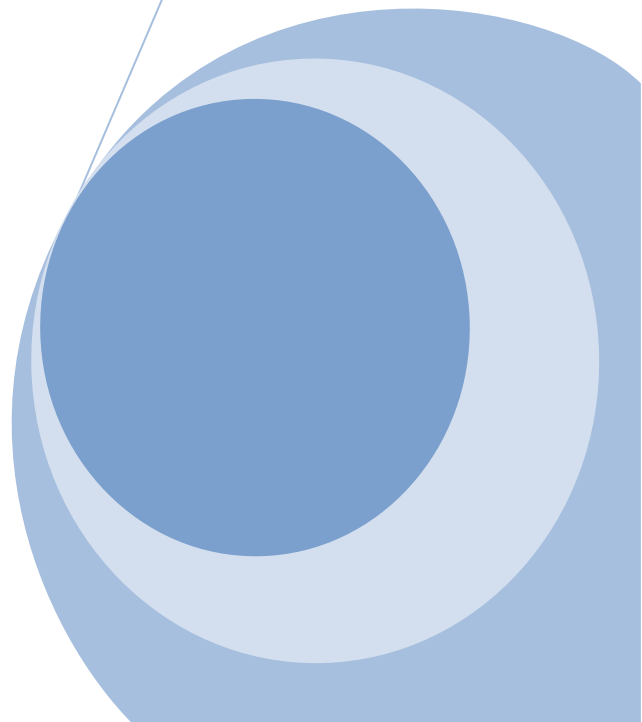


**COMMUNITY
COHESION:
CONCEPT, POLICY,
IMPLEMENTATION
AND THEORY**



First edition by Dr Frank Reeves, REWM 2003

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About Waterhouse Consulting Group

Waterhouse Consulting Group is a multi disciplinary management consultancy that brings together the UK's leading experts to deliver services in equalities & diversity, counter-extremism training, research and executive search.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(for an abbreviated version of the executive summary, read only italicised sections)

Overview

- ES1 *This review of community cohesion policy is presented as five chapters and a set of appendices. The first four chapters deal respectively with (1) the changing concept of community cohesion, (2) the evolution of cohesion policy, (3) West Midlands regional implementation pilots, and (4) the social theory underpinning the concept and the criticisms commonly levelled at it. Chapter five consists of a short commentary with recommendations. Finally, the main reports on community cohesion policy are summarised in a set of appendices.*

Concept

Simple meaning

- ES2 *The term ‘community cohesion’ entered the language of government in 2001 as the title of a report from the Home Office’s Independent Review Team, chaired by Ted Cante, charged with obtaining the views of local people and organisations on how to develop ‘confident, active communities’ and ‘social cohesion’. Superficially, the expression appears easy to understand and refers simply to the process or achievement of groups ‘gelling’ or ‘coming together’ in some kind of positive union. Most people interpret it in a broad commonsense way to mean good interpersonal relations. Others suspect that it must have a more profound meaning but find difficulty in locating it. The answer lies in deciding, when the term appears, what its users are referring to and why.*

Acquired meaning

- ES3 *The term first appeared in the official reports produced after the disturbances in northern towns in the spring and summer of 2001. Successive reports have added new dimensions (or further denotions) to the set of phenomena described by ‘community cohesion’. Each report has developed and popularised an increasingly detailed stipulative (or more accurately, precised) definition. What ‘community cohesion’ means is denoted by reference to a succession of practical policies devised and assembled for achieving a society judged to be cohesive. The definition has also been determined by what can pragmatically be undertaken and implemented in the current social and political context.*

Ouseley report

- ES4 *Sir Herman Ouseley’s report on Bradford is generally credited with introducing the concept, although his description is of its opposite: community fragmentation, manifested in growing divisions along race, ethnic, religious and social-class*

lines. As a solution to the perceived 'self-segregation', he proposes measures to unify the neighbourhood: a vision, strong civic leadership, involvement of young people in decision-making, and an appropriate education programme in the schools to tackle ignorance and bigotry.

Clarke report

- ES5 *Lord Tony Clarke's report on Burnley also sees the violence and damage as resulting from segregation in housing, education, employment and other contexts. The underlying causes are to be addressed by measures aimed at improving cohesion. Clarke focuses on the failing housing market which leads to vandalism, anti-social behaviour, and social isolation for those unable to move out of the area.*

Ritchie report

- ES6 *David Ritchie's report on Oldham describes a situation in which people from different ethnic backgrounds have come, or have chosen, to live separately. The answer lies in greater social integration, requiring a better understanding of current realities, respect for cultural diversity, and commitment to a united Oldham. More residential, educational and social mixing are required to make the community more cohesive.*

Cantle report

- ES7 *The national Independent Review Team, chaired by Lord Cantle professes surprise at the degree of physical segregation of housing estates and inner city areas. Separation in educational arrangements, community and voluntary bodies, employment, places of worship, use of language, and social and cultural networks means that people are living 'parallel lives', not touching at any point. Community cohesion is what is required to put communities together again after their disintegration. Cantle sees the solution in terms of promoting greater knowledge of, contact between, and respect for, the country's diverse cultures. The value of cultural pluralism and the importance of sharing ideas and understanding are regarded as seminal to cohesion. The promotion of cross cultural contact and the 'busting of myths' are also proposed. More controversially, the report emphasises the need to develop a new concept of citizenship requiring that citizens understand English.*

Denham report

- ES8 *The report of the Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion, chaired by John Denham, draws together many of the threads found in previous reports. It makes clear that the government is very much concerned with the scale of the disorders that occurred and the damage and destruction to property. The features of the areas that suffered the disturbances are listed. Again, the fact of*

geographical segregation is seen as reducing the opportunities for different communities to collaborate. Denham systematically sets out the factors that he believes result in the breakdown of order, thus beginning to provide the basis for subsequent prevailing definition of community cohesion. The dimensions are listed as identity and values, housing, education, political and community leadership. children and young people, youth services, sport and culture, employment, regeneration, activities of extremist groups, local media, policing and the prevention of crime and disorder. Denham also distinguishes clearly the role of central government in developing a national civic identity from the job of increasing cohesion at local level.

CRE report

- ES9 The Commission for Racial Equality reports on the lessons of Bradford, Oldham and Burnley provides an extended definition of a cohesive society. It has shared values, a sense of belonging, a shared pride in place, and genuine opportunities. But it also involves intolerance of discrimination and harassment, and respect for other people's lifestyles (as long as these do not infringe on others' rights), and leaders who tackle inequality and respect differences of background.

Local Government Association guidance

- ES10 *The Local Government Association guidance on community cohesion is significant for separating the role of central government from that of local government in the promotion of cohesion and in insisting that community cohesion issues must be related to practical action, thus providing 'a broad working definition'. Community cohesion is about local community action and a cohesive community is one with a common vision, appreciation of diversity, common life opportunities for all, and strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, schools and neighbourhoods. Also to be noted is the use of the more general expression 'different backgrounds' rather than 'different ethnic backgrounds'. The guidance is also only about what can be delivered at local level, thus downscaling pretensions to tackle issues, such as housing, by significant structural intervention. The report also extends the range of the issues to be tackled in relation to community cohesion, with a section on asylum seekers, refugees and travelling communities.*

Neighbourhood Renewal Unit prospectus

- ES11 *The Neighbourhood Renewal Unit's prospectus for local authorities and partners adopts the Local Government Association's definition and practical approach to community cohesion, taking the policy and programme a step closer to implementation in planning and service delivery, through voluntary and community sector initiatives and by building the capacity of communities to insist on quality services. The prospectus identifies the expected instruments of delivery as the local strategic partnerships, crime and disorder reduction*

partnerships, local authority, the community and voluntary sector, and sponsors of youth projects. The proposed distribution of funding also reveals the favoured Home Office approach, in particular, the allocation through the Community Champions programme to encourage the engagement of young people in community activities.

Home office guide on building a picture

- ES12 *The Home Office Guide for Local Authorities on how to build a picture of community also contributes significantly to the official definition by setting out how community cohesion is to be measured. Elements that can be measured are likely to receive attention, while those that cannot may suffer neglect. Ten social indicators under the three headings of common vision, appreciation of diversity, similarity of life opportunity, and positive relationships, will be used to provide a picture or measure and to assess the effectiveness of local strategy.*

Conclusion

- ES13 *In all those reports, the concept of community cohesion is used not only to characterise a set of desirable outcomes, but to provide an explanation of why they have not as yet occurred and what action needs to be taken to bring them about. The term, in other words, is embedded in a matrix of assumptions which purport to assist our understanding of why social fragmentation has occurred in Oldham, Burnley, and Bradford, why it might happen elsewhere unless there is effective intervention, what its underlying causes are and, following accurate diagnosis, what has to be done to put matters right and to monitor whether the various interventions are succeeding. All these considerations have played a part in providing a complex official definition of 'community cohesion'.*

Policies

Stages

- ES14 *The situation in Bradford and the disturbances in Oldham and Burnley 2001 resulted in proposals for remedial action which were then transformed in successive stages into government community cohesion policy. Seven separate stages in the formation of community cohesion policy can be identified. They are (1) the initial interpretation of situations and events, (2) responses to local situations, (3) generalised response to the concept of cohesion, (4) response to existing government initiatives, (5) policy tuning for practical implementation, (6) economic modification, and (7) modification for measurement.*

Interpretation of the situation: Ouseley

- ES15 *The Ouseley report provided the main conceptual framework for interpreting the events of 2001, even though it was written before the outbreaks of violence and*

destruction of property in the northern towns. According to Ouseley, community fragmentation is occurring along social, cultural, ethnic and religious lines, and local communities are actively engaged in self-segregation. Ouseley also suggests solutions such as bridge-building between communities and the promotion of greater understanding and respect. There is an issue, however, as to the reliability of the evidence supporting the claim that the relationships between communities are deteriorating and of the causes of the deterioration.

Interpretation of the situation: Clarke and Ritchie

- ES16 Clarke makes use of the concept of segregation in housing, education and employment, but focuses his explanation on the collapse of the Burnley housing market. Ritchie, too, adopts Ouseley's concept of voluntary self-segregation, but recognises the difficulties inflicted on Oldham by its recent industrial decline, although his analysis is multi-faceted.

Interpretation of the situation: Cantle

- ES17 The pivotal perception of the Cantle report relates to community polarisation, the extent to which people from different communities live 'parallel lives' with separate educational arrangements, community and voluntary bodies, employment, places of worship, language and social and cultural networks. There is a noticeable shift of emphasis away from concrete, historically-explanatory, economic and structural modes of thinking to practical commonsense proposals for encouraging contact. Cantle is no longer dealing with specific instances of separate living, but with the conceptual issue of increasing cohesion.

Interpretation of the situation: Denham

- ES18 The Denham report makes clear government preoccupation with preventing further damage and disorder. It attempts to draw out the features of areas and participants. The areas are deprived and fractured along racial, generational, cultural and religious lines. Participants are overwhelmingly white or Pakistani/Bangladeshi young men, with trouble breaking out after months of racial tension.

Interpretation of the situation: summary

- ES19 *Ouseley interprets the situation in terms of community fragmentation, self-segregation and the potential for educational solutions, Clarke in terms of the collapse of the local housing market, increased poverty, social exclusion and lack of opportunity for social mixing, Ritchie, in terms of the decline of traditional industry with disproportionate economic impact upon the Pakistani labour force and knock-on effects on housing, Cantle in terms of polarisation and parallel lives to be remedied by proposals for encouraging inter-ethnic contact, and Denham in*

terms of a focus on violence, injury and damage, and the importance of involving young people.

Policy responses to local situations: Bradford

- ES20 The Ouseley, Clarke and Ritchie reports describe local situations and events, and recommend solutions specific to the local issues they have identified. Ouseley's recommendations focus on measures to combat communities' 'self-segregation' through a series of mainly educational, cultural and ideological interventions. They have been criticised for being almost exclusively educational, exhortatory and attitudinal. The idea seems to be that just as communities are supposedly 'choosing' to live apart in a voluntarily-imposed self-segregation, they may be persuaded to change their minds and come to live together.

Local response: Burnley

- ES21 The Burnley Task Force recognises the need for action by a variety of bodies at national, regional and local level, and sees the local strategic partnership, supported by resources from the Community Empowerment Fund and the Community Chest, as the key local agency for engaging the public, community and voluntary sectors, and monitoring progress. In accordance with the importance it attaches to the subject of housing, the report makes 17 proposals relating to housing improvement, by far the largest number on any topic of the 83 recommendations.

Local response: Oldham

- ES22 The Ritchie report also sees the need for the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to work closely together, assisted by the local strategic partnership, to bring about greater degrees of residential and social mixing. It recognises, too, the importance of communication (and thus, the key role of the English language), greater education in cultural awareness, more prosperity, and a safer environment. A total of 125 recommendations are made across a broad range of themes.

Local response: summary

- ES23 *Ouseley, Clarke and Ritchie attempt to deal with similar problems and, although identifying different causal factors, their responses share in common a desire to improve a specific set of relationships in a given geographical area. The recommendations are conceived as working in a synchronised fashion to produce the desired outcomes. These policies are grounded in the specific local context that led in the first place to the intervention and are linked together in the sense that they are meant to bring about a specific kind of inter-ethnic or inter-religious cohesion.*

Response to the concept of cohesion: Cantle

- ES24 *As the response to the concept of cohesion becomes more generalised, as in the Cantle report, policy is no longer developed by reference to an assessment of the needs of a specific location, but rather by relating consideration of what should be done to the more general and abstracted concept of community cohesion. As the reasons for the original analyses and interventions become more distant, and the need for a national strategy more pressing, the nature of the policy recommendations begins to change.*

From inter-ethnic cohesion to diversity

- ES25 The recommendations of the Cantle report are detailed and cover fourteen themes. There is a shift away from terminology dealing with ethnicity and an increasing use of words such as ‘diversity’, ‘culture’, ‘disadvantage’ and ‘communities’. The diversity under consideration is multi-faceted and embraces age, social and economic standing and gender, as well as ethnicity, race and religion. Community cohesion is to be achieved by encouraging contact and mixing across a wide spectrum of social differences. *Policy is formulated, not by consideration of the immediate northern urban social realities, but by reference to the multi-faceted concept of community cohesion.*

Policy response to existing government initiatives: Denham

- ES26 The same approach is adopted by the Denham report, but Denham, set up as an inter-departmental group, also takes into account other government initiatives already under way. Denham reminds us that the government has introduced the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, Connexions, the New Deal, Sure Start, National Childcare Strategy, and Excellence in Schools, all of which need time to take effect. The inter-departmental group believes, nevertheless, that there is a need for a more holistic approach to regeneration. This is captured by the concept of community cohesion. *Denham makes clear that community cohesion is integrally related to the provision of high-quality public services for all. The necessity of mapping the relationship between community cohesion and the government’s other flagship local regeneration policies is clearly recognised. The similarities between, on the one hand, the themes of New Deal for Communities and the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, and on the other, the developing community cohesion agenda become increasingly obvious (as illustrated more fully in Chapter 2 of the full text).*

Denham and diffusion

- ES27 The net effect is to reinforce the tendency already present in the Cantle report to devise policies that are meant to impact on and alleviate a wide range of the inequalities existing between individuals, demographic groups, and neighbourhoods. *The resulting diffusion of effort moves the community cohesion*

policy still further away from the original purpose of tackling the ethnic, racial and religious fragmentation identified in northern towns.

Policy tuned for practical implementation

ES28 *Community cohesion policy is further developed by the Local Government Association guidance which is written with the view of showing how the issues raised by Cantle and the other reports can be translated into practical action at local level. The policy is tuned to the capabilities and needs of local agencies, such as local authorities, and local strategic crime and disorder reduction partnerships. The LGA guidance provides a large number of practical proposals for local action. The guidance amounts to a manual of practical tips on how to do cohesion. One feature of the guidance is the disaggregation of cohesion policy into discrete themes, with very little overlap or cross-thematic linkage of recommended actions. The overall effect is not of a holistic integrated approach, but of an analytical atomised set of proposals, 163 actions in all.*

Economically-modified policy response

ES29 *A further modification of community cohesion policy occurs when local authorities and their partners submit applications to become community cohesion pathfinders. The aims of the government community cohesion pathfinder programme are to identify ways of integrating cohesion across planning and service delivery, to provide support for cohesion through the voluntary sector, and to assist communities themselves in challenging existing services. The idea of integrating cohesion aims into existing planning and service delivery ('mainstreaming') is significant, but raises the question of whether it risks further diffusing the policy to the point at which it becomes indistinguishable from other regeneration policies. The way funding is allocated to the community cohesion pathfinder programme also has the effect of concentrating local effort on those activities which are funded, particularly youth programmes. Only a handful of the LGA recommendations for action are likely to be activated by pathfinder funding and only in those areas designated as pathfinders.*

Policy and measurement

ES30 *Policy is also fashioned by attempts to measure the success of its implementation. The Home Office has published ten indicators based on the LGA guidance to be used by local authorities and their partners in building a picture of local cohesion. REWM takes the view that the attempt to measure community cohesion based on its vague and opaque definition in the LGA guidance is inadequate and reveals the immense scale of the exercise in improving cohesion that the government has set itself. It is also difficult to see how the indicators proposed can be used to measure the success of the embryonic local community cohesion initiatives.*

Policy and implementation

The pathfinders

- ES31 *There are two designated pathfinders in the West Midlands: in Sandwell and Stoke-on-Trent. Each successful pathfinder has been awarded a grant of £285,000 over a twenty-two month period from February 2003 to September 2004, to be split between the local authority, community and voluntary sector, and Community Champions programme.*

Features of the two areas

- ES32 *The two areas selected are roughly equal in size, each with roughly a quarter of a million people. Both areas suffer high levels of deprivation and are in receipt of Neighbourhood Renewal funding. Both areas are political amalgams of older small industrial towns. Both have suffered recently from racial tension, exploited by the extreme right, with BNP candidates elected as councillors. The areas differ in ethnic composition, Sandwell with a black and minority ethnic community population of more than 20 per cent, Stoke of slightly more than 5.2 per cent. As well as being selected as community cohesion pathfinders, Stoke-on-Trent and parts of Sandwell fall into two of the government's nine housing renewal pathfinder areas aimed at reviving collapsing housing markets.*

Community cohesion pathfinder area plans

- ES33 *To gain community cohesion status, Sandwell and Stoke submitted cohesion pathfinder area plans, written to a format and notes provided by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit and the Home Office. For convenience, the description of the two pathfinder programmes makes use of the area plan format.*

Lead voluntary organisation

- ES34 In both Sandwell and Stoke, the lead community/voluntary organisation is the Council for the Voluntary sector. The Council for the Voluntary Sector receives pathfinder money directly to disburse for supporting activities and events that encourage diverse communities to interact cross-culturally.

Community Champions programme

- ES35 A similar arrangement is made for the Community Champions programme. In both Sandwell and Stoke, the Scarman Trust has been commissioned to administer schemes to encourage young people to meet and take part in activities to promote respect for diversity and leadership skills.

Local Government Association themes

ES36 *As their contribution to the pathfinder programme, Sandwell and Stoke have each selected to pursue a set of community cohesion themes from the sixteen listed in the Local Government Association guidance. Programme leaders commented on the themes they had selected, one describing a tension between race equality objectives and the neighbourhood renewal social inclusion agenda. There were major differences between leaders in the themes they regarded as most crucial to cohesion.*

Partners

ES37 The two pathfinder areas were expected to list partner organisations, Sandwell mentioning fourteen, and Stoke nine, organisations which would be undertaking cohesion work. An interesting difference between the two areas lies in the initiation of the pathfinder applications: the LSP coordinator in one, the City Council's head of corporate development in the other. Both areas, however, include the same kinds of local organisations as partners. *In both Sandwell and Stoke, the Local Strategic Partnership plays a central role in overseeing the programme and approving expenditure.*

Locality issues

ES38 In order to be selected for pathfinder status, the two areas were expected to identify key locality issues. Both areas lay great stress on their levels of multiple deprivation, including low educational attainment, poor health, poor housing, and a decline in traditional industry. The areas also describe their ethnic minority populations as well as locally-resident asylum seekers and refugees. Both identify the danger to race relations posed by the British National Party. Both areas recognise the need to collect further base-line data.

