

Committee:	Date:
Safer City Partnership	8 th June 2015
Subject: Policing, Crime and Justice Proposals 2015-20	Public
Report of: David MacKintosh	For Information
<p style="text-align: center;">Summary</p> <p>The Conservatives made a number of commitments within their manifesto which will be of interest to members of the Safer City Partnership. This report highlights the proposed changes.</p> <p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the report. 	

Main Report

Background

During the election campaign the Conservative manifesto indicated developments in the following areas:

- Policing Reform
- Crime Prevention
- Reforms to the Prison System
- Sentencing and Rehabilitation
- Human Rights Legislation and the Legal System
- Preventing Terrorism, fighting extremism

Policing Reforms

There will be further development to the existing role of Police and Crime Commissioners, as well as an overhaul of the current police complaints system. There will new direct entry and fast track schemes for Police Officers to attract applicants from black and ethnic minority backgrounds. There will be an extension of the use of police-led prosecutions as well as allowing the Police to retain a greater percentage of the value of assets seize from criminals. Legislation may be introduced to mandate changes in police practices if stop and search does not become more targeted and stop to arrest ratios do not improve.

There is an intention to support closer working between the fire and police services. Work will be undertaken to ensure the proper provision of health and community-

based places of safety for people suffering mental health crises. It is hoped that this will stop vulnerable people being detained in police custody (and save police time).

The response to cyber-crime will be improved, with reforms to police training and an expansion in the number of volunteer 'Cyber Specials'. The Police Innovation Fund will be used to accelerate the adoption of new technologies, including mobile devices.

There will be an overhaul of the police complaints system.

Crime Prevention

There is an intention to publish standards, performance data and a ranking system for the security of smartphones and tablets, as well as online financial and retail services. There will be an overhaul of the police caution system and a blanket ban on all new psychoactive substances. Sobriety orders will be introduced to all courts in England and Wales which will be enforced through new alcohol monitoring tags. Going forward offenders will always have conditions attached to their punishment, e.g. victim redress.

Reform to Prison System

Further savings in the prisons budget will be made by closing old, inefficient prisons and building larger, modern and fit-for-purpose ones and expanding payment-by-results. Widespread random testing of drug use in jails will be introduced as well as new body scanners, greater use of mobile phone blocking technology and the development of a new strategy to tackle corruption in prisons.

Sentencing and Rehabilitation

There will be tougher sentencing and use of new technology to protect the public. The reform of the way in which prisoners are rehabilitated will continue and the deployment of new technology to monitor offenders in the community and bring persistent offenders to justice more quickly will be looked at. There will be an introduction of a new semi-custodial sentence, providing a short, sharp spell in custody it is hoped that this will change the behaviour of prolific criminals. An extension in the scope of the Unduly Lenient Scheme will be considered, so a wider range of sentences can be challenged.

A review of the current legislation governing hate crimes, including the case for extending the scope of the law to cover crimes committed against people on the basis of disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity will be considered. There will be an improvement to the treatment of women offenders, exploring how new technology may enable more women with young children to serve their sentences in the community.

Legal System

There will be a focus on the protection of victims and supporting vulnerable people, a new Victims' Law will enshrine key rights for victims (including the right to make a

personal statement and have it read in court before sentencing – and before the Parole Board decides on a prisoner's release). Vulnerable victims and witnesses will have greater opportunity to give evidence outside court and there will be a roll out nationally of pre-trial cross examination for child victims.

Emphasis has been placed on tackling violence against women and girls and ensuring a secure future for specialist Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage units, refuges and rape crisis centres. Publicly-funded advocates will have specialist victims' training before becoming involved in serious sexual offences cases and making sure the independent statutory inquiry into child abuse can challenge institutions and individuals without fear or favour. Lastly, there is also a focus on partnership working with the urgent work of overhauling how police, social services and other agencies work together to protect vulnerable children, especially from organised grooming and sexual exploitation

Human Rights Law

The Human Rights Act will be repealed and replaced by a British Bill of Rights. There will continue to be £375 million pound investment into the modernisation of the courts system and the continued review of the Legal Aid system.

Preventing Terrorism and Fighting Extremism

Current counter-terrorism powers will be strengthened. The police and security services will keep up to date their ability to access communication data and continue to maintain the ability of authorities to intercept the content of suspects' communications. The oversight for the use of the above powers will also be strengthened.

There will be a creation of a new Extremism Disruption Order. In addition, new Banning Orders for extremist organisation will be introduced this will outlaw groups that foment hate. Ofcom's role will be strengthened so that tough measures can be taken against channels that broadcast extremist content.

A strategy to tackle the infiltration of extremists in schools and public services will be developed as well as further measures to ensure colleges and universities do not give a platform to extremist speakers. Employers will be able to check whether an individual is an extremist and be given the right to bar them from working with children.

Conclusion

1. None of these proposals are of themselves surprising nor mark a significant change in direction. However, as they proceed they will require the SCP to consider any impact they may have on existing and developing work.

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