

**HM Inspectorate of Constabulary  
South of England Region**

**Inspection of Swindon BCU  
Wiltshire Constabulary**

**April 2007**



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## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The effective management of change in the Police Service has become a fundamental requirement; and the pace of change is accelerating with advancements in neighbourhood policing, protecting vulnerable people and counter terrorism. The volume of change in Wiltshire Constabulary reflects this and in certain respects is even greater, as the Force attempts to improve its business systems at the same time introducing nationally driven changes to how it polices the County. It is against this background that the inspection of Swindon BCU was undertaken, and in recognition of the significant changes taking place, the inspection team attempted to restrict the number of recommendations to core areas of business.
- 1.2 Historically, Wiltshire Constabulary has had low crime rates, and although Swindon is the busiest BCU, it also had relatively low crime numbers. More recently Swindon BCU has seen rises in crime and for the period April 2006 - March 2007 total crime increased **4.91%**, vehicle crime **12.17%**, violent crime **14.45%** and robbery **18.63%**. The sanction detection rate for vehicle crime has seen a rise to **14.95%**, but the detection rate for burglary dwelling has fallen from **22.52%** to only **10.54%**, with the overall sanction detection rate falling from **25.10%** to **20.02%**. Although robbery has increased the sanction detection rate has more than halved. Part of this deterioration can be attributed to changes in crime recording practices as a result of the introduction of a new crime recording system (Niche).
- 1.3 Swindon BCU was requested to complete a self-assessment in October 2006 and subsequently it was decided that the HMIC would conduct an inspection in April 2007, in light of the apparent deterioration of the BCU's performance. The inspection revealed some areas for concern but also much good work and an enthusiasm to improve.

### Partnerships

- 1.4 Swindon BCU has undoubtedly strengthened its partnership working and this is an area of joint activity that is essential to effectively reduce crime. The Community Safety partners have strengthened their strategic approach to crime reduction, recognising the impact volume crime has on local communities. Performance is monitored at executive level and a suite of tactical plans has been drawn up, which are overseen by the Community Safety Operations Board. Many of these are at an early stage and HMIC looks forward to observing the improvements over the coming months, but early signs are positive. The Partnership has introduced a post dedicated to co-ordinating volume crime reduction activity and the BCU is linking its crime prevention capability into this role. The BCU points to an overall fall in crime between 2002/3 and 2005/6 of 9%. Partnership working is a strength for the BCU and recent changes should produce further evidence of improvements for the people of Swindon.

## Volume Crime

- 1.5 The BCU has a crime targeting team (CTT), which was previously the burglary team but now deals with burglary dwelling, class A drug dealing, prolific offenders, vehicle crime and outstanding suspects as a result of DNA/forensic hits. It may also be assigned anything the SMT feel appropriate from the daily management meeting (DMM). The team does not receive any specific training for its role and is light on the number of permanent trained detectives on the unit. It represents the only proactive capability on the BCU and appears to be relied upon to respond to all immediate problems. This may go some way to explain why, with a near stable rate of burglary dwellings, the sanction detection rate has halved. The CTT is now allocated crime directly from the CMU.
- 1.6 The BCU has set-up a crime management unit (CMU) that will allocate all crime directed to the BCU. Some crimes will be retained within the unit that would normally be allocated to the general patrol teams (GPD), and at the time of the inspection it was retaining 30 – 50% of such crimes. This is very positive but the unit does not maintain an overview of crime once they are allocated from the unit. Crimes are not scrutinised at the point of submission and there were examples given of crimes being filed undetected which were in fact not crimes at all. Because of the Niche crime recording system the inspection team were informed that it would be difficult for them to carry out a crime audit. Furthermore the Niche system currently makes it impossible to identify repeat victims or establish how many crimes are outstanding with a named suspect, a basic house keeping function of a CMU. Although in its infancy the CMU appeared to be well managed and the BCU should be commended for introducing it in such a short time.
- 1.7 The BCU has two crime standards auditors who are responsible for overseeing ethical recording of crime and detections. There is considerable experience within the team who are migrating to become part of the new CMU capability. With additional support they could perform a scrutinising role at the point of submission.
- 1.8 The role of the CMU needs to be further developed, so it takes on the task of managing all crime for the BCU, with an audit and scrutinising function. It is essential that the BCU discovers how many outstanding crimes have named suspects, and once established it should consider mounting an operation to clear any backlog (e.g. Operation Relentless, Avon & Somerset). Crimes such as these represent potential detections that may never be realised the longer they remain outstanding, leaving victims dissatisfied and suspects free to commit crime.

## Performance Management

- 1.9 The BCU has an embryonic performance regime that needs to be developed as a matter of urgency to assist in turning around the current downturn in performance. Apart from the CTT, staff generally did not feel that they are held to account for the performance of the BCU. Teams and individuals need to know what part they are expected to play, and be supported with timely and detailed performance information, linked to PDRs. Only when such a regime has been operating for a period of time on a BCU does it become embedded and eventually manifests as a

‘performance culture’. Therefore, Swindon BCU should seek to have all elements for the management of performance in place within six months.

#### Contact Management

- 1.10 Wiltshire Constabulary views contact management as a critical development area and has a major improvement project underway, as part of Operation Optimus. Significant investment is being made in the Force’s call handling capability, recognising that the majority of contact with the public takes place via the telephone. This development work is intended to improve the tasking of officers resulting in a timely and effective investigation, in line with the Victims Code of Practice and Quality of Service Commitment.
- 1.11 To assist with investment in call-handling the number of front counters open to the public has been reduced across the Force and there are now only three sites open from 7am until 9pm. At Swindon BCU front counter enquiries from the public are handled by enquiry staff managed within the BCU. The front counter service at Swindon is mainly only provided at the police station at Gablecross, which is out of town and on a ring road but with only limited public parking.
- 1.12 The inspection team witnessed a number of delays at the front counter and therefore carried out a limited survey, and interviewed front counter staff. Staff were feeling very unsettled as many faced possible redundancy. The layout of the front counter, although modern was rather poor. In the evenings queues of frustrated members of the public were observed on more than one occasion. Observations revealed that it is not uncommon for members of the public to wait for 20 minutes to be seen.
- 1.13 The Force is reviewing its contact management, and being cognisant to the above observations, should conduct further analysis with a view to improving the service to the public in this important area of business.

#### Resource Use

- 1.14 General patrol officers (GPD) felt very much under pressure at Swindon, mainly as a result of changes such as the setting up of neighbourhood policing teams and the creation of the CMU, and other significant changes as alluded to above. Some of these changes have resulted in posts being created at the expense of the response shifts. Many officers complained that they felt that staffing levels were critically short during the busy weekend period in the town centre, when officers from these new units were not available. This may merely be a perception but a review of actual staffing levels did reveal that GPD numbers did appear to be below the BCU’s own preferred staffing levels at the weekend. It was not clear why some staff were abstracted or allowed time off. This may be an issue of management by inspectors and supervisors.
- 1.15 The BCU may wish to consider innovative ways to provide additional cover and demonstrate support for GPD officers, such as Operation Debus at Milton Keynes, where officers who are normally office based are required to carry out patrol duties at the weekend period, but not at a frequency which impacts their core function.

## Summary

- 1.16 The challenges facing Swindon BCU are considerable but staff on the BCU are aware of the areas that are in need of improvement and were very honest in this regard; the self assessment reflecting this honesty. The inspection team found a real enthusiasm to improve and the well resourced senior management team are in a good position to grasp the opportunity and take things forward. The BCU is a place where the majority of staff enjoy working and they are provided with excellent working conditions at Gablecross, and it was also pleasing to find diversity so well embedded.

## Recommendations and Good Practice

### Recommendations

1. The SMT should further develop the crime management unit, supported by audit and scrutinising functions, to enable it to fully manage all crime on behalf of the BCU.
2. The CTT should be restricted to dealing with priority crimes, and have clear leads for each within the unit. The SMT should review the detective establishment within the unit.
3. Swindon BCU must develop a performance regime that should contain the following elements:-
  - Establish clarity of ownership and responsibility for performance.
  - Develop suitable performance measures for all teams/individuals. These should not be confined to merely detections but encompass a 'balanced score card' of performance measures (e.g. intelligence submissions, sickness/absence rates).
  - Develop a series of dual flow performance management meetings that are linked, down to inspector or equivalent level, enabling individuals to be held to account for delivery on performance.
  - Continue to develop PB views performance software; making clear to managers its potential by ensuring it provides simple, highly visible and regular information on current performance against priority targets.
  - Maintain the emphasis on rewarding good work and the positive management interventions that currently occur, but ensure current processes are universally understood and used.
  - PDRs have SMART objectives linked specifically to BCU priorities (suggest no more than three plus a development objective).
  - Establishing an auditing regime to ensure compliance with recently introduced SOPs, investigation models, policies and procedures.
  - Seek best practice on performance management from BCUs in the MSBCU group.
  - Implementation plan for the above to be developed with clear timescales, which result in full adoption within six months.
4. In the light of closures of front counter services elsewhere in the County, the current force project on contact management should further review front counter services. It is suggested that this should include:-
  - Ensuring resources and opening times are aligned to demand profiles.
  - Consideration of whether administration and ancillary functions, which frequently call staff away from dealing with the public, could be dealt with elsewhere (e.g. dealing with post, taking miscellaneous telephone calls, etc.)
  - Review of the front counter environment and layout and its impact on customer service (staff have to enter the visible area of the front counter to use the photocopying machine).
  - Consideration to greater use of volunteers.



5. The BCU should consider ways of increasing police presence during busy periods, such as Operation Debus at Milton Keynes, and review abstractions. The use of the CTT for this function should be avoided.

#### Good Practice

1. The intelligence unit has two police staff surveillance trained officers funded by the CSP, which is innovative and a reflection of positive partnership working.
2. The anti social incident database developed by NPT officers appears to be an impressive and useful tool, enabling comprehensive records to be maintained.

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1 Basic command units (BCUs) are a fundamental building block in the delivery of policing services. Aligned to communities, BCUs represent the local interface with the public and are therefore highly influential in the Police Service's aims to reduce crime and disorder, and to increase community confidence. BCUs vary in size and composition according to the areas they police. All share responsibility for the delivery of the national community safety plan as it affects them and, with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) colleagues, the delivery of the local community safety strategy (CSS) priorities. As such, individual BCUs will continue to be subject to increasing scrutiny of performance from both Government and local communities.
- 2.3 The range in performance outcomes between BCUs presents an opportunity for continuous improvement and to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of this tier of policing. A key ingredient of successful BCUs remains focus, with the most successful being those that maximise focus through effective leadership at every level. Such BCUs also have a performance management framework that strikes the right balance between holding individuals to account, and providing support for those in most need. The NIM will be fully embedded and mainstreamed throughout the BCU, driving all types of proactive intervention through the systematic and skilled interpretation of intelligence. Successful BCUs will also have a thorough appreciation and desire to meet the needs, wishes and expectations of their primary customer - the communities they police.
- 2.4 Following a five year rolling programme of BCU inspections, HMIC has since moved to a more intelligence-led approach whereby only a small number of BCUs are selected for inspection. This follows an examination of their relative performance within their MSBCU group, together with a detailed review of their self-assessment, which was completed as an integral part of the review process. All BCU inspections are now directly aligned to Force inspection frameworks and police performance assessment framework (PPAF) domains, and evidence gathered at the BCU tier can easily be used to help assess overall force performance.

### Aims of BCU Inspection

- **Promoting effective leadership.**
- **Disseminating good practice.**
- **Identifying inefficiencies.**
- **Providing pointers to enhance performance.**
- **Strengthening the capacity for self-improvement.**
- **Leaving behind a BCU management team that has learnt about itself and is even more committed to self-improvement.**

- 2.5 The inspection of Swindon BCU in Wiltshire Constabulary was conducted in April 2007. This report sets out the inspection findings, highlighting areas of good practice and making recommendations for improvement where appropriate. Her Majesty's Inspector thanks the officers and staff of Swindon BCU for the co-operation and assistance provided to members of the inspection team.

2.6 The inspection of Swindon BCU consisted of the following core stages:-

- Pre-visit data and analysis of BCU self-assessment
- Leadership Audit
- BCU Inspection
- Feedback to BCU
- Reporting

2.7 During the inspection a total of 48 structured interviews and focus groups were conducted, involving over 78 individuals and partnership agency representatives. An audit of custody records was undertaken and thirty staff PDRs were examined. Other than the BCU headquarters, two visits to other stations were made where additional staff were interviewed. A leadership audit was also conducted within the BCU.

### **3. Force Overview and Context**

#### Geographical Description of Force Area

- 3.1 Wiltshire Police is a small, mainly rural force. It includes the expanding conurbation of Swindon, the historic city of Salisbury and many market towns and villages. The M4 motorway runs through the north of the county and the busy A303 crosses the south of the county. There are a number of sites of historic interest, such as Stonehenge and Avebury.

#### Demographic Description of Force Area

- 3.2 The population of Wiltshire (including Swindon) is nearly 627,000, occupying 257,000 households. Some 2.55% of the population are from a minority black and ethnic background and 17% of the population are under the age of 20 years.

### **4. The BCU Overview and Context**

#### Geographical and Demographic Description of BCU Area

- 4.1 The Swindon BCU is situated at the northern end of Wiltshire Constabulary and Swindon is the largest urban conurbation in Wiltshire. The BCU is co-terminus with the Swindon Borough Council, and borders Gloucestershire and Thames Valley Police. The divisional headquarters has recently been rebuilt as part of a PFI initiative and is located at Gablecross, on the outskirts of the town. To maintain easy contact with the public there are police points in the town centre, and also on the West Sector, North Sector and a police station at Highworth. There is easy access to London via rail to Paddington; also a developing rail freight terminus, and major roads including the M4 motorway are close by.
- 4.2 Whilst Swindon is considered to be relatively prosperous, with a strong economy and low unemployment, there are pockets of deprivation. The Vulnerable Localities Index identifies Swindon as having 36% of the Force's vulnerable locations, the most significant wards being The Parks, Gorsehill, Pinehurst and Penhill.
- 4.3 Swindon BCU makes up 5% of the total force geographic area but produces 41% of the total crime reported in Wiltshire Constabulary (April –June 2006) and 47% of all serious crime is committed on the BCU.
- 4.4 Swindon has a population of 184,000, with 6% being from black and minority ethnic populations, and consists of 75,154 households. The BCU has a large central shopping centre and a vibrant night-time economy.

