect of very significant consequential savings in both social and financial terms.

17. We have already made a start in reaching those in positions of influence locally. A seminar held at Bramshill Police College in September 1982 brought together senior people responsible for key organisations to pursue ideas for effective crime reduction and encourage their development. The report of this seminar, which has been published and widely distributed has served as a basis for discussion with local authority associations and, on a separate occasion, with SOLACE. On both occasions, the response was encouraging and further action is planned.

18. We now propose to build on this beginning by:

- a. meeting with chief officers of police to discuss with them the development of crime prevention within the police service and the relationship between the service and community organisations;
- b. meeting with representatives of the voluntary sector to discuss their work and its relationship with crime reduction;
- c. extending discussions with local authorities by meeting with chief officers of relevant departments (housing, education, social services, planning);
- d. promoting local discussions between the relevant services, agencies and voluntary organisations;
- e. pursuing a programme of research and development in the area of crime reduction that will assist those working locally (see paragraph 15 above);
- f. by issuing a joint inter-departmental circular on the lines of the "Ditchley" letters on inter-agency co-operation in dealing with juveniles, but wider in scope to reflect the lessons we have learned.

19. The Home Office would continue to take the lead in carrying forward this programme of action with other Departments.

20. We invite Ministers to endorse the approach we have taken and to agree the direction we now propose to take and the specific measures in paragraphs 18 and 19 above.

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D R A F T

HOME OFFICE

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

WELSH OFFICE

Home Office Circular .../1983
Department of the Environment Circular .../1983
Local Authority Circular .../1983
Department of Education and Science Circular .../1983
Welsh Office Circular .../1983

The Chief Officer of Police
The Chief Housing Officer
The Chief Planning Officer
The Chief Probation Officer
The Chief Education Officer
The Director of Social Services
The Education Officer ILEA

The Chief Executive of Non-Metropolitan
County Councils and Metropolitan and Non-Metropolitan
District Councils

The Clerks to the London Borough Councils
The Clerk to the Greater London Council
The Clerk to the Common Council of the City of London
[The Clerk to the Justices]

[1983]

Dear Sir

CRIME PREVENTION

Crime is a complex phenomenon with roots in a wide range of social and environmental factors. Many of these factors lie outside the control or direct influence of the police. The task of preventing crime cannot therefore be left to the police alone. Other agencies whose policies and practices may also influence the incidence of crime, as well as private citizens, have important contributions to make, and an effective crime prevention strategy needs to involve them all.

2. Recent discussions between Ministers and between central government officials and representatives of local authority services, have shown that the police, local agencies and departments are aware of their mutual interests in crime prevention; and have emphasised the need to develop local arrangements within which all whose policies affect the incidence of crime can work effectively together. This circular is therefore issued jointly by the Home Office, the Department of the Environment, the Department of Health and Social Security, the Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office with the objective of encouraging the development of such arrangements. The purpose is not to lay down detailed guidelines but to indicate some of the factors of which account will need to be taken in designing and implementing local measures against crime; and to suggest a number of points that authorities may need to bear in mind in developing an appropriate local framework.

3. An accumulation of research results suggests that a sound policy towards crime prevention needs to be informed by the following key propositions:

- a. the effectiveness of the policy depends crucially on the active support of the community. The methods used by the police in preventing and detecting crime are constantly improving; but, in the long-term, significantly increased police effectiveness cannot be achieved unless the community can be persuaded to make a greater contribution.
- b. crime is not a uniform phenomenon. Patterns of crime vary markedly from area to area and between neighbourhoods and are influenced by the nature of the neighbourhoods themselves. This being so, significant progress in reducing crime is most

likely to be made if local initiatives are carefully focussed on particular localities and crimes;

- c. some common sorts of crime can be reduced through management, design or manipulation of the environment aimed at reducing the opportunities it affords potential offenders. Progress is being made, particularly in the long-term, by the application of policies designed to deal with social factors associated with criminal behaviour. For the short-term, the evidence increasingly argues that the development of a "situational" approach to prevention taking into account both social and environmental factors offers the best prospect for significant crime reduction;
- d. crime prevention schemes are more successful where local agencies work together, and with the police, in a co-ordinated way towards specified objectives.

