



House of Commons  
Committee of Public Accounts

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# Reducing crime: the Home Office working with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships

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**Twenty-third Report of  
Session 2004–05**

*Report, together with formal minutes,  
oral and written evidence*

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## The Committee of Public Accounts

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### Publications

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at <http://www.parliament.uk/pac>. A list of Reports of the Committee in the present Session is at the back of this volume.

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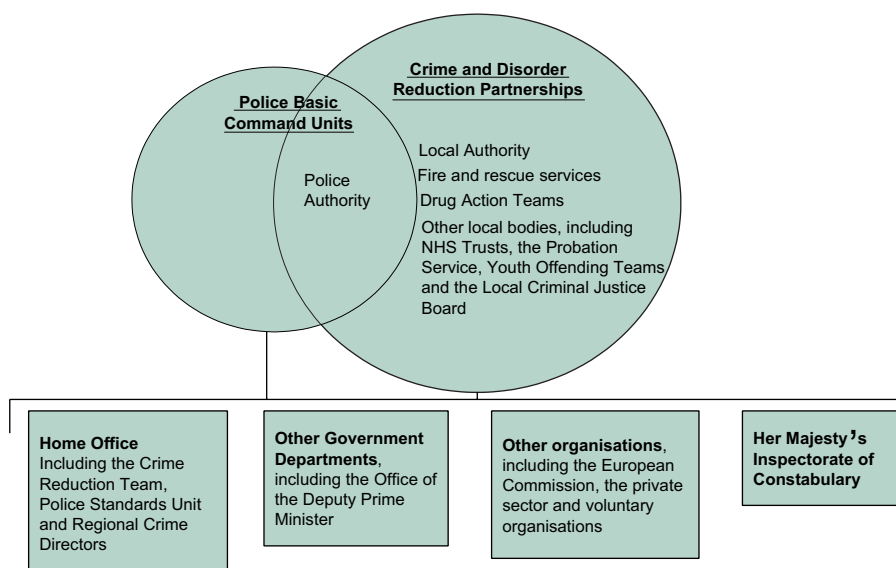


## Summary

Crime blights people's lives, with victims and witnesses suffering financial and emotional loss. The fear of crime also makes people feel unsafe, particularly after dark. Overall trends in crime are falling with an estimated 11.7 million crimes committed according to the British Crime Survey for 2003–04, representing a reduction of 7% on 2001–02 data, and a 39% reduction since 1995. Over 5.9 million crimes were recorded by the police in England and Wales in 2003–04, equivalent to 113 crimes per 1000 people. 78% of recorded crime was property related (burglary, theft from a vehicle, etc) and 19% was violent crime (including murder, assault and robbery). The remaining 3% related to drug offences, public order offences, etc.

The Home Office aims to reduce crime by supporting Police Basic Command Units, as well as the 354 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in England and 22 Community Safety Partnerships in Wales (**Figure 1**). The department has provided grants of £926.8 million since 1999 to fund crime reduction initiatives. The projects include initiatives which focus on potential and known offenders, specific locations and the victims of crime.

**Figure 1: The main organisations that typically work with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and Basic Command Units**



Crime and disorder reduction initiatives have contributed to the reductions in crime measured by the British Crime Survey, although it is not clear how much of a difference they have made. The Home Office has not systematically evaluated whether projects have demonstrated a measurable reduction in crime. Some projects have not been sufficiently targeted to achieve a quantifiable reduction in crime, and others have been too small to make any material difference. Generally there is scope for local projects to capitalise on best practice already established elsewhere rather than starting every initiative from scratch. Some projects have, however, been used by the Home Office to develop national strategies

to tackle specific types of offenders. The Prolific and other Priority Offenders Strategy draws, for example, on a local initiative developed in Blackpool.

Partnerships could make a greater contribution if less of their resources were tied up with administration. The Home Office should reduce the number of Partnerships, simplify the funding stream and encourage more effective working between partnerships and others involved in tackling crime.

On the basis of a Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General,<sup>1</sup> the Committee took evidence from the Home Office on the effectiveness of Crime and Disorder Partnerships and the programme's administration.

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<sup>1</sup> C&AG's Report, *Reducing Crime: The Home Office working with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships* (HC 16, Session 2004–05)

## Conclusions and recommendations

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- 1. By establishing 376 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, the Home Office has enabled locally based groups to find innovative solutions to local problems.** To avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and to deliver more effective solutions overall, the Home Office should now review whether the number of partnerships is excessive, and whether resources would be used more effectively if there were fewer partnerships covering larger areas. This approach might also better address crime displacement risks.
- 2. Nearly £1 billion has been spent through Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships over the past five years, but fewer than half of the Partnerships consider that their work has contributed to a measurable reduction in crime.** The Home Office should develop a framework to assist Partnerships in designing projects which will have a visible impact in reducing crime. Such projects are likely to be underpinned by rigorous analysis; to be targeted to achieve a demonstrable reduction in crime; to be a rational solution to the crime problem; and to be of sufficient scale to tackle the problem.
- 3. Local crime reduction targets are not clearly aligned with national crime reduction targets, and the link between national and local targets is not therefore transparent.** When setting future targets, the Home Office should establish clear links between targets needed to tackle local patterns of crime and the national targets.
- 4. Many projects have been directed at perpetrators of crimes rather than at helping potential victims to protect themselves.** At Bexley in Kent the “Bobby Van” initiative, which addressed the risk of repeat burglaries by helping to improve house security, has contributed to a 50% decrease in burglary between 1998 and 2004. The Home Office should encourage broader adoption of initiatives aimed at reducing risks for potential victims, particularly as there is a close link between areas of high deprivation and high crime.
- 5. The innovation and flexibility encouraged through the Partnerships has helped to inform some programmes now being run nationally, such as that aimed at prolific offenders.** The Home Office should support successful local initiatives by promoting such schemes to other Partnerships and encouraging wider sharing and take up. In reviewing Partnerships’ strategies, Home Office Regional Directors should question Partnerships about the extent to which they are adopting successful projects from elsewhere which are relevant to the crime problems outlined in their strategies.
- 6. Evaluation of outcomes delivered by Partnerships has been limited as the Home Office only introduced a self-assessment framework in 2003, some four years after the Partnerships commenced.** Effective self assessment depends on reliable data on the outcomes of projects run by each Partnership. The Home Office should develop a simple evaluation methodology to be adopted for all larger projects and funding applications for larger schemes should demonstrate how the methodology will be used.

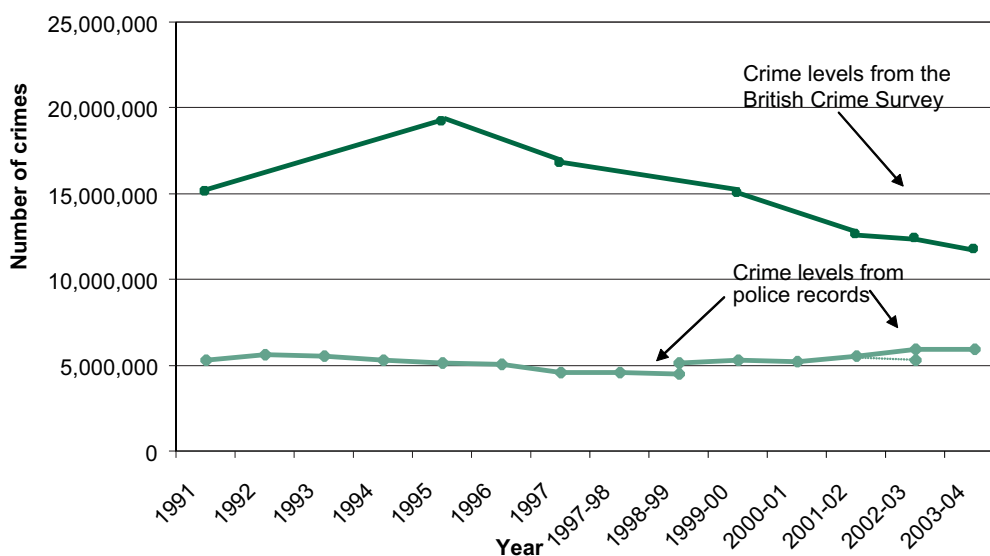
7. **There is evidence that the Home Office has placed more emphasis on Partnerships spending money allocated to them quickly and before the financial year end rather than on the value for money to be obtained from funds.** The Home Office should make use of existing flexibility for funding non-government organisations by granting funding for more than one year where a project has been clearly defined.
8. **The Home Office created a considerable administrative burden for Partnerships by introducing some fourteen different crime reduction initiatives over the last six years, each with its own grant fund, application and monitoring procedures.** The Home Office has now taken action to streamline the number of schemes.
9. **Lessons learned in reducing bureaucracy for Partnerships could also be applied to the police.** There is a need to ensure that valuable police time is not taken up unnecessarily with paperwork and bureaucracy. Although the Home Office already review each year their requirements for police data, the simpler funding arrangements for Partnerships could provide a model for further reducing the administrative burden on the police.
10. **The Home Office has failed to notify Partnerships of their funding allocations on a timely basis, making it difficult for Partnerships to start projects promptly.** Funding allocations for 2004–05, for example, were only notified to Partnerships in March 2004. In its timetable for allocating departmental resources, the Home Office should give greater recognition to Partnerships' need for greater certainty of funding, if projects are to be a success.
11. **The Home Office should explore the scope for sharing successful initiatives from elsewhere.** One option would be to adopt the zero tolerance of low level crime and disorder used in New York, which helped to underline that crime is unacceptable and contributed to the reductions in crime in the city.

# 1 Improving the effectiveness of Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships

1. The British Crime Survey for 2003–04 estimates there were over 11 million crimes in England and Wales. The Home Office considers that despite some limitations, the British Crime Survey provides the most accurate picture of crime as it affects individuals and households. The survey is based on the responses of 40,000 people, is continuously carried out and reported on quarterly.<sup>2</sup>

2. The Home Office believed that recent changes in the way crime incidents are counted by the police should bring police recorded crime and British Crime Survey figures closer together (**Figure 2**). Victims may still be reluctant to report a crime to the Police, but the new National Standard for Recording Crime, introduced in 2002, requires the police to record a crime if a victim notifies them of an incident, unless there is evidence to the contrary. Previously crimes were only recorded when there was clear evidence that they had occurred.<sup>3</sup>

**Figure 2: Crime trends according to police records and from the British Crime survey**



Notes:

1. The British Crime Survey was undertaken in 1991, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04.
2. The Home Office counting rules changed in 1998. The figures for 1998–99 show the results under the earlier rules and under the new rules. Figures for subsequent years are based on figures compiled under the new rules.
3. The Home Office counting rules changed in 2002. The figures for 2002–03 show the results under the earlier rules and the higher figures under the new rules.

