

# NORTHERN JOINT POLICE BOARD

14 November 2008

Agenda Item	
Report No	

## Force Service Point Strategy

### Report by the Chief Constable

#### **SUMMARY**

This report provides Members with a progress report regarding the development of a Service Point Strategy for the Force Area.

#### **Introduction**

The Chief Constable has previously advised the Board on the development of a Service Point Strategy for the Force area, provisionally scheduled for completion October/November 2008. This paper seeks to update Members on progress as the work-stream nears completion, with a view to its early circulation and implementation thereafter.

#### **Background**

The Force's community based approach to policing requires the maintenance of close and effective local linkage and co-operation with communities throughout the Highlands and Islands. This can be demonstrated to a degree by the Force footprint, which involves a wide geographic distribution of stations and staff, together with a number of section/single officer stations in some of our more rural areas.

Notwithstanding this well established approach, the Force must balance and manage the genuine expectations of communities with the daily requirements for delivery of direct policing services in order to provide an appropriate response to meet actual demand throughout the Force area.

This is particularly relevant at a time when demand for a variety of policing services is increasing at both local and national level under conditions of greater accountability and public scrutiny in terms of the ability to demonstrate financial efficiency and effective use of assets and resources. As a measure in support of this process, the Force must apply equitable and practical public accessibility arrangements which are conducive to community focused policing and choice, but which make the most productive use of officer time to provide the closest possible fit with identified demand.

To this end, in support of maintaining proper engagement and accessibility of services for all communities, particularly in some of the more rural, remote or isolated areas, the Force has closely examined its operational requirements and presence specific to these areas with a view to affording the public clear information on the opportunities and methods available to them to access non-critical services, maintain lines of communication with the Force and secure face to face interaction with local officers or police staff as required. These arrangements are to be collated to form a single source of reference and serve as the Force's 'Service Point Strategy' which will be widely available to the public through a variety of mediums.

## **Progress & Next Steps**

Work is advanced within each of the three territorial Divisions of the Force in conjunction with local partners and agencies through a series of interactions and local discussions aimed at examining local requirements and opportunities to shape solutions which will provide the most practical service provision possible.

It is envisaged that the outcome of planning and deliberation will provide a range of methods which will formalise, guide and inform arrangements which ensure the accessibility of localised non-critical policing interaction and services for particular communities across the force area, without dilution of the force's established policing standard.

It should be stressed that the proposed strategy and any arrangements to be published in connection with it, will not affect the permanent and sustained availability of emergency and critical policing services to any person across the Northern Constabulary Force area at any time.

It is anticipated that, following an opportunity to conduct local consultation between members and their respective Divisional Commanders, the completed strategy document will be available for circulation at the January 2009 meeting of the Board.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Members of the Board are invited to note the contents of this briefing document.

**I Latimer**  
**Chief Constable**

**28 October 2008**