#### Structural Description of BCU

- 4.5 The senior management team (SMT) comprises the BCU commander, superintendent operations, superintendent partnerships, chief inspector divisional development (responsible for reporting on performance and overseeing the

performance management framework), a detective chief inspector (DCI), chief inspector operations and a chief inspector responsible for neighbourhood policing. The SMT also has a business manager, a CJU manager and a divisional personnel officer.

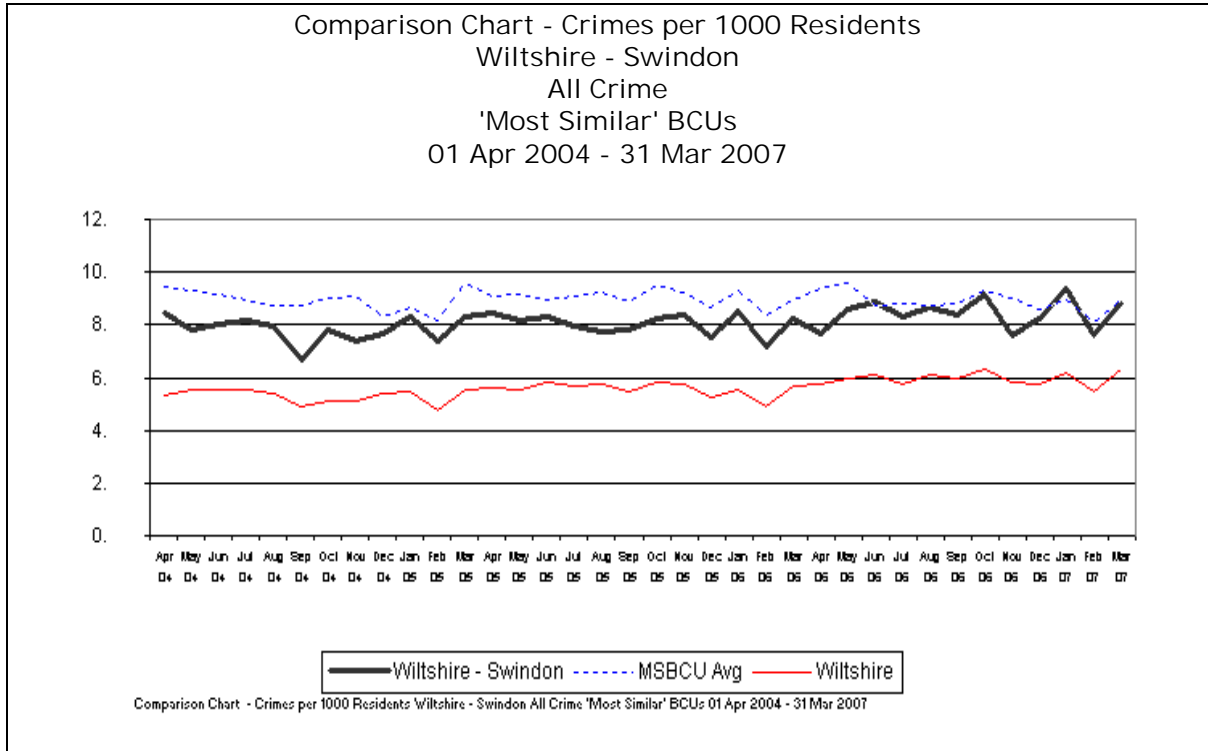
Swindon BCU Establishment as of 1 October 2006	
police officers (25% of force officers)	308
police staff (16% of force staff)	192
police community support officers	34
special constables (20% of force specials)	34

## 5. Swindon BCU Crime and Sanction Detection Performance

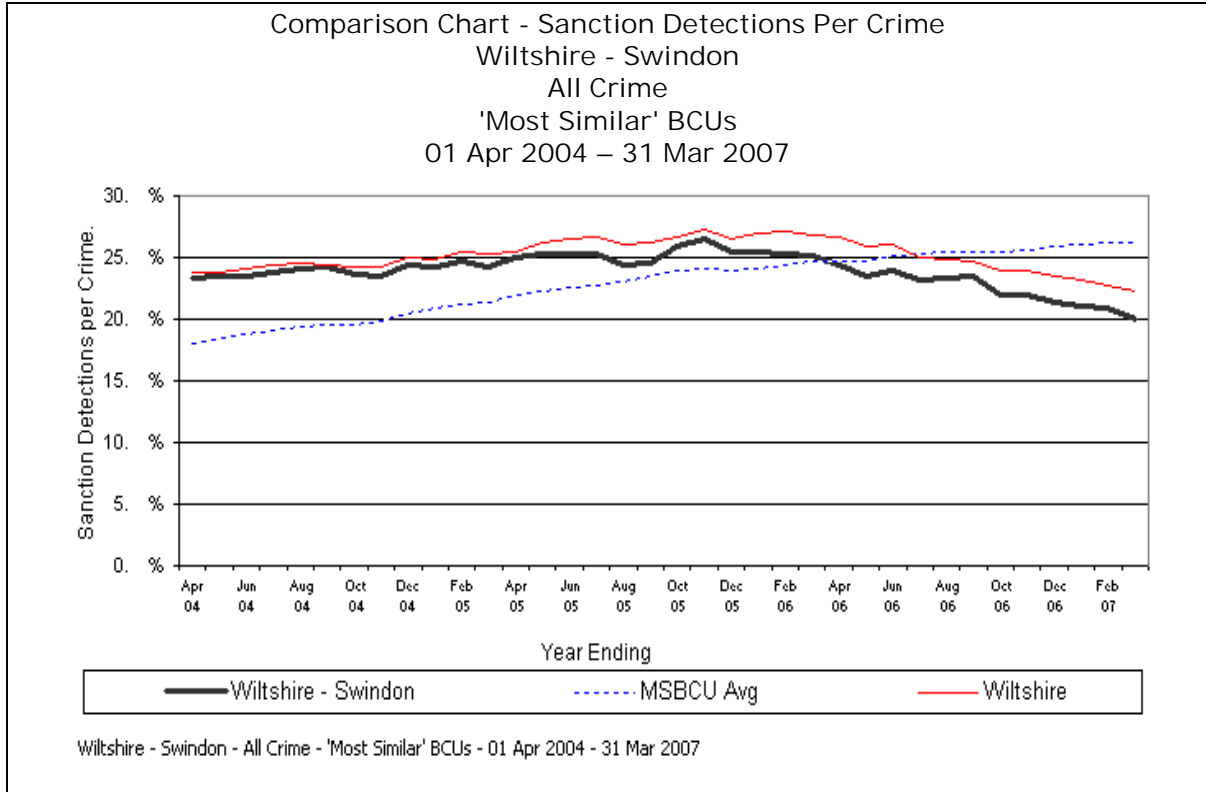
Crime Levels and Sanction Detections	April 2005 to March 2006	April 2006 to March 2007	% Change
Total recorded crime	17,750	18,622	<b>4.91%</b>
Number of crimes with a sanction detection	4,455	3,729	<b>-16.30%</b>
% Crimes with a sanction detection	25.10%	20.02%	<b>-5.07 %Pts</b>
Total recorded crime per 1,000 population	96.47	101.21	<b>4.91%</b>
<b>Total residential burglary</b>			
Total residential burglary	810	786	<b>-2.96%</b>
Number of residential burglaries with a sanction detection	176	88	<b>-50.00%</b>
% Residential burglaries with a sanction detection	21.73%	11.20%	<b>-10.53 %Pts</b>
Total residential burglaries per 1,000 households	10.45	10.14	<b>-2.96%</b>
<b>Total vehicle crime</b>			
Total vehicle crime	2,063	2,314	<b>12.17%</b>
Number of vehicle crimes with a sanction detection	231	346	<b>49.78%</b>
% Vehicle crimes with a sanction detection	11.20%	14.95%	<b>3.76 %Pts</b>
Total vehicle crime per 1,000 population	11.21	12.58	<b>12.17%</b>
<b>Total violent crime</b>			
Total violent crime	3,205	3,668	<b>14.45%</b>
Number of violent crimes with a sanction detection	1,611	1,323	<b>-17.88%</b>
% Violent crimes with a sanction detection	50.27%	36.07%	<b>-14.2 %Pts</b>
Total violent crime per 1,000 population	17.42	19.93	<b>14.45%</b>
<b>Total robbery</b>			
Total robbery	204	242	<b>18.63%</b>
Number of robberies with a sanction detection	56	23	<b>-58.93%</b>
% Robberies with a sanction detection	27.45%	9.50%	<b>-17.95 %Pts</b>
Total robbery per 1,000 population	1.11	1.32	<b>18.63%</b>

**Total Crime**

5.1 For the year April 2006 to March 2007 Swindon BCU has had a **4.91% increase** in the number of recorded crimes when compared to the previous year. Swindon is currently **in line with** the MSBCU average. All projections show the level of crime **increasing**.



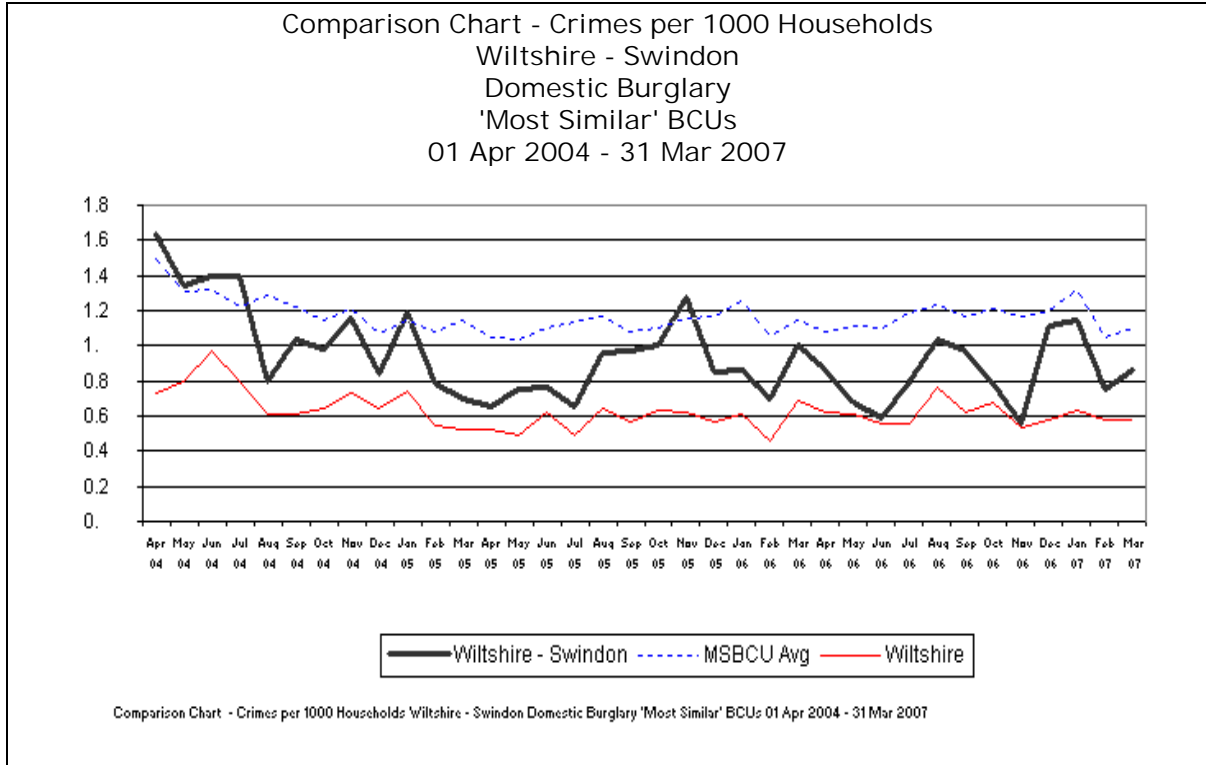
5.2 The sanction detection rate for the year April 2006 to March 2007 is **20.02%**, a **decrease of 5.07%points** on the previous year. Currently Swindon is **below** the MSBCU average. Projections based on the last 3, 6 and 12 months' data show the sanction detection rate **decreasing**.



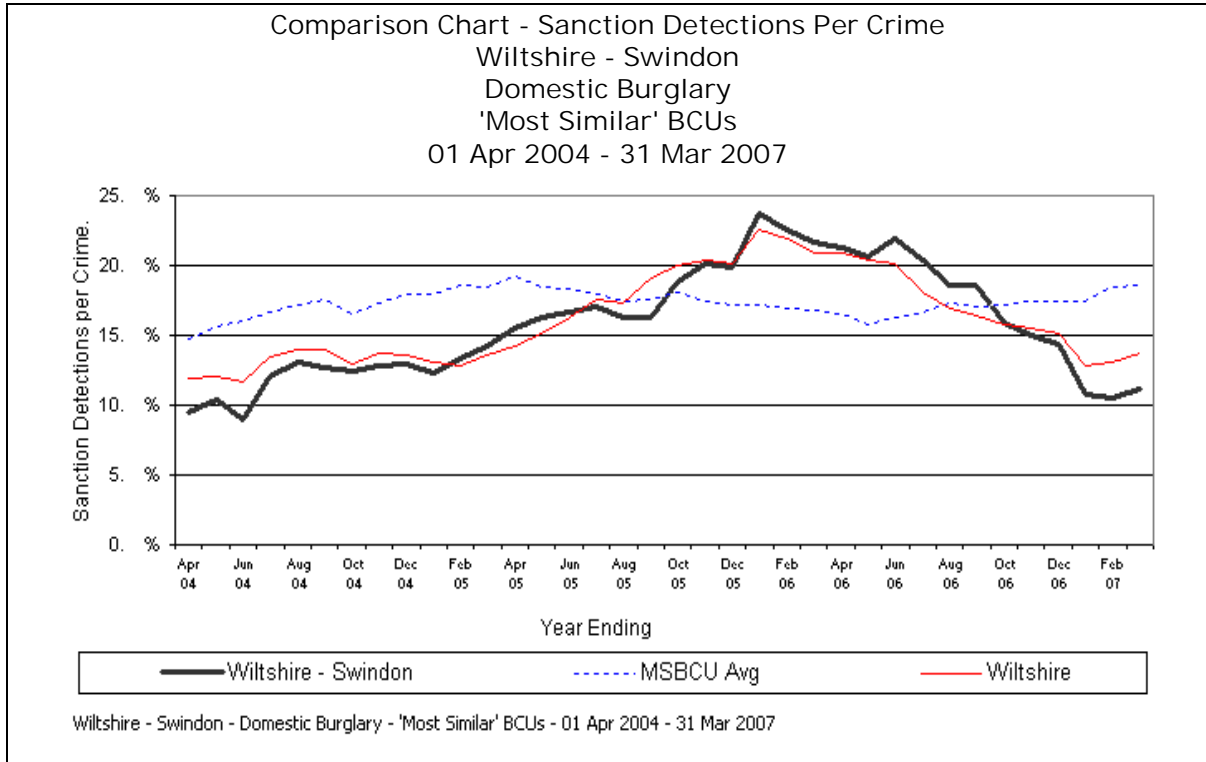


### Domestic Burglary

5.3 For the year April 2006 to March 2007 Swindon BCU has had a **2.96% decrease** in the number of domestic burglaries recorded when compared to the previous year. Swindon is currently **below** the MSBCU average. Projections based on the last 3 and 12 months' data show the number of burglaries **decreasing slightly**; projection of 6 months' data shows burglaries **remaining near the current level**.