Source: NAO analysis of Home Office data

2 Qq 46–47, 70

3 Qq 15–19; 68

3. The Home Office confirmed that deprivation and crime were strongly correlated. Reductions in property crime were linked to increases in economic growth. There was, however, some evidence to suggest violent crime tended to increase with economic growth and was linked to sales of alcohol. About 50% of violent crime might be fuelled by alcohol, and the Home Office had put in place an Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign.<sup>4</sup>

4. The British Crime Survey has recorded overall reductions in crime over the past ten years, with burglary and vehicle crime falling more than others. The Home Office considered that this outcome had been partly due to improved security and a better awareness of how to deter such crime, and partly through focusing effort on known problems and implementing solutions of proven effectiveness. Measures developed early in the crime reduction programme to make a location more secure (such as better lighting, and the use of CCTV) had contributed to the reductions in car crime. A similar approach to sharing initiatives and solutions which work could be used to tackle other types of crime.<sup>5</sup>

5. When the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 was passed, provision was made for each local authority area to establish a Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, bringing together the key partners and resources in that area. In all, 376 local Partnerships were established compared with, for example, 42 local Criminal Justice Boards and 155 Youth Offending Teams. Partnerships could work more closely together or even merge with neighbouring smaller Partnerships to improve their effectiveness. The Home Office said that the review announced in the Police Reform White Paper would look at this issue.<sup>6</sup>

6. Over the last five years, the Home Office has provided £926.8 million to fund locally based crime reduction projects. The effectiveness of projects had varied depending on the size of the scheme and the Partnership. Partnerships considered that only 48% of their projects had contributed to a measurable reduction in crime. Acknowledging the potential for closer collaboration between Partnerships to share resources and work together more effectively, the Home Office and the Government Offices were trying to break down Partnerships' natural disinclination to share good practice and work together more.<sup>7</sup>

7. Four partnerships in Dorset, for example, were now collaborating to share staff and resources to improve effectiveness. Projects had also contributed to the development of national policy. The women's safety unit project in Cardiff had informed the national domestic violence strategy for example, and a drug misuse programme in Hackney had influenced the national drugs intervention programme. The Tower Project in Blackpool had been important in developing the national scheme to combat prolific offenders. The Home Office estimated some 5,000 people were responsible for 8–9% of all crime. Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships across the country were now focussing in a joined up way on those 5,000.<sup>8</sup>

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4 Qq 59, 61–62, 72–73

5 Q 38

6 Qq 1–2

7 Q 8

8 Qq 5–7, 22, 25, 32

8. Opportunities may also exist for closer working and collaboration to share best practice with other government bodies, including the Scottish Executive. The two major police organisations, the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland already had contact arrangements. The Home Office intended to explore whether there was scope for more collaboration with the Scottish Executive to share initiatives which worked.<sup>9</sup>

9. More action could be taken to roll out nationally successful projects which focus on the victim rather than the offender. The Bexley Partnerships' "Bobby Van" initiative addressed the risk of repeated burglaries by helping to improve house security. The initiative contributed to a 50% fall in burglaries.<sup>10</sup> When the Crime Reduction Programme was initially set up, Partnership schemes focussed largely on delivering diverse and flexible local solutions. Less attention was given to providing value for money. As the Programme had evolved, however, there had been a gradual shift in the nature of projects supported by the Home Office towards implementing tried and tested solutions and best practice. To promote such an approach the Home Office had instituted a publication, Crime Reduction News, a website, and set up a crime reduction centre to organise events such as seminars.<sup>11</sup>

10. Better targeting of schemes and better monitoring of outcomes is likely to increase effectiveness. Partnerships needed a clear understanding of the problem the project was designed to address if they were to develop a logical solution. Setting specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound targets for delivering a reduction in crime for each project, and establishing reliable outcome data, would demonstrate the impact projects made on reducing crime and disorder.

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9 Q 63

10 Qq 51–57, 91; C&AG's Report, para 2.7

11 Q 3

## 2 Improving the administration of the programme

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11. An appropriate balance is needed between meeting local needs and achieving reductions in overall crime trends. Local crime reduction targets are not clearly aligned with national crime reduction targets, and the link between national and local targets is not always apparent. In Ashfield in north-east Derbyshire, for example, the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships had improved street lighting and outdoor play areas for young people without any significant impact on crime levels. The Home Office considered, however, that there was general evidence that improved street lighting reduced crime and that play facilities could reduce anti social behaviour.<sup>12</sup>

12. Not all projects are evaluated to assess their effectiveness in reducing crime. Partnerships had existed since 1999, but it was only in 2003 that the Home Office introduced a self assessment framework. Some schemes had been too small and localised to evaluate effectively, so their wider impact in reducing crime might also have been limited. The Home Office had embedded cost benefit analysis in its evaluations to support decisions on where resources were best spent.<sup>13</sup>

13. The plethora of different central government grants available to Partnerships from the Home Office directly or indirectly (**Figure 3**) has increased the administrative burden on Partnerships. Between April 1999 and March 2004, the Home Office had introduced 14 crime reduction grants, each with its own terms and conditions, and with different reporting requirements and audit certificates. It had now begun to amalgamate schemes, and from 2005–06 the Home Office planned to merge its funding for Partnerships with those of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister into a single Safer and Stronger Communities Fund. The Home Office accepted that it should have done more to reduce the administrative costs of the programme and to spread good practice more effectively.<sup>14</sup>

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12 Q 30

13 Q 79

14 Q 21

Figure 3: Home Office grants for crime reduction schemes running from April 1999 to March 2004

Grant Scheme and purpose	Type of grant and start date	Total grant to 31 March 2004 £ million	Grant recipients
<b>Building Safer Communities</b> – Main grant for crime reduction initiatives. In 2003–04, proportion of grant had to be spent on drug initiatives.	Annual, April 2003	72.2	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships
<b>Basic Command Unit (BCU) funds</b> – for initiatives fitting the overall Partnership strategy.	Annual, April 2003	50	Police BCUs
<b>Directors Funds</b> – Available to Partnerships and other organisations for specific capacity building and other projects to address key priorities, including national targets.	Annual, April 2003	10	Home Office Regional Directors
<b>Criminal Justice Intervention Programme (CJIP)</b> – Focused on 30 worst affected areas, provides support for drug-misusing offenders. Scheme widened from 2004–05.	Annual, April 2003	46.2	Drug Action Teams
<b>Anti Social Behaviour</b> – To strengthen Partnerships' response to anti-social behaviour.	One-off allocation, 2003–04	6.4	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships
<b>Vehicle Crime</b> – Local publicity on vehicle crime.	One-off allocation, 2003–04	1.2	Home Office Regional Directors
<b>Communities Against Drugs</b> – Initiatives tackling drug related crime and disorder, in conjunction with BCUs and Drug Action Teams.	Annual, 2 years, April 2001	220	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships
<b>Partnership Development Fund</b> – To help Partnerships develop and implement crime reduction strategies.	Annual, 3 years, April 2000	40.5	Home Office Regional Directors
<b>Street wardens</b> – For new or expanded schemes to improve physical appearance of streets, deter anti-social behaviour and reduce crime.	By bids, 3 years, April 2001	25	Local authorities, housing associations, Police
<b>Small Retailers in Deprived Areas</b> – Improving security in most deprived areas, for example by providing toughened glass, or better locks.	Annual, 3 years, April 2000	15	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships
<b>Safe Communities Initiative Funds</b> – To fund crime reduction initiatives and Partnerships capacity building.	Annual, 1 year, April 2002	20	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships
<b>Secured Car Parks scheme (SCP)</b> – awards SCP status to operators who meet a stringent set of security standards. Launched by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) in 1993.	One-off allocation, 2002–03	0.3	British Parking Association and ACPO Crime Initiatives Ltd

<b>CCTV Initiative</b> (mostly within Crime Reduction Programme) – To set up 680 CCTV schemes (£153 million funded through the Crime Reduction Programme – not included below).	By bids, 2 rounds, April 1999	170	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships
<b>Crime Reduction Programme</b> – Initiatives include Reducing Burglary Initiative, Targeted Policing and Drug Arrest Referrals scheme.	By bids, 3 years, April 1999	250	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships

Source: National Audit Office

14. Late notification of grant allocations by the Home Office to Partnerships has disrupted finalisation of Partnerships' project plans and delayed the start of crime reduction schemes. The Home Office did not make its allocations to Partnerships for 2003–04 until February 2003. As a result, by the end of the third quarter of 2003–04, Partnerships had spent £18.4 million less from the Building Safer Communities Fund than the Home Office had expected. It acknowledged the need to speed up the allocation process for subsequent years.<sup>15</sup>

15. Motivated by a desire to make sure that annual allocations were spent by the year end, Home Office regional crime reduction teams had encouraged Partnerships to implement projects quickly. Such a policy, based on end of year considerations had inevitably led to inefficiencies. The Home Office had allocated, for example, funding for a CCTV and automatic number plate recognition system to the Portsmouth Partnership in December 2002. It had then required the Partnership to spend the funds by March 2003. The rushed procurement led to the acquisition of a system which was not fully operational until August 2003. By making use of existing government flexibility for funding non-government organisations, the Home Office could have rolled forward funding for Partnerships from one year to the next, provided the programme money had not been spent and was still available for that project.<sup>16</sup>

15 Q 74

16 Qq 75, 77–78

# Formal minutes

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**Wednesday 6 April 2005**

Members present:

Mr Edward Leigh, in the Chair

Mr Richard Allan

Mr Ian Davidson

Mrs Angela Browning

Mr Alan Williams

The Committee deliberated.

Draft Report (Reducing crime: the Home Office working with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

*Ordered*, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 15 read and agreed to.

Conclusions and recommendations read, amended and agreed to.

Summary read and agreed to.

*Resolved*, That the Report be the Twenty-third Report of the Committee to the House.

*Ordered*, That the Chairman do make the Report to the House.

*Ordered*, That the provisions of Standing Order No. 134 (Select Committees (Reports)) be applied to the Report.

[Adjourned.]