4. Experience and these findings indicate that crime prevention initiatives need: first, to take account of the wishes of local people and to engage their active support; second, to be precisely targetted against specific local problems; third, to take account of the need to ensure that the environment offers adequate facilities and opportunities for non-criminal activities and indeed is not conducive to crime; and fourth, to draw upon the shared potential of all relevant local agencies in controlling crime.

5. Some areas of co-operation, such as over juveniles or young people in trouble or at risk are already well established: and a growing number of crime prevention schemes in operation up and down the country are

taking account of some or all of the features mentioned in paragraph 4 above. The object of this circular is both to encourage good day to day practice sometimes informed by special projects or schemes, and to suggest that there will be a great deal to be gained by establishing systematic inter-agency arrangements designed to ensure that any insights gained are taken up by the services concerned. So far as local authorities are concerned the ultimate aim of such arrangements would be to ensure that those involved with planning and service provision take routine account of the need to reduce crime and are fully alive to the opportunities for doing so.

6. It is not possible precisely to lay down how the broad approach outlined above should be translated into practice since the arrangements made and procedures adopted will need to be closely tailored to local circumstances. It is suggested, however, that a suitable framework will need to include the following elements:

- (i) the collection of information about, or relevant to, crime; and the analysis of local crime problems;
- (ii) the identification of the potential for crime reduction; and the preparation of policy options;
- (iii) consultation with community interests and the co-ordination of activity; and
- (iv) the implementation and monitoring of specific courses of action.

The Collection and Analysis of Information

7. Successful local initiatives must reflect local circumstances. Information will therefore be needed on local patterns of crime,

misbehaviour and the concerns of local people. Such information needs to be as detailed and specific as possible. The development of effective measures depends on considering the various factors associated with specific offences in specific areas and on assessing the practicability of different kinds of measures. It will, therefore, be helpful to start from the circumstances surrounding the commission of a particular type of offence.

8. A considerable amount of information is available from the police and other local agencies about the social conditions in which offenders have been brought up and now live and about the physical targets of crime. What has tended to be lacking is the coherent and systematic marshalling of that information in respect of the circumstances surrounding particular types of offence. An examination of the situation in which a particular type of offence takes place can reveal the conditions necessary for, or conducive to, its commission and can suggest a wide range of both social and environmental preventive measures which relate directly to these conditions.

9. It is important to note in this context that it is the collection and collation of aggregate data that is being suggested and not information about identifiable individuals; and this circular is not intended to alter or extend in any way such arrangements as exist between agencies for the exchange of confidential information.

10. For some types of offence there may be sufficient information available, but hitherto uncollated to make it possible to draw a full profile of the crime under study. The police are an obvious major source

of data and local authorities would be helped if the police were to make available to them information on local patterns of crime which describe the characteristics of specific crimes. There are also many other sources besides the police, such as insurance companies, who collect information about crime, as do the Post Office and the Gas and Electricity Boards when damage to their property is involved. Local authority departments in particular are likely to be rich sources both of information directly about crime, such as vandalism of school buildings or racial attacks on multi-ethnic housing estates, and of the social and demographic data necessary to place crime in its local context. Such data might, for example, include information about housing stock, population characteristics, and perhaps transport and recreational facilities in areas noted for high levels of crime and disorder.

11. Collating information from all such sources would enable full advantage to be taken of existing knowledge and expertise and, importantly, would draw in all agencies which hold such information in thinking about the planning for crime prevention at the earliest possible stage. Any research that had to be carried out to fill in gaps in information would be the last stage of the exercise when the needs were clearly identified.