Aims and objectives

ES39 *Both pathfinders are expected to list aims and objectives. For Sandwell, it is to build cohesion between communities and to support the implementation of the neighbourhood strategy. For Stoke, it is to make it a better place for all to live, learn, work, and enjoy, with community cohesion and social inclusion as core components. The pathfinders are also expected to describe their local area plans and to show how the proposed community cohesion activities dovetail with it. Also required is a specification of outputs, outcomes and milestones.*

Achievements

ES40 *When asked what, in reality, would be the main or most obvious achievements of the pathfinders, respondents mentioned: raised awareness of community cohesion issues, an established educational and youth programme that tackled racism, and*

more effective leadership from politicians, officers and local citizens. The community cohesion area plan also includes sections on sustainability, costs and risk, all explained more fully in the main report.

Race relations versus social cohesion

- ES41 *Respondents were asked whether in their view, community cohesion and the local pathfinder programme were primarily concerned with racial and ethnic relations, or the broader issue of social inclusion. In Sandwell, the line was taken that, although the issues were complex, the programme was a deliberate attempt to tackle racism. In Stoke, the view was that the pathfinder was primarily about social inclusion, integration, and a more effective response to the needs of local communities.*

Theory and criticism

Broader political context

- ES42 *The expression ‘community cohesion’ manages to combine two great themes of the modern state. In ‘cohesion’, the primary concern is that of maintaining social order through the rule of law. In ‘community’ is contained the idea of ensuring the welfare of the people, particularly the weak and vulnerable, by encouraging collective action. But despite its origins in the disturbances experienced in the northern towns, widely interpreted as ‘racial’ conflict, ‘community cohesion’ is devoid of any intrinsic racial connotation.*

Technical definitions

- ES43 *Parts of the Cattle report, which popularised the use of the term ‘community cohesion’, are devoted to refining the term’s meaning and suggesting how the phenomenon might be measured, thus augmenting a common-sense understanding with a number of technical definitions. Despite their social scientific derivation, these technical definitions fail to draw out, or make use of, two major perspectives on community cohesion found in social scientific literature.*

Major perspectives

- ES44 *These may be termed the cultural approach and the plurality of interests approach. The first focuses on developing a community of shared values, individual commitment to common aims, or identification with others. The second focuses on interdependence arising from shared interests, reduction in wealth disparities, or defending common interests. Current approaches seem more concerned with the former than the latter, but most policy reflects a consideration of both. The consequences of adopting these different perspectives is explored at greater length in the full text.*

Criticism

- ES45 *Criticism of current thinking on community cohesion has come from a number of different directions but may be summed up under these headings: good relations at the expense of social justice, blaming the victim, failure to address economic structures, processes and inequalities, and a preoccupation with interpersonal relations, projecting the responsibility for public service failure onto the community, diffusion and deracialisation, excuse for withdrawing funding from black and minority ethnic groups, and inadequacies in the theorisation of race relation. Many of these criticisms were first set out in a critical review of the Cantle report written by Ben Tovim.*

Good relations at the expense of social justice

- ES46 *There is a suspicion among race equality specialists that community cohesion policy shifts government thinking and initiatives towards the sharing of uniform values and away from policies to promote race equality. By focusing on developing common values to span a broad range of social divisions, the pursuit of social justice may be inadvertently or deliberately neglected.*

Blaming the powerless

- ES47 *The suggestion that minority ethnic groups are consciously and actively rejecting British values and opportunities for integration and seeking to keep themselves separate and exclusive is regarded as a simplistic generalisation. It is likely to transfer the responsibility for rejection and segregation away from white people onto a relatively powerless minority with relatively few choices in life.*

Failure to address economic structures, processes and inequalities

- ES48 *Related to the criticism of the Cantle report's neglect of inequality and preoccupation with shared values, is the view that community cohesion policy has moved the government agenda towards a set of soft social, relational and attitudinal solutions, and away from hard economic and structural considerations.*

Projecting responsibility for public service failure onto the community

- ES49 *It is argued that it is not local communities that are fragmented and in need of measures to improve their cohesion (they continue to exhibit remarkable resilience and solidarity), but government departments and local public services which do not collaborate with one another and provide services that vary in quality, are delivered unfairly and result in unequal and divisive consequences. The perception of community fragmentation is nothing more than a projection onto a community of local government and public authority failure to deliver co-operatively effective and inclusive services.*

Diffusion and deracialisation

- ES50 Another criticism relates to the dangers of policy diffusion and deracialisation. The expression 'community cohesion' fails to make clear the ethnic and racial dimension of the issues highlighted by the original northern reports. *The pursuit of a multi-dimensional approach to community cohesion as an alternative to one directed at addressing the specific divisions between ethnically-defined communities, diverts attention away from ethnic and racial issues, and leads to their neglect. And by attempting to tackle such a wide spectrum of social division, the initiatives run the risk of sinking into a sea of other government priorities, interventions and targets.*

Excuse for withdrawal of funding

- ES51 *Many service providers to ethnic minority communities regard with suspicion the community cohesion argument against area-based initiatives, the criticism of leadership for allowing social and economic programmes to develop along self-styled cultural and faith-dominant tracks, and the attack on projects catering exclusively for the needs of single ethnic or faith groups, and see them as a sign of moves to cut off their public funding.*

Inadequacy of race relations theorisation

- ES52 *A further major criticism of community cohesion policy, is that it has been formulated naively without any apparent awareness of the many different race relations theories and studies of policy intervention. The reports seem only to draw on two embryonic theories: contact theory and 'characteristics of minorities'. Far more sophisticated versions of contact theory are available (see Allport, 1954). At least seven major schools of sociological explanation are recognised, including institutional practice, and economic and status self-interest.*

Commentary and recommendations

Sharpening the focus

- ES53 *A noticeable feature of community cohesion policy has been its development from an initial investigation of race relations between ethnic and religious groups to an expanded multi-dimensional approach that includes social class, age, gender, national identity, and asylum seeking. This expansion and diffusion makes it far more difficult to decide on what exactly the policy is expected to achieve, how to go about delivering it, and how to recognise when it is successful. Action may need to be taken to refocus the policy initiatives already under way. It might be necessary to revisit the original problem of community fragmentation and 'parallel living' in northern areas in order to concentrate efforts on more deep-seated structural issues.*

Establishing a reliable research foundation

- ES54 Are the claims that social fragmentation is increasing and that ethnic minorities are choosing to avoid people different from themselves supported sufficiently by sociological research? Further robust research may have to be undertaken to establish more firmly the ground on which community cohesion policy is based.

Customising solutions for different scenarios

- ES55 It is also likely that the social fragmentation in northern towns needs a response specific to the local circumstance. Consideration should be given to the possibility that what is required is not a general response to community cohesion but a set of solutions developed for a number of different race relations scenarios, eg. areas of urban deprivation, economically prosperous urban areas, and rural districts. Currently, the same community cohesion guidance is offered to all local authorities and partners.

Linking policies through local strategic partnerships

- ES56 *Guidance should be issued on ways to relate the duty to promote good race relations to the various measures for enhancing community cohesion proposed in the Local Government Association guidance and pathfinder pilots. Local strategic partnerships appear to be in the best position to steer, direct, coordinate, plan and, possibly, performance-manage, community cohesion work. New models of race equality organisation could be developed to serve local strategic partnerships and their cross-cutting race, community cohesion, and crime prevention and community safety, sub-groups.*

Applying academic insights

- ES57 *Future community cohesion initiatives and relevant government reports should make use of a full range of academic insights into the way racial equality and social inclusion might be promoted to maximum effect. They might, for example, be applied to research into different approaches to community policing.*

Knitting the strands of community cohesion policy

- ES58 *The plethora of community cohesion themes and proposals for action should be reworked to establish greater prioritisation and interrelatedness. Finally, performance indicators need to be developed to measure the effectiveness of local pathfinders. Current Home Office indicators may be insufficiently sensitive to detect their impact. Pathfinder outcomes need to be measured, success noted and disseminated, and mistakes put right.*

Recommendations

ES59 *Sixteen recommendations are presented on how to develop and improve community cohesion policy (see list of recommendations).*

Chapter 1

CONCEPT

- 1.1 This chapter describes when and how the term ‘community cohesion’ came to be used in government circles, and the processes by which it has steadily accreted referential meaning to the extent that its ever-broadening compass has resulted in people finding it increasingly difficult to understand. The course of the developing concept is traced in the content of nine official publications, each progressively contributing a different emphasis and a gradually widening range of connotations.
- 1.2 The expression ‘community cohesion’ entered the language of government in the late Autumn of 2001 with the publication of the Home Office’s Independent Review Team’s report entitled *Community Cohesion*. Disturbances in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford in the spring and early summer of 2001 had resulted in the destruction of property and attacks on the police. People from different ethnic backgrounds were involved. Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, was prompted to set up a review team chaired by Ted Cante, Associate Director of the Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government and former Chief Executive of Nottingham City Council.
- 1.3 The review team’s terms of reference were, firstly, to obtain the views of local communities, including young people, local authorities, voluntary and faith organisations, in a number of representative multi-ethnic communities, on the issues that needed to be addressed in developing confident, active communities and *social cohesion*, and, secondly, to identify good practice and to report this to the Ministerial Group, and also to identify weaknesses in the handling of these issues at local level (Home Office, Nov 2001, p.5).

‘Community cohesion’: what it means in simple terms

- 1.4 The two words, ‘community’ and ‘cohesion’, can be understood only very superficially by looking them up in the dictionary. The expression as a whole brings with it an extensive historical legacy of social and political thought. Although used in recent reports in an apparently commonsensical and uncomplicated manner, it is thoroughly enmeshed in a complex and controversial web of social theory (see Chapter 4). The frequent failure to recognise or acknowledge any of the term’s theoretical implications contributes to its general vagueness, ambiguity and opacity, thus rendering it an innocuous political rallying cry, but a somewhat clumsy tool for fashioning policy.
- 1.5 From a common sense or lexical point of view, ‘community cohesion’ refers simply to the process or achievement of groups ‘gelling’ or ‘coming together’. It is ‘about helping micro-communities to gel or mesh into an integrated whole ...’ (Home Office, Nov 2001, p.70). At conferences called to discuss community

cohesion, participants often appear to interpret the expression in this extremely broad and unbounded way, to include any and every instance of good interpersonal relations. Others will insist that they be offered an expert definition that captures the illusive, hidden essence of the subject matter. Much time has been committed to this misguided quest. Yet others have concluded that the term can mean anything the communities want it to mean. They ignore Humpty Dumpty's profound observation that 'the question is ... which is to be master, that's all'. The government, of course, has determined the recent community cohesion agenda.

What the term has come to mean in official circles.

- 1.6 Since the disturbances of 2001, 'community cohesion' has acquired a complex set of referential meanings with every new report published on the subject matter, much like a rolling snowball. The series of official reports has gradually developed and popularised an increasingly detailed stipulative (or, more accurately, precised) definition. What 'community cohesion' means is denoted by reference to a succession of practical policies devised and assembled for achieving a society judged to be cohesive. The definition has also been determined to a large extent by a consideration of what can pragmatically be undertaken and implemented in the current social and political context. The government is unlikely to pursue policies of costly intervention that go against the grain of other initiatives. What follows is a brief summary of the concept's recent development.

Sir Herman Ouseley's report on Bradford

- 1.7 'Community cohesion' originated as the politically-positive way of presenting its antithesis: the negatively formulated concept of 'community fragmentation', used by Sir Herman Ouseley in his report (Bradford Vision, July 2001) to describe divisions observed in Bradford along social, cultural and religious lines.
- 1.8 Ouseley remarks on the 'worrying drift towards self-segregation, the necessity of arresting and reversing the process, and the role of education in tackling ignorance and bigotry'. He believes Bradford 'has lost its spirit of community togetherness' and is witnessing 'growing divisions amongst is population along race, ethnic, religious and social class lines'. Existing funding regimes have failed to incorporate objectives to encourage social and cultural interaction and integration. There is a lack of trust between young people and those in established leadership positions. What the district lacks is a unifying vision and strong political, municipal and community leadership.
- 1.9 Ouseley introduces a number of themes that have since become central to considerations of community cohesion, in particular, the need for a unifying vision, strong civic leadership, measures to involve young people in decision-making, and the part played by area-based regeneration funds in creating inter-

communal rivalry. Education, too, is given a key role in tackling ignorance and bigotry.

- 1.10 Starting from the assertion that ethnic relations are deteriorating, this first seminal report provides many of the premises on which subsequent government community cohesion policy is based. Significantly, for what is to follow, fragmentation along racial and ethnic lines was considered to be only part of a scenario which also includes divisions of social class, religion and age. After the disturbances in the north of England, two more local reports were commissioned.

Lord Clarke's report on Burnley

- 1.11 Clarke's report on Burnley is atheoretical in content, as indeed is most of the official literature on community cohesion. In analysis of local disturbances, however, a distinction is made between the immediate trigger of violence and damage and the underlying causes involving segregation in housing, education, employment and other contexts. The underlying causes are to be tackled by measures to improve cohesion.
- 1.12 In particular, Clarke focuses on the housing market. In Burnley, there is a 'large surplus of housing, much of it in a poor state and a significant proportion unfit for occupation' (p.39). The increase in vacancies leads to vandalism, anti-social behaviour and social isolation for those not able to move out. For many people, the equity in their home is their major source of wealth, of which they are deprived when the local housing market collapses. Like Ouseley, Clarke points out there are few opportunities for white and minority ethnic groups to mix and understand each other's cultures.
- 1.13 The report contains a large number of recommendations organised under headings that reappear in subsequent reports, eg. housing, regeneration, education, police, crime and disorder, youth and community, and media. The report also sees a central role for local strategic partnerships in remedial action-planning. The recommendation for a housing market renewal fund, however, is not taken up in later community cohesion policy development but in the government's housing market renewal strategy. Clarke stresses the importance of community consultation, the problem of 'legal educational segregation', the influence of the BNP, and the failings of both white and ethnic minority communities and their leadership, all themes to be repeated.

David Ritchie's report on Oldham

- 1.14 The Ritchie report on Oldham recognises 'a system of separate development within the town in which people from different ethnic backgrounds live lives largely separated from one another' (p.3). As in the Ouseley report, the processes involved appear to emphasise the voluntary self-segregation of communities. The answer is greater social integration requiring a better understanding of current

realities, respect for cultural diversity and commitment to a united Oldham. Respect for cultural diversity, however, ‘must be balanced in acceptance that in key respects people must come together much more’.

- 1.15 The social integration required for a community to be cohesive requires more residential mixing, educational mixing, social mixing (sports, leisure activity, religious festivals), inter-ethnic communication (requiring an understanding of the English language), education in cultural awareness, prosperity, and a safer environment (with a reduced fear of crime).
- 1.16 Cohesion is to be brought about by ‘mixing’ in a variety of social contexts. This list constitutes an early attempt to define what a cohesive community might look like. The report also contains sections with headings later to be repeated in the developing literature on cohesion policy: housing, education, the economy, health, policing, leisure, culture and community interaction, regeneration, governance and strategic direction, racism and the BNP, and media.

The Cantle report

- 1.17 The national report of the Independent Review Team, chaired by Lord Cantle, makes use for the first time of the term ‘community cohesion’ in its title and content, although its terms of reference refer to ‘social cohesion’.
- 1.18 The Review Team claims not to be surprised by the physical segregation of housing estates and inner city areas. What strikes it most forcefully is the depth of urban polarisation.

‘The extent to which these physical divisions were compounded by so many other aspects of our daily lives was very evident. Separate educational arrangements, community and voluntary bodies, employment, places of worship, language, social and cultural networks, mean that many communities operate on the basis of a series of parallel lives. These lives do not seem to touch at any point, let alone overlap and promote any meaningful interchanges.’ (Home Office, Nov 2001, p.9.)

- 1.19 Charged with identifying good practice, key policy issues and new and innovative thinking in the field of community cohesion, the Team approaches its job from the reality of fragmentation: cohesion is what has to be achieved to make matters right. It is about putting communities together again after their disintegration. There is ‘an urgent need to promote community cohesion, based upon a greater knowledge of and contact between and respect for the various cultures that now make Great Britain such a rich and diverse nation ... It is also essential to establish a greater sense of citizenship’.
- 1.20 The report makes use of the following headings, many already employed by the Ouseley, Clarke and Ritchie reports, and used again repeatedly in the

literature that follows: people and values, political and community leadership, political organisations, strategic partnerships, regeneration programmes, initiatives and funding, integration and segregation, younger people, education, community organisations, disadvantaged and disaffected communities, policing, housing, employment, and press and media.

- 1.21 The Cattle report is seminal in envisaging community cohesion in relation to the adoption of the value of cultural pluralism and the importance of sharing ideas and understanding, hence the proposal to mount a well-resourced national debate influenced by young people.
- 1.22 It also pays less attention than Ouseley, Clarke and Ritchie to existing socio-economic structural and institutional divisions that have resulted in fragmentation and ethnic polarisation, although the contribution of housing, education, employment and policing to local community relations is acknowledged.
- 1.23 Primacy, however, seems to be given to the development and ownership of the shared principles of ‘a new citizenship’. This citizenship involves fluency in English to facilitate social participation. For Cattle, community cohesion also requires the promotion of cross-cultural contact between different communities, the fostering of understanding and respect, and the ‘busting of myths’.

The Denham report

- 1.24 The report of the Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion, chaired by John Denham, draws together many of the threads found in the previous reports, as well as making use of an earlier draft of the CRE analysis. It reveals that the government’s concerns and proposed policy solutions are closely related to the scale of the disorders and the damage and destruction to property.
- 1.25 The group sets out to highlight the features shared by the areas that suffered disturbances, for example, that the participants were overwhelmingly young men, white and ethnic minority, and local to the areas, and that the areas, inhabited predominantly by Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, were some of the most deprived in the country.
- 1.26 The Denham report points out that until Lord Ouseley observed that different ethnic groups in Bradford were ‘increasingly segregating themselves from each other and retreating into ‘comfort zones’ made up of people like themselves’, the term segregation had been rarely used in discussion of community relations in Britain. While acknowledging that there is nothing intrinsically wrong about people exercising choice as to where and with whom they live, the Ministerial Group believes that geographical segregation is likely to reduce opportunities for different communities to collaborate and may be symptomatic of deeper concerns

(for example, fear of racist attack). The report also places less emphasis than Ouseley on self-segregation. The difficulty of distinguishing between cause and effect in the development of segregated communities is clearly recognised.

1.27 Starting, like Ouseley, from a negative perception of community fragmentation, Denham begins systematically to list the factors that may result in the breakdown of order. They are:

- the lack of a strong civic identity or shared social values to unite diverse communities.
- the fragmentation and polarisation of communities - on economic, geographical, racial and cultural lines – on a scale which amounts to segregation, albeit to an extent by choice.
- disengagement of young people from the local decision-making process, inter-generational tensions, and an increasingly territorial mentality in asserting different racial, cultural and religious identities in response to real or perceived attacks.
- weak political and community leadership.
- inadequate provision of youth facilities and services.
- high levels of unemployment, particularly amongst young people.
- activities of extremist groups.
- weaknesses and disparity in the police response to community issues, particularly racial incidents.
- irresponsible coverage of race stories by sections of the local media.

1.28 These issues and the policies intended to address them provide the framework for subsequent definitions of community cohesion. The report draws on Ouseley, Clarke, Ritchie, and Cattle in the main headings it selects to describe the various dimensions of cohesion, or its absence. At the risk of being repetitious, they are: identity and values, housing, education, political and community leadership, children and young people, youth services, sport and culture, employment, regeneration, activities of extremist groups, local media, policing and the prevention of crime and disorder.

1.29 The Denham report develops the concept of community cohesion in two ways. Firstly, it separates the role of central government in developing a unifying national civic identity from the policies and decisions to be made and implemented at local government level. Secondly, it provides a list of the factors

identified as resulting in community fragmentation, accompanying this with a set of solutions in the form of policy recommendations. This provides the foundation for the positive definitions of community cohesion provided in the CRE and LGA reports (below).

Commission for Racial Equality report on the lessons of Bradford, Oldham and Burnley.