## Witnesses

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**Monday 13 December 2004**

*Page*

**Mr Leigh Lewis CB, and Professor Paul Wiles, Home Office**

**Ev 1**

## List of written evidence

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Home Office

**Ev 15**

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Second Report	Tackling cancer in England: saving more lives	HC 166 ( <i>Cm 6496</i> )
Third Report	The BBC's investment in Freeview	HC 237
Fourth Report	Improving the speed and quality of asylum decisions	HC 238 ( <i>Cm 6496</i> )
Fifth Report	Excess Votes 2003–04	HC 310 ( <i>N/A</i> )
Sixth Report	Excess Votes (Northern Ireland) 2003–04	HC 311 ( <i>N/A</i> )
Seventh Report	Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Visa entry to the United Kingdom: the entry clearance operation	HC 312
Eighth Report	Ministry of Defence: Battlefield Helicopters	HC 386
Ninth Report	The Drug Treatment and Testing Order: early lessons	HC 403
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Twenty-third Report	Reducing crime: the Home Office working with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships	HC 147

The reference number of the Treasury Minute to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number



# Oral evidence

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## Taken before the Committee of Public Accounts

on Monday 13 December 2004

Members present:

Mr Edward Leigh, in the Chair

Mr Richard Allan  
Mr Brian Jenkins

Jim Sheridan  
Mr Gerry Steinberg

**Sir John Bourn KCB**, Comptroller and Auditor General, National Audit Office, further examined.

**Ms Paula Diggle**, Second Treasury Officer of Accounts, HM Treasury, further examined.

### REPORT BY THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL:

#### Reducing crime: the Home Office working with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (HC 16)

*Witnesses:* **Mr Leigh Lewis CB**, Permanent Secretary for Crime, Policing, Counter Terrorism and Delivery, and **Professor Paul Wiles**, Chief Scientific Adviser and Director of Research Development and Statistics, the Home Office, examined.

**Q1 Chairman:** Good afternoon. Welcome to the Committee of Public Accounts, where today we are looking at the Comptroller and Auditor General's report: *Reducing Crime: the Home Office working with Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships*. We are very pleased to welcome back Mr Leigh Lewis, Permanent Secretary for Crime, Policing, Counter Terrorism and Delivery— a big job you have there, Mr Lewis, and we look forward to hearing from you; and probably for the first time Professor Paul Wiles, Chief Scientific Adviser and Director of Research Development and Statistics. Mr Lewis, would you look at paragraphs 3.13 and 3.14. Mr Lewis, why are there so many partnerships?

**Mr Lewis:** Thank you for your welcome to us, Chairman. Originally, when the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 was passed it was thought important that in effect in every local authority area it was right to establish a crime and disorder reduction partnership in order to bring to bear all the resources and all of the key partners in that area together, to take action to reduce crime. That has led to the present position, where we have 376 CDRPs, 354 in England and 22 Community Safety Partnerships in Wales. With the passing of time, the question of whether that is the right number has become a more important one, and as possibly you will know, in the recently published Police Reform White Paper, the Government announced that it is going to review that section of the Crime and Disorder Act, with a view to reporting to ministers at the end of January. One of the questions which that review will cover is whether there is a case for reducing the number of CDRPs.

**Q2 Chairman:** So we have 376 in England and Wales; we have 155 youth offending teams; we have 42 criminal justice boards: how many should there be to increase their effectiveness, do you think?

**Mr Lewis:** I do not know, and I do not pre-judge the outcome of that review. As you say, we have a number of different groupings. As you say, we have

42 local criminal justice boards, and they mirror the number of police forces other than in the City of London; and we have other groupings of BCU local authorities. This inherently is not entirely simple, and that is why we do want to look at it from first principles and ask ourselves what is the most effective structure now for trying to make sure that on the one hand we have effective local engagement, but on the other we do not have a proliferation of too many bodies, some of which may be too small to be totally effective.

**Q3 Chairman:** Would you look at paragraph 2.10, please, page 23? Mr Lewis, when are you going to stop these partnerships trying to re-invent the wheel and just get them to adopt good practice?

**Mr Lewis:** I think that we have actually done a great deal to spread good practice and to try and ensure that we are not allowing everyone to re-invent the wheel. I just preface that remark by saying that in every area the issues, the position and the problems are always going to be different, and we do want to ensure that there is flexibility to allow local solutions to be tailored to local issues and problems. However, we do a great deal to seek to spread good practice, and you may want me to go into more detail later on in our hearing, but for example just in headline terms we have a publication *Crime Reduction News*, which I would be happy to let members see copies of, which is absolutely dedicated to spreading best practice around that community. We have a very successful website which has exactly that aim, and we have our crime reduction centre based in Easingwold, near York, which is part of the Home Office, which organises the programme of structured seminars to spread good practice. We are trying on the one hand not to stifle innovation but on the other hand to ensure that lessons are learned and good practice is spread.

## Home Office

**Q4 Chairman:** The whole purport of my questions in this first few minutes of the hearing is that you should have fewer partnerships; they should have a simpler funding stream and they should adopt the best practices that are already working. If you can understand the nature of our conversation, you can tailor answers in any way you wish.

**Mr Lewis:** Chairman, I very much understand the thrust of your questions. It may be that as we conduct this review, that is where we would want to go. However, I do not want to understate the value that we have achieved from having that number of separate crime and disorder reduction partnerships, nor the value that we have achieved by being willing to allow innovation and flexibility.

**Q5 Chairman:** Fair enough. If you look at paragraph 2.7 on page 20 you can see some pretty obvious thoughts of what makes for a good project, but give us a flavour of what are the most successful projects.

**Mr Lewis:** I will give you some examples of projects that I think have been successful, because there have been a number. There is the Tower Project in Blackpool, which is referred to specifically in the report, but there have been other similar projects such as in Ashfield and north-east Derbyshire that have looked at the issue of prolific offenders, that small number of individuals in absolute terms, but who commit very large numbers of crimes. That has been of absolutely pivotal importance in developing national policy. In September of this year we launched the Prolific and Other Priority Offender Programme nationwide, which is targeted on those roughly 5,000 to 7,000 offenders who, according to all our information at the Home Office, are responsible for a highly disproportionate amount of crime. In rolling out that programme nationally the Tower Project was of fundamental importance in terms of learning. I can give you two other examples, because I do not want to take up too much time.

**Q6 Chairman:** You can always wheel them out in the course of the hearing to impress my colleagues!

**Mr Lewis:** Just two more at this stage: there is the women's safety unit project in Cardiff, a support centre working with victims of domestic violence, which has undoubtedly informed the whole national domestic violence strategy and Domestic Violence Bill, and the Criminal Justice Interventions Programme in Hackney, which was all about supporting drug misusing offenders, has undoubtedly been one of the influences on our national drugs intervention programme.

**Q7 Chairman:** Are you confident that all your partnerships have learned the lessons from these successful projects?

**Mr Lewis:** I think that would be a very bold claim, and it is not one which I would want to assert with that degree of certainty. What I would say, for example, in relation to the first of those projects, the Prolific Offender Project, is that that is now a nationwide programme: every single CDRP throughout England and Wales is now running a prolific offender programme.

**Q8 Chairman:** Why do partnerships not collaborate more to share staff and resources?

**Mr Lewis:** Increasingly they do in some cases, for example if you take that programme which I have just referred to: four of our partnerships in Dorset, which are small partnerships, are now collaborating more. In a sense, we live in a country where the problems do differ in some key respects from location to location, and this is one area where I do not think the man from Whitehall always knows best. Second, you can inevitably have a kind of natural disinclination to share good practice and to work with other partnerships. People can sometimes be inclined to think that if it is not invented here then in a sense it cannot really be a solution to our problems. One of the things we are trying to do through the methods I have described, and through our government offices, which are key in this respect, is to try and break down any such barriers and try and ensure that good practice really is spread and resources are pooled where that is appropriate.

**Q9 Chairman:** Would you please look at page 32, paragraph 3.17? These partnerships came into being in 1999 and up to November 2003 they were not required to self-assess themselves, were they? Why does it take so long to get any sort of framework for self-assessment?

**Mr Lewis:** That is right. I think probably with hindsight we should have introduced what we now have, that is a self-assessment framework. As you quite rightly say, that was introduced in November 2003. It would be wrong to say that before then there had been no attempt to assess the quality of partnerships—that was very much the role of government offices working with each individual partnership. However, it is true to say that the self-assessment framework which we introduced in November of last year, and which is based on best practice, in terms of the quality assurance framework, does now give us a very clear framework within which partnerships can assess whether or not they are doing well.

**Q10 Chairman:** The last question I want to ask you is on the way you allocate funding, and this is dealt with in paragraph 3.6 on page 28. These partnerships started in 1999, as I said; they started off with 14 different types of grant and then simplified down to three, and now they are simplified down to one. Why has it taken five years for you to simplify the way that these partnerships are funded?

**Mr Lewis:** Because we have been learning as we have gone along, and because in the very early days of the Crime Reduction Programme, we did not know as much about crime and how to reduce it as we do now. It seemed then more logical to fund via a succession of individual funding schemes, each tackling particular issues and problems. That has had some signal success. I am pleased that the NAO report does believe that this programme overall has contributed to the reduction in crime—and for my own part I believe it has.

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**Q11 Chairman:** Do we have any idea? We have 5.9 million crimes in 2003–04. What the public if they were attending this hearing, I think, would want to know about is how much practical difference all this worthy work has made on the ground.

**Mr Lewis:** I do not think we can—and it is a question I would love to be able to answer as well—know as an absolute the degree to which this programme, as opposed to lots of other things we have been doing, has contributed to that reduction in crime. It is almost inherently unknowable. What is clear—and I share the judgment of the National Audit Office and this report—is that this programme has contributed, I would say significantly, to that reduction in crime.

**Q12 Mr Steinberg:** Mr Lewis, I expect a lot of my colleagues will pick up these points, because a lot of them hit you in the face, do they not? Before I start questioning you on the report itself, is it right that the total amount spent is almost £1 billion?

**Mr Lewis:** Yes, it is.

**Q13 Mr Steinberg:** How many police on the beat could you have for £1 billion?

**Mr Lewis:** I am afraid I could not answer that question—

**Q14 Mr Steinberg:** Of course you can! £1 billion—have you—

**Mr Lewis:** I am simply not able, I am afraid, to do the mental arithmetic in my head that quickly, so I apologise to you for that, but I will let you have the answer. In a sense, your question is rather suggesting that these are either/ors, and I do not think they are. Of course, this Government believes that having more police officers is extremely important. We have more police officers now in this country than—

**Q15 Mr Steinberg:** This is not Prime Minister's Question Time, Mr Lewis. I have heard all these statistics before—it is okay. I just want to know how many police £1 billion would pay for on our streets, and I am really surprised you cannot tell me. If you could let us know, I would be very grateful. I am also confused by the report as well because, again, like Prime Minister's Question Time, we get bombarded with statistics. According to this report, the British Crime Survey informed us that crime has fallen since 1995 by 34%, yet the statistic given by the police is that for the same length of time, crime has risen. What is the truth?