The Preparation of Policy Options

12. It has been suggested that an analysis of the situation in which particular offences occur can reveal a wide range of possible preventive measures which are directly relevant to local conditions. These are likely to include measures aiming to limit or remove the opportunities for crime as well as those that aim to reduce the motivation of people to engage in crime.

13. Measures designed to make the commission of crime more difficult can be of various kinds and achieve their effect in different ways. At one level, the use of bolts and bars on buildings and anti-theft devices can make certain offences more difficult to commit. At another level, shops, for example, can be designed in such a way that the physical act of shoplifting is made more difficult and, at the same time, more risky. This element of risk, that derives from the ability of the "defender" to keep an area of likely attack under surveillance, can be exploited in a number of ways. For example, improving levels of street lighting in places where crime is likely to occur can have some crime prevention effect; on a larger scale, housing designs and neighbourhood plans which enable residents to exercise greater surveillance and control over their homes and surrounding areas can give them a sense of "territoriality" that makes them readier and more able to prevent crime. The security of dwellings and of the entrances to blocks of flats, through better doors, entryphones, caretaking arrangements etc. can also make a big contribution to crime reduction. In more restricted circumstances, it has been shown that vandalism in buses - a difficult and costly problem in some parts of the country - can be reduced by ensuring that the design of the vehicle allows the driver or conductor to see the passengers in all parts of the bus.

14. Measures that concentrate more specifically upon the offender are based on the premise that criminal behaviour can be reduced by improving social conditions to eliminate, or to compensate for, the material and psychological deprivations which are associated with it. For example, policies to combat urban deprivation are, of course, justified in their own right; but they may also have some effect on the roots of criminality. In the education field, attention has been focussed on

attempting to understand the causes of truancy and of variations in delinquency rates between schools; upon developing the role of Education Welfare Officers in the reduction of truancy. In the social work area increasing emphasis is placed on retaining as far as possible within the community those young people who get into trouble, and using domiciliary and community-based provision rather than residential or custodial.

15. Although it may have its uses as a way of categorising and understanding approaches to crime prevention, drawing too firm a distinction between the sorts of measures that may suggest themselves in the light of an analysis of local crime problems or an undue adherence to the merits of a "physical" or "social" approach, can lead to an exclusive and narrow view of crime prevention and the benefits which each approach can offer may, in consequence, be overlooked or ignored.

16. If a broad view is to be taken, however, it will be of all the greater importance to examine each possibility for action critically in the light of the resources available and a realistic assessment of the potential of the participating agencies for reducing crime; and to ensure that any initiatives subsequently undertaken have clear, precise and practical aims.

17. What is important is to look for gains in the intelligent adaption of existing procedures and programmes. For example, an examination of local arrangements for the repair and maintenance of housing stock might suggest ways in which they could be altered in order to reduce crime. Similarly, where local authorities have, for example, a planned programme for improving street lighting, an examination of the order of priorities within the programme might suggest that it would be right to give

precedence to schemes in areas where improved lighting would be likely to make offending more risky and reduce local fear of crime. It should be noted that it is not being suggested that the purpose of such reviews of existing programmes should be to give automatic precedence to crime reduction over other equally, or, in many cases, more desirable or pressing objectives. Rather, the aim would be to ensure that the need to reduce crime was not forgotten and that such opportunities to reduce crime as may be taken up without distorting the aims of main programmes are fully exposed for rational consideration.

18. Special projects, studies, experimental schemes and so on can help considerably in the modification of standard procedures and programmes. The Home Office Research and Planning Unit has carried out several detailed studies, such as those of vandalism and burglary; and the Department of the Environment's Priority Estates Project has indicated several ways in which housing management working with other agencies can play its part in the reduction of crime and the fear of crime. The same is true of the many housing estate projects set up by NACRO, which have a focus on vandalism and crime prevention. There is continuing scope for study and experiment, specially that which is closely geared to the adaption of main programmes.