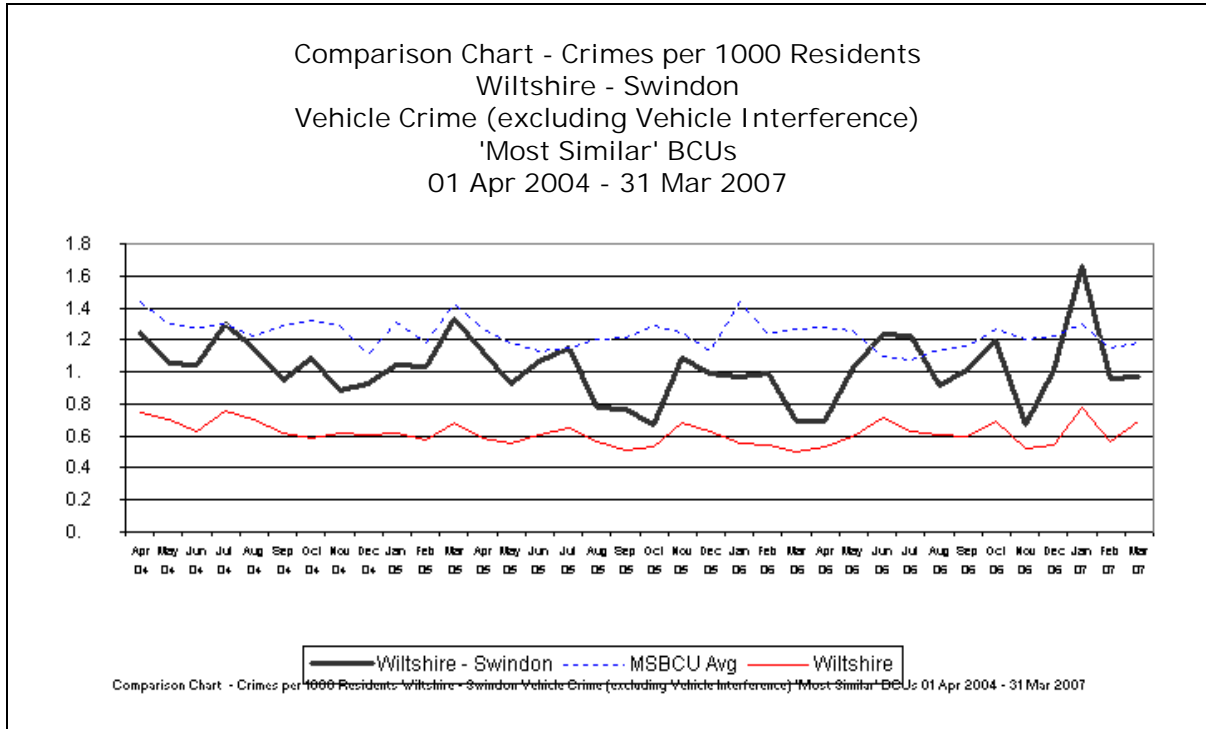


- 5.4 The sanction detection rate for the year April 2006 to March 2007 is **11.2%**, a **decrease of 10.53%points** on the previous year. Currently Swindon is **below** the MSBCU average. Projection of 3 months' data shows the sanction detection rate **increasing**; projections of 6 and 12 months' data show the sanction detection rate **decreasing**.

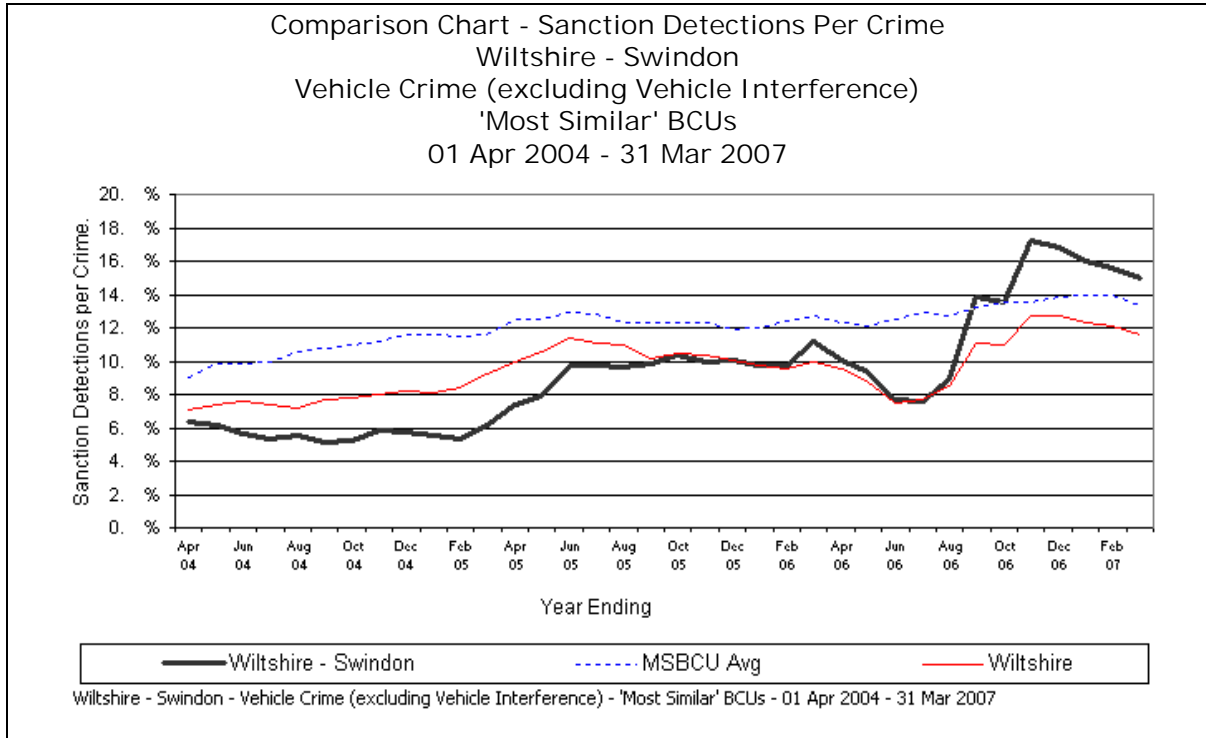


**Vehicle Crime**

5.5 For the year April 2006 to March 2007 Swindon BCU has had a **12.17% increase** in the number of vehicle crimes recorded when compared to the previous year. Swindon is currently **below** the MSBCU average. Projections based on the last 3, 6 and 12 months' data show the number of vehicle crimes **increasing**.

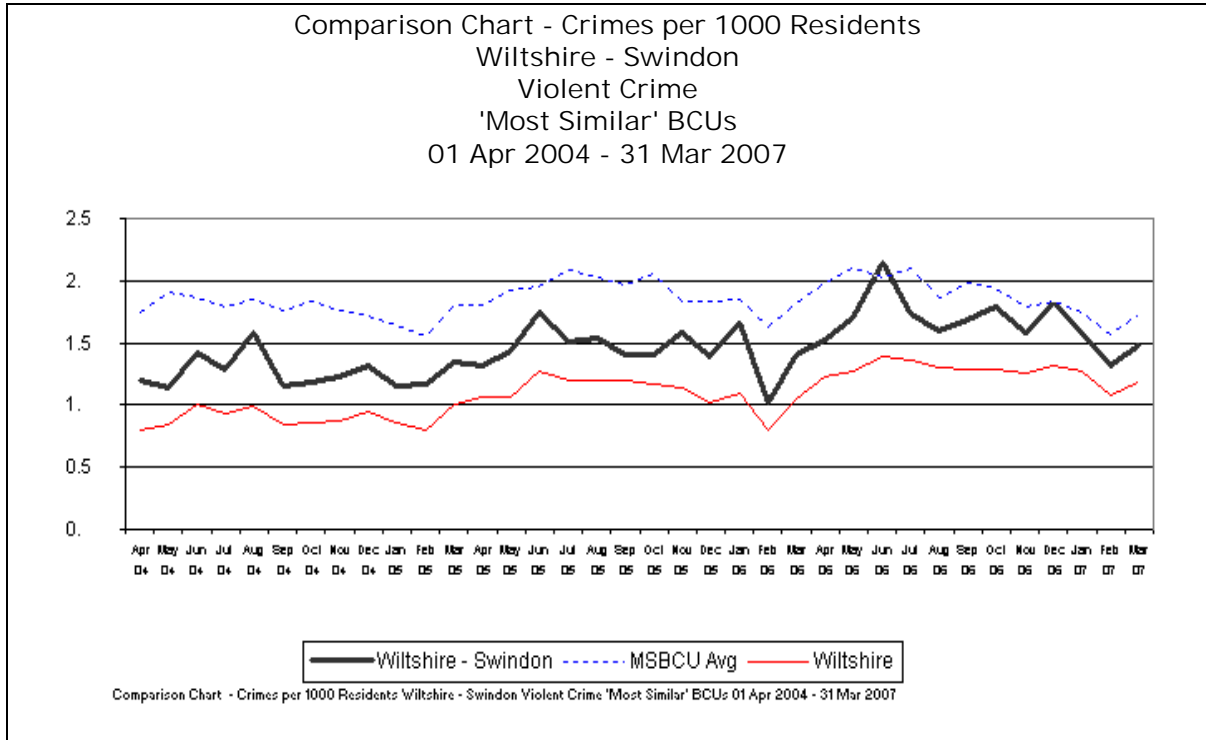


5.6 The sanction detection rate for the year April 2006 to March 2007 is **14.95%**, an **increase of 3.76%points** on the previous year. Currently Swindon is **above** the MSBCU average. Projections based on the last 6 and 12 months' data show the sanction detection rate **increasing**, but projections based on the last 3 months' data show the sanction detection rate **decreasing**.

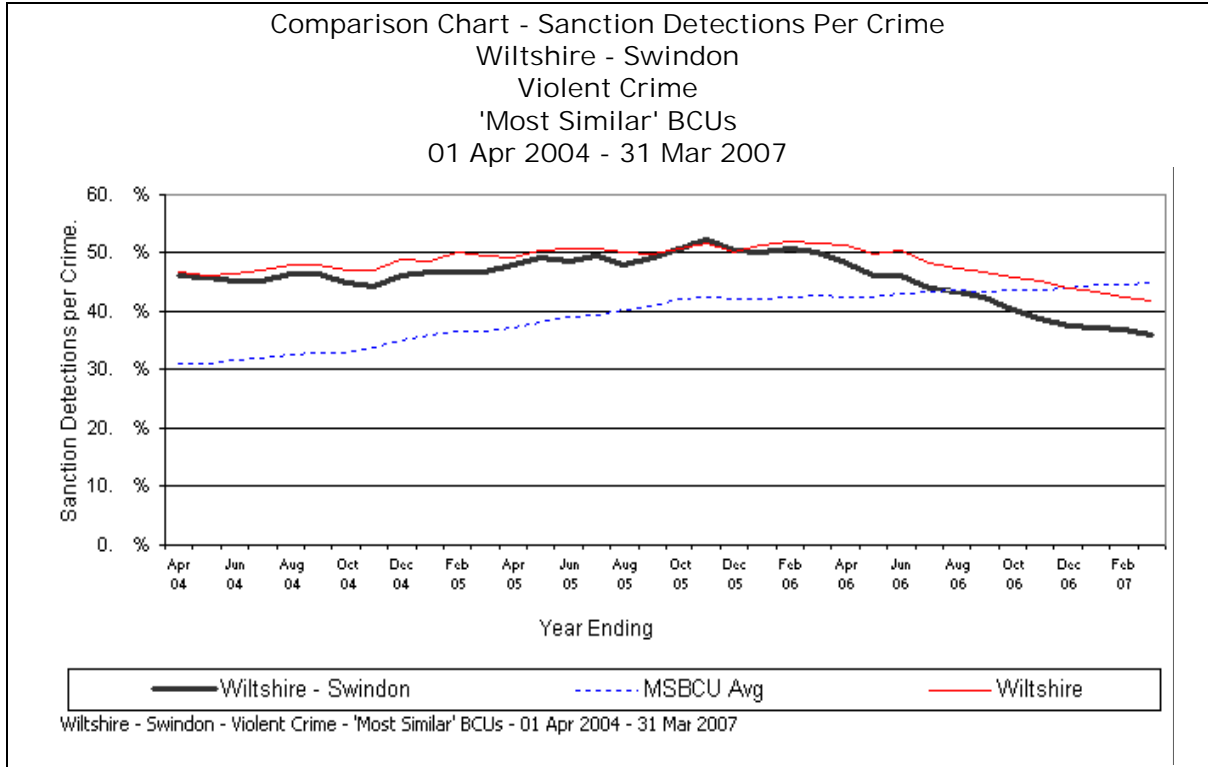


### Violent Crime

5.7 For the year April 2006 to March 2007 Swindon BCU has had a **14.45% increase** in the number of violent crimes recorded when compared to the previous year. Swindon is currently **below** the MSBCU average, but projections based on the last 3, 6 and 12 months' data show the number of violent crimes **increasing**.