- 1.30 The Commission for Racial Equality's report on the lessons to be learnt from Bradford, Oldham and Burnley is based on an earlier internal document. The Commission accepts the findings of the Ouseley report that ethnic groups live segregated lives in housing, education, work and everyday social intercourse and that communities are fragmenting along racial, cultural and faith lines.
- 1.31 The CRE report, however, is careful to make a distinction between enforced 'segregation' and voluntary 'congregation', as a contribution to earlier opinions suggesting that observed racial polarisation was a consequence simply of choice, or 'self-segregation'.
- 1.32 The report also provides an extended definition of a cohesive society as one with:
- shared values that can be upheld despite other differences between groups.
 - a sense of belonging and an acceptance that this means different things for different groups.
 - an intolerance of racial discrimination and harassment.
 - shared pride in the place where people live.
 - respect for people's lifestyles, as long as these do not infringe on others' rights.
 - genuine opportunities for everyone in education, employment, housing, health, and civic and democratic activity.
 - national and local leaders who tackle inequality and respect differences in background and outlook.
- 1.33 Sharing aspects in common with the one provided later by the Local Government Association, this list gives far greater emphasis to racial justice, diversity and the need to tackle racial discrimination, and to show respect for others' life styles. Other characteristics: shared values, a sense of belonging, pride in place, and good leadership, have already been mentioned in earlier reports.

Local Government Association guidance

- 1.34 The Local Government Association guidance on community cohesion (2002) is intended to translate understanding of community cohesion issues into practical action, thus excusing further theoretical consideration of the term in favour of a 'broad working definition'.
- 1.35 The guidance is significant for separating the role of central government from that of local government in the promotion of cohesion. Central government is to review national policy to ensure it promotes cohesion at local level and puts in place mechanisms to encourage local authorities to address the issue by, for example, providing advice and guidance, disseminating good practice and encouraging and facilitating new learning through pathfinder programmes. But the guidance makes clear that community cohesion is 'primarily about proactive action at the local level' and needs to be owned by local agencies and organisations working in partnership on a community strategy.
- 1.36 As most of the contents of the guidance is focused on arguing the case and providing proposals for practical action at local level, the guidance effectively redefines 'community cohesion' in terms of local community action, and provides the following description of a cohesive community as one where:
- there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities.
 - the diversity of people's different background and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued.
 - those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities.
 - strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.
- 1.37 There are elements here of the Denham definition, but put in more positive terms, and of the CRE's insistence on the importance of respecting diversity and others' lifestyles. But the Cantle report's proposals for a formal statement of allegiance and for the use of English as a condition of citizenship are absent from the local agenda and definition. The guidance is emphatically only about what can be delivered at local level, thus downscaling any pretensions to tackle issues, such as housing, by significant structural intervention, although these are taken up elsewhere.
- 1.38 The headings to be found in preceding reports are reproduced more systematically and comprehensively, and accompanied by more considered and practical recommendations: community and political leadership, vision and values, community and voluntary organisations, faith communities, young people,

regeneration, sports and cultural services, education, housing and planning, employment and the economy, community safety and policing, and press and media. This local government guidance, however, as might be expected, stresses the importance of achieving local ownership of the community cohesion agenda and of the value and role of local strategic partnerships as a means of effective local delivery.

- 1.39 There is a growing awareness, too, of the need to monitor and assess the success of any new local initiatives, reflected in the section on baseline assessment and monitoring. Local authorities are told to decide on how they will measure improvements in community cohesion and their attention is drawn to a new Quality of Life headline indicator: 'percentage of people surveyed who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds and communities can live together harmoniously'. This amounts to a new exclusively-attitudinal definition of community cohesion.
- 1.40 The guidance also includes a section on asylum seekers, refugees and travelling communities. The dispersal of asylum seekers, it is argued, might result in rapid changes to the ethnic or cultural mix of a geographical community with the effect that communities that are unprepared may feel threatened by new arrivals, this providing the potential for generating tension and disorder.
- 1.41 The introduction of this theme acknowledges the importance of dealing with the reality of grass-roots community relations, resistant to distant political reassurance and ripe for exploitation by extremist groups. The recognition of asylum seekers, refugees and travellers as part of the community constitutes a necessary but challenging extension of the cohesion agenda.

The Neighbourhood Renewal Unit's prospectus for local authorities and partners

- 1.42 The Neighbourhood Renewal Unit prospectus is a further step towards practical local implementation of community cohesion policy and draws heavily on the Local Government Association's guidance, adopting without modification its definition of a cohesive community. The programme aims to develop models for promoting community cohesion in planning and service delivery, to support cohesion measures in the voluntary and community sector, and to build the capacity of communities to improve the quality of local services.
- 1.43 In delivery mode, the prospectus emphasises the role of local strategic partnerships and crime and disorder reduction partnerships, as well as the need to start with a baseline assessment of cohesion, or the lack of it, on the ground. The funding for areas which are successful in application is to be divided between three agencies: local authority, the community and voluntary sector and the Community Champions programme. This last represents the development of a specialist youth stream aimed at engaging young people in community activities.

- 1.44 The prospectus draws out the importance of the financial framework and allocation in determining the nature of community cohesion on the ground. The Denham report's recognition of the damage inflicted by young people is acknowledged in the funding allocated for work with young people: a further significant element in the evolving definition of community cohesion activity.

Home Office Guide for Local Authorities on how to build a picture of community cohesion

- 1.45 It is generally acknowledged that efforts to measure a social phenomenon may affect the way it is defined. There is a tendency to focus on only those elements that can be measured (with relative ease) and to omit or neglect those that cannot.
- 1.46 The Home Office guide describes ten social indicators that can be used by local authorities and other local agencies to provide a picture of, or 'measure', community cohesion in their areas and to assess the effectiveness of their local community cohesion strategies. The Audit Commission, along with the government, believes that measurement is essential to policy implementation, because if outcomes cannot be measured, success cannot be distinguished from failure, and mistakes cannot be put right.
- 1.47 This is another way of saying that community cohesion must not only be operationally defined, but that the operational definition is the only one worthy of consideration, despite the fact that the general concept will have had to be drastically circumscribed in order to conform to the requirements of a simple and cheap system of measurement. Community cohesion is thus defined, or redefined, in terms of ten indicators. There is, however, an acknowledgement that the indicators will have to be interpreted in the light of local circumstances.
- 1.48 The so-called headline indicator (or outcome) is:
- (i) the percentage of people who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together.

The nine other indicators are grouped under the four components of the definition of a cohesive community (as originally stated in the LGA guidance).

Common vision. Whether a community has a common vision and sense of belonging is to be assessed by:

- (ii) the percentage of respondents who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood/town/county/England/Wales/Britain.
- (iii) key priorities for improving an area.
- (iv) the percentage of adults surveyed who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area.

Appreciation of diversity. Whether the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued is to be assessed by:

- (v) the percentage of people who feel that local ethnic differences are respected.
- (vi) the number of racial incidents recorded by police authorities per 100,000.

Similarity of life opportunity. The similarity of life opportunities from people from different backgrounds is to be judged by:

- (vii) the local concentration of deprivation.
- (viii) the percentage of pupils achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C or equivalent.
- (ix) the percentage of unemployed people claiming benefit who have been out of work for more than a year.

Positive relationships: The development of strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, schools and neighbourhoods is to be measured by:

- (x) the percentage of people from different backgrounds who mix with other people from different backgrounds in everyday situations.

(Surprisingly, however, 'different backgrounds' is understood as 'different social class' as well as 'different race or ethnicity'.)

- 1.49 Six of the ten indicators are attitudinal, with only four measuring material factors, namely, recorded racial incidents, concentration of deprivation, A*-C grade GCSE results, and percentage of unemployed people claiming housing benefit.
- 1.50 The question can, of course, be posed as to whether the indicators will serve as reliable measures of cohesion and whether, if averaged, within or across, they may disguise tensions between groups, and fail to warn of future outbreaks of disorder and property destruction. Furthermore, are they likely to prove adequate in measuring the outcomes determined by the Local Government Association guidance and the Pathfinder initiatives? Nevertheless, the indicators represent a significant development in the ongoing process of defining what is meant officially by community cohesion.

Conclusion

- 1.51 In the reports referred to above, the concept of community cohesion is used not only to characterise a set of desirable social outcomes, but to provide an explanation of why they have not as yet occurred and what action needs to be taken to bring them about. In philosophical jargon, 'community cohesion' does not simply describe a social reality but carries additional causal and decisional implications.

1.52 The term, in other words, is embedded in a matrix of assumptions which purport to assist our understanding of why social fragmentation has occurred in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford, why it might happen elsewhere unless there is effective intervention, what its underlying causes are and, following accurate diagnosis, what has to be done to put matters right and to monitor whether the various interventions are succeeding. All these considerations have played a part in providing a complex official definition of 'community cohesion'.

Chapter 2

POLICY

2.1 This chapter describes how the situation in Bradford and the disturbances in Oldham and Burnley in 2001 resulted in proposals for remedial action which were then transformed in successive stages into government community cohesion policy. The process of policy formation in respect of community cohesion is analysed under seven headings:

- initial interpretation of situations and events.
- policy responses to local situations.
- generalised policy response to the concept of cohesion.
- policy response to existing government initiatives.
- policy tuned for practical implementation.
- economically-modified policy response.
- policy in relation to measurement.

Initial interpretation of situations and events

Ouseley

2.2 The Ouseley report is generally accredited with providing the main conceptual framework for interpreting the events of 2001, despite the fact that it was written before the outbreaks of violence and destruction of property in the northern towns. Nevertheless, its publication in July 2001, with its claims that community fragmentation was occurring along social, cultural, ethnic and religious lines, and that local communities were actively engaged in self-segregation came at an opportune moment to provide a context and explanation for all the disturbances of the previous months. The analysis in terms of social fragmentation and increasing self-segregation was subsequently adopted by Clarke, Ritchie and Cattle. Ouseley's report on Bradford, an initiative at local level, conveniently captured the spirit of the moment and can be credited with 'agenda setting' (see Howlett and Ramesh 1995, p 104).

2.3 The terms of reference of the Ouseley report requiring it to identify the causes of conflict and polarisation, facilitate bridge-building and recommend ways of promoting greater understanding and respect, predispose it towards adopting a view of closed culturally-discrete communities, apparently relating with difficulty to one another. The report relies for its evidence base almost exclusively on the

observations and opinions of local Bradfordians. The conclusion is reached that relationships between white and Asian communities are deteriorating, with whites believing their needs are neglected and those of Asian Muslims prioritised. Conversely, members of the Asian community feel that Islamophobia and racism are blighting their lives.

- 2.4 Ouseley provides the seminal analysis, but how hard-edged and reliable is the evidence for worsening relationships or for the causal explanations provided to explain the deterioration? Base-line data of this kind may have been available, but the report does not draw on them. Indeed, the evidence base for most of the assumptions made about race relations, including their susceptibility to rational debate and persuasion, is not at all obvious.
- 2.5 The possibility has to be considered that all subsequent analyses and recommendations have only a minimal foundation on systematic data collection. This may not in this instance, or more generally, have much relevance to subsequent policy formation or outcome. Nevertheless, the slender evidential base of this trail-blazing document needs to be recognised, given the large policy edifice since constructed upon it.

Clarke

- 2.6 The Burnley Task Force's terms of reference were to consider the disturbances that took place in the town in June 2001 and to examine their underlying causes. The report produced by Lord Clarke makes use of the distinction between the immediate trigger of violence and damage and the deeper reasons behind Burnley's racial and ethnic division.
- 2.7 In explaining the division, the report makes extensive use of the concept of segregation in housing, education, employment and other social contexts, in a general situation of long-term economic decline. The high levels of prejudice and distrust in Burnley are attributed to the absence of opportunity for white and ethnic minority groups to mix.
- 2.8 The report, however, concentrates heavily on the collapse of the local housing market. Much of the housing is in a poor state and unfit for occupation. Ethnic minorities with larger families are housed in smaller, older, privately-owned property, inadequate for their needs, while demand from whites for social housing is falling.
- 2.9 The physical and environmental decline associated with both these processes has created a context in which disadvantaged communities feel neglected, a situation further exacerbated by the obsolescence of much terraced housing, falling house prices, and increased redundancy rates. Many residents, living among derelict and abandoned property and accumulated rubbish, have to endure appalling conditions and are, in effect, trapped, having invested their earnings, time and

effort in their homes, as house values spiral downwards. There is little chance of moving to a better part of town.

- 2.10 The collapse of the local housing market is clearly identified as a major factor in increasing social exclusion, poverty, and the threat to community cohesion. Although the resulting segregation and fragmentation may be the same, this theme of powerful housing market forces operating behind the scenes in Burnley to prevent individuals escaping from their existing social enclaves is at odds with the account provided by Ouseley of communities in Bradford actively choosing to live separately. The Ouseley and Clarke reports, then, provide different explanations for the deteriorating race relations in the two districts, although there is little recognition of this anomaly in the subsequent development and weighting of community cohesion policy.

Ritchie

- 2.11 Ritchie's report on Oldham, like Clarke's, considers the underlying causes of tension between local communities. While Ritchie largely adopts Ouseley's concept of voluntary self-segregation, the report is distinctive in attempting to explain Oldham's difficulties in the historical context of the town's dependence on the production of cotton textiles and its recent industrial decline, with adverse impact on the Pakistani labour force recruited initially to undertake unsociable shift-working.
- 2.12 While recognising the underlying economic malaise, the report also deals with the separate development of white and Asian communities in housing, education, health, policing, leisure, culture, community interaction, regeneration, governance, and the media. In particular, the report criticises the lack of a bi-partisan approach to the town's future, failure of civic leadership and the absence of any vision.
- 2.13 Ritchie's analysis seems far more consciously multi-faceted than Ouseley's or Clarke's and gives greater emphasis to joined-up working between agencies and the role of the Local Strategic Partnership. The report acknowledges the role of politics in the equation and is not afraid to criticise politicians for their lack of leadership, but its uncritical acceptance that residential and other segregation is self-inflicted, and its attribution of blame in equal measure to all parties, has quite understandably been challenged and rather more than impressionistic evidence demanded.
- 2.14 Nevertheless, the Ritchie report provides, if only in embryo, yet another answer to the primary cause of local racial tension: the collapse of traditional industry and employment, unduly affecting one section of the community, depriving it of economic power, and forcing it to look inwards and to rely on its own community capital.

Cantle

- 2.15 The Cantle and Denham reports are national in scope, unlike Ouseley, Clarke and Ritchie, and thus are distanced from the immediate local environments and events of the initial inquiries. Yet their selection of explanations and recommendations from the previous reports is also of considerable importance in determining subsequent policy.
- 2.16 Cantle's brief is to obtain the views of local multi-ethnic communities on the issues needed to develop confident, active communities and social cohesion. The pivotal perception relates to community polarisation: the extent to which people from different ethnic communities live 'parallel lives', with separate educational arrangements, community and voluntary bodies, employment, places of worship, language, and social and cultural networks.
- 2.17 Cantle does not seek a direct answer to the specific historical and geographical question of why people in some areas have arrived at a situation in which they live 'parallel lives'. Instead, he is concerned with how they might be encouraged, enabled, or empowered to mix, particularly if they are currently inclined not to want to do so.
- 2.18 There is a notable shift of emphasis away from concrete, historically-explanatory, economic and structural modes of thinking to practical common-sense proposals for encouraging contact. Cantle is no longer dealing with specific instances of separate living but with the conceptual issue of increasing cohesion.

Denham

- 2.19 The first chapter of the Denham report is entitled 'background' and dwells at length on the violent disorders in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham in 2001, which are described as some of the worst in twenty years. Other places experienced less serious disturbances and many more towns, mainly in the north of England, were identified by the police as at risk. Denham provides a table showing the numbers of people involved, the injuries to the police and public, and the cost of the damage. Some of the 395 people arrested were charged with rioting and violent disorder.
- 2.20 The inter-departmental ministerial group makes clear that its main interest is to prevent events of this kind happening again. With this in mind, it draws out the following features that the participants and areas affected have in common. The wards are some of the most deprived in the country with low average incomes. They are fractured along racial, generational, cultural and religious lines, with little dialogue or contact between groups. Participants are overwhelmingly white or Pakistani/Bangladeshi young men local to the area. In many, but not all cases, trouble arose after months of racial tension and racial attacks (Asian on white, and

white on Asian), with the disorder occurring in, or on the margins of, Pakistani/Bangladeshi areas.

- 2.21 Having focused on disorder and damage, the Denham report proceeds to list many of the same issues highlighted by the other reports, for example, fragmentation, lack of civic identity and shared values, young people’s lack of involvement in decision-making, youth unemployment, poor facilities for young people, weak political leadership, extremist activity, and inconsistent policing.

Summary

- 2.22 In relation, then, to the initial interpretation of situations and events (the background to policy making), the five reports mentioned here carry common themes but emphasise different factors in analysing and explaining the disturbances of 2001 in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford. At risk of serious oversimplification (as all the reports recognise the complexity and connectivity of the factors involved), their respective contributions might be summarised as follows:

REPORT	INTERPRETIVE CONTRIBUTION
Ouseley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community fragmentation. • self-segregation. • educational solutions.
Clarke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collapse of local housing market. • increased poverty, social exclusion and lack of opportunity for social mixing.
Ritchie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decline of traditional industry with disproportionate economic impact upon the Pakistani labour force and community, with knock-on effects on housing. • voluntary self-segregation. • lack of political leadership and vision.
Cantle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community polarisation and parallel lives. • proposals for encouraging inter-ethnic contact.
Denham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focus on violence, injuries and damage to property. • poverty and divisions along racial lines. • role of young people and lack of youth facilities.

Policy responses to local situations

- 2.23 The Ouseley, Clarke and Ritchie reports describe local situations and events and then recommend solutions specific to the local issues they have identified. The Ouseley report, however, was written before the civil disorder that led to the setting up of the Burnley Task Force and the Oldham Independent Review, and had different priorities. It was intended to deal with the perceived fragmentation of communities, already apparent before the violence, ‘to make diversity work’ in Bradford, whereas the Burnley Task Force and Oldham Independent Review were required to consider the underlying causes of the disorders and to recommend a plan of action to ensure there was no repetition.

Ouseley

- 2.24 In the context of the relative calm before the storm, Ouseley’s recommendations focus on measures to combat communities’ ‘self segregation’ through a series of mainly educational, cultural and ideological interventions. In all, there are eight recommendations, headed by an educational programme.
- 2.25 The citizenship component of the National Curriculum covering diversity, differences, rights and responsibilities, Ouseley suggests, should be revised and improved to encourage behaviour and respect for others, irrespective of their background, appearance, characteristics, social circumstances and status. This recommendation is intended to reduce racial and social tension and complaints about racial bullying and harassment in schools. It should increase community participation in cultural and educational events and lead to young people being better informed and knowledgeable about different cultures, religions and needs, and more prepared to participate in cross-cultural activity.
- 2.26 Bradford should also establish a Centre for Diversity, Learning and Living, a new district-wide equality and fair-treatment initiative for public services and employers. This organisation would coordinate activities promoting diversity and provide advice on equality policy.
- 2.27 A workplace behavioural model of competency should be introduced for public service employees to improve their skills at providing services to multi-cultural communities. Training would be provided for those without competence and only those who met the standards would be employed.
- 2.28 Independent equality and diversity audits should be undertaken for all public bodies in Bradford. The positive features of the district should be highlighted in work and marketing programmes to improve its image and identity. Equality and diversity conditions should be inserted into all contracts involving public funding. Schemes should be mounted to engage the talents of all communities in a strategy that brings them together in activities that create economic prosperity for everyone. A leadership and community programme should be mounted to

convince local people of the benefits to be derived from Bradford's diverse cultural, ethnic, faith and multi-lingual communities.

- 2.29 The policies proposed by Ouseley to prevent any further local fragmentation of the district along ethnic, cultural, or religious lines may be summarised as: curricular changes, trans-cultural activities, advice on equality issues, improved public-sector knowledge and skills in relation to community diversity, leadership programmes on the benefits to be derived from cultural diversity, together with making the receipt of public money conditional on measures to promote integration.
- 2.30 Ouseley's proposals have been criticised for focussing almost exclusively on soft educational, exhortatory and attitudinal approaches in the belief that, just as communities are supposedly 'choosing' to live apart in voluntarily-imposed 'self-segregation', they may be persuaded to change their minds and come to live together. The counter-argument that, in the face of the operation of the housing and employment markets, individuals, in reality, have very little choice or control over how they conduct their lives, is ignored. The proposed policies, therefore, relate closely to Ouseley's personal interpretation of the social processes at work in Bradford as a matter of self-imposed segregation.