**Mr Lewis:** I can certainly make a stab at answering that question, but I wonder if Professor Wiles, who is our expert in the department on this whole area, might like to take that question.

**Professor Wiles:** The issue here is how much you are looking at what has happened to overall crime. We have to take account of how much crime the public reports to the police, how much of the crime reported to the police is recorded by the police, and whether both those things change over time. Unless we understand that, then it is difficult to understand the relationship between those two numbers. The British Crime Survey, because it is based on what individuals and households tell us directly has

happened to them, are not mediated through the propensity to report or record, undoubtedly gives us a more accurate trend for crime, as it affects households and individuals. I would stress that because, obviously, not all crime is against households and individuals, and adult members of the households, not children. There are limitations, but nevertheless that does give us a better trend line, and that is the first thing. The second thing to remember—and I am sure you are aware of this—is that there have been a couple of things that have happened to police-recorded crime which have changed the amount of crime that is recorded, irrespective of how much crime is actually occurring. The first is that we changed the counting rules quite early in the time of this Government to mean that relatively minor violence was now being recorded in the annual publication of crime statistics, whereas before it had not been—and that is also true of some lesser criminal damage as well. Secondly—

**Q16 Mr Steinberg:** I only have ten minutes, so can you—

**Professor Wiles:** Of course, I will try and speed up. Secondly, the Association of Chief Police Officers has put in a new national crime recording standard, which means that the police overall are recording more crime than it did in the past, especially minor violence and criminal damage. You have to take this into account when you are looking at those two figures.

**Q17 Mr Steinberg:** I am sorry, but I am still confused.

**Professor Wiles:** Crime has been going down for a longer period at a steeper rate than in the memory of anybody in this room.

**Q18 Mr Steinberg:** So why are the police saying they are getting more and more crimes then?

**Professor Wiles:** The police are not getting more and more crimes; they are recording more crimes that are being reported to them, and the public are reporting more crime than they used to in the past.

**Q19 Mr Steinberg:** I am totally confused, as I say. The police say there are more crimes occurring.

**Professor Wiles:** The police are recording more crime. Police-recorded crime shows an increase in some categories—and not all categories, by the way—burglary has gone down, even on police-recorded crime, since 1997 by 20% and vehicle crime has gone down 19% on police-recorded crime, since 1997. The categories of police-recorded crime have gone up on the two I identified early on—violence, particularly minor violence, and criminal damage. The British Crime Survey shows that violence is actually going down: more of it is being reported and more of it is being recorded.

**Q20 Mr Steinberg:** Right, let us move on. A lot of money has been spent, as the Chairman mentioned at the beginning, but a lot of money appeared to be wasted on administration that could have been spent on the chalk face. He mentioned the sixth point on

page 2. He used the same words that are in the report itself, and I have picked those two words out as well as he did. It says: “Partnerships have too often ‘re-invented the wheel’ by not using lessons learned elsewhere.” Mr Lewis seemed to disagree with that to a certain extent. However, I do not know how you can disagree with that. You have had this report longer than we have had it, and before this report can be given to us you have to read through the report. If you did not agree with that, you would have said, “I do not accept that point”. On the one hand, how can you tell the Chairman, or give the impression that you are arguing against the fact that that is in the report, and on the other hand agree to the report in the first place?

**Mr Lewis:** If I have given that impression, I have given a false impression because I am not querying the report in any—

**Q21 Mr Steinberg:** So you think there is a lot of money being wasted.

**Mr Lewis:** No. Can I use my own words to answer your question, please? It is undoubtedly the case that we could and should have done more to reduce the costs of administration of this programme, and to spread good practice more effectively. I accept that entirely. The report says it; we accept it, and we are doing a lot. What I said to the Chairman was that we have actually done a great deal to improve the operation of these programmes—and I set out some of the things we have done. We are now doing more, and more effectively than ever before. I do think actually that it is right to set what is said on page 2 in context because the previous paragraph to that congratulates—not a word that the National Audit Office or the Comptroller and Auditor General uses lightly—the Home Office on the range and diversity of the projects and initiatives it is supporting, and says that there is no doubt that this programme has contributed to the continuing reduction in crime reported by the British Crime Survey. It is therefore right to set what follows in that context.

**Q22 Mr Steinberg:** On page 18 of the report, paragraph 2.5 states that less than 50% of the projects have actually reduced crime. That is a dreadful statistic, is it not?? That seems to me to be a hell of a waste of money going on when you consider that we are spending nearly £1 billion—so half the projects—half a billion pounds are being wasted.

**Mr Lewis:** First of all, it refers to the fact that it contributed to a “demonstrable” reduction in crime or disorder, i.e., for some of the other 52% it may be that the underlying truth is that they will have contributed to a reduction in crime or disorder, but we cannot demonstrate it. This bottle can be either half full or half empty, as you want to look at it. You are looking at the bottle that is half empty, and I am looking—

**Q23 Mr Steinberg:** My wife tells me that all the time!

**Mr Lewis:** Indeed. I am looking at the bottle that is half full, which is that we support it—

**Q24 Mr Steinberg:** When she goes to buy a new coat, she always tells me I am looking at the bottle half empty!

**Mr Lewis:** Perhaps I should not have started with this analogy, but I will continue. I think that what we have done here is to support a wide variety of projects and initiatives, in the certain knowledge that when you do that you cannot expect that they are all going to succeed.

**Q25 Mr Steinberg:** Let us look at it half full, and 50% of the schemes have been very successful and you have reduced crime. When I read the report I thought they were all very local schemes, parochial schemes. I get the impression that they have been very successful in the first street, but in the second street, half a mile down the road, crimes are still taking place and more crimes will be taking place because of what has happened. The people who have been prevented or stopped from committing crime in the first street, have now moved to the second street a hundred yards down the road and are causing more trouble. How do you know you have not just moved it on a few hundred yards?

**Mr Lewis:** First of all, not all the projects by any means were targeted on geographical areas; some were targeted on different types of crime and so on. Secondly, that is to not give sufficient weight to the fact that in some key respects the learning we have achieved from these individual projects has contributed to very, very different national programmes and policies. The Prolific Offender Programme, to which I referred earlier in answer to the Chairman’s question, I think is a very, very telling example of that, where the work started in Blackpool, under the Tower Project, supported by other programmes here, has led us to roll out a major national programme using the learning generated by that. If that programme is anything like as successful as we hope and expect it to be, it will turn out to have been a huge return on that investment.

**Q26 Mr Steinberg:** The report also says, does it not, that the National Audit Office has done some research on statistics which find that any scheme costing less than £50,000 to bring in was an absolute failure; and yet you continued to fund these schemes. Why did you do that? If there are schemes that are failures because a lot of the resources being put in are not properly thought out and have not been evaluated properly—which, by the way, you go and do according to the report—properly evaluate the schemes—why or how do you let this continue and just waste resources?

**Mr Lewis:** I think we have learned from our experience over time. In the early days of the programme, when we were very much learning, we did think it was right to let one thousand flowers bloom and see what the results would be. Of course, government is often criticised, rightly, for only wanting to deal in big government and only wanting to support large programmes and large projects, and not being willing to support individual initiatives by local people which may not have a very large price tag attached to them but which can be very

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important. I do not think we should be too bashful of the fact that we supported some small projects under this programme as a whole that were not hugely costly. Equally, I do accept the point that the report makes, and which you make in your question, that you have to look at that as a balance. If you support too many projects which are too small, it does become very difficult in any systematic way to evaluate them and draw the lesson. That is what we have learnt and so we have moved on to approach this in a different way.

**Q27 Mr Steinberg:** The Chairman has been very generous: normally we have ten minutes and that is it, but he says he is prepared to relax it; but I am not going to exploit his generosity. All I would say is that I had the impression from the report that you did not even evaluate the scheme, so you did not even know whether or not they were successful. All you were keen on doing was doling out money to anybody who came along and said they had a scheme. You did not know if it was going to be a success; you did not know whether it ever was a success; all you were interested in was getting as many schemes as you could off the board and give them the money to get on with it.

**Mr Lewis:** No, I do not think that is a fair description of what is in the report or of the underlying reality. Professor Wiles heads the part of the Home Office which oversees our evaluation strategy as a whole and may want to comment in more detail but over the last two years alone the Home Office has published some 70 evaluation reports into the different aspects of our crime reduction programme; so that is not the mark of a department that does not believe in evaluation.

**Professor Wiles:** When the Crime Reduction Programme was initially set up, it was decided that we should spend 10% of each project on evaluation. It rapidly became clear that that was not a sensible strategy. First of all, the cost of evaluation does not necessarily relate to the cost of a programme. For example, it would have been madness to have spent 10% of the CCTV schemes on evaluation because they were big expensive capital schemes and it did not need anything like that to do the evaluation. Similarly, you would have to be careful because you can actually kill small projects by demanding too much from them so that they can be evaluated, or it could make it difficult. What we did try and do was to make sure that for all the projects we were carefully evaluating them in terms of the key crime outcomes. In other words, we were looking at crime figures for the area. We were looking at what you referred to earlier on, which was displacement. Were we simply pushing crime around? That was one of the things we were particularly interested in looking at. As the programme has gone on, it has moved from a programme that was very concerned with innovation, to try things to find out if they worked, but as the programme has gone on we have become increasingly clear and focused on what you have been referring to, which is driving down the lessons of what we have learnt and making that the basis for what most people are doing. The balance has shifted

from innovation and a lot of evaluation to a small amount of innovation and increasingly trying to get people to follow the good practice that the evaluation produced. That means that increasingly our evaluation has been focusing on those projects where we think there is an area where we know very little and where it would be very useful to know more; where a project seems to be innovative, and therefore especially useful; and where projects have been set up in a way that evaluation can be done, and we can know the results of the project compared to other things going on in an area and other schemes. The evaluation strategy has changed as the project has gone on, in order to match the changes in the programme itself.

**Q28 Chairman:** There are a couple of points arising from those answers, Professor. What has happened to violent crime in recent years?