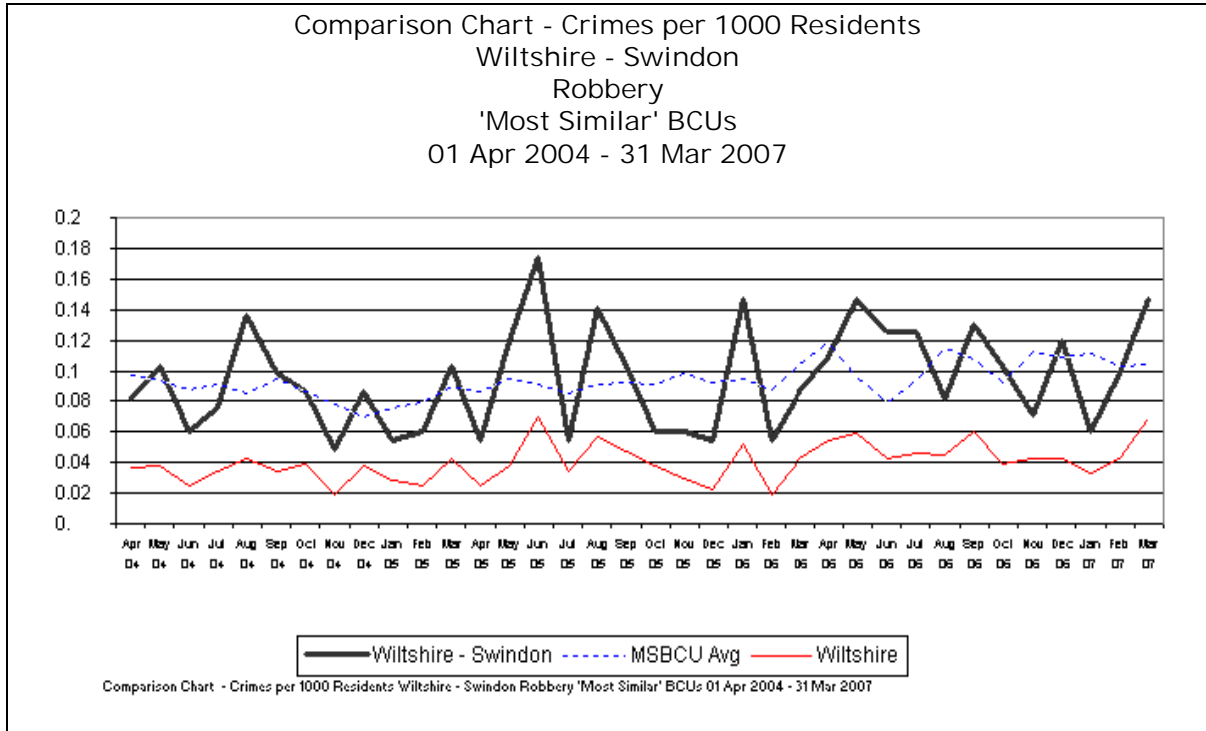


5.8 The sanction detection rate for the year April 2006 to March 2007 is **36.07%**, a **decrease of 14.2%points** on the previous year. Currently Swindon is **below** the MSBCU average. Projections based on the last 3, 6 and 12 months' data show the sanction detection rate **decreasing**.

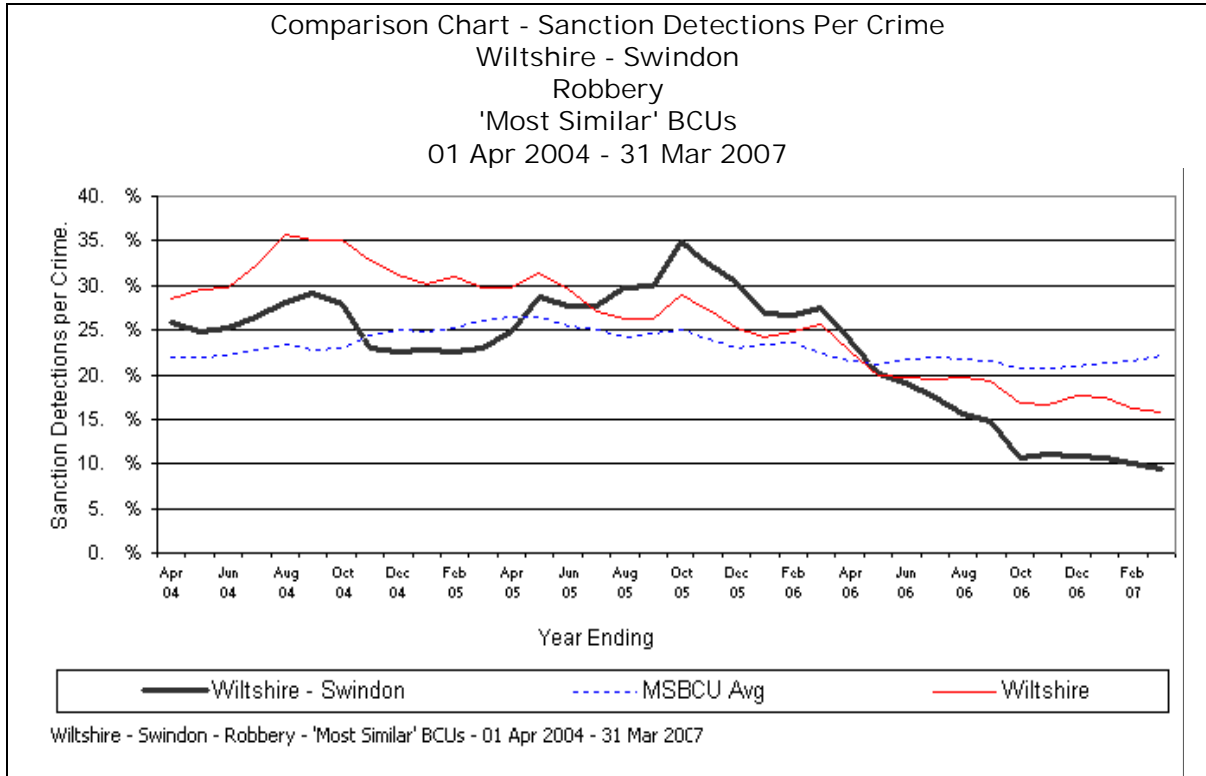


### Robbery

5.9 For the year April 2006 to March 2007 Swindon BCU has had an **18.63% increase** in the number of robberies recorded when compared to the previous year. Swindon is currently **above** the MSBCU average. All projections show the number of robberies **increasing**.



- 5.10 The sanction detection rate for the year April 2006 to March 2007 is **9.5%**, a **decrease of 17.95%points** on the previous year. Currently Swindon is **below** the MSBCU average. Projections based on the last 3 and 6 months' data all show the sanction detection rate **decreasing**. Projection of 12 months' data shows the rate **decreasing sharply, reaching 0 by November 2007**.





## 6. The Leadership Audit

- 6.1 A critical attribute of successful BCUs is effective leadership. Leadership styles vary – some are highly transformational while others veer more towards transactional approaches. There is no ‘correct’ style because circumstances vary too, and good leaders attune their approaches to fit these circumstances. To try and explore the components of leadership and their relative impact on performance, HMIC has developed a leadership audit tool, the findings from which inform the fieldwork stage of the inspection to validate key themes. This is a developing tool that will become increasingly powerful as benchmarks are created from BCUs against which results can be evaluated.
- 6.2 The leadership audit explores leadership across the whole BCU, using the headings that are applied to force-level leadership. This is a development from the previous focus of BCU inspections on the leadership of the commander and senior management team.
- 6.3 The audit process comprised three phases: a questionnaire, circulated to just over 200 staff by HMIC, focus groups with a representative cross section from officers and police staff; and one-to-one interviews with members of the SMT. The audit also included an interview with the relevant assistant chief constable who exercised line management over the BCU commander, to explore their working relationship. The results from the questionnaire have been supplied to the BCU Commander and are summarised in Appendix B. The comments below are selected highlights augmented by issues arising during focus groups and interviews.

### Summary of Audit Results

- 6.4 Seventy-one replies were received in time to be counted in these results, approximately 32% of those asked.
- 6.5 Respondents were asked to answer 0-5 for all questions:-
- 5 This is an integral part of our culture and operation and can be regarded as best practice
  - 4 Yes this is recognised as the way we do business, and we achieve real benefits
  - 3 Yes this usually happens but it could be improved
  - 2 This happens occasionally but there is no consistency
  - 1 No - this doesn't happen
  - 0 Don't Know

*The term **all respondents** below equates to the number of people who replied with an answer (1-5) for that question, excluding those answering “0” (Don’t Know).*

***The BCU has an appropriate structure which is aligned to the Force Strategy.***

- 6.6 A high percentage (85%) of all respondents consider that their role is clearly defined and contributes to the BCU and Force Strategy and nearly three quarters believe that lines of accountability and responsibility within the BCU are clearly defined. Similar responses were received in respect of respondents viewing health and safety procedures as effective.
- 6.7 Less than half of all respondents believe that teams are balanced in terms of skills, experience and diversity with police officers giving lower scores than police staff. A similar response was received to the question ‘resources are effectively managed within the BCU, including issues of demand and deployment’.
- 6.8 This probably reflects recent major change with the introduction of NPTs and the centralisation of some units. The BCU is alive to the concerns of staff and has introduced a roll call on weekend evenings so that staff know exactly who is on. For example, whilst centralised, the RPU retains a significant presence on the BCU and can be deployed to assist.

***The BCU has a performance culture with integrity.***

- 6.9 About three quarters of all respondents believe that there is effective use of the NIM on the BCU with slightly less believing that their managers demonstrated an interest in their performance and development.
- 6.10 Just less than two thirds of all respondents agreed that their managers ensure that maintaining integrity is more important than achieving good performance. For this question there was a high total of ‘don’t knows’, accounting for 21%. This may reflect the view expressed by a number of staff that the performance culture on the division was not well established (**see Recommendation 3**).
- 6.11 Just over half of all respondents believe that innovation is promoted and supported on the BCU. On the question of good performance being rewarded, again just over half of respondents answered positively. The inspection team acknowledges recent initiatives to reward good work such as an award ceremony and the highlighting of good work at the DMT. The responses in focus groups, however, suggest that these need to be marketed more and managers and supervisors encouraged to make full use of them.
- 6.12 Sixty percent of all respondents believe the BCU delivers an effective service to the community but of these, over half answered ‘yes this usually happens but it could be improved’. This probably reflects high levels of good will noted by the inspection team amongst staff – but also frustrations at not always being able to deliver the quality of service they would like.

***Diversity***

- 6.13 A high percentage of all respondents believe that diversity is embedded within the BCU, specifically in terms of personal values and all areas of business including selection and appointment of staff.
- 6.14 Similar responses were received in answer to the question ‘my manager’s decisions in respect of disciplinary issues are consistent’ and ‘my manager’s decisions in respect of operational issues are consistent’. Seventy percent of all respondents believe that fairness at work procedures can be used without fear of recriminations from managers.
- 6.15 Over three quarters of all respondents believed sickness and welfare were effectively managed. The inspection team attended the resourcing meeting, where sickness is discussed and this is an area receiving considerable SMT attention.
- 6.16 Sixty percent of all respondents believe that abstractions from duty are effectively managed, with police officers answering less positively than police staff. This again may reflect recent changes in resourcing and deployment but in focus groups there was a distinct perception, amongst police officers in particular, that there are less resources than ever before, especially on response teams.

#### ***Personnel Management***

- 6.17 About three quarters of all respondents believe that personnel issues are dealt with in a relevant and timely manner by their managers and a similar percentage said they have meaningful and regular contact with their managers. That said, for the police staff questioned the percentage of positive answers was less.
- 6.18 Over two thirds of all respondents believe that their contributions are welcomed and valued, a similar amount of staff who feel their manager demonstrates a genuine interest in them. On the question of feeling trusted, valued and included by their managers, over two thirds of respondents agreed.
- 6.19 Over two thirds of all respondents felt that coaching and mentoring is available if they need it and just under two thirds feel encouraged to learn by their manager. However, just less than half of all respondents believe that training and development is allocated according to need on the BCU. This was borne out in focus groups where it became apparent that many staff, particularly inspectors and sergeants, had not received the training required to undertake their role.

#### ***Communication***

- 6.20 Nearly three quarters of all respondents believe that their manager communicates relevant information to them – a similar number who believe that their managers respond positively to feedback from staff, with police officers answering more positively than police staff.
- 6.21 Seventy two percent of all respondents believe that their manager is available when they need to talk to them. Less than half of all respondents believe that their BCU commander and SMT respond in a positive way to feedback from staff. This may

reflect the very difficult decisions that the BCU has to make, set against force requirements for closing the level 2 gap and introducing neighbourhood policing. The inspection team are aware of the recent introduction of a 'change management group' but stress the importance of ensuring effective lines of communication, consultation and feedback mechanisms are in place.

## **7. What We Found**

- 7.1 Following a review of the BCU's performance, the GL3 (Going Local 3) self-assessment, the findings from the leadership audit and other key documentation, HMIC conducted its fieldwork at Swindon BCU. The inspection team sought to validate acceptable practice, and investigate and evidence both potential good practice and any areas for improvement (AFIs). This report does not, therefore, reiterate what is and should be happening on a BCU in terms of its core functional activities, given that these are detailed within the GL3 self-assessment process. Instead, the following section highlights areas against the force inspection frameworks that are evidenced by the inspection team as either particular strengths or opportunities for improvement against the core business of the BCU.

### **Citizen Focus**

#### Fairness & Equality in Service Delivery

- 7.2 The SMT at Swindon BCU have invested a great deal of effort in ensuring that the local community receive the best and most equitable service by emphasising partnership working. To this end the BCU, in common with the rest of Wiltshire Constabulary, has had the additional post of a superintendent partnerships added to the strength of the SMT. It is the inspection team's view that this commendable enhancement of the capabilities of the SMT is in part due to the recognition of the efforts of the BCU commander, who gave freely of his time to build relationships with partners. A position that could not be maintained indefinitely. The BCU has mainstreamed community and race relations (CRR) and integrated it more closely with its community safety capability. These links have been strengthened with the creation of neighbourhood policing teams (NPTs) and by a dedicated constable and PCSO post, to support the gathering of community intelligence.
- 7.3 The BCU boasts a large number of community contacts within the CRR database, who are consulted on issues such as stop and search, race and hate crime and wider community concerns. Some contacts have formed part of Gold Groups set up following critical incidents. It remains a concern that the BCU does not have a formal independent advisory group (IAG) but the Force has recognised the need for such a group on a forcewide basis and recruitment is currently underway.
- 7.4 The CRR department monitors the response to hate crime, stop, and stop & search data. A detective sergeant quality assures all hate crime investigations and compliance with National Standards. The BCU operates a Race Equality Plan under the Force's Race Equality Scheme, and both this and the BCU's performance in terms of hate crime investigation have previously received positive comment. Swindon has one of the lowest levels of reported hate crime and one of the highest detection rates within its MSBCU.