Clarke

- 2.31 The Burnley Task Force recognises the need for action by a variety of bodies at national, regional and local level and sees the local strategic partnership, supported by resources from the Community Empowerment Fund and Community Chest, as the key agency for engaging the public, community and voluntary sectors, and monitoring progress. In accordance with the importance it attaches to the subject, the report makes seventeen proposals relating to housing improvement, by far the largest number on any topic of the 33 recommendations listed.
- 2.32 The government, the Regional Development Agency and the Housing Corporation are urged to respond positively to the proposal to set up a Housing Market Renewal Fund to tackle private sector housing conditions and abandonment in Burnley and East Lancashire. This proposal is later taken up separately from the government's specific community cohesion initiative. Also, among the housing recommendations are suggestions for considering the housing needs of young people and for making housing association property more appealing to black and minority ethnic households.
- 2.33 While the emphasis of the Clarke report is undoubtedly on housing, the range of the recommendations is comprehensive and covers housing (17), local strategic partnerships (2), planning for future disturbances (1), community relations (8), community and voluntary sector (3), Burnley Borough Council (7), regeneration (6), the local economy (5), the police (4), the media (2), education (7), youth and

community (12), crime and disorder (5), taxi and private hire industry (3), and correspondence with the Home Secretary re compensation (1), (83 recommendations in total).

- 2.34 Many of these proposals are taken up elsewhere, but the main thrust of the Clarke proposal finds its way, not into the Home Office's specific community cohesion initiative, but into the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's and Housing Corporation's housing renewal pathfinder plans. In recognition of the scale of the problem, with 4,000 empty and abandoned houses in Burnley alone, nine housing market renewal areas are to undertake large-scale clearance, refurbishment and new-build work in those parts of the country where the housing market is in crisis.

Ritchie

- 2.35 While acknowledging the underlying economic factors at work in Oldham, the Ritchie report sees the need for public, private, and voluntary and community sectors to work closely together, assisted by the local strategic partnership, to bring about greater degrees of residential, educational and social mixing. It recognises, too, the importance of communication between communities (and thus, the key role of the English language), greater education in cultural awareness, more prosperity, and a safer environment. Following Ouseley, it attributes the tension between ethnic groups to the voluntary self-segregation of communities.
- 2.36 The analysis leads inevitably to recommendations in relation to the following themes (listed in order of numerical strength): education (25), leisure, culture and community interaction (23), governance (18), policing (17), housing (12), employment and the economy (10), health (9), media (6), and regeneration (5), a total of 125. Space only allows a few examples to give a flavour of the ideas offered to bring greater social integration, and their range.
- 2.37 In regard to education, the report argues that greater emphasis should be placed on raising the levels of achievement of ethnic minority pupils and that all pupils are set clear achievement targets. To deal with educational segregation, more consideration should be given to drawing up school catchment areas, and school resiting or rebuilding should create opportunities for further integration of schools.
- 2.38 The report also suggests, controversially, that faith schools should allocate 15 to 20 per cent of their places to pupils from other faiths, a proposal later ignored by government. English lessons should be provided for Oldham residents who lack fluency in English – particularly young parents, for their lack of English might affect their children's educational success.
- 2.39 Under leisure, culture and community, the local council is urged to draw up a strategy for racially-integrated sports that pays special attention to the

involvement of women, and there should be a detached youth work strategy developed in partnership with the police.

- 2.40 Under governance, Ritchie proposes an Oldham Community Plan, setting out a vision and strategy for the town. A borough-wide Race and Diversity Strategy Committee, involving the police, should be established to coordinate estate-based forums in areas of community tension. It should involve women and young people. The LSP should be tightly drawn, accept responsibility, and act independently of the council. A priority should be the development of a leadership programme.
- 2.41 The police should review the structure of the Oldham police division with a view to basing it on identified communities and their problems. A sharper and multi-agency focus needs to be given to tackling racist incidents, with a racist incident panel reporting to the Crime and Disorder Partnership. Greater Manchester police should involve the Black and Asian Police Association to assist with recruitment and retention of black and minority-ethnic police officers.
- 2.42 These examples give a gist of the range of recommendations for local action and some indication of how they are intended to impact on local race and community relations. Some of them, clearly, have the potential for wider application at local level across the country. The report is also strong on recognising the mutually-enforcing relationships between the different areas of public policy and acknowledges the important role of political commitment, activity and vision. But the promise in Ritchie's initial analysis of the part played by the local economy in the troubles is not reflected in the content and weight of the recommendations.

Summary

- 2.43 Ouseley, Clarke and Ritchie all focus on local inter-ethnic, inter-racial and inter-religious relations and seek to probe the underlying social conditions that have resulted in fragmentation and conflict. Their interest in community cohesion stems from a very specific set of presenting problems. The causal factors they identify are many and varied and given different emphases depending on the report, but they are related to one another by their perceived impact on the pattern of relationships in the geographical area under investigation. Although the recommendations apply to different agencies and public services, they are conceived as working in a synchronised fashion to produce the desired outcomes, usually specified in the original terms of reference.
- 2.44 The policies emerging from the reports, therefore, are grounded in the specific local context that led in the first place to the intervention and are linked together in the sense that they are all meant to bring about a specific kind of inter-ethnic or inter-religious cohesion. As community cohesion policy is developed more

generally, the relevance, immediacy and transparency of its connection to a particular location and set of conditions run the danger of being lost.

Generalised policy response to the concept of cohesion

- 2.45 Instead, community cohesion policy is no longer developed by reference to an assessment of the needs of a specific location, but rather by relating consideration of what should be done to the more general and abstracted concept of community cohesion. As the reasons for the original analyses and interventions become more distant, and the need for a national strategy more pressing, the nature of the policy recommendations begins to change, as illustrated in the final published version of the Cantle report.

Cantle

- 2.46 The report draws out fourteen themes: people and values; political and community leadership; political organisations; strategic partnerships and community involvement; regeneration programmes, initiatives and funding; integration and segregation; the views of, and facilities for, younger people; education; the funding and role of community organisations; disadvantaged and disaffected communities; policing; housing; employment; and the press and media. Each theme is followed by recommendations for action, 67 in all.
- 2.47 The report clearly attributes the fear and ignorance of different communities (and presumably prejudice and discrimination) to the lack of contact between ethnic groups. The solution lies in the promotion of contact between different communities at all levels, the fostering of understanding and respect, and the ‘busting’ of myths. With these in mind, local community cohesion plans are proposed to promote cross-cultural contact at all levels.
- 2.48 One feature of the Cantle report is the marked shift away from terms such as ‘ethnicity’, ‘black and minority ethnic’ and ‘white community’, and the increasing use of ‘diversity’, ‘culture’, ‘disadvantage’, ‘communities’ and, of course, ‘cohesion’. While continuing to include the dimensions of ethnicity, race and religion, it is made clear that the diversity under consideration is multi-faceted and also embraces differences of age, social and economic standing, and gender. Greater community cohesion is to be brought about by encouraging contact and mixing across a wide spectrum of social differences, with Cantle particularly exercised with the services available to young people.
- 2.49 Recognising the large ethnic differences in the intake of local schools, however, Cantle suggests that schools in multi-cultural areas should try to avoid taking more than 25 per cent of their pupils from one culture or ethnic background, and that faith schools should offer at least 25 per cent of their places to other faiths or denominations, proposals that have since fallen from the national agenda. Instead, the setting up of inter-school twinning arrangements between schools

with different ethnic compositions has proved a popular and less politically-controversial alternative.

- 2.50 The overall effect of the report and its recommendations is to replace the specific local drivers of policy, arising from the disturbances in northern towns and their analysis in terms of bipolar white Pakistani/Muslim community fragmentation, with one deriving from a more general concept of community cohesion.
- 2.51 'Community cohesion' is no longer merely the antithesis of the ethnic, racial and religious fragmentation and 'parallel lives' identified in the northern towns, but a broader concept extended to include a wide range of differences and diversities. Henceforth, policy is formulated, not by consideration of the immediate northern urban social realities, but by reference to the multi-faceted concept of community cohesion. The original proposals for tackling the presenting problems: essentially, the encouragement of greater positive inter-ethnic contact, are likewise transposed to other social dimensions: what is needed is more social mixing between age groups, social classes, the sexes, etc.
- 2.52 Cantle also recognises the intense inter-communal and inter-agency rivalry for resources that are dispensed through regeneration programmes and other government initiatives. Furthermore, new initiatives are often introduced before old ones are completed, while nationally-derived targets and priorities run the risk of disempowering local communities.
- 2.53 Cantle suggests that area-based initiatives should be examined for evidence of divisiveness, and consideration should be given to thematic programmes that are not locked into particular geographical areas, with the possibility of producing programmes designed to unite different communities. Examples are given of projects for tackling drugs, achievement through sports and arts programmes, and literacy and basic skills development, across all communities. It is pointed out, nevertheless, that the focus must remain on poverty and deprivation, as the main contributors to the problems of cohesion.
- 2.54 A further feature of Cantle's report is the recognition that action needs to be taken to 'counter ... enforced choices and to ensure equality in practical terms', but, taken as a whole, the recommendations reveal a marked leaning towards policy solutions relying on education, persuasion, and attitude change. Programmes proposed are 'to promote contact and understanding between and within, the black and ethnic minorities, and the white community and faiths' (p. 29).
- 2.55 The comprehensiveness and sheer range of the proposals spanning fourteen themes display a laudable recognition of the holistic nature of social cohesion: much like an introductory sociological textbook. The downside, however, must be the increasing difficulties of coordinating action, ensuring effective delivery, and developing any form of synergy across such an immense field.

Policy response to existing government initiatives

Denham

- 2.56 In recognition of the inter-departmental implications of the disorders in the north of England, the Home Secretary set up the Inter-Departmental Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion, chaired by John Denham, with the specific task of making recommendations on ways to minimise the risk of further disorder and to build stronger communities. The resulting report is based on the detailed descriptions and analysis contained in the reports of Cattle, Clarke, Ouseley, Ritchie, the CRE, and the PIU report on ethnic minorities and the labour market. It is accepted that the factors contributing to the disorders are complex and multi-layered, and that all of the previous reports are agreed on the factors that caused community tensions and led to disorder.
- 2.57 The Denham report points out, however, that the government has already done a great deal to regenerate the inner cities and towns, empower the communities, and tackle the problems of deprivation and decline. Previous approaches had often overlooked the importance of involving the public, private and voluntary sectors, and residents in the regeneration of their areas. And regeneration funding had not always met the needs of ethnic minorities. But the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, launched in January 2001, was designed to address many of the criticisms.
- 2.58 The government, Denham reminds us, has introduced the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, Connexions, the New Deal, Sure Start, National Childcare Strategy, and Excellence in Schools, all of which need time to take effect. Likewise, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 will have an impact on the public sector work force and delivery of local services.
- 2.59 The inter-departmental group believes, nevertheless, that there is need for a more holistic approach to regeneration and civic renewal, captured by the concept of community cohesion. It makes clear its view that community cohesion is integrally related to the provision of high quality public services for all and to the development of civic identity and shared values (through a debate about citizenship and rights and responsibilities).
- 2.60 It is difficult to detect at which point the decision was taken to integrate the community cohesion agenda with other major government programmes, but it is clear from Chapter 3 of Denham: 'Government's response: action taken and proposals for further action', that the necessity of mapping a relationship of this kind was recognised early on.
- 2.61 The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions published its New Deal for Communities Race Equality Guidance in February 2000, two years before the development of community cohesion policy. It is based on the belief

that, as part of the government's wider agenda to promote equal opportunity for everyone, all groups within a community must be involved in its regeneration.

- 2.62 The guidance deals in particular with the process of involving black and minority ethnic groups in the New Deal initiatives, recommending mapping exercises, inclusion of ethnic minorities in decision-making and delivery, consultation, monitoring partnerships for inclusiveness, support for black and minority ethnic networks, and capacity-building. It also includes advice on applying a race equality approach in each of the New Deal for Communities priority outcome areas: jobs, education, health, and crime.
- 2.63 To take education as an illustration, the guidance highlights for attention educational underachievement of certain black and minority ethnic groups, their over-representation in school exclusion, racial harassment, and bullying in school. Recommendations are made for greater family support and parental involvement in school management and activities, study support, mentoring, support for supplementary education, anti-bullying policies, and opportunities for developing greater understanding of others' cultural backgrounds. Many of these themes and suggestions for action eventually find their way into the Local Government Association's community cohesion guidance.
- 2.64 Another influential document, the Cabinet Office Social Exclusion Unit's National Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy Action Plan was published in January 2001, nearly a year in advance of the community cohesion proposals. The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy focuses on the gap between poor neighbourhoods and the rest of the country and is aimed at reversing the spiral of decline in the most disadvantaged areas. The gap is seen as resulting from social and economic changes due to mass joblessness, the decline of manufacturing, changing skill requirements, the reduced popularity of social housing, a rise in lone parents, and the increasing concentration of vulnerable people in deprived neighbourhoods.
- 2.65 With the reduction of the resources and sustainability of a neighbourhood, a vicious cycle can take hold that contributes still further to the process of decline. Six barriers to improvement are identified:
- failure to address the problems of local economies.
 - failure to promote safe and stable communities.
 - poor core public services, such as health, education, etc.
 - failure to involve communities.
 - lack of leadership and joint working.

- insufficient information and poor use of it.

2.66 Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy is based primarily on an analysis of the fragmentation of communities along lines of wealth and social class, while community cohesion policy has been developed in response to perceived ethnic, racial and religious self-segregation. Nevertheless, there is a close relationship between the themes, or headings used in the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and those in the Cattle, Denham and Local Government Association reports. These later reports display a thorough awareness of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and its priorities, as the following table shows.

Cantle	Denham	Local Government Association	National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal
people and values	identity and values	vision and values	vision and long-term goals
political and community leadership	weak political and community leadership	community and political leadership	national leadership and support
political organisations			
strategic partnerships and community involvement	(local strategic partnerships)	the value of local strategic partnerships	partnership working and community involvement (local strategic partnerships)
regeneration programmes and initiatives.	regeneration	regeneration	neighbourhood renewal neighbourhood management improving the physical environment
integration and segregation	cohesion and segregation		encouraging mixed communities (housing)
			childcare
facilities for younger people	children and younger people	young people	
	youth facilities and services		
		sports and cultural services	culture, arts and sports
education	education	education	education and skills
funding and role of community organisations		community and voluntary organisations	community groups and social entrepreneurs
disadvantaged and disaffected communities			New Deal for Communities
policing	policing and crime reduction	community safety and policing	crime anti-social behaviour
housing		housing and planning	housing and physical environment (tackling low demand)
employment	employment	employment and the economy	jobs and local economies
press and media	local media	press and media	
	activities of extremist groups		
		local context, baseline assessment	measuring impact of national strategy on different ethnic groups
		faith communities	
		asylum seekers, refugees and travelling communities	
			health
			transport
	(drugs)		drugs
			adult skills and ICT access

- 2.67 The net effect of this is to reinforce the tendency, already present in the Cantle report, to devise policies that are meant to impact on and alleviate a wide range of the inequalities existing between individuals, demographic groups, and neighbourhoods. The resulting diffusion of effort moves the community cohesion policy agenda yet further away from the original purpose of tackling the ethnic, racial and religious fragmentation identified in northern towns.

Policy division

- 2.68 Another process, almost the reverse of the grafting of policy described above, is that of policy division: the splitting off of a significant element of an initiative and its subsequent development into an independent, separately funded and managed programme. In relation to community cohesion policy, the housing renewal pathfinders, already mentioned, serve as an example.

Policy tuned for practical implementation

- 2.69 Practical considerations of how a general policy is to be implemented also affect the way it is formulated. Decisions have to be taken as to what may feasibly be achieved in the current economic and political climate, who must do it, how they are to do it, and with what resources.
- 2.70 In the development of community cohesion policy, the Local Government Association guidance is intended to show how the issues raised by the Cantle and other reports can be translated into practical action at local level to improve the situation on the ground. It focuses on the action that may be taken by local authorities, but also recognises the role of other agencies such as local strategic partnerships, community safety, and crime and disorder reduction partnerships.
- 2.71 The guidance emphasises that existing policies and practices have to be reviewed and, where necessary modified to contribute to cohesion. A large number of practical proposals for local action is provided at the end of each section of the guidance. This, then, is seen as a further stage of the process: the translation of the community cohesion policy initiative into a manual of practical tips on how to do it.
- 2.72 The exclusive focus on the practical action that might be taken by local authorities has two important effects. Firstly, the action to be taken is not immediately derived from any appreciation of a theory of, or research into, the social structural forces underpinning social fragmentation, but arises from the need to suggest something practical, straight-forward and implementable. As a result, the guidance consists not of a strategy for clinical, tightly-coordinated, controlled, particular and effective interventions, but of a somewhat piecemeal presentation of useful tips to be undertaken simultaneously by a number of different agencies (albeit, that they are urged to work in partnership).
- 2.73 Secondly, there is an emphasis on marshalling and coordinating those various activities and initiatives already in train which appear to have a bearing on

issues of diversity, race and community, in the hope that more of the same, but perhaps, with a different emphasis, will do the trick.

- 2.74 The guidance is readily available and summarised as Appendix G. It is superfluous to reproduce its content here, but it is worth, by way of an example, taking a closer look at one of the sixteen themes, education, which itself carries a further sixteen suggestions for action. Ouseley's ideas on the importance of citizenship education are still central to the proposals. Possibly, four of the proposals relate directly to the school curriculum and, to a much older tradition of the role of the curriculum in promoting multi-culturalism and inter-racial and inter-ethnic tolerance. There is a recognition, too, of the possibilities provided by earlier developments in multi-faith religious education.
- 2.75 Of crucial importance in relation to the original analysis in terms of 'parallel lives' are the proposals for dealing with the phenomenon of schools with an intake mainly of students from a single ethnic background, resulting effectively in largely white or largely ethnic minority schools, often located in close proximity. Schools in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham are markedly separated along ethnic lines. In Oldham, for example, black and minority ethnic children constitute 80 per cent of pupils in 17 schools, and in seven of these schools it is 99 per cent. In two of Oldham's secondary schools they make up 98 per cent and 77 per cent respectively, but in five other secondary schools they form less than five per cent (Speeden and Clarke, 2003).
- 2.76 The answer here is no longer seen in attempts to integrate the schools, but in the development of twinning and exchanges, an indication, perhaps, of the deep-seated nature of the fragmentation under consideration, and of the scale of intervention judged compatible with the government's commitment to the extension of parental choice.
- 2.77 A judgement has to be made as to whether the sixteen LGA proposals for intervention to increase cohesion through education are likely to bring about long-term improvements. What also has to be considered is whether there is sufficient agreement over the nature of a cohesive society and to what extent these limited proposals for action are likely to contribute to its realisation. In practical terms, to what degree will the development of a multi-cultural curriculum, a set of twinning arrangements, and the 'extension' of schools for parents and others, contribute to the integration of already severely-fragmented local education provision? How, if at all, could success ever be recognised?
- 2.78 One further feature of the Local Government Association guidance is the disaggregation of cohesion policy into discrete themes, with very little overlap or cross-thematic linkage of recommended action. There are proposals that attempt to build bridges between, for example, employment, housing and education, but it is questionable whether they are sufficiently explicit, innovative, or strategic to impact on the vicious cycles reinforcing the divisions between communities and the resulting 'parallel lives'.

- 2.79 Is a review of the impact of housing policies on access to health, leisure and education sufficient to address the separate provision that has emerged? How precisely will the employment gap be bridged by a programme of remediation delivered on a cross-cultural basis? What action will be taken to facilitate the progression in employment of under-achieving groups? And how is further education supposed to provide equal opportunities?
- 2.80 By comparison, these cross-thematic proposals are small in number and noticeably vague on detail and outcome. Most, by far, of the proposals for action relate to a single theme or strand of public policy and there is no overarching framework or apparatus to coordinate the strategy or to relate its different aspects. The overall effect is not of a holistic integrated approach, but of an analytical atomised set of proposals, 163 actions in all.
- 2.81 When examined more closely, the guidance is far from specific, with little or no attempt to indicate the what, who, how, and when of the proposals. The commonly-used verbs are 'ensure', 'explore', 'review', 'encourage', 'invite', 'value', 'involve', 'work with', 'develop', 'identify', 'focus on', 'support', 'empower' and 'take action'. The effect is exhortatory and thought-provoking, rather than instructive and exacting, with the focus on action planning, rather than on specifying desired outcomes.