**Professor Wiles:** That is one of those where we go back to the British Crime Survey or recorded crime. The British Crime Survey shows that overall violence since 1997 has gone down by 26%. What is interesting within that is that although overall violence has gone down, particularly domestic violence and acquaintance violence, stranger violence has been going up slightly. Overall the violence has been going down, but stranger violence has been going up within that mix. On police-recorded crime, there has been a significant increase for the two reasons I gave earlier on: we changed the counting rules, which meant that an awful lot more of minor violence has been recorded—and as you will know, almost half of all recorded violence does not involve any injury to anybody—it was that kind of violence that was drawn within the counting rules—and secondly the new national crime recording standard has also meant that the police are recording more of that violence. We have the British Crime Survey showing a reduction, and police-recorded crime going up. I am reasonably confident that overall the increase in police recorded crime is something that changes in counting rules and methods of recording.

**Q29 Chairman:** So we are living in a less violent society now!

**Professor Wiles:** Overall, but I would add one rider in exception to that: certain kinds of mercifully rare but nevertheless serious violence have been increasing. Homicide has been going up since the mid 1960s on a gradual increasing trajectory, and that is partly because of where it is together with the increase in stranger violence. Certain other kinds of very serious violence, the ones that may by sheer accident almost become homicides—ie, medical care was not got there quickly enough—has similarly been going up.

**Q30 Chairman:** Arising also from Mr Steinberg's question, would you look at page 20, figure 13, which is an example of a project that was not of sufficient size to make a difference? Ashfield Partnership spent £24,000 on improving street lighting and £9,000 on improving the outdoor play

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areas for young people. Not surprisingly, it does not seem to have had a great deal effect on crime in Ashfield. Do you happen to know how much has been wasted on Ashfield Partnership introducing schemes that are clearly inadequate for the people there?

**Professor Wiles:** I do not, I am afraid, but can I put a slightly different view on that? First of all, we do have good systematic evidence from looking at a whole range of evaluations here and in other countries that improving street lighting does reduce crime. Spending money on reducing street lighting, even in these small numbers, was not necessarily—

**Q31 Chairman:** Can we go back to this question about the extra Bobbies on the beat, or not necessarily on the beat? How about improving the outdoor play area?

**Professor Wiles:** Again, we have evidence that if you provide the facilities for children so that they are not running around the street, then that can help reduce low levels of crime, particularly antisocial behaviour. I do not think it necessarily follows that these were silly expenditures of money; there was evidence for both of them that it was a sensible thing to do.

**Q32 Mr Jenkins:** Mr Lewis, you said earlier that these projects have contributed significantly to reduction in crime. I did not think I had seen that word, so I looked for it on page 2 in paragraph 4, where it says, "... have contributed to the 39% reduction in the number of crimes reported through the British Crime Survey". You said they had made a "significant" contribution. What would you estimate to be significant?

**Mr Lewis:** I added the word that in my judgment it was significant. I think it is inherently very difficult indeed to isolate one factor that has contributed to the very substantial reduction in crime that Professor Wiles has described from all of the others. It is almost inherently unknowable. Nevertheless, if you take the example of the Tower Project in Blackpool, which focused perhaps for the first time on that small number of individuals who we believe commit a totally disproportionate amount of all crime, our best evidence within the Home Office is that some 5,000 people in absolute terms may be responsible for around 8–9% of all crime recorded by the British Crime Survey. What we are now doing is focusing in a joined-up way that we never have before on those 5,000 people in each individual crime and disorder reduction partnership in the country. If, as a result of that, we can significantly reduce that 8–9% of all crime that those 5,000 people commit, that would be a significant and not an insignificant reduction in crime.

**Q33 Mr Jenkins:** That is the one idea that has come out of the schemes that you are going to push forward for a national plan.

**Mr Lewis:** No, that is not what I was seeking to say, and it is not what I want to say. I think it is probably the single most significant, but there have been many other areas where we have genuinely learnt and

genuinely promoted different national practice as a result. It does become difficult though to isolate the impacts in other respects.

**Q34 Mr Jenkins:** When you set up these partnerships—and I have been on one in the past—can you estimate how many police hours or how many full-time police officers you have taken off the streets to put into these?

**Mr Lewis:** It tends to be not very many, in terms of literally who is at the meeting. I am particularly thinking that the actual meetings will be attended by the BCU commander, the chief superintendent or superintendent for that district. It is not as if we are talking about them not being on the streets because there are partnership meetings. I put a different test on it actually, and there are some figures quoted in the report. As I go round—I spend an awful lot of time going round; I do not sit in an office in Whitehall trying to work out what is going on from there—I meet an awful lot of senior police officers who think their time is very far from wasted by being at CDRPs because the police absolutely believe that they cannot reduce crime on their own and that they are one key instrument in our efforts to reduce crime; but if they are to reduce crime, they need the support of a much wider group of stakeholders. Most senior police officers, operational police officers that I meet think that their time is very well spent in these kinds of partnership bodies.

**Q35 Mr Jenkins:** Yes, I bet they do! You were asked earlier how a project can be successful if it lacks clear and measurable targets, and you now say you have come up with the scenario to make sure they do have clear and measurable targets, and you can now assess how effective they are. Can I tease this out of you: is that a "can" or a "must"?

**Mr Lewis:** It is now a "must" as we have moved on. We are now asking for next year, the year 2005–06, each crime and disorder reduction partnership to set, by discussion and negotiation with each government office, a specific set of crime reduction targets for the crime reduction it will seek to achieve in the three years beginning 2005–06. That is a process whereby each CDRP will be asked to reach, by agreement with its government office, a specific target for the reduction in crime in its area that it will achieve over that 3-year period.

**Q36 Mr Jenkins:** At the same time, will you take the opportunity to put together all the partnerships in a non area, non location, so that they work together, and talk together, and not work against each other thereby reducing effectiveness? Why do we seem to have so many little partnerships that do not seem to talk to each other or co-ordinate?

**Mr Lewis:** I think that that is an issue. It goes much wider than just the report we are looking at, of course, and much wider indeed than just the Home Office. In my previous role as Chief Executive in Jobcentre Plus, many of my district managers felt very similarly that there were a lot of partnerships asking for their attendance, and these are wider questions. The creation of local strategic partnerships will help,

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I hope; and on a wider canvas local area agreements where we will be piloting 21 of those from the beginning of the next financial year will help. I do think that we sometimes have too many partnerships, and sometimes they go over the same ground in too many fora. That said, I do believe that crime and disorder reduction partnerships have had a very, very successful introduction since 1998 because what they have done, which just did not happen before, is that they have become a key forum for pulling all of the key local actors together.

**Q37 Mr Jenkins:** The point you made earlier was that burglary and car crimes have gone down. Why is that?

*Mr Lewis:* Again, I might defer to Professor Wiles.

*Professor Wiles:* As far as car crime is concerned, there has been a whole series of things, starting off of course with the introduction of better security on cars. That was partly a consequence of the car manufacturers, and partly a consequence of governments over time talking to the car manufacturers and persuading them that this was a sensible thing to do and that the public would pay for better security on cars. It is now quite difficult to break in to a recent car. If you look at the data on what cars are being stolen, you can see that very clearly. The cars that are much more at risk are the older cars. The newer cars are much less likely to get stolen than they once were.

**Q38 Mr Jenkins:** Come to Sunderland!

*Professor Wiles:* Even in Sunderland, if you look at which cars they are, it is the old cars again that are easy to steal. The second thing is that we have been doing a lot of work to understand how you can deter car crime in relation to the way you manage car parks and the use of CCTV and lighting, and all these things, many of which started off in the early crime reduction programme and have now become mainstream in all sorts of areas. All those things together have produced a significant reduction in car crime, theft of cars and theft from cars.

**Q39 Mr Jenkins:** Burglary?

*Professor Wiles:* It is a similar kind of story. There has been a lot of investment in what we call target hardening—how can you get better locks and windows; how can you use burglar alarms more effectively? There is a series of programmes through the Crime Reduction Programme particularly making sure that those target hardenings go to areas where people are least likely to purchase them themselves.

**Q40 Mr Jenkins:** We are dealing here not with looking at the perpetrators of crime but at the victims of crime, and we are trying to establish how we can make the victim more secure and raise awareness. Many of these schemes are very effective in raising pride in the community and making people more aware of the projects, and yet the amount of money put into that according to the report is

miniscule. Why do we not spend more in that approach, rather than targeting the offender and looking after the offender?

*Professor Wiles:* If I may just say something about where that money comes from, one of the things you need to take into account when looking at burglary prevention is that most people will provide burglar protection for themselves. For example, we have identified that they are much more likely to do that just after they have moved house and have been deliberately targeting advice at people at the time when they move house. What we have been trying to concentrate government money on is getting that same protection for people who, for all sorts of reasons, might be less likely to do that. The other answer to your problem is, as you say, that we have got very effective work for relatively speaking a small investment, and that is one of the successes of the crime reduction programme.

*Mr Lewis:* Again, I just do not believe that these are either/ors; I think we have to go on looking at how we can reduce individual crime targets—

**Q41 Mr Jenkins:** I will tell you why it is either/or: in the world we live in, the taxpayers' world, we have to pay for it. If we have to spend a pound we have to decide the best option to spend that pound on. I would like two pounds and spend it on both, but I only have one pound. If you have only got a pound, which one are you going to spend it on? That is what I am asking you? From my point of view it is more effective to spend it to raise awareness amongst victims or potential victims than to spend it on the criminal.

*Mr Lewis:* We spend our time trying to decide how to spend that one pound too, because we have not got two pounds. I do not think you can simply say you are going to spend even that one pound all here or all there. For example, we are spending quite a few taxpayers' pounds at the moment with our advertising campaign, which I am sure some members of the Committee will have seen, which is simply encouraging people to take the most basic precautions in terms of their homes and vehicles. I may get the exact figure wrong, and Professor Wiles will correct me if I do, but from memory somewhere between 15–20% of all burglaries take place through unlocked or open doors or windows. Trying to get people to take the most basic precautions, to lock their doors and windows, by using advertisements that are eye-catching and which grab their attention, is important. Equally though, we know there are individuals who commit very large amounts of burglary, and focusing on them is of value too.