Consultation and Co-ordination

19. The public can only be expected to participate in crime prevention where initiatives against crime reflect their own perceptions and concerns; otherwise their involvement will almost certainly be minimal. It has been shown that it is not unusual for the targets of police and local

authority activity to be of limited interest to those living in the community. This mismatch of perceptions indicates a need for methods by which the community's fears and concerns can be assessed, and for the formation of closer links between the public and those holding positions of authority.

20. There is no single structure that can be universally adopted, and local arrangements for community participation in collaborative efforts to reduce crime will need to be sufficiently flexible to take account of variations in both the needs and resources of localities within the area under review. Some existing groups, such as crime prevention panels, "Scarman" consultative committees and the local inter-agency committees being sponsored through the new DHES intermediate treatment initiative are already well suited to communication and consultation about crime; others, such as community councils or neighbourhood associations, may need to be made aware of the contribution they can make and to be drawn into discussions.

21. Besides forging links with the public, local agencies and departments will need to establish a framework within which their own activity on the crime prevention front can be co-ordinated. So far as local authorities are concerned, the way forward here might be to identify individuals (initially, perhaps, at chief officer/ director level) within the authority to whom the development of a crime prevention dimension in policies and procedures would fall, and to arrange for regular meetings between them. This is a matter on which the chief executives of Metropolitan and London boroughs and of Shire county councils, might consider taking the lead in consultation with their colleagues in the other tier of local government. The scope of attendance at such meetings

would vary from place to place but it is likely that, at a minimum, the police, the magistracy, the social and probation services and the departments of education, housing and highways will all need to be involved as will those responsible for planning and environment and the provision of leisure facilities. These official "core" meetings might be linked with other regular discussions designed to bring in community and voluntary groups, the churches, and representatives of local industrial, business and commercial concerns. In urban areas where there are inner city partnerships or programme arrangements these should be part of the consultation process.

22. As one important product of all these discussions, those involved might consider the preparation of a co-ordinated crime prevention plan for the area. Such a plan would need to be based on specific objectives agreed by all those concerned with, or affected by, its implementation and should be endorsed both by local elected representatives and relevant local government departments and agencies, including the police. Support from the local private sector would increase its strength. To serve a useful purpose, it should include practical proposals, and the necessary administrative arrangements, at working level, for implementation. As far as possible the plan should involve modifications to ongoing policies and practices rather than wholly new bodies of work. Some modifications might warrant trying out experimentally in one area before they are adopted more widely.

Implementation and Monitoring

23. The nature of the initiatives undertaken in the light of analysis, planning and consultation, will reflect local circumstances and resources

and the following examples are intended to give no more than a very broad indication of what they are likely to include. In housing, the main requirement may be for management and maintenance policies and practices to reduce crime and vandalism and to gain tenants' support in doing so. So far as planning is concerned, progress might be made by taking account of the crime reduction potential of policies towards land use (mix); the layout of residential areas and the provision of leisure amenities. As regards road and transport, benefits might flow, as has already been suggested, from improved lighting in some locations; and from scheduling public transport to allow for the swift and peaceful movement from town centres (including places of entertainment at night). Many social services departments will already be deeply involved with local inter-agency committees concerned with juvenile offending in general and intermediate treatment in particular. Where appropriate this activity could be linked into a broader crime prevention strategy. There are also some well-established victim support schemes; these as well as restitution and reparation projects might well be extended. The scope for contributions by education authorities may be particularly wide, centring on the schools' concern with the development of responsible behaviour and self-discipline in children and extending to aspects of the design, maintenance and care of educational buildings and steps to facilitate the use of school facilities by the community outside school hours.