Economically-modified policy response

- 2.82 A further modification of community-cohesion policy occurs when local authorities and their partners submit applications to become community cohesion pathfinders. The aims of the government community cohesion pathfinder programme are to identify and disseminate models by which cohesion can be integrated across planning and service delivery, to provide support for the voluntary and community sector to focus on cohesion, and to assist the communities themselves in challenging existing services and creating 'bottom up' approaches to cohesion.
- 2.83 Of these, the idea of integrating action in pursuit of cohesion into existing planning and service delivery, often referred to as 'mainstreaming', is significant, and is already reflected in the LGA guidance. There is, of course, the issue as to whether the whole community cohesion policy initiative risks further dilution to the point at which it becomes indistinguishable from other equalities or regeneration policies. The extent to which this is already occurring is explored in the next chapter on implementation.
- 2.84 An essential feature of the pathfinder programme, however, is that it puts a figure on the extra funding to be made available to the authorities whose application is successful. The fifteen successful areas are to receive £285,000, to be spent in the period February 2003 to October 2004, with money split between local authority, the community and voluntary sector, and the Community Champions programme (a specialist youth stream to encourage the engagement in civic activities of young people).

- 2.85 The pathfinder programme, therefore, has the effect of restricting the local policy response to only those activities to which government decides to allocate funds, plus any further activities that the local authority chooses additionally to fund. One tranche of the pathfinder funding is allocated directly to the voluntary sector and another to the Community Champions youth programme (in line with the stated aims of the pathfinder programme). Thus, the prioritisation of action under the programme is determined by the availability and ring-fencing of the funding stream.
- 2.86 Of the 163 recommendations for action set out in the LGA guidance, only a handful is likely to be activated by the available pathfinder funding and only in those areas designated as pathfinders. This does not, of course, preclude local authorities and their partners pursuing other community cohesion initiatives, but it does determine to a great extent the selection of activities to be pursued in each area in furtherance of cohesion.

Policy in relation to measurement

- 2.87 No account of modern policy formation would be complete without a section on how programmes are affected by the requirement to monitor and measure their impact. Public authorities are now schooled in the language of management and subscribe to the view that ‘what gets measured gets done’, believing that, if baselines are not established and performance indicators are not set, then it will be impossible either to know that an initiative has been successful, or to be held to account for its delivery. But it is precisely in relation to measurement that community cohesion policy considered as a whole, or in part, as, for example, with the specific pathfinder projects, is most weak. It is not difficult to understand why.
- 2.88 According to this chapter’s account of the development of community cohesion policy, the policy has in turn become detached from the context in which it was originally devised in response to disturbances in northern towns, extended to cover ever more instances and dimensions of community fragmentation, redefined as a general concept of social cohesion, combined, mainstreamed, or merged with other more heavily-funded programmes, modified with a view to practical implementation in the form a list of 163 action points, and then trimmed down in consideration of the limited ring-fenced funding available for piloting. At what stage are the policies or their outcomes to be measured?
- 2.89 What has been developed by the Home Office, in association with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Local Government Association, the Commission for Racial Equality, the Audit Commission and the Improvement and Development Agency, is a set of ten indicators to be used by local authorities and their partners ‘to help build a picture of community cohesion in their area’ (Home Office, June 2003, p.6). The indicators have already been described at 1.48 in the previous chapter.
- 2.90 They are derived specifically from the definition of community cohesion, provided in the Local Government Association Guidance, reproduced at 1.36.

This, of course, is the most general of the definitions and is composed of terms that are either vague (the range of things to which the term refers are not sufficiently specified) or opaque (when a term requiring definition is used without first having been defined in relation to the range of things to which it refers), such as 'common vision', 'communities', 'diversity', 'different backgrounds', 'life opportunities' and 'positive relationships between people'.

- 2.91 If this composite definition of vague and opaque terms was the starting point, it is not difficult to understand why, as the Home Office diplomatically expresses it, 'measuring community cohesion is not straightforward', and the proposed indicators 'will need to be interpreted in the light of local knowledge'.
- 2.92 Nevertheless, ten indicators have been developed, including a so-called headline indicator. This is stated as the percentage of people who feel that their local area (15/20 minutes walking distance) is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together. The aim is to obtain an overall measure of community cohesion based on whether residents as a whole think they live in an area which has good community relations. It is explained that a question about whether people from different backgrounds get on well together does not specifically focus on race and, therefore, could be used to capture tensions that may exist as a result of other factors, such as religion or belief.
- 2.93 All the indicators proposed are justified in terms of their bearing on community cohesion. For example, the indicator: the percentage of pupils achieving five or more GCSE at grades A*-C or equivalent, is included because 'a community is more likely to be cohesive where children from different backgrounds have an equal chance of attaining good GCSE grades'. (In some deprived neighbourhoods, of course, they may have an equally poor chance.)
- 2.94 The attempts at measuring community cohesion reveal the sheer scale of the exercise in improving cohesion that the government has set itself. Cohesion is not only about improved ethnic, race and religious relations, but now involves ameliorative action on a whole gamut of inequalities and related fault lines, including relationships between social classes. For example, in attempting to measure the development of strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, schools and neighbourhood, the Home Office Citizenship survey will ask, 'In which of the following situations, if any, would you say you regularly meet and talk with people of a different social class to you?'
- 2.95 The difficulties of measuring such a vague and opaque concept as community cohesion have already been pointed out. There is a difference, however, between measuring, on the one hand, the state of cohesion in the community and, on the other, the effectiveness of the policy initiatives set in train to achieve cohesion. The measures provided in the Home Office guide are only distantly related (at the end of a long and complicated causal chain) to the 163

LGA action points or to the objectives, or stated outcomes, of the pathfinder programmes.

- 2.96 It is difficult to see how the proposed indicators can serve in any adequate way to measure the success of the still embryonic local community cohesion initiatives. Without agreed base-line data or suitable performance measures, it will be difficult to assess the effectiveness of the local action currently being undertaken to promote community cohesion, or to justify further expenditure on cohesion projects.

Chapter 3

PILOTING AND IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1 This chapter describes the way in which community cohesion policy is currently being implemented through the community cohesion pathfinder pilots recently inaugurated in the West Midlands region in Sandwell and Stoke-on-Trent. The schemes are still in their infancy and it would be premature to pass any judgement on their effectiveness.
- 3.2 What is offered here is a description of the plans, applications, arrangements, progress, intentions and impressions so far, with a proposal that the schemes be revisited at a later stage when a report of their success in implementation can be produced. Respondents' views are included but their presentation takes into account an understandable reluctance to make observations that might jeopardise in any way the work of the recently-launched pathfinders. A study of the pilots, though, has value in that it represents a further stage of the processes described in Chapter 2.
- 3.3 In early summer 2003, the Home Office Community Cohesion Unit announced the names of the fourteen local authority areas (two of them, consortia of local authorities) that had been successful in their application for Community Cohesion Pathfinder Status. In the West Midlands region, there were two designated pathfinder areas: Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council. An additional thirteen local authorities were designated 'shadow areas'.
- 3.4 Each successful pathfinder area was awarded a grant of £285,000 over a twenty-two-month period from February 2003 to September 2004, with £150,000 allocated to the local authority, £90,000 to the community and voluntary sector (through a nominated lead community/voluntary sector partner), and £45,000 for Community Champions programmes targeted at young people, this last administered through the DfES.
- 3.5 It is not possible without knowledge of, or access to, internal Home Office assessment to know why Sandwell and Stoke were chosen from among other West Midlands authorities for pathfinder status.
- 3.6 The two areas are roughly equal in population size, each with roughly a quarter of a million people, Sandwell with 283,000 and Stoke with 241,000. Both suffer extremely high levels of deprivation, related to a decline in manufacturing industry, poor housing stock, and low levels of educational attainment. Both are in receipt of Neighbourhood Renewal Funding. Both areas are a political amalgam of older urban industrial villages, each still surprisingly parochial in its political allegiances and outlooks, with six identifiable districts in Sandwell, and six in Stoke.
- 3.7 In common with Burnley, Stoke suffered inter-racial disturbances in July 2001, but effective intervention stopped any further escalation. The temperature in Sandwell, meanwhile, was raised by the discovery of the

‘Tipton Taliban’. Racial tensions in both places was exploited by the extreme right, with candidates of the British National Party being elected as councillors in Great Bridge and Princes End wards in Sandwell, and Longton North in Stoke, in May 2003. Sandwell and Stoke, therefore, share at least two of the features listed in the Denham report in common with Bradford, Burnley and Oldham.

- 3.8 In terms, however, of their ethnic composition, the areas differ enormously. Sandwell has a black and ethnic minority population of 57,401, or 20.3 per cent, made up of 39,578 or 14.0 per cent Asian, 10,807 or 3.8 per cent black, 5,998 or 2.1 per cent mixed, and 1,019 or 0.4 per cent Chinese and other. Stoke has a black and ethnic minority population of 12,537 or 5.2 per cent, made up of 8,495 or 3.5 per cent Asian, 1,084 or 0.45 per cent black, 2,143 or 0.9 per cent mixed, and 842 or 0.35 per cent Chinese and other. The combined ethnic Pakistani and Bangladeshi population of Sandwell is 4.2 per cent, and of Stoke 2.9 per cent.
- 3.9 Sandwell also has four wards where 40 per cent or more of the population is from ethnic minorities and one, St Paul’s, has a majority Asian population. Neither local authority has a particularly large Muslim population: 4.6 per cent of Sandwell people, and 3.9 per cent of Stoke, state their religion as Muslim, compared with 14.3 per cent in Birmingham.
- 3.10 Sandwell has proportionately the third largest black and minority ethnic population in the West Midlands. Stoke, on the other hand, has proportionately the smallest of any West Midland urban area, ranking lower than Solihull and Telford and Wrekin. It is not, of course, the size of the ethnic minority population that is relevant to community cohesion, but the perceived lack of opportunities for mixing and integration. Accordingly, given the relatively small size of the minority ethnic population, its residential concentration, low level of mixing and, conversely, of ‘parallel living’, the situation in Stoke is perceived to be of greater concern than that in Sandwell.
- 3.11 Apart from being selected as community cohesion pathfinders, Stoke-on-Trent and parts of Sandwell fall into two of the government’s nine housing renewal pathfinder areas aimed at reviving collapsing housing markets, a problem identified so clearly in Burnley by Lord Tony Clarke.
- 3.12 The Birmingham Sandwell housing renewal area takes in major areas of Sandwell (Smethwick, West Bromwich, Oldbury Road End), and of Birmingham (Handsworth, Winson Green, Rotton Park and Lozells). It contains 60,000 homes, private and council, with high levels of property in disrepair and unfit, and occupied by a disproportionate number of black, minority ethnic and older people.
- 3.13 The North Staffordshire renewal area comprises Stoke and Newcastle-under-Lyme, badly affected by the decline of the pottery industry and the collapse of coal and steel. There are 65,000 properties, 25,000 terraced houses, of which 17,000 are regarded as unfit, with repair bills above their economic value.

- 3.14 The overlap in the West Midlands between the community cohesion pathfinders and the location of the housing renewal areas may be no more than coincidence, but it strongly revives the theme of housing in the areas selected. Burnley and Oldham are also located in housing renewal areas.

Community cohesion pathfinder area plans

- 3.15 To gain pathfinder status, Sandwell and Stoke were expected to submit cohesion pathfinder area plans. The plans were written to the format and notes provided by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit and the Home Office under the headings: name of local authority, name of partners, lead community/voluntary organisation, themes, issues particular to the locality, aims and objectives, area plan, outputs (for each of the three periods), outcomes (long-term differences that will be made), milestones, sustainability (how the programme will be sustained/mainstreamed at the end of its funded life), costings, risks, lead officer, additional information, and signature of the Chief Executive. The ‘themes’ referred to are the thematic headings set out in the Local Government Association Guidance (see 1.38, 2.72 and appendix G of this report). For convenience, the two West Midlands pathfinder plans are summarised below under the headings provided by the format.

Lead community/voluntary organisation

- 3.16 The lead community/voluntary organisation in Sandwell is the Sandwell Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO). In Stoke it is Voluntary Action, Stoke-on-Trent. Respondents believed they had little choice when making the application but to involve their local voluntary sector councils, as these bodies would receive funding directly, although some doubt was expressed as to whether these bodies at the time were ‘up to speed with cohesion’.
- 3.17 The role of lead community/voluntary organisation is seen as one of disbursing funds to support activities and events (for example, in arts and sports) that encourage diverse communities to come together and to interact cross-culturally. It was pointed out that other organisations, for example, the local race equality agencies, could just as easily have been designated the accountable bodies. The important issue now, however, is for the lead organisation to be ‘seen to deliver’.
- 3.18 In both Sandwell and Stoke, the Scarman Trust, established by Lord Scarman in 1991 to promote the creative and active community participation of local people, has been commissioned to administer the Young Community Champions’ element of the pathfinder pilot. The aims of the scheme are to encourage young people to meet and take part in activities together to promote respect for diversity and to develop leadership skills and the capacity to deliver community-based initiatives.
- 3.19 The Scarman Trust will distribute grants of up to £2,000 to young social entrepreneurs between the ages of 14 and 25 who wish to promote community and neighbourly relations in their area. The money can be spent on setting up

new, or developing existing, community projects, enterprises, or cooperatives, organising educational visits to learn about different cultures or faiths, producing a community newsletter for young people, organising social events with a diversity theme, such as festivals, concerts, sporting or arts events, or other original proposals. But established sports, large capital equipment, political, or animal rights, campaigning will not normally be funded. In one area, the Trust had already received eleven small grant applications, nine of them successfully allocated.

Themes

Listed in LGA guidance	Selected by Sandwell	Selected by Stoke
Ownership of the community cohesion agenda	Yes	Yes
Community and political leadership	Yes	Yes
Vision and values		
Local context, baseline assessment, monitoring		Yes
Local strategic partnerships		
Community and voluntary organisations	Yes	
Faith communities		
Young people	Yes	
Asylum seekers, refugees	Yes	
Regeneration		Yes
Sports and cultural services		
Education	Yes	Yes
Housing and planning	Yes	Yes
Employment and economy		
Community safety and policing		Yes
Press and media		Yes

3.20 Sandwell has selected seven, and Stoke eight, of the sixteen themes listed in the Local Government Association Guidance. Only four are shared by both areas. They are agenda ownership, community and political leadership, education, and housing and planning. In addition, Sandwell has chosen community and voluntary organisations, young people, asylum seekers and refugees, while Stoke has included local context, baseline assessment and monitoring, regeneration, community safety and planning, and the press and media.

3.21 Programme leaders had various views on the adequacy of the Local Government Association themes in encapsulating the key issues of community cohesion, some struggling to explain why they felt so uncomfortable with the cohesion concept. One respondent said that some of the themes were more pertinent than others, but the particular selection made for the programme he led was on the whole satisfactory. He believed that intrinsic to the pathfinder was a tension between its race equality objectives and the neighbourhood renewal/social inclusion agenda.

- 3.22 Another view expressed was that the community cohesion approach was somehow shallow and superficial, and seriously underestimated the complexity of the issues involved. Another respondent suggested there were too many themes and that it would have been far better to concentrate on just one area, such as the greater involvement and engagement of young people, which was a gigantic task itself.
- 3.23 Each area's particular selection of themes was made for a variety of reasons: some themes played to local strengths, others were seen as central to local need, while still others were picked with a view to their being susceptible to mainstreaming. Officers expressed views on the priorities, for example, suggesting that, with the low level of awareness in the area, young people and education needed to be at the heart of awareness-raising.
- 3.24 There were major differences between programme leaders, however, in the themes they regarded as most crucial to cohesion, one selecting community and political leadership, another ownership of the agenda, another regeneration, and yet another, awareness-raising among young people. There was no agreement on what constituted the most crucial theme, nor on the prioritisation of the themes selected for a particular pathfinder.
- 3.25 Indeed, some officers complained that the Local Government Association had failed to provide guidance on priorities, or to link the themes together in any coherent way. Other comments highlighted the current absence of relevant baseline data, making it impossible to come to an evidence-based decision on priorities.
- 3.26 One respondent felt the thematic approach was inimicable to identifying distinctive local issues and engaging in innovative local problem-solving. The guidance, he believed, had been devised from a national perspective and took little account of available local intelligence on community fragmentation and potential conflict.

Partners

- 3.27 Sandwell lists fourteen, and Stoke nine, partner agencies involved in funding, delivering, or running their respective pathfinder programmes.

Sandwell	Stoke
	Stoke-on-Trent Local Strategic Partnership
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council	
Sandwell Primary Care Trusts (led by Rowley/Tipton)	
Sandwell Council for Voluntary Organisations	Voluntary Action, Stoke-on-Trent
Race Equality Sandwell	North Staffordshire Race Equality Council
	Black and Minority Ethnic Network
Sandwell Multi-Faith Network	

Sandwell	Stoke
The Safer Sandwell Executive	Community Safety Partnership
Grow-well (the children and young people's partnership with the LSP)	Young Persons' LSP
Connexions and the Youth Service	
West Midlands Police	
West Midlands Fire Service	
The Community Engagement Network	Community Cohesion Network
Local schools	
Local community organisations	
Sandwell's six town teams	City Community Forum
	Drug Action Team

- 3.28 An interesting difference between the two locations is in the initiator of the pathfinder application. In Sandwell, the application came from the Sandwell Local Strategic Partnership coordinator, in Stoke, from the City Council's head of corporate development, hence the fact that Sandwell treats the strategic partnership as lead organisation and omits it as a partner.
- 3.29 Both area plans include the same kinds of local organisations as partners. Each lists its voluntary sector council, its local race equality organisation, its community network, its area-based town teams or forums, and agencies concerned with community safety. In regard to the involvement of young people, Sandwell mentions Grow-well, its children and young people's partnership with the LSP, while Stoke has a young persons' LSP. In addition, Sandwell lists its primary care trusts, Connexions and the youth service, the police, fire service, local schools and community organisations (generally). Stoke has included the Drug Action Team.
- 3.30 It is not easy to establish from the area plans the nature, degree of management involvement, level of development, or strength of the partners. Some will be more central than others in accessing groups, decision-making, and project management in relation to the themes.
- 3.31 When asked how the particular selection of official partners had been arrived at, lead officers offered a number of explanations: the partners were already part of an existing working group (eg. the cohesion network in Stoke, formed in the aftermath of the July 2001 disturbances), it was thought that partners would play an active role in steering, managing or delivering the programme or, more calculatingly, partners had been chosen to satisfy the likely expectations of the Home Office assessors. It might have been desirable in hindsight to have included other partners (Stoke mentioned the possibility of more involvement from health) but, on the whole, given the scale of the programme and available resources, any greater number could have proved counterproductive. In both Sandwell and Stoke, the Local Strategic Partnership had played from the start a central role in overseeing the programme and approving expenditure of the local authority share.

- 3.32 With regard to the division of the pathfinder grant between three accountable bodies, the local authority, the voluntary sector council and the Scarman Trust, opinions differed. Most had no problem with the split, believing the pathfinder to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate the arrangement. The arrangement, however, was felt to miss the point about added value. The primary consideration should have been about which sector was most likely to deliver. Another view was that with such limited resources, the split had resulted in a 'bitty' programme when, particularly in regard to cohesion, a holistic approach was needed. Some concern was expressed over the allocation to the Scarman Trust, when similar local cross-cultural youth initiatives were already being developed.

Locality issues

- 3.33 Both Sandwell and Stoke stress that their areas suffer from multiple deprivation. Sandwell is the eleventh most deprived borough in England. Seventeen of Stoke's twenty wards are in the top quartile of the most deprived wards in the country. Both boroughs mention low educational attainment, poor health and poor housing, and a decline in traditional industry.
- 3.34 The Sandwell pathfinder plan describes the ethnic diversity of the local population, with around 17 per cent of the working population and 24 per cent of the school age population coming from non-white backgrounds. The non-white population is spatially concentrated with a correlation between areas of higher non-white residency and areas of severe deprivation.
- 3.35 Stoke reports a growing ethnic minority population, with the largest community being of Asian heritage. The number of recorded crimes in relation to racist incidents has increased sharply. In addition, Stoke experienced serious race-related disturbances in the summer of 2001. Possibly, because they were written prior to the availability of Census 2001 local area data, neither of the plans provides information about the ethnic composition of local wards.
- 3.36 In Sandwell, in March 2002, there were 2,840 registered asylum seekers, a rise of 155% on the previous year. As a consequence of the dispersal programme, Stoke, too, has increasing numbers of asylum seekers and refugees, causing heightened community tension.
- 3.37 Sandwell notes the recent electoral activity of the British National Party and other extreme right-wing groups against a background of public order incidents and racially-motivated attacks. Stoke mentions the inflammatory activities of extremist political parties in the local area in a context of prejudice and suspicion of asylum seekers and refugees. Although written in early spring 2003, both pathfinder submissions identify the danger to race relations posed by the British National Party which subsequently went on in May to win two council seats in Sandwell and one in Stoke.
- 3.38 For Sandwell, the challenge to community cohesion is conceived as tackling poverty and exclusion across all communities and grasping the potential that

the community cohesion has to offer (which is more than improving race relations) to become ‘a community of communities, at ease with its own diversity’.