**Q42 Mr Jenkins:** We have accepted that. What about individuals committing crime? My town has just been rated very highly on the violence scale, and it is the most violent place since Dodge City. The reason for that is that the town has a very high number of high CCTV cameras and a high police presence, particularly at the weekends. They get to the scene very quickly. We have found with great difficulty that the number of people who have been assaulted—and we have a CCTV record of them

being assaulted—when they get there refuse to press charges. It is logged as a crime, so we cannot proceed, although we have proceeded in some cases with assault on the individual, and that is what we have in mind when you talk about the British Crime Survey—in that case where you must self-determine that you are the victim of an assault. I have given you a cast-iron example here of the number of people, which is probably as much as 25%, being assaulted refuse to say they have been assaulted when we have the evidence there, and then the British Crime Survey shows the numbers are going down because people no longer feel they are victims of crime. What confidence can I have?

**Professor Wiles:** I do not think that is quite the case. One of the things we know from the British Crime Survey and that we have been able to track over 20 years is how far people who have been victims have reported to the police, pressed charges and so on. That is exactly one of the things we can look at. You have just given a very good example of what I was saying earlier on. One of the reasons why police-recorded crime has gone up is that if you have more CCTV cameras, you will get an increase in police-recorded crime because a lot more of it is being seen by third parties and recorded. The problem is converting that into successfully dealt-with crime, as you were saying; but those people are still reporting it to the British Crime Survey. They are still saying, “Yes, I was hit”. We do not ask people in the British Crime Survey, “Have you been the victim of an assault?” We ask: “Has anybody hit you?” We then go on to look at that, starting with that basic point. One of the interesting things is looking at changes and reporting them, and one of the things we know from the last few years is that the public overall are now increasingly likely to report events to the police. That does mean that police-recorded crime goes up, but overall that is a good thing.

**Q43 Mr Jenkins:** I will tell you what happens in my part of the world. You get a break-in or car damage or a car stolen, and people will phone the police up to report it. The police ring back and say, “here is your crime number”, which those people need to claim off the insurance. They expect nothing more of the police other than to be given the crime number. How do you think that fits in with the perception of beating crime in this country?

**Mr Lewis:** That is one reason why people report vehicle crime because they need to do so in order to make a valid insurance claim, and so what you say is accurate. However, I really do not think that we should regard that as meaning the police believe that that is the sum total of their job. A huge amount of investment in the police service over recent years—and we now step outside the bounds of this report—has gone into improving the ability of the police and to reduce crime. You have seen the National Intelligence model, and so on. Of course, there is too much crime that goes undetected, and everybody would accept that. Actually, along with the advances you have seen here through the Crime Reduction

Programme, there have been very substantial advances in the overall effectiveness of the police service in reducing crime.

**Q44 Jim Sheridan:** What crimes are excluded from the British Crime Survey?

**Professor Wiles:** The British Crime Survey includes all crimes against adult individuals and households. It does not include crimes against commercial or industrial victims or against those under 16, or those who are dead, obviously.

**Q45 Jim Sheridan:** Do they include murder or rape?

**Professor Wiles:** It cannot include murder because you cannot interview people who are dead, obviously. Rape is included, as is domestic violence.

**Q46 Jim Sheridan:** This subject, as with many other subject, is open to interpretation or misinterpretation particularly by politicians. The general public are sick of politicians swapping insults, saying “I am the good guy, you are the bad guy”: why can the professionals not come up with a system telling us quite clearly that crime figures are up or they are down?

**Professor Wiles:** As far as the individual householder is concerned, we have the British Crime Survey. What I am saying is that it is not just the view of government but the view of most researchers in universities doing research on crime as well that the British Crime Survey is the best measure of trends over time.

**Q47 Jim Sheridan:** It is open to interpretation.

**Professor Wiles:** I do not think it is, no. It is a large-scale, scientifically designed survey, and it gives you quite clear measures of change in crime all the time.

**Q48 Jim Sheridan:** Why do the politicians, particularly the Prime Minister and his opposite number, continue to trade insults about who is right and who is wrong.

**Professor Wiles:** I am not sure I can comment on the behaviour of the Prime Minister or any of the rest of them. The British Crime Survey is a well-constructed, scientifically designed survey. It is a survey and therefore it has margins around it which are well understood and analysed. It clearly shows that crime in this country has been going down. The other reason I have confidence in that is because crime has been going down in many other countries as well; so we are not just getting a strange aberration here; there is a trend in many developed countries.

**Q49 Jim Sheridan:** How do we compare *per capita* with other European countries?

**Professor Wiles:** It depends which European countries you are talking about. If you are talking about the western European countries, those in the EU before it was extended, we have a crime rate roughly similar to the Dutch, and a crime rate only slightly higher than many other EU countries. That difference has been there for some time. Some of that is to do with the fact that we had—though fortunately it has been going down significantly—a

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particularly high rate of car crimes, both compared to European countries and to the United States of America. The reduction has been therefore very welcome.

**Q50 Jim Sheridan:** In terms of a league table, where would we sit with other European countries?

**Professor Wiles:** I cannot answer that question at the moment. We are waiting for the results of the International Victim Crime Survey, which is precisely designed to give us that relative ranking. The last crime survey showed that we were still about a third of the way down that. The high crime countries, particularly for violence, were Australia and New Zealand, and then you tend to get countries like Holland and the United Kingdom; and then you have lower crime countries further down—including the United States, by the way, which, apart from its murder rate has a lower crime rate than the United Kingdom, and has had for a long time.

**Q51 Jim Sheridan:** On page 18 you talk about the Bobby Van. I am sure the people of Bexley are absolutely delighted that burglary has reduced by some 50% because of the Bobby Van. Have the crime figures gone up in neighbouring towns to Bexley? I assume that the criminals have not just stopped because of the Bobby Van and will have gone to neighbouring towns.

**Professor Wiles:** Absolutely. As I said earlier on, most of our evaluations of geographically based schemes like the Crime Reduction Scheme looked very closely both at the possibility of displacement, and diffusion. Overall, summarising those findings across a whole range of different schemes that we looked at, you occasionally get a small amount of displacement, but the net effect is a reduction in crime. You also get a small amount of diffusion; that is, if you do a crime reduction programme in one area, you find the immediately surrounding area gets some benefits from that either because the potential victims are talking to each other and taking remedial steps, or what we also know is that you get a drop in burglary even before the programme is implemented. The initial publicity is sending a message out to potential offenders.

**Q52 Jim Sheridan:** The burglars in Bexley have given up—

**Professor Wiles:** Quite a lot of them have given up because, otherwise, the national rate of burglary would not be going down. We are talking about less offences overall, less offenders committing fewer—

**Q53 Jim Sheridan:** Neighbouring towns and cities also benefit from the Bobby Van as well, do they?

**Professor Wiles:** I do not think they necessarily benefited from that particular Bobby Van; they certainly benefited from all the work that everybody has been doing on reducing crime.

**Mr Lewis:** Can I add something that we have learnt from this whole programme. It is a sad fact, but a fact nonetheless, that if you are a victim of crime you are more likely then to become a victim again in the

future. Therefore, what we are doing much more of is that when someone is a victim of crime, as well as helping them in terms of that crime and to record it and detect it, we are giving advice to that individual as to how they can seek to avoid becoming a victim of crime a second time. That is now done much more routinely and widely than before because we understand that better.

**Q54 Jim Sheridan:** If the Bobby Van was so successful in Bexley in reducing burglary, are you talking of rolling it out throughout the country?

**Mr Lewis:** No, we are not talking of rolling that specific thing out throughout the country. That is why, through magazines like *Crime Reduction News* we say, “if you have been involved in a project that other practitioners can learn from, please get in touch”.

**Q55 Jim Sheridan:** People do not read magazines. If you have a Bobby Van that has proved to be successful with a 50% reduction, why not roll it out throughout the country?

**Professor Wiles:** What the Bobby Van was doing was what many other areas have been doing as well, and it is a combination of providing advice to householders on how they can help reduce their risk; and, secondly, as Lewis has said, repeat victimisation is a significant part of the overall crime problem. Your risk of being victimised gets greater each time you are victimised. It is not just advice, but where people have been victimised several times a large number of forces now provide protection either by “cocoon” neighbourhood watch, where immediate neighbours of the victim keep a special eye out and help this person not be victimised again; or in some cases forces loan to burglary victims temporary burglar alarms to fit in their house.

**Q56 Jim Sheridan:** The Bobby Van is not about delivering leaflets; it is a tangible example of police doing what they should be doing on the streets. That has delivered a 50% reduction in burglary in Bexley.

**Professor Wiles:** Yes.

**Q57 Jim Sheridan:** Why are you not using a successful project in other towns and cities?

**Professor Wiles:** I am saying we are. The sort of things they were doing in the Bobby Van are exactly what many other police forces are doing. They might not call it a Bobby Van, but they are doing the same thing—the sort of things I have just been spelling out, the kinds of things that many police forces are doing. That is why we have burglaries going down.

**Q58 Jim Sheridan:** Is that offence going down by 50%?

**Professor Wiles:** Not necessarily. You get variations in different areas. Some areas are much more difficult to get crime down than others. It is more difficult to get crime down in a high crime area than it is in a low crime area.

**Mr Lewis:** Let me give you another example of why we do not say, “right everybody; introduce the Bobby Van” because the problem is different in

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different locations. If you look for example at some inner cities with high levels of student accommodation, students are particularly vulnerable to crime, particularly at certain times of the year. Therefore, we have learnt a huge amount over recent years through some of these programmes and elsewhere about how you get students to guard against crime. When they arrive particularly for their first year at university they often do not have uppermost in their minds securing their own personal property. You can make major, major inroads into student crime in some areas. We do need horses for courses. We do need to adapt and allow people to find their own routes; but we do need to give them the information from which they can make individual decisions.

**Q59 Jim Sheridan:** In regard to different remedies for different areas, is there any link to higher levels of crime in areas of deprivation and poverty as opposed to other areas?

**Professor Wiles:** The technical answer to that question is that the correlation between deprivation and high crime is about 0.8, which is a fancy way of saying that the majority of high crime areas also suffer from significant deprivation.

**Q60 Jim Sheridan:** On CCTV, I have a general fear that where it is installed it tends to push the crime back out of the areas; that vandals, hooligans or thugs tend to take crime out into areas not covered by CCTV.

**Professor Wiles:** When we have looked at CCTV schemes, we have looked at the question of displacement and found that whilst you get some, overall you get a net reduction. I accept that sometimes with CCTV you can get a degree of displacement, and what you have to do and what we now include in those CCTV packages is managing around that issue, saying “look out for this; think of what might happen”. If you are putting CCTV into a town centre, you also ought to be changing the nature of your police patrols to pick up any of that displacement. It is not just CCTV done by itself; it is how it fits in with other things you are doing to reduce crime. The example you give is particularly to do with police patrolling but also to do with licensed premises and aspects of that as well.