(\* Indicates strength or AFI identified in the Swindon self assessment and ratified during inspection)

#### **Strengths**

- Clear emphasis on partnership and equality issues by BCU commander.

- Strong performance within MSBCU in reducing and detecting hate crime.\*
- Race Equality Action Plan, linked to the BCU's Policing Plan.\*
- Audit regime in place to quality assure and dip sample stop search records.\*
- BCU held to account by DCC for stop search performance via quarterly performance meeting.\*
- CRR department very active within Swindon partnerships.\*
- Hate crime investigation overseen by CRR and nominated detective sergeant.\*
- Importance of community and race relations reinforced by new superintendent partnerships post.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Audit process needs to include examination of custody data in relation to stop search/VME prisoners.\*
- In absence of its own IAG the BCU needs to form links with newly created force IAG.\*
- Performance targets relating to the reduction of hate crime to be included within the LAA.\*

### Neighbourhood Policing and Problem Solving

- 7.5 The BCU aims for significant improvement in community engagement through the roll out of the neighbourhood policing teams programme (NPT) utilising the force NPT strategy. There are a total of 23 NPT areas, identified by local communities after consultation both with those communities and partners.
- 7.6 As a result of lessons learnt from the implementation of Pinehurst NPT pilot, a number of different consultation techniques were used to engage the community culminating in a SARA meeting to agree the top three priorities. These priorities are managed within a software product that acts as a dynamic problem profile. The inspection team had the benefit of a presentation on this and other approaches taken by NPT officers, which was further supported by a site visit to a NPT office. Some innovative ideas were displayed, such as the anti social behaviour incident database, but more importantly a real enthusiasm was evident from staff.
- 7.7 Sector inspectors attend the tactical tasking and co-ordination group (TTCG) and weekly intelligence meeting, and NPT officers work closely with other units within the BCU such as the crime targeting team (CTT). These close working relationships were observed by the inspection team when they attended a TTCG meeting. A persistent offender (PPO) was identified as causing problems and crime in a particular neighbourhood. Further intelligence was later produced at an intelligence meeting, and the offender was eventually apprehended and placed before the courts by a community beat manager (CBM) who forms the heart of any NPT. The CBMs regularly work alongside the crime targeting team (CTT) in drug enforcement operations to provide a community intelligence link. The BCU use the force model for NPT staffing, requiring a split of uniformed resources of 66% general policing (GPD) and 33% NPT. There is a policy in place to ensure that abstractions of CBMs are no more than 5% and 20% for community beat officers (CBOs).

- 7.8 The scoping work for the NPT project did provide community intelligence, which the BCU has developed, enabling early intervention in relation to problems within the Broad Green area.
- 7.9 Local media work is ongoing as NPTs are establishing and the main NPT launch is being progressed by Corporate Development/Marketing in conjunction with the project team.
- 7.10 The Force is on course to meet recruitment targets for PCSOs, allowing Swindon to meet its commitments for NPT rollout. Special Constables and PCSOs are being attached to NPTs with a primary responsibility for tackling ASB. On-going training for these roles will be covered by the ASB strategy.
- 7.11 Although principles have been agreed by the Force to provide clarity on which tasks will be assigned to NPT and GPD officers, this was not in place at the time of the inspection. The situation will have potential for further confusion with the newly created crime management unit (CMU) already making decisions on how crimes will be allocated. This work needs to be progressed and communicated to staff as a matter of urgency.

### **Strengths**

- Fifty community areas have been identified through consultation and agreement with local communities and partners. These have been clustered to form the 23 NPT areas.\*
- SARA training rolled out to all live NPTs – this includes training to partners and community representatives.\*
- Innovative use has been made of IT and leaflets to raise knowledge/awareness of CBMs.\*
- Partnership ethos of neighbourhood teams is firmly embedded in Local Area Agreement and project managed by multi agency team.\*
- Good use of CBMs key contacts, agreed with CBM and partners (SBC).\*
- The Community Safety Partnership is adopting the NIM business process with staff roles being amended and increased in number to support this.\*
- Intelligence from NPTs is fed into tactical and strategic assessments.\*
- The Force has developed a software product to capture priorities agreed by the Neighbourhood Tasking Groups documenting progress and actions.\* **The inspection team considered this potential best practice.**

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The BCU needs to swiftly translate the agreed principles on task and crime allocation to a policy which is known and understood by all officers.
- Further development of the performance information software is needed to provide data down to beat level and at community levels.\*

### Customer Service and Accessibility

- 7.12 Wiltshire Constabulary is undergoing radical changes in contact management, seeking substantial efficiencies through its enquiry offices and investing heavily in its call handling capability. The inspection team observed some issues with the front counter services at Swindon police station and it is commented on in more detail under contact management.
- 7.13 It is recognised on the BCU that neighbourhood teams play an important part in the public perception of accessibility. This is reflected in the development of multi agency Neighbourhood Partnership Teams forming a specific outcome within the LAA and being taken forward in conjunction with the local authority's work on neighbourhood management.
- 7.14 Recently the BCU has professionalised how it manages the media leading to positive changes in local media reporting. Evidence of this was to be seen in the reporting of positive stories around crack house closures, drug enforcement warrants and town centre policing cover. There is a media strategy in place and there is a 24/7 facility for press interaction and briefing through press officers. Out of hours cover for non-critical matters is undertaken by the duty inspectors.
- 7.15 Various methods are used to discover preferred methods of contacting the police including the 'Peoples Voice' survey locally and the force satisfaction surveys. The preferred method of contact regarding local policing issues was found to be leaflets, local newspapers and parish or community papers, and full use is made of these. This is reflected in the findings of the annual public satisfaction survey that showed ease of contact for the BCU to be 83.8%.

### **Strengths**

- High level and sustained level of customer satisfaction (83.3%).\*
- Substantial improvement in media relations resulting in consistently positive news coverage thereby enhancing community confidence.\*
- Local additional training provided to Swindon inspectors supported by local media outlets.\*
- Use of force web-site to report crime.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The FCC is currently implementing an improvement plan (see contact management) to reduce the use of the answering machine and improve customer satisfaction.\*

### Professional Standards

- 7.16 The importance of high professional standards is stressed within the BCU and is reflected within a leaflet for all staff outlining expectations. During locally run training sessions run in April 2006 staff from the Professional Standards Department provided an input. This training also covered unsatisfactory police



performance procedures to ensure an understanding and confidence amongst supervisors in using these mechanisms.

- 7.17 In 2005/6 the Division, accounted for 32% of force complaints compared with 25% and 39% in the other two divisions, against a background of 50% of all prisoners and just fewer than 50% of the crime workload for the Force.
- 7.18 Any member of staff subject to three complaints in a 12 month period will be highlighted to the BCU commander and appropriate action taken. Professional Standards provide a moderating role prior to any local misconduct sanctions being administered.

### **Strengths**

- Robust reporting system and monitoring of complaints.\*
- Follow up actions in relation to staff with three or more complaints in 12 months.\*
- Trend analysis.\*
- Force Professional Standards Department provides moderating to ensure consistency.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Professional Standards data needs integrating into the wider divisional performance management information.\*

## **Reducing Crime**

### Volume Crime Reduction

- 7.19 Wiltshire Constabulary has been seen historically as a low crime area and although Swindon is the busiest BCU, it has by default, also had relatively low crime numbers. More recently Swindon BCU has seen rises in crime and for the period April 2006 - March 2007 total crime increased by **4.91%**, vehicle crime by **12.17%**, violent crime by **14.45%** and robbery by **18.63%**. The sanction detection rate for vehicle crime has seen a rise to **14.95%**, but the detection rate for burglary dwelling has fallen from **22.52%** to only **10.54%**, with the overall sanction detection rate falling from **25.10%** to **20.02%**. Although robbery has increased the sanction detection rate has more than halved.
- 7.20 Swindon BCU has undoubtedly strengthened its partnership working and this is an area of joint activity that is essential to effectively reduce crime. The Community Safety partners have strengthened their strategic approach to crime reduction, recognising the impact volume crime has on local communities. Performance is monitored at executive level and a suite of tactical plans have been drawn up, which are overseen by the Community Safety Operations Board. Many of these are at an early stage and HMIC looks forward to observing the improvements over the coming months, but early signs are positive. The Partnership has introduced a post dedicated to co-ordinating volume crime reduction activity and the BCU is linking

its crime prevention capability to this role. The BCU points to an overall fall in crime between 2002/3 and 2005/6 of **9%**.

- 7.21 The BCU has a crime targeting team (CTT) primarily responsible for leading on priority crimes. The team consists of 16 uniform officers, one full time detective post and one detective post filled on rotation, plus one uniform and detective sergeant. Previously the team were the burglary squad but now deal with burglary dwelling, class A drug dealing, prolific offenders, vehicle crime and outstanding suspects as a result of DNA/forensic hits. It will also be assigned anything the SMT feel appropriate from the DMM.
- 7.22 All officers hold the CTT in high regard and the SMT clearly see it as a team that can tackle issues as they emerge, and be trusted to return results. The officers do not receive any specific training for the role and are expected to build up experience within the team, largely seen as omniscient rather than specialising in crime themes within the unit, as normally seen elsewhere. For a unit of that size it is light on trained detectives. It represents the only proactive capability on the BCU and if it continues to become responsible for other problem issues, the unit's expertise will diminish even further. This may go some way to explain why, with a stable rate of burglary dwellings, the sanction detection rate has halved.
- 7.23 The BCU has set up a crime management unit (CMU) that will allocate all crime directed to the BCU. Some crimes will be retained within the unit that would normally be allocated to the general patrol teams (GPD), and at the time of the inspection it was retaining 30 – 50% of such crimes. This is very positive but the unit does not maintain an overview of crimes allocated from the unit. Crimes are not scrutinised at the point of submission and there were examples given of crimes being filed undetected which were in fact not crimes at all. The inspection team were informed that, because of the Niche crime recording system, it would be difficult to carry out a crime audit. Furthermore the Niche system currently makes it impossible to identify repeat victims or establish how many crimes are outstanding with a named suspect, a basic house keeping function of a CMU. Although in its infancy the CMU appeared to be well managed and the BCU should be commended for introducing it in such a short time.
- 7.24 The BCU has two crime standards auditors who are responsible for overseeing ethical recording of crime and detections. There is considerable experience within the team, who are migrating to become part of the new CMU capability. With additional support they could perform a scrutinising role at the point of submission.

### **Strengths**

- Strengthened partner response to volume crime reduction at both executive and operational levels.\*
- Appointment of community safety crime reduction officer and development of a suite of crime reduction plans.\*
- Effective use of partnership funds to increase crime reduction capability. This is evidenced by increased posts specifically focused on crime reduction (surveillance officers) and equipment (satellite navigation tracking equipment and covert monitoring equipment).\*

- CTT aligned to control strategy and provides focus for priority crimes.\*
- Designated crime standards auditors.\*
- Creation of CMU.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The detective element of the CTT should be increased with priority crime leads within the unit (**see Recommendation 2**).
- The CMU should take on a scrutinising role for all crimes submitted as undetected (**see Recommendation 1**).
- The Force/BCU should urgently establish a way of enhancing Niche to enable the BCU to better manage its crime and identify crimes with a named suspect and repeat victims.
- The BCU needs to ensure there is full coverage and effective co-ordination between problem profiles, crime reduction plans and NPT problem solving plans.\*

### **Investigating Crime**

#### Managing Critical Incidents and Major Crime

- 7.25 In the management of critical incidents the use of the gold, silver, bronze command structure is standard practice on the BCU. A dedicated chief inspector is responsible for operations and critical incident management. The initial response is controlled by the force operations room inspector, supported by the Swindon duty inspector who acts as the local critical incident commander.
- 7.26 Although some critical incident training is provided by the Force, the inspection team spoke to a number of inspectors who had never received training for their role. Wiltshire Constabulary has put measures in place to rectify this but it is still a matter of concern. There were some examples of good practice in relation to critical Incident management, such as Operation Dakota, an attack on a white schoolboy on school premises by a group of Asian youths resulting in life threatening injuries. A gold group was used to good effect, ensuring a co-ordinated response at a time of raised community tension.
- 7.27 A force dedicated major investigation team (MIT) has been established. This much needed change will increase resilience and the capability of the Force. The BCU supports any major enquiry with additional resources as necessary.
- 7.28 The Force is currently in the process of setting up a Wiltshire IAG. The expectation is that once the Wiltshire group has been established, a further IAG would be created specifically for the Swindon area, which has different social and demographic issues. The HMIC supports this proposal.

### **Strengths**

- Dedicated chief inspector with critical incident manager responsibilities.\*
- Force Major Incident Team together with on-call specialist assistance available throughout the Force.\*

- Established practices and procedures in the use of community representatives and partners in Gold Groups.\*
- Impressive purpose-built MIR suite within new Swindon Police Station.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Although all inspectors have been allocated places on critical incident training it is a cause of concern to the HMIC that inspectors have been in post for a number of years without the appropriate training.
- The Force needs to continue to develop trigger plans (standard operating procedures).\*
- An audit process needs to be established to ensure that supervisors dip sample interviews.\*

### **Tackling Serious and Organised Criminality**

- 7.29 Swindon BCU accounts for 41% of the force crime and approximately 50% of the force serious crime. The Community Safety Partnership's strategic assessment has produced an agreed partnership control strategy. As a result the BCU established a crime targeting team (CTT) that target priority crimes, which is mainly made up of uniform officers and only has one permanent detective post. The intelligence unit has surveillance trained officers, including two police staff surveillance officer posts funded by the CSP. **The HMIC commends this as potential good practice.**
- 7.30 The BCU receives support from the force Level 2 TTCG and made 20 successful bids for resources between Jan – Oct 2006. Swindon BCU actively seeks to maintain good relations with neighbouring divisions and other forces, to enable more effective collaboration, and this has resulted in good intelligence flows and shared resourcing when necessary.
- 7.31 A CSP analyst post has been funded by partners with responsibility for the partnership strategic assessment and its compilation, and this enables police analysts to concentrate on tactical products. Both CSP analyst and performance officer have attended the strategic analyst course.