- 3.39 For Stoke, the vision is to make the area a better place for *all* to live, learn, work and enjoy, but in the knowledge of the race-related disturbances of summer 2001 and continuing racial tension.
- 3.40 Both Sandwell and Stoke recognise the need to collect further baseline data. Sandwell recognises the importance of community-level intelligence supplied by Sandwell’s six town teams and supported by Sandwell MBC’s neighbourhood intelligence unit which collects, collates and disseminates high-quality statistical information at neighbourhood level.
- 3.41 Stoke acknowledges that the methodologies it has used in its locality analysis are ‘too coarse grained’ to identify the most vulnerable neighbourhoods. But the process of local mapping has been started through the Neighbourhood Renewal process and investment in the City’s knowledge management capacity. Ongoing work will be directed towards establishing cohesion baselines.
- 3.42 As might be expected, programme leaders reiterated the same, or similar, locality issues when quizzed about the pathfinder cohesion problems in their respective localities. For Sandwell it was the danger of polarisation, a less acute but still serious version of ‘parallel living’, with few opportunities for interaction, especially in areas of extreme poverty. There were high levels of mistrust and fear. In Stoke, it was deprivation, lack of ethnic mixing, and deprived white estates, where ethnic minorities feared to venture. The activities of the far right and issue of asylum seekers were also much in evidence.

Aims and objectives

- 3.43 The Sandwell project aims to build cohesion between communities and to support the implementation of the neighbourhood strategy and neighbourhood management via local action plans. The Sandwell programme’s objectives are:
- to promote support and enable interaction through shared activity between diverse communities and generations in neighbourhoods and towns.
 - to improve services in education, housing, social inclusion and crime/disorder prevention via targeted action to improve cohesion in neighbourhoods.
 - to assess and challenge policy, strategy and activity and its positive/negative impact on community cohesion with a view to inform future policy, strategy and activity to tackle segregation and improve community cohesion.

- to work specifically with young people on educational awareness and personal development/leadership programmes to build capacity to improve community cohesion within our neighbourhoods and towns.
- to learn from the programme and the other pathfinders, and to ensure that learning impacts on all levels, including leaders, services and residents.

3.44 The Stoke project aims to make Stoke-on-Trent a better place to live, learn, work and enjoy, with community cohesion and social inclusion as core components. The LSP has adopted community cohesion as a key cross-cutting theme, underpinning all its activities. The Stoke project's key objectives are:

- to develop a detailed community profile of Stoke-on-Trent in respect of community cohesion in Stoke.
- to establish a common understanding and shared vision of community cohesion in Stoke.
- to develop processes across service providers which promote and support cohesion, establishing a coordinated and prioritised action programme.
- to build confidence and mutual understanding across and amongst communities.
- to tackle the underlying causes and effects of community cohesion issues.
- to ensure that community cohesion is mainstreamed through its integration within partnerships, strategies and organisations.

Description of area plan

3.45 Under this heading, Sandwell lists the various partners which will be contributing to the pilot, the part to be played by Sandwell's six multi-agency town teams, and the way the coalition of these organisations, led by the Local Strategic Partnership, will drive forward the community cohesion agenda. The role of Sandwell Council's select committee on the policy implications of McPherson (indicating strong multi-party political commitment to community cohesion), the commitment of local authority staff, and the closeness of collaboration with the Sandwell Neighbourhood Intelligence Project (part of Sandwell MBC Data Unit) are also stressed.

3.46 The proposed programme of activities is to be based on the following themes:

- local integration of different communities within neighbourhoods through arts, events, and other activities.
- awareness and education on race and diversity. Myth busting of negative constructs of race, in particular, but also disability, gender and class.

- leadership development, particularly in young people (Champions) but also through training in community cohesion of board members and officers.
 - policy and strategy development in education, housing, health and social inclusion linked to neighbourhood strategy.
- 3.47 Stoke describes its area plan under the headings: capacity, leadership, baseline assessment, ownership, community safety and policing, education (schools, young people and play), housing and planning, press and media, regeneration, community champions, asylum seekers and refugees: the same themes mentioned above, but with the addition of asylum seekers and refugees.
- 3.48 The plan will also relate to local development in neighbourhood planning and the emerging community forums. The intention is to tackle cohesion through the mainstream neighbourhood planning process. Local groups and organisations will be supported through making available a local small bidding provision, both through the community chest and the funding channelled by the project through Voluntary Action, Stoke-on-Trent. The local black and minority ethnic community has also been allocated £500,000 through Neighbourhood Renewal, to support pathfinder objectives.
- 3.49 To ensure that cohesion becomes a city-wide issue, and a consensus to deliver cohesion is achieved, the cross-cutting LSP community cohesion group will develop policies with five principal pillar areas: health and wellbeing, community safety, education and skills, enterprise and innovation, and housing and development, with the intention of building cohesion into the twenty recommendations arising out of the strategy.
- 3.50 The plan also proposes to support particular communities of interest or place, to judge their effectiveness, learn from them and to pump-prime potential larger scale activity. Finally, the plan provides linkages to parallel and complementary activities, with cohesion objectives commissioned and delivered through individual service areas.
- 3.51 The plan explains in detail how Stoke will develop the various themes mentioned above. In regard to Community Champions (for youth) the original aim was to support capacity building with young people at local area level by building on the pilot scheme already being run by North Staffordshire Race Equality Council and the Youth Service, and involving detached black and minority ethnic youth workers.

Outputs

- 3.52 As required, these are listed for three phases or periods: February to June 2003, July 2003 to March 2004, and April to September 2004 (twenty-two months in all). Sandwell mentions, for example, community events and arts programmes, educational awareness programmes in schools, extension of the

REWIND programme¹ and youth advocacy project, and the young people's Champions programme. Stoke lists, for example, the development of core values and support from the major political parties and local organisations, the establishment of the LSP cohesion group, appointment of a 'football-in-the-community' officer, a 'get-to-know-your-neighbour' programme, a play pilot, and interfaith-based programme for schools, and a pilot project in relation to asylum seeker accommodation.

Outcomes

3.53 Sandwell gives as outcomes:

- benefits from better relationships between groups.
- young people empowered through positive understanding of differences between communities.
- raising the political profile of cohesion issues.
- review of policy and strategy from the point of view of cohesion as a cross-cutting issue.
- more awareness and contact between neighbours of different ethnicity, age, gender and disability.
- providers acquiring knowledge of service users' needs.
- a tool kit of statistical indicators for analysing cohesion.
- sharing of lessons learnt from the pilot.

3.54 Stoke gives as outcomes:

- broadened ownership, commitment and understanding of community cohesion across the LSP.
- established baselines on cohesion at neighbourhood level.
- an increased range of opportunities for inter-community cohesion.
- mainstreamed PPA approach to action-planning.

¹ The REWIND programme, integral to Sandwell's community cohesion project and anti-racist work, is aimed at 'busting' racial myths, exposing 'race' as an historical social construct with no basis in reality, but recognising that the racism it has given rise to has serious consequences for the way people live. The REWIND of the name relates to the idea of returning to the origins of 'race' and 'racism', but also resonates with the action of a DJ rewinding a track or tape. The work of REWIND is conducted by 'peer educators' through work in schools, with youth (in centres or in detached settings) and for community groups. Participants are given the opportunity to reappraise their beliefs and thus come to change their practice.

- cohesion integrated into area plans to address local issues.
 - shared learning in respect of what works in cohesion issues.
 - a number of pilot schemes evaluated to plan for mainstreaming.
 - local capacity increased through Community Champions.
- 3.55 When asked what, in reality, would be the main or most obvious achievements of the pathfinders, respondents mentioned the following:
- raised awareness of community cohesion issues and the importance of good race relations.
 - an established educational programme in schools and in youth provision that tackled racism.
 - more clear and overt leadership in relation to community cohesion.

Key milestones

- 3.56 Sandwell offers eight milestones, including the secondment/appointment of a cohesion coordinator, the commencement of a Community and Arts programme, the start of the Community Champions programme, and completion of a housing market renewal area prospectus.
- 3.57 Stoke offers ten milestones plus final evaluation of the programme in August 2004. It includes appointment of a cohesion coordinator, launch of the Jigsaw Fund, initial baselining, signing up of the LSP board to cohesion principles, the start of the Community Champions programme, and the establishment of the education programme.

Future sustainability

- 3.58 Sandwell acknowledges that cohesion building should be resourced from core budgets rather than special programmes like the Pathfinder allocation and matched Neighbourhood Renewal Funding. Long-term partner involvement is regarded as the key.
- 3.59 Stoke sees the pathfinder initiative being sustained through establishing cohesion as a core theme of Stoke's Community Strategy. The relationship of the LSP cohesion group to LSP pillar groups will 'design in' cohesion to emerging City initiatives across all sectors and issues. The area planning model adopted by community forums will involve the bending of mainstream services to support locally-identified priorities.
- 3.60 Respondents saw the issue of sustainability in terms of mainstreaming, but warned that much valuable work contributing to community cohesion might not be included. The eventual location of responsibility for the community cohesion agenda was thought to be an issue. The pathfinder it was pointed

out, was meant to be experimental: what did not work also had to be discarded.

Area Plan Costs

- 3.61 Both projects set out respectively a spend of £285,000 each over the three phases of the project. Sandwell promises a matched funding from local authority and other sources of £375,000. Stoke includes matched funding of £150,000.

Risk analysis

- 3.62 Sandwell lists and analyses ten risks, Stoke eleven. Sandwell mentions risks such as 'neighbourhood strategy fails to engage communities in cohesion pathfinder', 'inability to recruit sufficient young champions', and 'poor take-up of community events programme'. Stoke envisages 'local impact of terrorist activity resulting in heightened tension between white and Muslim community', 'election of BNP councillors', as well as 'failure to deliver on project outcomes'. Both plans include the possibility of 'underspend' as a risk.

Lead officer

- 3.63 In Sandwell, the lead officer is the local strategic partnership coordinator. In Stoke, the 'nominated area plan owner' is the Head of Corporate Development at the City Council, who is also a member of the LSP community cohesion group.

Race relations versus social inclusion

- 3.64 Respondents were asked whether, in their view, community cohesion and the local pathfinder programme were primarily concerned with racial and ethnic relations or the broader issue of social inclusion. In Sandwell, the line was taken that the pathfinder was a deliberate attempt to tackle racism by promoting awareness, but that the issues involved were complex and had to be understood against a background of extreme deprivation, inequality, envy, crime and anti-social behaviour. In Stoke, the view was taken that the pathfinder was primarily about social inclusion, integration, and a real need on the part of public services to respond more sensitively and effectively to local communities. The pathfinder was not primarily intended to address racial or ethnic issues.
- 3.65 Well attended conferences on community cohesion entitled respectively 'United strength is stronger' (city motto) and 'Many and different but together', were held in Stoke on 24th September, and Sandwell on 2nd October 2003. Both had keynote speakers who had written reports on cohesion, Ted Cantle in Stoke, and Lord Herman Ouseley in Sandwell, and both talked about polarised and segregated communities, 'parallel lives', ignorance and fear, and repeated many of the sentiments and proposals they had previously written about. Both conferences, too, provided art, music and entertainment drawing

on multi-cultural themes. Both reflected in their choice of speakers, their themes and the workshops, the central role of partnership in promoting community cohesion.

- 3.66 While race and ethnic relations were undoubtedly featured on the agenda, the general message was far more diffuse: community cohesion policy came across as a set of diverse measures to encourage supportive, collaborative, interpersonal relationships: the soft 'community togetherness', or 'cultural' interpretation of what needs to be done to achieve a cohesive society. It involves sharing values, rather than schools or streets.

Chapter 4

THEORY AND CRITICISM

- 4.1 This chapter explores the technical meanings of 'community cohesion' and their relationship to established social and political theory. A distinction is made between two major sociological perspectives: the cultural approach and the plurality of interests approach, each with implications for the kinds of policy that might be adopted to address social fragmentation. Various criticisms of current community cohesion initiatives are presented with the general observation that policy development might have benefited from a greater awareness of social and race relations theory and a firmer grounding in empirical research.

Broader political context

- 4.2 The government responded to the 'moral panic' arising from the perceived breakdown of law and order in northern towns by setting up the Ministerial Group on Public Order, chaired by John Denham, and the Community Cohesion Review Team, chaired by Ted Cantele. Both group and team were expected to answer the question of why some people in those localities had chosen not to obey the laws of the land. 'Social cohesion', in this context, implies 'social order', a central concern of political philosophy for more than two thousand years.
- 4.4 Sociologists have been preoccupied for the last two hundred years with the theme of the changing nature of communities, their fragility, and the threat posed to them by industrialisation, urbanisation, individualism and modernisation. Given the effects of globalisation on the work force of Western economies, it is only to be expected that the government might wish to pursue the business of sustaining and developing communities as an answer to many of the ills of contemporary society. 'Community', as Raymond Williams has commented (Williams 1976, p.66), is a 'warmly persuasive word' that 'seems never to be used unfavourably'.
- 4.3 Significantly, too, the word 'communities' is repeated three times in the terms of reference, qualified respectively with the adjectives 'local', 'multi-ethnic' and 'confident, active'. Communities are clearly of importance to government, so much so, that by the time the Review Team produced its report, the expression 'social cohesion' had become transformed into the 'community cohesion' of the report's title.
- 4.5 The resultant expression 'community cohesion', therefore, manages to combine the two great themes of the modern state: a primary concern to maintain social order through the rule of law, together with the need to ensure the welfare of the people, particularly the weak and vulnerable, by encouraging collective action under the banner of 'community', real or imaginary. The 'community cohesion' of the Review Team's report indicates the government's determination to maintain order through reaffirming and reinforcing the positive values attributed to local communities.

- 4.6 Significantly, however, despite its origins in the disturbances experienced in the northern towns, widely interpreted as ‘racial’ conflict, the expression ‘community cohesion’ carries no intrinsic racial connotation: it has a much wider denotation than ‘inter-racial or inter-ethnic cohesion’, or ‘cohesion of multi-ethnic communities’. This has important political and policy implications.

Technical or specialist approaches

- 4.7 The Cattle report includes a chapter and appendix (written by Dr Rosalyn Lynch of the Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate) refining the term’s meaning and suggesting how the phenomenon might be measured, thus augmenting a common-sense approach with a number of technical definitions developed in different national and local contexts.

- 4.8 For example, the Canadian government regards community cohesion as ‘the ongoing process of developing a community of shared values, shared challenges and equal opportunity ... based on a sense of trust, hope and reciprocity’. As another instance, Ferlander and Timms (1999), citing Mitchell (1986), draw out three characteristics of community cohesion: individual commitments to common norms and values, interdependence arising from shared interests, and individual identification with the group. They suggest that ‘social cohesion requires that participation extends across the confines of local communities, knitting them together into a wider whole’.

- 4.9 Forrest and Kearns (2000) are also quoted as suggesting that the simplest observable measure of community cohesion ‘would be of groups who live in a local area getting together to promote or defend some common local interest’ (Home Office, Nov 2001, pp.,69-70). The report reproduces a table from Forest and Kearns summarising ‘the domains’ of community cohesion. These are:

- common values and a civic culture.
- social order and social control.
- social solidarity and reduction in wealth disparities.
- social networks and social capital.
- place attachment and identity.

(Home Office, Nov 2001, p.13)

- 4.10 These domains later reappear, slightly transformed, as headings for comment and action in subsequent reports. It should be noted that none of these technical terms refers directly to issues of cohesion arising from racial or ethnic differences, only to the need to reduce disparities in wealth.

Two major perspectives

- 4.11 The technical definitions offered in the Cantle report incorporate, but do not draw out, contrast, or make use of the two major perspectives on community cohesion found in social scientific literature. These may be termed the cultural approach and the plurality of interests approach. For example, the focus on developing a community of shared values, individual commitment to common norms, or identification with other groups, is a feature of the cultural approach, whereas reciprocity, interdependence arising from shared interests, reduction in wealth disparities, or defending common interests, exemplify the plurality of interests position.
- 4.12 These approaches are not necessarily exclusive and indeed should normally be regarded as complementary. Yet, there is a tendency in the current literature on community cohesion to ignore altogether the significance of the theoretical setting of the concept but to dwell at greater length on cultural aspects at the expense of a fuller consideration of the plurality of interests approach.

The cultural approach

- 4.13 In the social sciences, the term ‘social cohesion’ is regularly used as a synonym for ‘social order’ and has become closely associated with what has come to be called *the cultural approach* to explaining order in society. The cultural approach emphasises the importance of establishing shared norms, values and beliefs to create and sustain social order.
- 4.14 Its classic expression is to be found in the work of the American sociologist, Talcott Parsons. He stressed the roles of values and culture in integrating all aspects of social behaviour as the following quotations illustrate:
- ‘A social system which leads to too drastic disruption of its culture, for example, through blocking the processes of its acquisition, would be exposed to social as well as cultural disintegration’ (Parsons, 1951, p.34).
- ‘... the stability of any social system is dependent on the degree of integration of a set of common value patterns’ (Parsons, 1951, p.42).
- 4.15 The consequences of assuming that community cohesion arises from the sharing of values and a common culture can be seen in the emphasis in the Cantle report’s recommendations on the need for ‘greater knowledge of, contact between and respect for the various cultures that now make Great Britain such a rich and diverse nation’. Also, the importance of establishing ‘a greater sense of citizenship based on (a few) common principles which are shared and observed by all sections of the community’ (p.10).
- 4.16 The Cantle report, however, does not posit the assimilation of minority cultures into an existing uniform British culture. Rather, it seeks to encourage the emergence of a new overarching tolerant multi-cultural value. As the Review Team expressed it, there needs to be a ‘determined effort to gain

consensus on the fundamental issue of 'cultural pluralism'. In other words, an acceptance, and even a celebration, of our diversity and that within the concept of citizenship, different cultures can thrive, adding to the richness and experience of our nationality' (Home Office, Nov 2001, p.18).

- 4.17 Thus, cultural diversity is not treated as a threat to community cohesion as long as a particular culture conforms to a set of generally-agreed social, political and legal principles. Nevertheless, it is a matter of conjecture as to whether certain cultural practices can be reconciled with the multi-cultural vision.
- 4.18 Within the context of the cultural approach to cohesion, therefore, where stability is seen as dependent on common values, the degree or extent, of the diversity to be tolerated will remain a crucial and contentious issue. After all, if social order is believed to depend on shared values, significant perceived differences of value will be linked to the possibilities for social disorder. Anxiety of this kind may have underlain the Home Office's proposals for compulsory citizenship lessons for all new applicants for citizenship. Ironically, the goal of social diversity becomes more problematic from a cultural perspective, which sees cohesion as dependent on the sharing of a common culture.

The plurality of interests approach

- 4.19 The cultural approach is frequently contrasted with explanations of social order in terms of the exercise of power and the success or failure to accommodate competing group interests. This can be referred to as *the plurality of interests (or conflict) approach*.
- 4.20 Ralph Dahrendorf, German sociologist and former director of the London School of Economics, saw disparate interests and conflict as arising from the distribution of power and authority in society (see Dahrendorf, 1959). Cross-cutting and overlapping conflicts in which groups could be allies in one situation but opponents in another, however, prevented fracture along any single fault line. Other writers in the same vein have focussed on the social distribution of wealth, income and material resources, emphasising a fairer distribution of, or access to, social assets as the key to stability.
- 4.21 Often the structural divisions are seen as leading to the emergence of different cultures, for example, 'working-class culture', 'counter-culture', 'work-place culture', as the people occupying their different and unequal positions in society evaluate their experiences and express their interests. Differences of culture, then, are the effect, rather than the cause, of social division.
- 4.22 Cultural diversity is regarded as the inevitable consequence of social division and the different opportunities, occupations, life-styles and choices available to the different groups that make up the population. The plurality of interests approach acknowledges that groups do not invariably share values and interests and may be in conflict. If that conflict becomes extreme, it will sometimes be necessary to use the power of the law to enforce the peace.