**Q61 Jim Sheridan:** On licensed premises, there is also the problem of alcohol and binge-drinking, particularly youngsters who pour out of pubs and clubs in the cities at night time. Is there anything in the report suggesting we could deal with that more effectively?

**Mr Lewis:** This specific report does not focus on alcohol-related crime, but you are absolutely right; and we believe there are major difficulties associated with alcohol-related crime, binge-drinking, particularly in some of our towns and cities and particularly on some nights of the week. We have been taking a great deal more action more recently to deal with that, including what we call the Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign, which is about to run for a second time over the Christmas period. It

involves police forces and local authorities, environmental health and trading standards, seeking rigorously to enforce licensing regulations, particularly seeking to crack down on sales to underage people and people who are creating disorder. We have learned a great deal about what can help to prevent alcohol related disorder in our towns and cities, but this is a serious issue. It requires a lot of police manpower to deal with that and it is something that we have to do more to tackle, undoubtedly.

**Q62 Jim Sheridan:** Is there anything that is not already being done? For instance, publicans and club owners could assist the police.

**Mr Lewis:** Yes, there is a huge amount they can do. Some of the best schemes—Manchester City Safe is one; York is another—are where licensed doorkeepers are linked to the police and the radio communication systems are very much seen as part of an integrated solution. It cannot be simply the police on their own. They cannot deal with and control this entire problem. It is about a responsible industry. It is about, for example, not having irresponsible promotions like all you can drink for £6.99 and so on, which simply encourage people to drink a huge amount. It is about the industry with local authorities and the police together looking at how you create a greater sense of responsibility in our town and city centres without stopping people from perfectly properly enjoying themselves.

**Q63 Jim Sheridan:** There are a number of good projects identified in the report. How do you share these best practices with other government bodies like the Scottish Executive? Is there any interaction between yourselves and the Scottish Executive on how best practices can work?

**Mr Lewis:** There is quite a lot of contact. I do not want to overplay it here particularly where I am not aware of every link. There is quite a lot of spreading of good practice. The two major police organisations, ACPO and ACPOS, which is ACPO’s equivalent north of the border, are in touch very much. We have contacts with the Scottish Executive. I would not want however to suggest to you that everything we can possibly do is being done. That is one point I will take away as a result of your question, to think whether there is more scope, given that the responsibility for policing north of the border does not rest with the Home Office, to implement better sources of information and exchange in both directions.

**Q64 Mr Allan:** Professor Wiles, can I take it from your earlier responses that the British Crime Survey figures you would recommend as the ones that we should take as the best indicators of levels of crime in the country?

**Professor Wiles:** I did not quite say that. They are the best indicators of the trend of personal and household crime.

**Q65 Mr Allan:** The kind of crime that affects our constituents as individuals?

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*Professor Wiles:* Yes.

**Q66 Mr Allan:** That is the general view across the profession of criminologists?

*Professor Wiles:* Yes.

**Q67 Mr Allan:** If in 10 years' time you see the BCS figures going up and the crime figures coming down and there is a political temptation to say, "No, the recorded crime figures are there", your professional recommendation would be for us to keep looking at the BCS?

*Professor Wiles:* Not only my professional recommendation. I doubt if I shall be here in 10 years' time but if I am I will have the job of saying to my political masters, "I am sorry but crime is going up."

**Q68 Mr Allan:** The change that was made on the recorded crime figure now records all those things that people say were crimes. In other words, the police are not filtering out ones that they do not think were crimes, and that now brings the two closer in line?

*Professor Wiles:* Yes. If I could slightly correct what was said earlier, what the National Crime Recording standard requires is that the police should record a crime if a victim says there has been one unless the police have evidence to the contrary. It is not just recorded because the victim says. If the police really think that somebody is making a report of a crime just to make an insurance claim, it should not be recorded on the National Crime Recording standard. The effect of the National Crime Recording Standard will gradually be to bring the police recorded crime and the British Crime Survey crime, where they are covering the same crimes, closer together. That is happening.

**Q69 Mr Allan:** Is there a correlation that you can see or can you verify the recorded crime figures? You are saying, "Were you a victim and did you report it?" Does that correlate neatly with the actual figures?

*Professor Wiles:* Yes, pretty well, given the margins of error in the survey. That is something we have been looking at very closely over the years. It is interesting that over that period people's desire to report to the police has increased and the police have increasingly been recording more of the crime that is reported too. Both of those over the last few years have been going up.

**Q70 Mr Allan:** Is the British Crime Survey now going to be done in a year? It was very sporadic during the 1990s. Is the idea now that it should be an annual event?

*Professor Wiles:* It is now not just an annual event; it is continuous. We are doing a survey which has an annual sample of over 40,000 and in order to do that we have to do continuous interviewing, which is why we are able once a quarter to publish a quarterly look from the British Crime Survey.

**Q71 Mr Allan:** We should in theory have a much better record of crime now on computer.

*Professor Wiles:* Absolutely.

**Q72 Mr Allan:** There is a sort of maxim that goes round that says with increasing affluence property crime goes down and violent crime goes up. From your professional point of view, is there any substance in that?

*Professor Wiles:* As far as we can see from the econometric modelling we have done—it is referred to in the report—this is pretty high level micro stuff, but nevertheless what that suggests is that as the rate of growth in the economy increases, other things being equal, property crime is likely to go down. What is less well established, although it was suggested by some earlier Home Office work, is that as the level of affluence in broad terms goes up certain kinds of violent crime go up. In a sense, that is what we have been seeing. We know that violent crime, as was suggested in a recent answer by Mr Lewis, is related to alcohol consumption. In almost half of all violent crime the victims say their assailant was drunk. We know that is particularly related to beer consumption. In other words, it is not the overall consumption. That is related to drinking in pubs and clubs.

**Q73 Mr Allan:** Could we expect that if there were to be an economic downturn and property crime were to go up that would be your prediction of what would be likely to result?

*Professor Wiles:* My prediction would be that if the rate of economic growth reduces other things being equal that could lead to an increase in property crime but the "other things being equal" are quite important. That is just one variable.

**Q74 Mr Allan:** Mr Lewis has the administration of these schemes. I am particularly interested in the paragraphs on page 27, paragraphs 3.2 to 3.4. Do you recognise that this has been a pretty damning indictment? At the end of 3.3 it says: "Staff in the Home Office regional crime reduction teams explained that their prime objective became to ensure that annual allocations were spent by the year end." In other words, not to reduce crime but to get rid of the money.

*Mr Lewis:* I do think that this report draws attention to the fact that, in the early years of this programme, we did not administer it as well as we should have done. We have been getting significantly better. For example, for 2003–04 we made final allocations of funding only in June 2003. In other words, after the year in question had begun. That cannot be good practice. For 2004–05 we improved very substantially on that and final allocations were made on 10 March 2004, before the year in question began. For next year, our target is to have made those allocations by 1 February. We are seeking to improve but you are quite right to say that in the early years of the programme one of its weaknesses was that decisions about funding were made too late.

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**Q75 Mr Allan:** The other area they talk about here is year end spending. There is a lot of money stacked up; get rid of it quick. Can they roll over partnership money from one year to the next?

**Mr Lewis:** Normally, our programme funding is for three years so within that envelope the answer is yes, as long as the money has not been spent and is still for that project. Overall within government we have moved some way to extending what is called end-year flexibility so that there is not what there certainly was some years ago, a kind of rush to spend money at year end.

**Q76 Mr Allan:** We have looked at another report and I think we have found that this is just as bad as ever. That is what worries me. You have gone to all this trouble of establishing resource accounting and three year budgets and some of the other work we have done with the National Audit Office shows it seems to be just as bad.

**Mr Lewis:** I can only speak from my own personal experience but having been a civil servant now for over 30 years I think the position is significantly better than it was.

**Q77 Mr Allan:** Can you explain why in 3.4 we see that Portsmouth bought a rubbish CCTV and an automatic number plate recognition system on condition that the money had to be spent by the year end? Why were they not just given six months to buy one that works rather than forced to quickly buy one that did not work?

**Mr Lewis:** I did look into this paragraph and asked a few questions of that kind. Although the facts are exactly as stated here, Portsmouth Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership were given a choice in this matter as to whether they wanted to take up that funding or not. It was made clear to them at the time of the allocation that they should only take it up if they thought it could properly be spent before the year end.

**Q78 Mr Allan:** Why, if an automatic number plate recognition system is needed in Portsmouth and there is some money sitting in a government bank account to pay for it, do they have to spend it by an artificial deadline?

**Mr Lewis:** I agree with you. I agree that in a sense we have been too hidebound by end of year accounting and that is not healthy in this particular instance where this particular funding was offered. It was however made clear that that, in this case, would be the condition attaching to it.

**Q79 Mr Allan:** Can we move on to figure 15 on page 22, which is the Blackpool Tower Project which tries to give some figures for value for money from engaging in a project like this? Do you see this kind of accounting as a good way of looking at the initiatives?

**Mr Lewis:** Yes, I do. This is the project that I have referred to a number of times which has been hugely instrumental in leading to our National Prolific Offender Programme. It is possible to attach some numbers to the cost of the crimes that that very

small number of people in absolute terms, the very prolific offenders, are committing. You then have to go through some very, very complex economic calculations to try and work out your cost benefits in all of this, but I do think that is worth doing. It is worth saying that Professor Wiles and I have spent a lot of time together working on precisely this. That national programme is being evaluated very thoroughly as from its outset so that we can try and understand the benefit or not that it would bring about.

**Professor Wiles:** What we have been trying to do is embed cost benefit analysis in all of the evaluations because that is the common measure, to try and decide where each pound of public resource is best spent. This is an example of the kind of cost benefit analysis that we have been trying to do.

**Q80 Mr Allan:** If you look at the figures, it looks like you have spent about £10,000 or 281,000 over 27 offenders. I presume you did not consider giving them £10,000 each not to offend but I assume you spent the money primarily on getting instant drug treatment for them. When you look at the figures here, you have to ask why it is that we still get reports that, in most parts of the country, the waiting lists for drug treatment are still 12 to 18 months. Drug treatment and testing orders have been piloted in a lot of areas and there is capacity in the system. If this is working so well, why is it not the case that today you are not preventing more victims of crime by making sure that everyone gets this instant drug treatment as they have in Blackpool?