### **Strengths**

- The Crime Targeting Team provides a dedicated resource to target serious and priority crimes.\*
- Commitment to partnership working is strengthened by the DIP/PPO manager working within Swindon police station.\*
- Partnership commitment to delivering operational impact and outcomes through funding for staff and other initiatives (e.g. police staff surveillance operatives, satellite navigation tracking equipment).\*
- The availability of centrally-managed TSU equipment, together with local partnership funded covert equipment.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The CTT should be restricted to dealing with priority crimes, and have clear leads for each within the unit (**see Recommendation 2**).
- The SMT should review the detective establishment within the unit (**see Recommendation 2**).
- Analytical resilience within the intelligence unit remains of concern although work continues to resolve this.\*
- The BCU needs to further improve links with surrounding forces and agencies to ensure collaboration opportunities are being fully exploited.\*

### Volume Crime Investigation

- 7.32 Swindon BCU has historically been a strong performer in the area of crime investigation. During 2005/6 the BCU dealt with 41% of the county's crime and achieved its targets in relation to robbery detection at 28.88%, burglary dwelling detection at 22.27%, vehicle crime reduction reducing by 223 offences and achieved 36 offences brought to justice for PWIS drugs. The BCU's performance has recently declined as described above, and the SMT feel that to an extent this is a result of new processes introduced with an integrated records management system (Niche) and statutory charging. To counteract this decline, investment has been made in auditing Niche investigations to maximise detections, and collating daily statistics on critical areas to allow early intervention; the latter being considered best practice by HMIC.
- 7.33 The Force and BCU are establishing crime management units (CMUs) which will be supported by CRIB. Currently case action plans are prepared by case managers for detainees. Two evidence review officers (detective posts) carry out this function as part of the CMU and the intention is to have a third review officer as part of this team. The Force has revised FLOPSIE and uses ECLIPSE as the template for crime investigation, which are tools to ensure that minimum investigative standards are met. A number of staff have been trained in financial investigation, with two asset recovery officers based on the BCU. It is proposed they form part of the CMU to take an early view on POCA opportunities.
- 7.34 High satisfaction levels are evidenced with 97% of victims being satisfied with service received in burglary cases, and 87% of victims in cases of vehicle crime. In relation to NCRS and HO CR, the crime standards auditors who are two very experienced members of staff, check compliance with these standards and will continue to do so as part of the CMU. The last detections audit carried out by external auditors found the BCU compliance with Home Office counting rules to be 100%.
- 7.35 Vulnerable and intimidated witnesses are flagged through a file marking process and referred to a central witness care unit, who make referrals to victim support if necessary.

### **Strengths**

- The use of the FLOPSIE model, and now the ECLIPSE Model.\*
- The CSA department enforcing HO CR and NCRS standards.\*
- Case Management providing advice to investigators.\*

- The setting up of a Crime Management Unit to link with Central CRIB.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The BCU needs to swiftly translate the agreed principles on task and crime allocation to a policy which is known and understood by all officers.
- The SMT should further develop the crime management unit, supported by audit and scrutinising functions, to enable it to fully manage all crime on behalf of the BCU (**see Recommendation 1**).
- Continual focus required to reduce operational time spent on administrative burden, particularly as a result of Niche RMS.\*
- Improvement in allocation and management of initial crime and incident reports.\*

### Improving Forensic Performance

- 7.36 Crime scene investigation is centrally managed and locally deployed, providing professional line management in terms of skills and personal development, and a local focus through SMT.
- 7.37 All CSIs are nationally accredited and undergo refresher training and the CSI supervisor is a trained crime scene co-ordinator and crime scene manager. All front line officers receive scene skills training during initial training. The standard operating procedures for volume crime investigation places requirement upon officers and staff in relation to the preservation and use of forensic evidence.
- 7.38 Crime scene investigators carry out crime scene briefings for officers, covering new developments in forensic management. Crime scene investigators attempt to attend all dwelling burglaries, all distraction burglaries, and all commercial robberies. The SMT were of the view that close to 100% of burglary dwellings are attended but do not routinely monitor this type of data. With some difficulty, the inspection team obtained this information and last year 91% of burglary dwellings were attended. This is a good attendance rate but clearly not 100%. The BCU should seek to become an informed customer of central services and this type of information should be routinely available under a performance regime (**see Recommendation 3**). Staff from CSI brief daily with CTT to share intelligence and advise on forensic opportunities.
- 7.39 The DNA conversion rate has increased to 170% between April & Sept 2006, and is above national standards.
- 7.40 The BCU utilises Livescan within custody and the SICAR system for shoe mark intelligence, and makes use of the Socrates forensic management software enabling tracking of progress of forensic submissions.

### **Strengths**

- Close link between CSI and CTT.\*
- DNA conversion rate of 170%.\*
- Contact made with all vehicle crime victims to explore forensic opportunities.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- CSI attendance rates should be routinely available to the BCU.

#### **Criminal Justice Processes**

- 7.41 The Force centralised criminal justice in February 2007, but the staff remained geographically sited on BCUs. The rationale for the change was to focus on improving performance under ‘Narrowing the Justice Gap’. The responsibility for case management remains on the BCU, now under the DCI, as it was inextricably linked with operational performance. Case management is designed to assist investigators in carrying out quality investigations, and the staff act as Gatekeepers available for advice to investigators between 0700 & 2300 hours each day. Custody and detective sergeants are also accredited Gatekeepers.
- 7.42 Criminal justice investigators take responsibility for all full file upgrades post-charge, and a proportion of volume crime interviews, with the target of achieving 40% of all interviews. Case managers attend daily briefings with uniformed staff, and also DMM.
- 7.43 With implementation of the CMU, evidence review officers will monitor case action plans and provide advice at an early stage of the detention process, with the intention of maximising investigative opportunities and subsequent detections.
- 7.44 The custody suite at Swindon is managed by chief inspector operations, with close links with the detective inspector responsible for CMU implementation. There are two custody officers per shift plus civilian detention officers. In times of high demand and/or abstractions there is a panel of variable hours detention officers who can be called out. All custody officers are trained to a national standard, with other sergeants trained and who can provide support if necessary. Until recently the BCU had thirteen acting sergeants, and this made it difficult to obtain sufficient trained sergeants to cover for custody, but this situation has now eased.
- 7.45 Phase 3 of Niche RMS implementation, including Case & Custody, went live at Swindon in March 2007. Through this mechanism the Force and BCU will link to national CJIT systems with CPS and Court Service. The initial effect was a drop in prisoner throughput of 27%, caused primarily by delays in booking in detainees. It would appear that totals for arrested persons brought to custody have dropped by 8% over the year, which cannot be totally attributed to Niche. The BCU should attempt to discover why this occurred, as it directly impacts upon performance.
- 7.46 In custody there is Livescan, VIPER and footwear capture technology. There is a custody visitor scheme and the BCU is running a trial of the self-introduction of visitors to see if this increases take-up by detainees.

### **Strengths**

- Good working relationship with CPS and effective escalation process.\*
- The tasking of CJIs through briefings with uniform officers and DMM.\*
- The centralised Witness Care Unit picks up issues in relation to special measures for intimidated and vulnerable victims and witnesses.\*
- The use of civilian detention officers and variable hours DOs.\*

- Implementation of linked electronic Case/Custody system as part of integrated records management system.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- To offset the deskilling of shift officers, the BCU should consider a system of attachments to the case management unit.
- The BCU should attempt to discover why the drop in the number of prisoners occurred, and to continue to monitor the effects of the Niche custody system.
- Work required to ensure opportunities to gather intelligence are maximised by criminal justice investigators whilst dealing with interviews and detention processes.\*
- Structured feedback programme required to ensure timely quality feedback between case management and investigators.\*

### **Promoting Safety**

#### Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

- 7.47 Anti-social behaviour blights local communities and damages community cohesion. It is important that this is recognised by the police and that they respond effectively, using a menu of options of which visibility is key.
- 7.48 In Swindon partnership working has been the focus of tackling and reducing anti-social behaviour, and there is an effective ASB unit, which has a national profile due to a number of areas of best practice being identified. Links exist between the ASB unit and NPT, ensuring an effective operational response to this problem. The BCU works with partnership-funded ASB officers who are co-located within the police station. The ASB unit has a reporting hotline ensuring appropriate information is made available to the police.
- 7.49 Effectively dealing with anti-social behaviour forms part of the control strategy and is a standing agenda item on both DMM and TTCG, enabling anti-social behaviour to be managed through the NIM process, giving it a high profile. Together with partners, the BCU has been responsible for creating 27 anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs), 74 anti-social behaviour contracts (ABCs), closing three crack-houses and creating 21 dispersal orders. The BCU has also endeavoured to reduce anti-social behaviour by closure of a licensed premise, relocation of a taxi rank, and introduction of a night bus; all examples of a positive or innovative approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour. Problem profiles are created and high visibility patrols targeted through daily briefings. The BCU has introduced other innovative ideas such as the anti-social incident data base (see Neighbourhood Policing).

### **Strengths**

- Anti-social incident database.
- Full range of ASB tools and techniques used – good practice in Swindon recognised nationally.\*
- ASB forms part of the LAA, to ensure partner commitment.\*



- ASB highlighted as a priority within the strategic assessment and control strategy.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Action is needed to ensure national developments and requirements of the NRPP are communicated and understood by all staff.\*
- The BCU recognise the need to incorporate the monitoring and management of Special Constabulary duties, training and abstractions as part of the wider NPT model.\*

### **Protecting Vulnerable People**

- 7.50 Wiltshire Police are undergoing a major change programme aimed at strengthening its response and improving quality of service in the area of vulnerability. Responsibilities for Public Protection have now been centralised under a new dedicated superintendent post within HQ Crime. This will provide a focus under a specific head of profession for the areas of child protection, domestic violence, and public protection. Each Division has a dedicated detective inspector, line managed by HQ Crime, and with local responsibility for Public Protection. Local accountability is maintained through links between the DI role and Divisional Crime Manager (DCI).
- 7.51 Located on the Gablecross police station site is a separate purpose-built building housing CPU, DVU, SARC, Public Protection Officers and Vulnerable Adult Officers.
- 7.52 The BCU commander represents the BCU on the Children's Trust Management Board, with superintendent partnerships sitting on the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. There are other groups within the partnership that feed the strategic groups and the BCU has senior representation on all of these. The partnership will be undertaking a twenty-four hour initiative to collect data in relation to domestic violence incidents reported to all agencies, in order to obtain an updated picture of the number and types of incidents.
- 7.53 Electronic systems for referrals/data capture and retrieval have recently been introduced by the Force. These systems are available to all staff 24/7 as is the Child Protection Register. Many staff complained about the bureaucratic nature of the lengthy document that must be completed before an officer goes off duty.
- 7.54 The DVU carries out a quality assurance role and advises officers in relation to investigations. The unit is expected to make contact with victims and undertake investigations in high risk and repeat victim cases. Staff interviewed stated that they lack capacity to investigate many cases themselves and are almost entirely victim focussed. There is a need for greater capacity to take on more investigative work. Domestic violence incidents are flagged by control room logs and the submission of an electronic domestic violence report to the unit. Staff undergo workplace training and training in the eight Centrex modules will commence in April 2007. Joint training is already taking place with CPS around Module 1. MARACs are being considered to improve repeat victimisation rates. Despite

additional investment, resources continue to remain an issue, which is recognised and is being considered as part of the new PP structures.

- 7.55 The Force has adopted the NCPE policy in relation to missing persons. Initial risk assessments are carried out by the HQ control room inspector and response escalated to the appropriate level. All missing person enquiries are reviewed at DMM. A child protection referral is raised to engage Social Services on the third and subsequent report of a child going missing.

### **Strengths**

- Electronic risk assessments for DV and CPU making critical information available to all relevant staff.\*
- CPU and DV intelligence and case histories electronically available to staff to assist decision making.\*
- Comprehensive multi-agency working practices available to all staff via the intranet.\*
- The use of DMM to manage high priority missing persons and DV cases.\*
- Standardised risk assessment processes for missing persons consistently applied by FORI.\*
- Strong partnership working at practitioner and senior level.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Review electronic risk assessments for DV, to see if they can be simplified.
- More effective gathering and production of management information in this area is needed (e.g. the intervention arrest rates were not easily accessible).
- Improvements are needed in the response to repeat victims (currently 40%) and high-risk cases.\*
- Improved marketing required to increase awareness of extent of CP work, including all child abuse.\*
- It is acknowledged that updated disclosure guidance is required in relation to vulnerability-related investigations.\*
- The NCPE policy in relation to missing persons requires further communication throughout the Force.\*
- Robust procedures exist in relation to initial risk assessment of missing persons but follow up risk assessment processes could be improved.\*
- Action is required to record the impact on children of domestic violence within prosecution files.\*

### **Providing Assistance**

#### Contact Management

- 7.56 Wiltshire Constabulary views contact management as a critical development area and have a major improvement project underway, as part of Operation Optimus. Significant investment is being made in the Force's call handling capability, recognising that the majority of contact with the public takes place via the telephone. This development work is intended to improve the tasking of officers

resulting in a timely and effective investigation, in line with the Victims Code of Practice and Quality of Service Commitment.

- 7.57 To assist with investment in call-handling the number of front counters open to the public have been reduced across the Force and there are now only three sites open from 7am until 9pm. At Swindon BCU front counter enquiries from the public are handled by enquiry staff managed within the BCU. The front counter service at Swindon is mainly provided at the police station at Gablecross. This is out of town, on a ring road and with minimal public parking. There is a limited facility at the town centre police point.
- 7.58 The inspection team witnessed a number of delays at the front counter and therefore carried out a limited survey, and interviewed front counter staff. Staff were feeling very unsettled as many faced possible redundancy. The layout of the front counter, although modern was rather poor. In the evenings queues of frustrated members of the public were observed on more than one occasion. Observations revealed that twenty minutes is not an uncommon waiting period for members of the public.
- 7.59 The Force should acknowledge these observations, and in line with its review of contact management, conduct further analysis with a view to improving the service to the public in this important area of business.