- 4.23 In fact, this model of perceived differences of interest, leading to outbreaks of violence, with the police force intervening to enforce order, accords most closely with the events in the northern towns that triggered the government's community cohesion initiative. Nevertheless, the plurality of interests approach does not dominate the literature of community cohesion, nor feature to any great extent in its recommendations, although conflict of interest is recognised as a factor contributing to the disorders.
- 4.24 The Review Team recognised that opportunities were 'far from equal with many differences in real terms, in respect of housing, employment and education' (Home Office, Nov 2001, p.10). It also agreed that 'the competitive nature and area basis of regeneration and other targeted programmes had helped to create divisions' (ibid, p.24). The Team had received consistent complaints about the damaging impact of different communities bidding against each another and the difficulties of convincing them of the fairness of the current approach (ibid, p.25). It felt the need to insist that bids should be based on evidenced need, on a thematic basis. Funding 'should not follow the assumption that all black and ethnic minority needs are greater than other sections of the community, nor should a similar assumption be made where the bid is predominantly featuring the white community' (ibid, p.40).

Hybridity and pragmatism

- 4.25 In these two juxtaposed theories of how social order or disorder occurs lies the essence of the debate about cohesion and conflict and relations between groups differentiated not only by their comparative levels of wealth, economic activity, education, health, crime and quality of housing and environment, but now, in addition, by race, ethnic origin and culture.
- 4.26 Most accounts that deal with issues of social order – certainly, the reports of 2001 on the northern towns – begin by describing the concrete events and circumstances that are perceived as instances of breakdown. It is in the explanation of disorder and the solutions offered as social policy that preferences can be detected for theories based on culture or plurality of interests. Yet, precisely because the accounts arise from an attempt to grapple with the complexity of concrete social realities, they are rarely 'pure' in the sense of subscribing exclusively to one or the other approach: rather they are hybrid, but with one set of explanations appearing to dominate.
- 4.27 The preferred explanations are also related to the feasibility of intervention. There is no point adopting explanations so fundamental, systemic and counter to other government initiatives, that they rule out the ready adoption by the currently-responsible agencies of a suitable set of possible recommendations. Thus, the need for immediate policies determines explanatory preference, irrespective of the observed realities of the social situation.
- 4.28 To this scenario should be added the much-remarked-on pragmatism of British social policy generally, which, in its quest for rapid common-sense and uncontroversial solutions, mostly fails to acknowledge the need for social

scientific theory or research. The Local Government Association's guidance puts the position very clearly. It agrees that there may not be any quick fixes or ready answers but 'the challenge facing us all since the publication of the Cantle and other reports, has been to translate our understanding of the issues raised into practical action to improve the situation on the ground' (LGA, 2002, p.5).

Criticism of current thinking on community cohesion

4.29 What are the implications of uncritically accepting the government's current formulation of community cohesion as a guide to political intervention? What follows is a brief indication of criticisms that have been levelled at current approaches to community cohesion, particularly those emerging from the Cantle report.

4.30 They may be summed up as follows:

- good relations at the expense of social justice.
- failure to address economic structures, processes and inequalities (preoccupation with interpersonal relations).
- blaming the powerless.
- preoccupation with cultural differences.
- historical amnesia.
- projection of public service failure onto the community.
- diffusion and deracialisation.
- excuse for withdrawing funding from black and minority ethnic groups/discouragement of area-based initiatives.
- inadequacies in the theorisation of race relations.

Ben-Tovim's critical review of the Cantle report

4.31 In 2002, Gideon Ben-Tovim, senior fellow in sociology at the University of Liverpool and leader of the Labour group on Liverpool City Council, produced one of the first and most incisive analyses of community cohesion policy and the Cantle proposals. He warns of 'the forced integration lying behind the naïve assumptions of the 'community cohesion' approach to regeneration with its threat to a range of local minority group projects and other area-based initiatives'.

4.32 Ben-Tovim sees the Cantle report as embodying a number of dangerous assumptions which might be summarised as: (i) an emphasis on 'blaming the victim', (ii) a diversion away from issues of racial inequality and

discrimination, (iii) amnesia in relation to the history of post-war race relations, (iv) a preoccupation with cultural differences rather than with institutional racism, (v) a focus on integrationist policies, interpersonal relations and inter-group activities between communities which are defined in cultural terms, and (vi), in relation to policy, a discouragement of area-based regeneration initiatives in favour of more diffused 'thematic' programmes. Ben Tovim, of course, assumes that the community cohesion of the Cattle report is concerned in the main with improving ethnic and racial cohesion. This view may be challenged in the light of Cattle's overall emphasis and the subsequent direction of policy development.

- 4.33 Ben-Tovim questions whether the key problem identified, community cohesion, is the best starting place, given that the Cattle report's first recommendation is to propose a statement of allegiance. This plays into the hands of the extreme right by unquestioningly assuming that the victims of discrimination are to blame for not adopting the British way of life: yet another version of Norman Tebbit's 'cricket loyalty test'.
- 4.34 Ben-Tovim points out that the focus on community cohesion may serve as a distraction from the central features of British race relations, which are racial inequality and injustice (see below). Citing the history of British race relations and, in his experience, the specific context of Liverpool, he argues that the key issues were 'not questions of language, newness, and cultural polarisation, but the 'colour bar', the problem of long-standing racist exclusion from the mainstream of Liverpool institutions'. Because it was seen to be inadequate for dealing with issues of racial discrimination, harassment and segregation, the older community relations tradition, with its bland programmes of inter-racial harmony, has long since been replaced with one focussed on race equality. In this light, community cohesion appears as a manifestation of policy regression.
- 4.35 But it has serious policy implications because the new agenda shows a 'misplaced preoccupation with cultural difference and to a naïve aspiration of harmonious community relations, when the key current political and policy emphasis should be on tackling the long-standing and deep problems of overt and institutional racism' (p.46). By way of contrast, Cattle attributes the disturbances to a failure of communication and focuses, not on organised and institutional racism, but on the need to agree values (as in 'the pledge of allegiance'), and improve inter-personal and inter-group relations and activities between culturally-defined communities. Ben-Tovim points out that, if inter-cultural initiatives are not allied to robust anti-discriminatory action, resources may ebb away from the key task of exposing and dismantling the institutional structures supporting racist practice.
- 4.36 Furthermore, emphasis on cohesion above all else could once again result in opposition to action specifically aimed at recognising and compensating for racial injustice, such as targeted anti-racist action and minority-orientated and/or area-based regeneration programmes. Cattle recommends more diffused thematic programmes as part of community-cohesion regeneration strategy.

- 4.37 Subsequent concerns expressed about community cohesion policy often take up the themes of the Ben-Tovim article. Some of the recurring comments made to Race Equality West Midlands staff by race equality specialists and practitioners, as well as unofficially by individuals involved with, observing, or relating to pathfinder projects, are mentioned below.

Good relations at the expense of social justice

- 4.38 Race equality specialists and practitioners claim to have had difficulty in coming to terms with the concept of community cohesion. This is despite the fact that the Race Relations Act and the constitution of most race equality organisations already incorporates the duty to promote good race relations between persons of different racial groups. The prevailing feeling is that, in focusing on developing common values to span the perceived social divisions, the pursuit of social justice is being inadvertently or even deliberately neglected.
- 4.39 With their additional objectives of eliminating racial discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity, it is perhaps understandable that race equality organisations should prefer analyses that give primacy to the damage and divisiveness of social inequality and racial injustice and incline towards a view of cohesion that accepts as given a plurality of interest, value and culture.
- 4.40 The suspicion is that the new community cohesion policies have the effect of shifting government thinking and initiatives towards the sharing of uniform values (the ‘culturalist’ end of the spectrum) at the expense of policies to promote equality. Yet policies and practices aimed at enhancing community cohesion can also be derived from a plurality of interest model that takes into account the importance for social order of achieving greater social equality. In relation to contemporary practice, community cohesion initiatives are also occurring at the same time as the measures taken by public authorities to eliminate institutional racism in response to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act.

Blaming the powerless

- 4.41 The Ouseley report’s analysis, also adopted by Cattle, of communities engaged in a process of ‘self-segregation’ is subsequently softened by the Denham and the CRE reports. Treating the decision field of groups with widely differing economic, social and political resources at their disposal as equivalent in intention and effect has, however, caused widespread political controversy.
- 4.42 The suggestion that minority ethnic groups are consciously and actively rejecting British values and opportunities for integration and are seeking to keep themselves separate and exclusive is regarded by race equality specialists as a dangerous and unevicenced overgeneralisation. Such a view transfers, in whole or in part, the responsibility for rejection and segregation away from the white community and its decision-makers to the relatively powerless minority:

those who, in truth, are merely on the receiving end of social processes over which they have no control.

- 4.43 The Denham report subsequently raises the central question of whether choice is involved, or whether the observed segregation is the result of a *lack* of choice about housing, jobs and schools. The CRE, too, makes much of the important distinction between ‘congregation’, where people choose to be together, and ‘segregation’, where choice is constrained, not as in the past by law, but by social and economic factors and fear of exposure to discrimination and harassment. But there is no attempt to delve more deeply into, or gather and weigh evidence about, the forces at work in the areas under consideration.
- 4.44 The literature on community cohesion and the ensuing policies, nevertheless, continue to entertain the theme that the values of ethnic minorities are at least in part to blame for perceived fragmentation. Thus, the recommendations to prepare newcomers for life in British society by teaching them English and their duties as citizens.

Failure to address the economic structures, processes and inequalities responsible for segregation

- 4.45 Closely related to the criticism of the Cattle report’s neglect of inequality and its preoccupation with shared values, is the view that, in the development of community cohesion policy, the government has deliberately moved away from a consideration of the hard economic and structural issues, highlighted in the original reports, towards a set of softer social, relational and attitudinal solutions.
- 4.46 Lord Clarke’s report on Burnley, for example, recognised the central role played in the crisis by the collapse of the housing market. Many residents, living among derelict and abandoned property and accumulated rubbish, had to endure appalling conditions and were trapped where they lived, having invested their life-time savings in their homes as home values spiralled downwards.
- 4.47 The local authority and Housing Corporation did not have the capacity to deal with the extent of the housing market failure. The Burnley task force recognised that the present level of funding available through current methods of provision for housing regeneration and development were inadequate to deal with the situation in Burnley. It recommended the creation of a community housing company as well as a new partnership between the Housing Corporation, Government Office and the Regional Development Agency to manage the housing market renewal fund.
- 4.48 Similarly, the Ritchie report recommended the creation of an urban regeneration company to undertake a targeted programme of housing clearance with the modest target of cleaning houses and replacing them at the rate of 300 per year (in a context in which 9,000 privately-owned homes were unfit and 13,000 in need of renovation).

- 4.49 The Ritchie report was also critical of the degree of segregation it found in local schools, with many of the local faith secondary schools having no Muslim pupils. It recommended that 15 to 20 per cent of places be open to pupils of non-Christian background.
- 4.50 With the publication of the Local Government Association guidance on community cohesion and the prospectus for the Pathfinder programme, it appeared that no radical additional intervention in the housing market or in relation to schools admissions or local employment policy was proposed. Community cohesion was intended to bring about greater integration, but not by making specific changes to existing arrangements for social housing or school admissions. Proposals were not so much aimed at reducing existing involuntary segregation, but at increasing the opportunities for voluntary congregation. Since the announcement of the government's major housing renewal strategy (see before), this criticism has not been so easy to sustain.

Projecting the responsibility for public service failure onto the community

- 4.51 A thought-provoking argument formulated in various abbreviated forms at local seminars, is that it is not local communities that are fragmented and in need of measures to improve their cohesion, but government departments and local public services which do not collaborate with one another and provide services that vary in quality, are delivered unevenly and unfairly according to geographical area, social class, ethnic group, gender, etc., and result in unequal and divisive consequences.
- 4.52 Thus, the perception of community fragmentation is nothing more than a projection onto a community of national and local government and public authority failure to deliver effective and inclusive services and outcomes, and a useful rhetorical device for avoiding the blame. If the communities have become fragmented (so another version of the argument goes), then this must have occurred gradually over time. Politicians at national and local level could have intervened but chose not to. This is why schools over time have become segregated along racial lines.
- 4.53 Interestingly, evidence of the recognition of service inadequacy and failure is presented in many of the reports and reflected in their recommendations. Ouseley, for example, describes how communities and neighbourhoods are forced to compete for regeneration funds, in a competition based on a 'deprivation deficit model', eg., 'our area is more dreadful than yours'. He believes funding regimes have failed to incorporate specific objectives to bring about integration. Clarke acknowledged the failure of the housing market and the inadequacy of current levels of funding for housing regeneration.
- 4.54 Ritchie concludes that Oldham lacks strategic direction and any vision for future development. Cante proposes that faith schools should offer a quarter of their places to children of other faiths, thus questioning the government's policy of creating more faith and specialist schools. Denham accepts that youth facilities and services are inadequate and that there are unacceptably high levels of unemployment among young people. The report also mentions

weaknesses and disparities in policing, particularly in regard to racial incidents. The government's response is to commit to delivering high quality public services to *all*.

- 4.55 In relation to delivery, the Local Government Association guidance states that local agencies and organisations should work in partnership and integrate issues within an overall community strategy. The Local Strategic Partnership is expected to develop composite strategies, for example, for crime and disorder reduction, health improvement and housing. Official recognition of the former inadequacies of local service provision, however, is provided by the LSPs themselves in their designated role of coordinating the strategies of different agencies and of connecting inclusively with local communities. It is implicit that the coordination and delivery of services must be improved.

Dangers of diffusion and deracialisation

- 4.56 In his report on Bradford, Ouseley analyses the growing divisions among the population along 'race, ethnic, religious and social class lines'. All three of the northern reports, however, are concerned with the factors affecting community relations that have led to communities, defined primarily along ethnic and religious lines, living their lives apart. Fragmentation along ethnic lines and, to a lesser extent, between ethnically-defined groups of young people and their elders, was the original concern.
- 4.57 The adoption of the expression 'community cohesion', however, fails to make clear the ethnic and racial dimension of the issues under consideration. As cohesion policy is developed in the Cantle report and Local Government Association guidance, the range of social divisions addressed increases, possibly in recognition of the government's broader neighbourhood renewal and equalities agenda. Any specific focus on ethnic and racial issues diminishes, along with specific recommendations for action in respect of race and ethnic relations.
- 4.58 The impression appears to have been formed at meetings held to explain the government's community cohesion initiatives that the agenda is far broader than that of improving local race relations. It is, after all, important for partnership working to encourage a broad range of interests to sign up to the various local action plans.
- 4.59 Nevertheless, it is difficult to allay the belief among race relations specialists and practitioners that the application of the concept of community cohesion has resulted in a diffuse and deracialised set of policy initiatives which are unlikely to be effective in addressing the problems originally identified. Put simply, the pursuit of a multi-dimensional approach to community cohesion as an alternative to one directed at addressing the specific divisions between ethnically-defined communities, diverts attention away from ethnic and racial issues and leads to their neglect. In attempting to tackle such a wide spectrum of social division, being 'all things to all persons', the initiatives run the risk of sinking into a sea of other government priorities, interventions and targets.

Excuse for withdrawing funding from black and minority ethnic groups

- 4.60 Black and minority ethnic activists have viewed the reports and recommendations on community cohesion warily. In particular, they have seized upon Ouseley's comment on the dangers of allowing 'social and economic programmes to develop along self-styled cultural and faith dominant tracks' (p.18) and recommendation that all 'publicly financed contracts, sub-contracts, grants and partnerships have explicit conditions and criteria in pursuit of equality' with the implication that 'no community based project, either voluntary or statutory would be able to operate with public finances for one single community only' (p.35).
- 4.61 A further example at the micro-policy level of the perceived danger to black and minority projects (aimed at meeting the specific needs of minority communities) is the proposal in the Local Government Association's guidance under the theme of education that supplementary education programmes should be reviewed to ensure they focus on basic education and cross-cultural contact.
- 4.62 The perception, rightly or wrongly, is that one of the effects of the new community cohesion approach will be to make it increasingly difficult for black and minority ethnic groups to access public funds for projects providing specialist services directed solely at black and minority ethnic communities. Any change in this direction is felt to be regressive, interfering with service delivery to those with special requirements, and having the potential for increasing disparities between ethnic groups.

The inadequacy of race relations theorisation in community cohesion literature

- 4.63 In analysing community divisions and making recommendations, the authors of the reports on community cohesion make certain assumptions about the nature of race and ethnic relations. The premises on which these assumptions are made are very rarely made explicit or their adequacy questioned. It has been pointed out that if the intention of community cohesion policy is to make a contribution to local race relations, it would seem essential to highlight and examine more closely the underlying premises on which the recommendations for intervention are based. A major criticism of community cohesion policy is that it has been formulated naively without any apparent awareness on the part of its authors that different race relations perspectives and theories exist, or that they have implications for choice of policy and successful intervention.
- 4.64 At the level of common sense, the reports seem to draw on two embryonic theories of race relations which may, for convenience, be referred to as 'contact theory' and 'minority characteristics theory'.
- 4.65 The most explicit sociological explanation offered in the various reports for the state of race relations in the areas under examination is the extreme lack of contact between ethnic groups, neatly summed up by the expression 'parallel lives'. There is institutional isolation – Ouseley, Clarke, Ritichie and Cattle

all use the term 'segregation' - in housing, education, employment and out-of-work activities. Racism is explained in terms of the respective groups' physical, social and psychological isolation from each other, preventing 'myth-busting' contacts, supporting ignorance, misconceptions and jealousy and removing all opportunities for mutually-supportive collaboration. The corollary in policy terms are proposals for action that encourage or force people to mix, or increase the opportunities for them to do so.

- 4.66 The adequacy of this approach is exposed by naïve questions, such as: 'why, even when there is close social and residential proximity, as prejudice and discrimination remain prevalent?' Or, 'have the groups chosen to live apart because of their unpleasant experiences in the past of living in proximity?'
- 4.67 Sociological theories focussing on networks of social relations have usually analysed in a much more sophisticated manner the nature of the contact under discussion, for example: Is the contact of equal status? What are the power relations involved? What are the specific contexts in which racial hostility manifests itself (eg residential, casual, occupational, religious, political)?
- 4.68 Allport (1954, pp.262-3), sets out a framework of the variables involved under the following headings:
- Quantitative aspects of contact (eg., frequency, duration, number of persons, variety).
 - Status aspects (eg., perceived inferiority, equality or superiority of majority or minority group).
 - Role aspects (eg., competitive/cooperative, superordinate/subordinate).
 - Social climate/atmosphere (eg., Is segregation prevalent? Is contact voluntary or involuntary? Is contact 'real' or 'artificial'?)
 - Areas of contact (eg., residential, occupational, religious).
- 4.69 Simpson and Yinger (1965) summarise some of the research findings from the United States:
- Pleasant equal status contact that makes it unnecessary for individuals to cross barriers of class, occupational and education differences ... is likely to reduce prejudice.
 - Stereotype-breaking contacts that show minority group members in roles not usually associated with them reduce prejudice.
 - Contacts that bring people of minority and majority groups together in functionally important activities reduce prejudice.
- 4.70 Contact theory is only one of many race relations theories developed by sociologists and psychologists. Chesler (1976), for example, distinguishes

between seven major schools of sociological explanation, including, for example, theories focusing on: the characteristics of minorities, networks of social relations (or ‘contact theories’, see above), cultural values, normal institutional practice (including ‘vicious cycles’ or the kinds of process of institutional racism highlighted by McPherson), and economic and status self-interest.

- 4.71 The first and most inadequate (in relation to its explanatory value) of these categories are theories focussing on the intrinsic characteristics of ethnic groups. This approach is reflected in those parts of the community cohesion reports that assume that the ethnic groups voluntarily choose to live apart and/or are unwilling to modify culture and values.
- 4.72 Overall, the reports on community cohesion show little consciousness of race relations theories, or of the role they might play in helping to develop effective policies. This is in keeping with the government’s general approach to community development, which is largely pragmatic and oblivious to the value of social scientific research.
- 4.73 Nevertheless, questions have been raised as to whether the common-sense approach, adopted by the various committees of worthy people and community representatives set up to examine the disturbances, is the right or only way of developing social policy. Would the community cohesion initiative have benefited from a more empirically-based social-scientific research foundation? Put another way: what is the quality and generalisability of the evidence for asserting that communities are increasingly fragmenting along ethnic and religious lines, that increased contact will alleviate ethnic tensions, or that current policy initiatives are effective in reducing conflict?