**Mr Lewis:** That is not accurate. You have some wrong information there because I am also responsible within the Home Office for the Government Drug Strategy. Although I cannot literally quote the figures to you, I would be more than happy to write. Overall waiting times for drug treatment have come down very significantly indeed in recent years. Its availability is still not perfect but it is much, much better than it was. Moreover, in what we call the drugs intervention programme areas where we believe drug related crime is at its highest, the fall in waiting times has been at its greatest.

**Q81 Mr Allan:** Moving on to the proliferation of different funding programmes and audits, the report is very clear that the administrative burden has been a nightmare. Do you evaluate these kinds of schemes against giving the money to local authorities and police authorities saying, "Here you are. Here is the broad guidance. Get on with it" as opposed to running it all from the Home Office?

**Mr Lewis:** Yes. At a broader level, those are the kinds of calculations which you are making all the time. You are always trying to identify where that one pound can be best spent and achieve maximum returns. For example, we carried out recently in the Home Office a major review of our entire crime reduction strategy, looking precisely at where our pounds are best being spent. What it does show though is that to put all your pounds in any one basket would almost certainly be the wrong answer.

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This is an area where the sum of the individual parts can be greater than the individual parts if you can get them to work together.

**Q82 Mr Allan:** You have said in the report that you recognise there has been a proliferation of these initiatives and you are going to bring them all together. This seems to happen in regularly in government. We have this proliferation of initiatives for political reasons. You bring them all together and they can be proliferated again. Can you assure us you are not now going to have a special binge drinking reduction fund or whatever is the latest thing—mobile phone robbery or whatever—and that, now you have brought this to one, it is going to be one for a while?

**Mr Lewis:** I cannot give you an assurance that there will never be any future occasions on which government will decide to focus on particular initiatives and particular areas because there will always be reasons why the government of the day will decide that that is an appropriate thing to do. We have very much been moving in the direction, both within the Home Office and more widely across government, where we are concluding that giving people money in bigger pots with more flexibility but accompanied by demanding outcome targets and giving people more flexibility to decide how they are going to achieve those targets and use that available money is a good means of going forward. In my previous career as chief executive of a major agency, that is what I felt empowered by as well: being told very clearly what it was that people wanted me to achieve but then being given more flexibility to achieve it.

**Q83 Mr Allan:** Presumably the Gershon review requirements to cut staffing at the centre will help sharpen the focus?

**Mr Lewis:** Yes indeed and the Home Office is reducing our overall staffing by some 30% over the next three years. Even if it was not desirable in its own terms, which it is, we would be obliged to move in this direction anyway because we are simply not going to have the number of people who, even if we wanted them to, could micro-manage from the centre.

**Q84 Mr Allan:** In appendix one it describes a number of different grants and one is a directors' fund which sounds like a lot of fun. It is 10 million quid, "To enable Partnerships and other organisations to carry out specific projects to build capacity and address key priorities, including national targets." That sounds like a load of waffle. Is the ten million quid going out to Home Office regional directors just admin money?

**Mr Lewis:** It most certainly is not and I think this is a very good thing. Let me try to explain why. First of all, it is not simply about administration. It is to give our Home Office directors in the government offices and the National Assembly for Wales some real discretion over funding because they are closer to the coal face inevitably than we can be in the centre, so that they have a pot of money where they

can say, "I am persuaded that if I use some of this money with these partners in this place for this purpose it will bring a very substantial return." I think we should be more willing in the future to give more discretion over funding within a framework which we have to establish to our colleagues who are closer to the ground. I think this is rather a good use of funding.

**Q85 Mr Allan:** It is not for the directors' benefit; it is for the directors to spend?

**Mr Lewis:** It is most certainly the latter. It is not remotely for the directors themselves.

**Q86 Mr Allan:** We should bid to our regional directors for things in our local areas because we know they have some bunce?

**Mr Lewis:** I would not use those terms but I hope that Members would have very close working relationships with their Home Office directors because I think they would benefit both ways from that.

**Professor Wiles:** Part of this is getting people out of Whitehall onto the ground. Those regional directors are supported by one of my research staff as well, whose job is to help them understand what the evidence shows, what the good practice is, to analyse what the problem is in their area and to help them spend that money wisely.

**Q87 Mr Jenkins:** We talk about the British Crime Survey and crime being recorded. Where is business crime recorded?

**Professor Wiles:** We do surveys, but not as regularly as the British Crime Survey, a victim survey, asking people directly what they have suffered against industry and commercial enterprises. We have just completed one and it will be published in the new year.

**Q88 Mr Jenkins:** On the town centre problem, at one time we had a footballing problem, so has there ever been any model anywhere that required, for instance, funding for police to sort out problems in a town centre in licensed premises, the cost to fall on the licensed premises to meet the policing?

**Mr Lewis:** It is a very topical issue and the government—Hazel Blears, the Minister for Crime Reduction and Policing—has made clear fairly recently in response to a rather large study which was done on alcohol related violence that the government is looking to the industry to assume a greater responsibility for the costs incurred by some of the disorder and violence that, in the government's view, is created by irresponsible action on the part of some in the industry. The Minister has made clear that she is looking in the first instance for this to be on a voluntary basis but that the government is not ruling out any options for the future.

**Q89 Chairman:** You have been excellent, clear and very cogent witnesses, obviously very skilled in the subject. Would you forgive me if I asked you a couple of questions that I am sure my constituents

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would want me to ask? You will probably think they are rather naïve. They say to me all the time, “The problem with all this is that our police are loaded with political correctness and form filling. We want them on the beat.” What is your answer?

**Professor Wiles:** One of the things we have been doing right across the Home Office, including on the research side, is to see what we can do to reduce that burden. You may remember that about a year ago we carried out a small piece of research, but a very important one, called “Diary of a Police Officer” and we published it. That was precisely looking at how much time officers were spending on the beat. How much time were they spending in the station? How much time were they spending on bureaucracy? As a result of that, the former chief, Her Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary, was tasked to go away and look at how to reduce that. In a rather similar way, we have what we call an annual data requirement that sounds horribly bureaucratic, but the whole purpose of it is to make sure we are not over-burdening the police with unnecessary paperwork and form filling and to work out what we can do to reduce that, to maximise the time officers spend on the beat. Investment in IT systems and investment in modern technology are again to achieve this.

**Q90 Chairman:** The other thing people say to me is, “Look what happened in New York with roughly the same population as London, twice as many police officers, Mayor Giuliani, zero tolerance. Why can we not do it in London?”

**Professor Wiles:** The question of how many policemen is not a question for me directly. What you have to remember in America is that overall crime has been going down in many cities in America, not just in New York, so you need to be a little careful when you quote the New York example not to think that it only happened in New York when it happened in other states that did not have Giuliani and had slightly different policing policies. However, the key part of zero tolerance was essentially to say that if you do not pay attention to relatively minor crimes in a sense you almost encourage people with the idea that it is all right to commit a crime. That is very much what has been coming out of the recent work that has been done on crime reduction. This report is about crime reduction. It does not mention much about antisocial behaviour, but it is there in the strategy. Dealing with antisocial behaviour is precisely the zero tolerance strategy. It is taking up those things that are not necessarily crimes themselves but may well encourage the idea that crime is acceptable.

**Mr Lewis:** As a footnote to that, as Members of the Committee may know, our director of the police standards unit in the Home Office is the former commissioner of police in Boston in the United States. Although I would not want to speak for him—he has appeared already before a number of parliamentary committees—I think his view is that, yes, most certainly policing in this country has some

things to learn from the north American experience and vice versa. He thinks there are some things that he has found here which are very admirable and innovative. I think this is a learning process. We have to be open to ideas from other countries, just as I think other countries have something to learn from what we are doing.

**Q91 Mr Steinberg:** I worked out that if a copper costs us anything between £50,000 and £100,000 a year you would have on the beat between an extra 10,000 and 20,000 policemen which would be anything between 250 and 500 extra coppers in any police authority area in the country. That would have a significant effect compared to putting some lights up in Ashfield or wherever it was.

**Mr Lewis:** Thank you for doing the mental arithmetic that I was incapable of doing. I think it is too simplistic to say that we could have used this money and we could have had more police officers. Of course we could but that does not necessarily mean that the impact on crime would have been greater. It might have been less. Most police officers—and I spend an awful lot of my time with police officers—do not think that the whole solution to reducing crime in this country is simply having more police officers. They think there has to be a real involvement in the community. They do believe that things like CCTV, better lighting, alley gating and a whole variety of things such as those are really good.

**Chairman:** Thank you very much. I was struck by the line of questioning from my friend, Mr Sheridan, about the Bexley experience. It seemed very clear. What was going on was quite obvious and when people are burgled you go in there and try to improve their lots. Then, there was the questioning by Mr Allan on the Blackpool Tower Project. If you read this it is so very clear and cogent on page 21: “. . . the project showed that 98% of Blackpool’s prolific acquisitive criminals were drug addicts . . .”. We know that from our own experience in our own constituencies. “. . . there were long waiting lists for drug treatment . . .”. We know this from our own constituencies. “. . . typically between 12 and 18 months. The Partnership developed a programme of immediate testing and drug treatment for prolific offenders . . . The project takes a robust approach to the treatment of prolific offenders with a drug problem and seeks to cut the supply of drugs to the area. Staff make initial contact with offenders whilst they are in prison and arrange to meet them at the prison gate on the date they are released. The scheme involves an assertive approach to treatment, and it is made clear to the offenders on the scheme that if they test positive for drugs or show signs of offending they will be subject to increased police surveillance. Drug treatment includes methadone prescriptions to reduce each person’s need for illegal drugs and hence their motivation . . .” This, gentlemen, seems so very obvious to us. We wish you and your partnership scheme well in trying to ensure that in all our constituencies this sort of thing happens and that there are a few more police on the beat.

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**Supplementary memorandum submitted by the Home Office**

*Question 80 (Mr Richard Allan): Waiting times for treatment for the misuse of drugs.*

**AVERAGE WAITING TIMES FOR DRUG TREATMENT—IN WEEKS**

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<i>Treatment Modality</i>	<i>Average national waiting times 2002–03</i>	<i>Average national waiting time December 2004</i>	<i>Average waiting times in Drug Intervention Programme areas December 2004</i>
Specialist Prescribing	8.3	3.5	2.6
GP Prescribing	8.5	2.1	1.7
Structured Counselling	5.5	2.4	2.0
Day Care	3.0	1.3	1.1
In-Patient Detoxification	8.3	3.0	2.8
Residential Rehabilitation	7.2	2.5	2.4

*Source: National Treatment Agency (December 2004)*

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