### **Strengths**

- The Force's most recent public consultation demonstrates that 85.6% of the public are satisfied with ease of contact.\*
- Appointment of professional Head of Contact Management which is already realising significant performance benefits.\*
- Significant investment through increased resourcing to handle increased demand and improve on quality of service.\*
- Implementation of Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) software to enable call distribution and management information.\*
- There is evidence that within the NPT areas there has been a noticeable improvement in police officer and CSOs accessibility.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Staffing and layout of the front counter services at Swindon BCU should be reviewed (see **Recommendation 4**).
- Need to build on the satisfaction survey, including customer call back dip-sampling.\*

### Providing Specialist Operational Support

- 7.60 The BCU's SMT are actively engaged in the force response to firearms operations with the BCU commander as part of the gold cadre and chief inspectors forming part of the force silver cadre. All are trained and accredited to national standards. Firearms operations are continuously reviewed and monitored to ensure best practice in line with ACPO manual and Home Office codes of practice.

- 7.61 A number of joint arrangements or multi-agency plans exist through the Local Resilience Forum and its sub-groups. The Wiltshire Local Resilience Forum consists of Wiltshire Constabulary, Wiltshire Fire & Rescue, Wiltshire County Council, Wiltshire & Swindon Primary Care Trusts, Swindon Borough Council, Wiltshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust, Health Protection Agency, Environment Agency, 43 (Wessex) Brigade and Government Office of the South West.

#### **Strengths**

- De-briefing and feedback following operations are conducted in a timely manner and used as developmental events by identifying learning points.\*
- All firearms operations' debriefs and authorities are reviewed by head of HQ Ops.\*
- Mandatory training is run twice a year for silver and gold commanders.\*

#### **Areas for Improvement**

- A future training need has currently been identified: Multi agency training for firearms incidents, particularly with Fire and Ambulance.\*

#### Strategic Roads Policing

- 7.62 Strategic roads policing is undertaken by the force Roads Policing Unit (RPU) following the centralisation of this function in 2006. Whilst a central function, Gablecross remains the reporting station for officers covering the north of the Force. The RPU has a draft strategic plan with clear force and BCU objectives, including Level 1 and 2 and counter-terrorism. Force TCG is the main avenue for tasking RPU as a force resource. The Safety Camera Partnership deals with speed enforcement at county partnership level.

#### **Strengths**

- Officers posted to Gablecross remain closely integrated within the GPD teams who work the same shift arrangement.\*
- The central force team builds resilience in response to serious collisions and deterring criminal use of the road network.\*
- Strong partnership link between safety camera and other partnership groups.\*
- Wiltshire Police are ranked 4th out of only 13 forces on target to meet the 2010 casualty reduction target.\*

#### **Areas for Improvement**

- RPU representative should regularly attend TTCG.
- NIM processes are still under development for RPU and include employing a briefing officer, intelligence officer and analyst posts.\*

## Resource Use

### Human Resource (HR) Management

- 7.63 The Director of Human Resources at chief-officer level is responsible for the force HR Strategy. The central HR function provides the strategic framework, policy development and specialist HR support. There is a human resources officer (HRO) on the BCU, who is centrally managed but supports the BCU and is responsible for leading on the BCU's HR plan. The HRO is a member of the BCU SMT, providing local links and a specific focus on BCU requirements. Staff management is devolved to line managing staff and officers.
- 7.64 The daily management team (DMT) meeting, as witnessed by the inspection team, makes a point of recognising good work and highlights welfare issues. Processes exist in relation to sickness management, PDR performance, recognition of good work, and are all led by SMT.
- 7.65 The HRO has regular meetings with staff association representatives, with both Police Federation and Unison being members of the resource management group (RMG) and the BCU management team.
- 7.66 The Swindon BCU did have thirteen acting sergeants until recently but that high figure has recently been reduced. It was having a negative effect upon custody cover and generally the level of trained supervisors available to assist junior officers.
- 7.67 The Force has adopted an IT based personal and development review process (PDR) and the documentation examined had a sensible and easy to follow format. It was amongst the best layouts examined by the inspection team, and attempted to set out objectives using the SMART principles.
- 7.68 The emphasis on the BCU has been the completion rates for PDRs rather than the quality, which is understandable when attempting to obtain compliance with a new system. The following comments sum up the audit sample but it should be said that a few individual PDRs were well completed, but the completion by supervisors was generally poor. No real use was made of the SMART principles in setting personal objectives, which ranged from one to eight in number. There was no linkage between personal objectives and individual performance – very few actually mentioned individual performance in real terms – and nor were they linked to the BCU plan. Some staff with very high Bradford scores for absence had the fact ignored or merely skirted over by their supervisor, although the document emphasised the importance of the issue as part of a standard introduction.
- 7.69 PDRs should be linked to the BCU plan with personal performance objectives, reflecting team and unit performance. This is recognised by the SMT to a limited degree but should be treated with greater urgency if it wishes to establish a true performance culture.
- 7.70 General patrol officers (GPD) felt very much under pressure at Swindon, mainly as a result of changes such as the setting up of neighbourhood policing teams and the

creation of the CMU, and other significant changes as alluded to above. Some of these changes have resulted in posts being created at the expense of the reactive shifts. Many officers complained that they felt that staffing levels were critically short during the busy weekend period in the town centre, when officers from these new units were not available. This may merely be a perception but a review of actual staffing levels did reveal that GPD numbers did appear to be below the BCU's own preferred staffing levels at the weekend. It was not clear why some staff were abstracted or allowed time off. This may be an issue of management by inspectors and supervisors.

- 7.71 The BCU may wish to consider innovative ways to provide additional cover and demonstrate support for GPD officers, such as Operation Debus at Milton Keynes, where officers who are normally office based are required to carry out patrol duties at the weekend period, but not at a frequency which impacts their core function.

### **Strengths**

- New PDR format is well laid out and easy to follow.
- The BCU receives excellent support from the HRO.
- Strong consistency between BCU and central HR by having a structure of devolved management and a divisional HRO.\*
- Inclusion of the divisional HRO within the SMT.\*
- Strong specialist central HR support.\*
- Performance data is available to the BCU. SMT regularly use PI's when addressing performance management, such as sickness absence and PDR completion rates.\*
- Good use of OH services within the BCU.\*
- The BCU has developed an HR management plan, pulling together all local HR-related initiatives in support of the force strategy.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The BCU must build upon the new PDR system and introduce qualitative checks.
- PDRs should be linked to the BCU plan with personal performance objectives, reflecting team and unit performance (**see Recommendation 3**).
- The BCU should consider ways of increasing police presence during busy periods and review reasons for abstractions (**see Recommendation 5**).
- The BCU recognise further work is required in relation to succession planning, workforce planning and use of management information to assist in resourcing.\*
- Action plans are required as a result of the People Survey, and are being developed to progress the improvement areas identified.\*
- Sickness absence information is required at team and departmental level to enable full incorporation into performance management system framework.\*
- Further marketing of the people survey results and action taken by the Force and BCU as a result.\*

### Training, Development and Organisational Learning

- 7.72 The head of the centralised Learning and Development department has responsibility for training standards, tasking, costing, planning and service delivery. The head of L&D has a number of staff and officers supporting posts that manage teams and mechanisms to provide quality assurance in specialist areas. Probationer development units (PDU) based on the BCU provide localised training and support. Predominately training interventions are those that are mandatory for operational demands.
- 7.73 There was a lack of training on the BCU, with no regular training days available outside mandatory training and there was no opportunity to influence the training delivered. It was almost impossible for the BCU to deliver its own training packages to deal with local issues, such as file quality.
- 7.74 This lack of training appeared to be across the board and instead there was an emphasis on virtual training by e-mail. Custody sergeants had not received any refresher training for years but were expected to keep up to date with changes in the law via e-mail. There was no way for the organisation to be aware if staff had accessed these updates or not. Staff constantly complained of the lack of access to training. The PDR system does not currently lend itself to being a vehicle for establishing training needs.
- 7.75 Inspectors who were expected to command and deal with critical incidents had not been trained, as no training was provided to newly promoted inspectors until recently. A similar situation appeared to be the case with sergeants. In September 2005 a management, leadership and development programme MLDP was established for newly promoted inspectors, linked to an external training provider. Sergeants will have access to the equivalent for their role (CDLP). Inspectors who have already been in post for some time will be expected to complete the CDLP. It is the Force's view that these courses are now mandatory but existing inspectors spoken to had a contrary view, as much of the course work has to be completed in the officers' own time.

### **Strengths**

- A BCU training officer provides good links to the central L&D function.\*
- A new PDU has been embedded well within the BCU and the benefits of this are recognised within the BCU.\*
- There is good communication between BCU and L&D, including incorporating L&D staff into operations where appropriate.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Paucity of training provision needs to be urgently reviewed.
- PDR system to be developed to provide a link to training needs.
- BCU to carryout training needs analysis.
- The Force has identified a training requirement for people management skills at a middle-management level – this was abundantly clear on the BCU.\*

- Review the reason for non-participation of divisional staff in the Learning Skills Council, NVQs that have been offered to targeted groups of staff (Customer Service NVQ to enquiry office for example).\*
- Increase the provision of training for those staff wanting career progression; in addition ensure the existing gap between staff and officer perceptions in this area is not expanded.\*

#### Race and Diversity – Internal Organisation

7.76 A central Equality and Diversity team provides support to the Force in an attempt to maintain a diverse workforce that is representative of local communities. There is commitment from SMT through the BCU commander, who is also force champion for race issues in support of the independent Race Equality Action Group. All aspects of a diverse workforce, explicitly addressing race, gender, disability, age, religion or belief and sexual orientation appear engaged and supported through a variety of mechanisms. Staff can access policy information openly and a dedicated centrally led board reviews these. The inspection team formed the view that internally equality and diversity issues on the BCU were well managed and received a high priority. This was reflected in the leadership audit.

#### **Strengths**

- The local Employers' Forum for Disability has twice given Swindon BCU Best Practice Achievement Awards for work in the field of disabilities.\*
- Strong community links ensure the BCU can champion and be part of schemes such as the Swindon Employers Forum on Disability; providing work experience for at least two disabled people each year.\*
- A visible presence by the central support team ensures staff sees them as a pool of approachable expertise.\*

#### **Areas for Improvement**

- It is recognised that improved management information is required to assist managers, broken down to local level.\*

#### Managing Financial and Physical Resources

- 7.77 The BCU commander is budget-holder for the devolved BCU budget, with the day-to-day management being undertaken by the business manager. The business manager is supported by a force-wide computerised financial management system.
- 7.78 Swindon have historically created a large overspend, generally caused by overtime spends on major incidents. Action has been taken by managers to ensure a system is in place to deal with this, to reduce spends to an absolute minimum. The BCU is still projected to be overspent by end of year 06/07. The creation of MITs will assist with reducing casual overtime spends on major investigations. Reporting and monitoring is conducted via a monthly management report produced by the central Finance Department.
- 7.79 The overtime budget is devolved to inspector/head of department level to reinforce localised accountability and responsibility. The SMT resource management group



(RMG) involves staff association representatives and reviews issues affecting resourcing, including sickness management.

### **Strengths**

- The alignment of responsibilities (both financial and physical resource) has had positive impact on local overtime spends, with improved intrusive management in routine and MIR/Ops spends reducing.\*
- Strong partnership and community links has resulted in income generation.\*
- Exception reporting is used regularly, with larger financial impact activity having a dedicated financial support from as early on as possible, with all levels of the management team being updated regularly on the financial position.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The BCU needs to stay within budget.
- The monthly budget statements from the central finance team could have more detail which would be of more value when reviewing and monitoring divisional finances. \*

### Information & Communication Technology Management

7.80 The ICT strategy is centrally driven but has strong two-way links to BCUs and the Force, through a number of established forums. Project management has a rigorous and consistent format through PRINCE2 methodologies. HQ Reform & Development determines future development priorities and appropriate actions.

### **Strengths**

- A current and annually reviewed ICT strategy incorporates the main core components of ICT maintenance/ replacement/ procurement, user support and systems development.\*
- Reliable and robust data back up routines that will help to ensure a continuity of supply of accessible business information.\*
- BCU staff are involved as user communities in development projects or work areas.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The BCU needs to work with the Force to ensure there is no duplication between stop/search quality checks carried out on the BCU and the auditing process carried out centrally.\*
- All new staff receive hard copies of security policies and knowledge is tested through the induction process. However, refresher training is not currently provided and it is recognised this requires addressing.\*

### National Intelligence Model (NIM)

7.81 The superintendent operations is the operational lead for NIM, with chief inspector divisional development owning the process. The strategic assessment is produced in October to link with the planning cycle. The latest strategic assessment was considered by the Community Safety Partnership Executive, who agreed the control strategy and who have now commissioned the next strategic assessment –

the first at partnership level. The control strategy is incorporated into the BCU plan with any strategic actions required to address it allocated to owners.

- 7.82 Community Safety has employed an analyst who will take the lead on strategic products for the CSP, including the strategic assessment. This will enable other agencies' analysts to concentrate on tactical products making targeting and problem solving more effective. The analyst is supported by a newly formed Data Officers Group, which is comprised of practitioners in data collection and analysis from CSP partner agencies. This group collates the data agencies hold and aims to set up a central data warehouse to hold information/intelligence from all agencies, which will increase the data available when analysing problems.
- 7.83 Officers are briefed in dedicated briefing rooms and a member of the intelligence unit provides an intelligence briefing using a template that follows the control strategy. The briefing observed by the inspection team was of a good standard.
- 7.84 The BCU holds a daily management meeting (DMM), fortnightly TTCG, weekly intelligence and crime series meeting, which is good practice.

### **Strengths**

- Clear SMT ownership of the NIM Process.\*
- Involvement of partners in the NIM process.\*
- Partnership NIM development and funding for posts (analyst and two surveillance operatives).\*
- Partnership funding of covert equipment.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The reviews of operations are informal with de-briefings taking place which could be improved by greater results analysis within the DIU.\*
- DS Intelligence has 16 staff which is too many to supervise effectively.\*
- FIOs are yet to attend training.\*

### **Leadership and Direction**

#### Leadership

- 7.85 The SMT has emphasised the importance of visibility, getting to know staff, recognising and rewarding good work, as well as reducing sickness absence. This was evidenced in the notes of the DMT and fortnightly resource management group (RMG) and by observation. The inspection team observed some good processes to facilitate these objectives but several focus groups criticised the lack of visibility by SMT. In addition few staff were aware of the recent commendation ceremony and it appeared that the messages to staff, that the SMT wanted to communicate, about being accessible and alive to their concerns were not getting through. Precisely why this occurred was not apparent but it appeared to the inspection team that there was a blockage at inspector level.