24. Many obstacles to the successful implementation of crime prevention initiatives are likely to arise. It will, therefore, be useful to establish some means of assessing the progress made in particular areas or in respect of particular schemes and of ensuring that objectives are

not abandoned in the face of surmountable difficulties. It will also be vital to monitor new schemes, practices or policies with great care to ensure that they are having the effect desired. It will be particularly important to feed back information on the cost of change and the introduction of new arrangements introduced in a particular area to management teams working in different areas with an interest in making similar changes themselves. Besides providing necessary feedback, information from monitoring and evaluation will also provide an essential aid to decisions as to what projects and policies are, in the event, unlikely to succeed and should be abandoned and those which are capable of refinement in the light of experience.

Role of Central Government

25. Crime prevention initiatives cannot follow any central government "blue-print" and must develop on a local basis. This does not, of course, mean that central government policies are irrelevant and, in the course of an inter-departmental review established by the Home Secretary last year, all the departments contributing to this circular have examined their policies and considered what more they could do to prevent crime. One result of this review was the invitation to local authorities from the Department of the Environment to submit, for funding under the Urban Programme, schemes relevant to crime prevention.

26. Central departments have a significant role in working towards the establishment of a climate in which crime prevention is accepted as a significant and integral goal of public policy, both centrally and locally; and in ensuring that the right climate is created. This they will do. But government also has the duty of taking steps to ensure that

support is given to local initiatives in the form of the dissemination of information and ideas and of advice in tackling problems and evaluating initiatives.

27. [As a modest start in providing central support for local efforts, the Home Office is to establish a Crime Prevention Unit. This Unit will aim to draw together Home Office resources presently devoted to crime prevention and to develop crime prevention thinking; and will be available to work with the police, local authorities and voluntary groups in designing and evaluating "demonstration" crime reduction projects. It will also aim to collect, evaluate and disseminate information about promising local initiatives and local crime prevention plans (as proposed in paragraph 22). The Unit will be located in the main Home Office building in Queen Anne's Gate, London, SW1.]

28. Support will also be available from other central departments. Urban Programme support, for example, is available for local authority expenditure on their own projects or those of voluntary organisations which contribute to the reduction of crime or the alleviation of its effects for a wide variety of youth work and other relevant activities. Ministers wrote to the leaders of inner city Partnership and Programme authorities last year encouraging them to consider the inclusion of such projects in their Inner Area Programmes. DHSS's regional social work service network will continue to be available to support local authorities in establishing inter-agency consultative machinery, and in providing advice and help to social services departments. DHSS will continue to make direct grants to suitable voluntary organisations for projects which bring together community interests in the field of juvenile offending.

Support and advice will also be available from the Inspectorates of the relevant Departments. They will be adopting a co-ordinated and integrated approach in supporting local initiatives and will have an important role in disseminating good practices to those working in the same fields in different parts of the country.

Resources

29. It has been suggested that, at a time when resources are scarce, progress in reducing crime can nevertheless be made by ensuring that the need to reduce crime is not forgotten and that such opportunities as exist within main programmes are taken up. Where existing policies and programmes make the incorporation of a crime prevention "dimension" more difficult, progress might still be made at little extra cost. Projects already underway indicate that private charities and similar bodies may be willing to fund local initiatives, while projects requiring resources in the form of manpower might usefully turn to local voluntary groups. It might also be possible to make better, or further, use of existing facilities. The educational service, for example, has a range of premises and facilities which might, in principle, be made available to those organising crime prevention projects.

Conclusion

30. The reduction of crime will not be achieved either swiftly or easily. The co-ordination of crime prevention activity can be very time-consuming and needs to be long-term if it is to be really effective. Representatives of central and local departments and other agencies attending the seminar at Epsom Hill Police College last September (from whose discussions most

of the material in this circular derives) were in no doubt, however, that the effort would be worthwhile. We hope that this circular will encourage good schemes already underway, stimulate new initiatives and policies, and help to spread "best practice" in this field. If we are to be successful, crime reduction must come to take its place in the collective thinking of every agency and every citizen.

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