- 7.86 The SMT has developed a planning method, where the BCU plan is recorded electronically, driving the agenda for DMT meetings, and is regularly updated. Other BCUs and departments have adopted this approach.
- 7.87 There have been significant changes on the BCU recently and this momentum is gathering pace, with the centralisation of services to protect vulnerable people, introduction of NPTs and the creation of the CMU. The SMT rightly deserves credit for overseeing these changes, some of which they have introduced ahead of schedule. Whilst it was accepted by the SMT that performance might drop as a result, they believe the effects have been minimal.
- 7.88 The staff representatives feel that the increase in sickness is partially due to the significant changes that are taking place and unsettling staff, some of whom feel that they have not been kept informed, as indicated by interviews with front counter staff.

### **Strengths**

- Clear vision, values and strategic direction within the SMT.\*
- Investment in staff recognition and support.\*
- After two years of considerable work the SMT has introduced a variable shift pattern. This has achieved a workable and effective system which balances management requirements and staff needs, and has been held up as good practice by the BCU for other forces.\*
- Investment in change management and implementation, minimising short-term negative impacts while business benefits are being realised.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The SMT need to explore other ways of communicating with staff in general, and the organisational changes in particular, supported by knowledge sampling.
- Improve management information from exit interviews supporting the learning culture and assisting future retention of staff.\*
- Team meetings and communication structures need to be further developed to include staff effectively and efficiently in change processes.\*

### **Performance Management and Continuous Improvement**

- 7.89 The force performance management framework ensures BCU commanders are held to account through monthly Strategic Performance Group meetings, chaired by an ACC and attended by chief officers. In addition, the ACC holds quarterly performance meetings with individual commanders. The Force is currently instigating a new performance regime requiring BCU commanders to be accountable through the Service Delivery Group for performance.
- 7.90 BCU performance is monitored by the Performance Review Department, with a recently introduced performance framework. This information includes provision of a monthly risk report by performance review and performance leads being held to account by their SMT lead. The focus is on the control strategy areas of business.

- 7.91 A monthly SMT performance meeting is chaired by the BCU commander examining key crime performance, and action plans are developed where necessary with SMT leads for each action. The SMT leads are held accountable for their delivery of these actions and for performance in areas which are under their control. The BCU monitors sickness and PDR completion at the RMG every two weeks.
- 7.92 The inspection team found that officers do not generally feel that they are held to account for performance, although the CTT and detectives were a little clearer on what was expected of them. These officers have ‘team days’ that facilitate this and the BCU should ensure this becomes more widespread. There was a general confusion on who was responsible for performance. For example sector inspectors felt that the CTT were responsible for burglary dwellings on their areas, which was not the view of chief inspectors. Ultimately, the BCU commander is responsible for performance but it is beneficial to have a ‘day-to-day’ owner, and at Swindon BCU this should rest with superintendent operations.
- 7.93 The Force has just introduced a new IT system to deliver performance information, and this shows great promise (PB views). There are some key members of staff trying hard to deliver the necessary mechanisms, who have unbounded enthusiasm. What currently exists in terms of performance management is embryonic, and individual or team targets do not exist. The inspection team formed the view that at the moment there is not a performance regime on the BCU, but what exists is the enthusiasm to create one.
- 7.94 The SMT summarised the current position in its own self-assessment as follows; “Further development work is required, embedding a performance regime in at team and team leader (inspector) level and encompassing individual performance measures which actively contribute to overall BCU performance.”
- 7.95 The HMI supports this view and acknowledges the steps taken to date to progress this work. The need, however, is urgent and the BCU must not allow the chance to introduce a dynamic performance regime to be overtaken by other organisational changes. The SMT must grasp the moment by setting in place a plan for full implementation of all the necessary strands at the earliest opportunity (see **Recommendation 3**).

### **Strengths**

- Performance information is well collated and displayed to staff.\*
- New ICT systems being developed to allow comparative data to be utilised.\*
- Positive performance is linked to reward mechanisms.\*

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Detailed plan to implement a full performance regime holding individuals and teams to account should be instigated immediately.
- Superintendent operations should own performance on behalf of the BCU commander on a day-to-day basis.
- There is a need to continue and improve the use of People Manager at all levels within the BCU.\*

## HMIC Going Local 3 – BCU Inspection

### Appendix A – GL3 Notional Contract

#### Purpose

This document follows an HMIC inspection of Swindon BCU in Wiltshire Constabulary, which was conducted in April 2007 and sets out the action required by the BCU together with the improvement outcomes required. It is between the HMI, the BCU Commander and his/her ACPO line manager.

#### Action Required

BCU inspection reports published by the HMIC contain both recommendations and areas for improvement. Save for exceptional circumstances rendering the implementation of recommendations impossible or inappropriate, the implementation of recommendations is a given. Areas for improvement are highlighted to assist the BCU and are intended to allow the BCU discretion and flexibility on how it responds.

For Swindon BCU, the HMIC requires that the following recommendations be implemented.

1. The SMT should further develop the crime management unit, supported by audit and scrutinising functions, to enable it to fully manage all crime on behalf of the BCU.
2. The CTT should be restricted to dealing with priority crimes, and have clear leads for each within the unit. The SMT should review the detective establishment within the unit.
3. Swindon BCU must develop a performance regime that should contain the following elements:-
  - Establish clarity of ownership and responsibility for performance.
  - Develop suitable performance measures for all teams/individuals. These should not be confined to merely detections but encompass a 'balanced score card' of performance measures (e.g. intelligence submissions sickness/absence rates).
  - Develop a series of dual flow performance management meetings that are linked, down to inspector or equivalent level, enabling individuals to be held to account for delivery on performance.
  - Continue to develop PB views performance software; making clear to managers its potential by ensuring it provides simple, highly visible and regular information on current performance against priority targets.
  - Maintain the emphasis on rewarding good work and the positive management interventions that currently occur, but ensure current processes are universally understood and used.
  - PDRs have SMART objectives linked specifically to BCU priorities (suggest no more than three plus a development objective).
  - Establishing an auditing regime to ensure compliance with recently introduced SOPs, investigation models, policies and procedures.
  - Seek best practice on performance management from BCUs in the MSBCU group.
  - Implementation plan for the above to be developed with clear timescales, which result in full adoption within six months.

4. In the light of closures of front counter services elsewhere in the County, the current force project on contact management should further review front counter services. It is suggested that this should include:-
  - Ensuring resources and opening times are aligned to demand profiles.
  - Consideration of whether administration and ancillary functions, which frequently call staff away from dealing with the public, could be dealt with elsewhere (e.g. dealing with post, taking miscellaneous telephone calls, etc.)
  - Review of the front counter environment and layout and its impact on customer service (staff have to enter the visible area of the front counter to use the photocopying machine).
  - Consideration to greater use of volunteers.
5. The BCU should consider ways of increasing police presence during busy periods, such as Operation Debus at Milton Keynes, and review abstractions. The use of the CTT for this function should be avoided.

### ***Improvement Outcomes***

The implementation of recommendations and areas for improvement should ultimately lead to improvement in BCU performance. It is therefore essential that this notional contract include expectations as to future performance that are firmly linked to force and BCU priorities.

It is acknowledged that there will be occasions when circumstances change beyond the control of either the Force or the BCU Commander whereby the implementation of certain recommendations or improvement outcomes is rendered unrealistic and void. Account will therefore be taken of these factors when the HMIC revisit is conducted within the timescale described herein.

### **BCU Revisit and Review**

Swindon BCU will be revisited in six months to determine whether this notional contract has been fully discharged. The HMIC will make an overall assessment that will fall within one of the following four options:

- 1) Fully discharged;
- 2) Partially discharged with further revisit scheduled;
- 3) Fully or partially discharged with aspects voided;
- 4) Not discharged with PSU referral.

## Appendix B

### Leadership Audit – Staff Survey results

#### Key to Scores:

5 = This is an integral part of our culture and operation and can be regarded as best practice

4 = Yes this is recognised as the way we do business, and we achieve real benefits

3 = Yes this usually happens but it could be improved

2 = This happens occasionally but there is no consistency

1 = No - this doesn't happen

0 = Don't Know

The BCU has an appropriate structure which is aligned to the Force Strategy		0 scores	1 scores	2 scores	3 scores	4 scores	5 scores
Q01	My role is clearly defined and contributes to the BCU and Force Strategy	5.63%	4.23%	9.86%	38.03%	21.13%	21.13%
Q02	I am set objectives which are clearly relative to my role and experience	1.41%	8.45%	18.31%	29.58%	28.17%	14.08%
Q03	Lines of accountability and responsibility within the BCU are clearly defined	5.63%	2.82%	22.54%	32.39%	30.99%	5.63%
Q04	Resources are effectively managed within the BCU including specific issues of demand and deployment	8.45%	22.54%	28.17%	26.76%	11.27%	2.82%
Q05	Throughout the BCU teams are balanced in terms of skills, experience and diversity	12.68%	21.13%	26.76%	23.94%	11.27%	4.23%
Q06	The health and safety procedures on the BCU are effective and make me feel safe in my workplace	5.63%	7.04%	11.27%	22.54%	39.44%	14.08%
The BCU has a performance culture with integrity							
Q07	My manager demonstrates an interest in my performance and development	0.00%	14.08%	15.49%	18.31%	26.76%	25.35%
Q08	I receive the development I need to perform my role	0.00%	21.13%	22.54%	22.54%	28.17%	5.63%
Q09	Within the BCU, good performance is recognised and rewarded	4.23%	21.13%	21.13%	25.35%	22.54%	5.63%
Q10	Innovation is promoted and supported on the BCU	9.86%	12.68%	29.58%	29.58%	14.08%	4.23%
Q11	On the BCU there is effective use of the National Intelligence Model - resources/tasking/coordination	15.49%	8.45%	14.08%	26.76%	25.35%	9.86%
Q12	BCU managers ensure that maintaining our integrity is more important than achieving good performance	21.13%	14.08%	15.49%	19.72%	22.54%	7.04%
Q13	The BCU delivers an effective service to the community	5.63%	9.86%	28.17%	32.39%	19.72%	4.23%
Diversity							
Q14	Diversity is embedded within the BCU, specifically in terms of personal values and all areas of business including selection and appointment of staff	18.31%	4.23%	8.45%	21.13%	35.21%	12.68%
Q15	Fairness at work procedures (e.g.: grievance or appeals) can be confidently used by staff on the BCU without fear of recriminations from managers	19.72%	8.45%	15.49%	15.49%	29.58%	11.27%
Q16	My manager's decisions in respect of operational issues are consistent	7.04%	11.27%	9.86%	14.08%	40.85%	16.90%
Q17	My manager's decisions in respect of disciplinary issues are consistent	14.08%	8.45%	5.63%	14.08%	43.66%	14.08%
Q18	My manager to solves problems effectively	4.23%	12.68%	11.27%	15.49%	42.25%	14.08%
Q19	My manager inspires me with confidence	2.82%	11.27%	19.72%	23.94%	23.94%	18.31%
Q20	Sickness and welfare are effectively managed within the BCU	5.63%	9.86%	11.27%	29.58%	33.80%	9.86%

Q21	Managers deal effectively with bullying	29.58%	8.45%	11.27%	18.31%	22.54%	9.86%
Q22	Abstractions from duty - other than sickness - are effectively managed within the BCU	11.27%	19.72%	15.49%	29.58%	19.72%	4.23%
Q23	There is a commitment within the BCU to staff retention	14.08%	23.94%	18.31%	19.72%	19.72%	4.23%
<b>Personnel management</b>							
Q24	I have regular and meaningful contact with my line manager	0.00%	15.49%	9.86%	26.76%	23.94%	23.94%
Q25	My manager demonstrates a genuine interest in me	0.00%	19.72%	12.68%	16.90%	28.17%	22.54%
Q26	I feel that my contributions are welcomed and valued	1.41%	9.86%	16.90%	26.76%	28.17%	16.90%
Q27	My manager makes me feel proud of the service we deliver	1.41%	19.72%	16.90%	22.54%	23.94%	15.49%
Q28	My manager makes me feel trusted, valued and included	0.00%	16.90%	18.31%	18.31%	28.17%	18.31%
Q29	Training and development is allocated on the BCU according to need	11.27%	19.72%	25.35%	25.35%	12.68%	5.63%
Q30	I am encouraged to learn by my manager	2.82%	21.13%	12.68%	21.13%	25.35%	16.90%
Q31	I feel prepared for future changes	4.23%	19.72%	21.13%	33.80%	15.49%	5.63%
Q32	Coaching and mentoring is available to me if I need it	15.49%	15.49%	9.86%	26.76%	25.35%	7.04%
Q33	Personnel issues are dealt with by my manager in a relevant and timely manner	7.04%	14.08%	7.04%	22.54%	33.80%	15.49%
<b>Communication</b>							
Q34	The BCU Commander & Senior Management Team has a high profile within BCU	9.86%	21.13%	18.31%	25.35%	18.31%	7.04%
Q35	My manager communicates relevant information to me	0.00%	12.68%	14.08%	25.35%	29.58%	18.31%
Q36	I feel that, where it is appropriate, I am consulted on matters of policy and strategy	0.00%	33.80%	16.90%	25.35%	21.13%	2.82%
Q37	My manager is available when I need to talk to him/her	0.00%	7.04%	21.13%	21.13%	28.17%	22.54%
Q38	The BCU Commander, Senior Management Team are available to staff at appropriate times	16.90%	16.90%	21.13%	23.94%	15.49%	5.63%
Q39	The BCU Commander and SMT respond in a positive way to feedback from staff	15.49%	18.31%	26.76%	15.49%	16.90%	7.04%
Q40	My manager responds in a positive way to feedback from staff	2.82%	15.49%	11.27%	16.90%	32.39%	21.13%



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HMIC BCU reports represent a snapshot in time, ie when the inspection occurred. It is acknowledged that performance may have changed since the time of the inspection. Every effort is made to publish reports as soon as possible after inspection.