Chapter 5

COMMENTARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Sharpening the focus

- 5.1 The concept of community cohesion has become increasingly inclusive, so much so, that it is now understood as referring not only to the strength of relations between racial, ethnic and religious groups, but also the bonding between social classes, age cohorts, men and women, nationalities, and local communities and asylum seekers/refugees, in effect, a 'good interpersonal relations' syndrome. This broader idea of a society cohesive in a multitude of dimensions may have an important role to play in community development and neighbourhood renewal, but it has moved a long way from the original concern to improve relationships between districts fragmented along racial lines: what might more narrowly be referred to as a proposal for 'inter-ethnic cohesion'.
- 5.2 Those locally involved with community cohesion programmes are also aware of the tension between, on the one hand, policy on race and ethnic relations, and, on the other, the far broader social inclusion agenda implicit in New Deal and Neighbourhood Renewal strategies. While there may be certain advantages in broadening the scope of the programmes, the ensuing diffusion makes it far more difficult to decide on exactly what the policy on community cohesion is expected to achieve, how to go about achieving it, and how to recognise when it is successful. Action may need to be taken to refocus the various policy initiatives already under way, and to undertake background research into the matters that gave rise to the concerns in the first place.
- 5.3 It might, for example, be possible to acknowledge the undoubted tension that exists in current community cohesion policy between schemes for improving race and ethnic relations and those aimed more broadly at achieving a greater measure of social inclusion. Programme leaders might be invited to specify which option they felt most comfortable with and wished to pursue, bearing in mind local needs.
- 5.4 The community cohesion pathfinders currently under way might thus be able to refocus, or narrow their focus, in a manner that gave them a greater chance of bringing about meaningful change. Programme managers believe that, given the resources presently at their disposal, their efforts may be spread too thinly, and in danger of being seen as ineffectual.

Establishing a reliable research foundation

- 5.5 Ouseley, Clarke and Ritchie identified a distinct problem of community fragmentation and 'parallel living' in particular localities characterised by the presence of ethnic groups living in separate neighbourhoods, the decline of traditional industry, poor housing, weaknesses in local housing markets, and schools catering largely for single ethnic groups.

- 5.6 The issue identified in the northern towns needs customised policy intervention sufficient to impact on the underlying social structure and institutions in a way that alters the economic logic and provides local people with a choice of job and of where they live and educate their children. The housing market renewal areas may have just such an impact on one of the key structural issues: housing. It is unlikely, however, that community cohesion pathfinders with their current generic equalities approach and limited scale of operation will have a great deal of effect on the intractable problems identified in the north.
- 5.7 Still in need of investigation is whether the Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnicity, or Muslim religious identity, of the ethnic minority communities living in the northern towns have any bearing on the current situation in which they live or the choices they make. The ‘blame the victim’ explanation needs at least to be tested.
- 5.8 A thorough social scientific study also needs to be conducted into the Ouseley report’s claim that relationships between white and Asian communities in Bradford (and elsewhere) are deteriorating, that social fragmentation is occurring, and that individuals and families are deliberately and actively choosing to avoid people of other ethnic and religious groups and retreating into ‘comfort zones’. The whole community cohesion edifice is constructed on a very suspect social research foundation.

Customising solutions for different scenarios

- 5.9 The phenomenon of social fragmentation in the north of England is likely to be different in nature from elsewhere in the country and to require its own particular policy solution. Elsewhere, concentrations of people from a single ethnic minority group or religious affiliation may live in an area where employment opportunities exist and the housing market is buoyant. The nature of race relations is also likely to vary according to the number and degree of dispersal of ethnic minorities. Rural areas, for example, will have distinctive features and needs. Concentrations in some urban areas may enable ethnic minorities to exercise greater political control over their neighbourhoods and the public authorities serving them.
- 5.10 Local context, therefore, should determine the choice of a racial cohesion strategy: policies developed for a northern town are unlikely to be appropriate for other places. Yet community cohesion guidance, as currently presented, is intended for all local authorities and partners. This position surely needs to be re-examined.

Linking policies through local strategic partnerships

- 5.11 The Home Office should also consider how best to relate the duty of public authorities under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act to promote good relations between persons of different racial groups to the various measures for enhancing community cohesion proposed in the Local Government Association guidance and pathfinder pilots. Public authorities should be

expected to show an awareness of community cohesion issues and initiatives. Likewise, Local Community Empowerment Networks and the Community Cohesion Pathfinders should contribute to the identification and impact assessment of the functions and policies most relevant to promoting race equality. The Denham report (pp.21-22) recognises this important connection which has the potential for ‘triangulation’ and mutual reinforcement. As yet, this possibility does not appear to have been widely recognised or exploited.

- 5.12 Local strategic partnerships, or their most suitable major public sector partners, appear to be optimal locations from which to steer, direct, coordinate, plan and, possibly, performance manage, community cohesion work. LSPs are intended to achieve inclusivity by bringing together public, private, voluntary and community sectors, and involving hard-to-reach groups, to promote, in a strategic manner, race equality in service provision, and to develop community and neighbourhood renewal strategies to ensure community cohesion. LSP community cohesion/race equality coordinating committees oversee both of the pilots described in this report.
- 5.13 Nevertheless, the implications of this location in marrying public authorities’ statutory duty to promote race equality in a context of improving services for all, with community cohesion programmes involving voluntary and community groups and the local neighbourhood communities themselves, has exciting possibilities and remains to be fully explored. Public authorities, many of whom will have a place on the LSP board, must produce race equality schemes and are required to review their functions for their impact on promoting good relations between persons of different racial groups.

Developing race equality organisations and strategies

- 5.14 Already, in Sandwell, this connection has been recognised in the recent formation of Race Equality Sandwell, a new organisation set up as a partnership between public authority members of the LSP, the voluntary and community sector, and local ethnic communities. The organisation is well-placed to draw together and coordinate action on policy development (especially race equality schemes), racially-motivated crime, racial harassment and violence, and community development, including community cohesion, New Deal and Neighbourhood Renewal initiatives. It may serve as a model that can be adopted elsewhere.

Applying a full range of academic insights to the promotion of race equality and social inclusion

- 5.15 The reports on community cohesion show very little awareness of the long standing academic tradition of race relations research and publication, either in the United States or Britain. They make use instead only of a common-sense inter-racial ‘contact’ or ‘mixing’ theory, translated in policy terms into ‘promoting common values’ or ‘good race relations’. There seems to be no understanding of the range of sociological and psychological research and explanation in the field of race relations, nor of the possibilities for its

application, not only to improve interpersonal relations, but to develop policy in respect of major structural and institutional change.

- 5.16 A range of race relations theories: economic, status self-interest, rational choice, vicious cycle, institutional practice, and more sophisticated versions of contact theory should be explored to inform future community cohesion policy initiatives and to contribute to their effectiveness. The current populist approach, spurning academic policy research as irrelevant and ignorant of real community needs, is undermining the success of worthwhile policies and pilots.
- 5.17 As one specific instance of this agenda, more research should be undertaken into how different approaches to community policing might contribute to the measurable improvement of local race relations.

Knitting the strands of community cohesion policy

- 5.18 The themes adopted in the Local Government Association guidance should be reworked in a way that draws out and demonstrates their interrelatedness. This will also involve greater prioritisation of the 163 action proposals, a concentration on actions that involve developing links between themes, and a new focus on improving race and ethnic relations.
- 5.19 It should also be borne in mind that premature mainstreaming, in the context of community cohesion policy, runs the risk of becoming a way of losing the community cohesion baby in the thickets of other institutions' policies, procedures and projects. If the baby becomes too rapidly entangled it will not have time to develop as an insightful, independent, coherent, intelligently-formed response to local need.

Measuring the success of pathfinder programmes

- 5.20 The Home Office Guide for Local Authorities on how to build a picture of community cohesion reveals more than any other document the extent to which the content of inter-ethnic cohesion has been recast in general terms: common vision, respect for diversity, sense of belonging, mixing of people from different backgrounds. The consequence is reflected in the generalities that it is proposed to measure. The performance indicators serve the purpose for which they were intended and there is no intention here of questioning their usefulness in that regard.
- 5.21 But they are not suitable in their present form for measuring the success of the community cohesion pathfinders or more race-specific cohesion approaches. They will not, for example, be able to show whether the range of policies proposed under the LGA education theme has been successfully implemented.
- 5.22 If it is believed that measurement is essential to policy implementation because, if outcomes cannot be measured, success cannot be distinguished from failure, then it will surely be necessary to develop performance measures more closely related to community cohesion activities on the ground.

Measurement of community cohesion with the indicators currently proposed is unlikely to be successful. There are too many factors and dimensions of cohesion, and the variables cannot be identified or held constant. Besides, the concept is vague, opaque and the problem to which it was meant to be a solution was only hit upon two years ago.

- 5.23 Much better to focus on the specific local action and outcomes identified in the community cohesion pathfinder area plans. Pathfinder outcomes do need to be measured, success noted and disseminated, and mistakes put right.

Recommendations

For the consideration of the Home Office Community Cohesion Unit

- R1 Formally to recognise the dual nature and alternative agenda of community cohesion policy by differentiating between, on the one hand, programmes aimed primarily at improving inter-ethnic cohesion, promoting good relations between persons of different racial groups, combating tensions between ethnic communities, and ending ‘parallel living’ and, on the other, those concerned more generally with social inclusion, social deprivation, improving public services, neighbourhood renewal, and regeneration.
- R2 To invite pathfinder programme leaders to refocus, or narrow their focus, on either race equality or on social inclusion with a view to concentrating resources and achieving more realistic and measurable outcomes.
- R3 To avoid premature mainstreaming of policies and to concentrate instead on establishing cross-cutting policies relating and aligning the work of major public authorities.
- R4 To develop performance measures for community cohesion more suited to establishing local baseline data and measuring the success of local policy initiatives and cohesion outcomes, so that success can be distinguished from failure, and worthwhile projects can be identified, and lessons disseminated.

For the consideration of the Commission for Racial Equality, Home Office and Office of Deputy Prime Minister

- R5 To acknowledge more directly through new specifically directed guidance that different areas display different patterns of race and ethnic relations and require different approaches and policy solutions.
- R6 To develop specific advice on how to promote race equality and community cohesion through local urban regeneration initiatives, especially New Deal and Neighbourhood Renewal.
- R7 To recognise the distinctiveness of race relations in specific northern towns and to develop policy tailor-made for those situations. To do likewise in other areas where lack of cohesion between ethnic groups is seen to be an issue. To provide appropriate guidance if this is thought to be required.

- R8 Building on Eric Jay's report (1992), *Keep them in Birmingham*, and other experience gained, for example, from the rural race equality project in Cornwall, Devon and Somerset, and the rural racism in Suffolk research project, to develop specific advice on how to tackle racial harassment, violence and discrimination in predominantly rural areas.
- R9 To commission through the Commission for Racial Equality the production of a manual of theoretically-grounded (but, nevertheless, carefully-applied) race equality and community cohesion training materials for race equality officers and community development workers. To seek accreditation from a university for a module in diversity management (that makes use of the materials) to serve as part of a management certificate, diploma or master's degree, and, as a trial, to fund course development and part-time student course fees for the first three years in which the course is offered.

For the consideration of the Office of Deputy Prime Minister Neighbourhood Renewal Unit research and development division (and any other relevant governmental research agency)

- R10 To undertake robust research into whether the Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnicity, or Muslim religious identity, of ethnic minority communities living in specific northern towns have any bearing on the current situation in which they live, or the choices they make.
- R11 To undertake a rigorous study of whether the relationships between the white and Asian communities in Bradford (and elsewhere) are actually deteriorating, that social fragmentation is occurring, and that individuals and families are deliberately and actively choosing to avoid people of other ethnic groups and retreating into 'comfort zones'. To indicate the rate of deterioration and its causes.
- R12 To explore a range of established theories of race equality for their relevance for understanding, explaining, and intervening in, current patterns of British race relations.

For the consideration of the Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate

- R13 To undertake further research into how different approaches to community policing might contribute to a measurable improvement of local race relations.

For the consideration of the Commission for Racial Equality, Home Office, Office of Deputy Prime Minister and Local Government Association

- R14 To issue guidance on ways to relate the duty of public authorities under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act to promote good relations between persons of different racial groups to the various measures for enhancing community cohesion proposed in the Local Government Association guidance and pathfinder pilots.

- R15 To promote through government regional offices a new partnership model of race equality organisation to operate under the auspices of a local strategic partnership. The organisation would have the multiple functions of assisting public authorities with their race equality policies, supporting community safety and crime prevention partnerships in respect of racially-motivated crime and racial harassment, building the capacity of the voluntary sector, particular organisations catering for black and minority ethnic needs, and developing cohesive communities.
- R16 To rework Local Government Association guidance in a way that draws out and demonstrates the interrelatedness of themes, prioritises the numerous proposals, and emphasises the development of activities that make links between major areas of social policy such as work, housing, education, and crime prevention.

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Appendix A

Report on Bradford (Ouseley)

Background

- A1 Published in July 2001, the report on race relations in Bradford (West Yorkshire) entitled *Community pride not prejudice, making diversity work in Bradford*, was written before the April 2001 outbreak of interethnic violence and destruction of property in the district. The Race Review Team, commissioned by Bradford Vision a regeneration initiative representing key local agencies, including Bradford Council, the police, health authority, local business, voluntary groups and faith communities, was chaired by Sir Herman Ouseley, former chair of the Commission for Racial Equality.

Community fragmentation and self-segregation

- A2 The team set out to address the question of why *community fragmentation* along social, cultural, ethnic and religious lines was occurring in the Bradford District. As the first of the three reports dealing with race relations in northern towns, it introduced and popularised the concepts of *community fragmentation* and *self segregation*. With uncanny prescience and timing, this publication was seminal in reinstating to the race relations agenda the neglected policy of promoting good race relations by ‘bringing communities together’.

Terms of reference

- A3 The Race Review Team’s terms of reference were:
- (i) to identify issues of shared concern and understanding in order to facilitate the building of bridges between communities where they do not exist and to foster and strengthen them where they are weak;
 - (ii) to identify those issues that cause conflict and lead to polarisation between individuals and communities on the grounds of race, culture and religion, and suggest methods for resolution;
 - (iii) to identify methods of working that will assist key institutions in the public, private and voluntary sectors, including faith organisations, to create ownership and responsibility in promoting greater understanding and respect between communities;
 - (iv) to consider whether a racial equality organisation is needed within the District and, if so, to identify the role, structure and remit of such an organisation.

Main findings

- A4 The report draws heavily on the views of local people; individuals from different communities, voluntary organisations, local and regional employers, public services and young people and the vulnerable and disaffected, whose opinion is rarely heard. Ostensibly, it provides a long list of their concerns with the disclaimer that they have not emanated from the review team. The

comments appear, nevertheless, to have been selected carefully, and some of the race review team's recommendations are based on them, indicating a degree of concurrence, or approval, at least. This chosen method of using the diverse opinions of local people to underpin the report also gives the impression that it is somewhat loosely and casually structured.

- A5 The comments criticise community leaders who are seen as 'self-styled' and deliberately retaining the segregated status quo to stay in power. Different communities, it is said, seek to protect their identities and cultures by discouraging and avoiding contact with other communities and institutions. The self-segregation that exists is driven by fear of others, the need for safety from harassment and violent crime, and the belief that it is the only way to retain faith and cultural identity. The white community perceive mono-cultural religious leaders as the advocates of segregation. Regeneration processes force communities and neighbourhoods to bid against each other for scarce resources, thus creating division, resentment and competition based on a 'deprivation deficit model', eg 'our area is more dreadful than yours'. The views expressed are classified under a number of different heads, including discrimination, deprivation, lack of interaction, exclusion from decision-making, the local economy and labour market, policing, education and young people.
- A6 Ouseley's argument is that the once prosperous district of Bradford has suffered economic decline and that there are growing racial, ethnic, religious and class divisions among its population. The social divisions are accompanied by various fears. People are unable to talk openly and honestly about social problems either within or between communities because they fear repercussions or victimisation. Possible public and media criticism has led to a fear of leading and managing change. Wrong-doing goes unchallenged because of the fear of being labelled racist. Gang culture and the illegal drugs trade are not confronted. People are not prepared to face up to the negative effect on social integration of all white and all Muslim schools.
- A7 Relationships between different communities are deteriorating. White people feel their needs are neglected, while those of Muslims, in particular Pakistanis, are prioritised. Members of the Muslim community believe that Islamophobia and racism are blighting their lives and that they are being treated unfairly by decision-makers. They tend to stay together, retain a strong culture, religious affiliation and identity, and live in self-contained communities, maintaining strong links with Pakistan. The different ethnic groups are segregating themselves and retreating into 'comfort zones' made up of people like themselves. Their children go to separate schools.
- A8 New initiatives are needed to further social inclusion, eliminate institutional discrimination, promote diversity and highlight the strengths and achievements of the Bradford District. Courageous leadership is essential for instigating and sustaining any necessary change.
- A9 Funding regimes have failed to incorporate specific objectives to bring about social interaction and integration. A strongly-held view expressed to the

review team was that local leaders had contributed to community division by their reluctance to challenge the perceived norms of allowing social and economic programmes to develop along self-styled cultural and faith-dominated tracks, leading to comfort zones, segregation and ghetto formation.

- A10 The report recommends that all publicly-financed contracts, sub-contracts, grants and partnerships have explicit conditions and criteria for promoting equality. No publicly-financed community project should operate for one single community only.

Recommendations

- A11 The report contains eight recommendations as follows. The citizenship component of the National Curriculum should be revised to cover diversity, difference, rights and responsibilities. Bradford should set up a Centre for Diversity Learning and Living, an organisation like a super racial equality council or partnership. A workplace behavioural model of competency for public service employees should be introduced to improve provision for multi-cultural communities. Independent equality and diversity audits should be undertaken for all public bodies in Bradford. The positive features of the district should be highlighted in all work and marketing programmes. Equality and diversity conditions should be inserted into all contracts involving public funding. Schemes should be developed to encourage community integration, harnessing the abilities of all sections in pursuit of a strategy for the achievement of economic prosperity for all. A leadership and community programme should be mounted to convince local people of the benefits to be derived from Bradford's cultural diversity.

Comment

- A12 In general, the emphasis of the recommendations lies in measures to combat communities' 'self-segregation' through various policy initiatives, most of which operate at an educational, cultural, ideological or attitudinal level. While the report recognises the mutually reinforcing links between 'self-segregation' in housing, education and jobs, it singles out education, in particular, the educational curriculum, as a significant area for policy intervention to prevent 'fragmentation'. The exception is the recommendation relating to contract compliance, requiring the receipt of public money to be conditional on measures to promote integration.
- A13 Criticism of the report has come from two directions. There is the key issue of whether and to what degree the respective ethnic communities self-consciously choose to be segregated or find themselves in a decision field determined by the housing, education and job markets, or fears about security. The use of the term 'self-segregation', without supporting sociological evidence to decide the issue, begs the essential question of agency.
- A14 In addition, there is an assumption, evident in the recommendations, that the solution to the fragmentation lies in educational and attitudinal approaches

rather than in intervention in housing and employment markets, a far more resource-hungry and ideologically-contentious matter.

Appendix B

Report on Burnley (Clarke)

Background

- B1 The Burnley Task Force was set up with the purpose of producing an action plan for the future of Burnley (East Lancashire), following a community conference arranged by Burnley Borough Council to discuss the underlying, as well as immediate, causes of the disturbances that took place in parts of Burnley during the weekend of 23rd to 25th June 2001. Skirmishes had occurred between white and Asian youths when a gang of white men attacked and seriously injured an Asian taxi driver on his way home from work. The following night, at least 200 people took to the streets and a public house was subsequently petrol bombed by Asian youths.
- B2 Chaired by Lord Tony Clarke, the task force of fifteen people, including women, young people and ethnic minorities from Burnley, issued its report on 11th December 2001. The focus was on justifying in readily understandable terms the accompanying practical action plan. In this sense, the report eschewed social scientific concepts and came across as somewhat atheoretical in content, setting the trend for much of the current literature on community cohesion.

Segregation in housing, education and employment

- B3 A useful distinction, nevertheless, was drawn between the immediate trigger of violent conduct and criminal damage and the deeper reasons behind Burnley's racial and ethnic division. In explaining that division, the report made extensive use of the concept of *segregation* in housing, education, employment and other social contexts, in a general situation of long-term decline. The high levels of prejudice and distrust in Burnley were attributed to the absence of opportunity for white and ethnic minority groups to mix: an example of the application of a race relations contact theory.

Terms of reference

- B4 The Burnley Task Force's terms of reference were:
- (i) To consider the events of June 23rd to 25th 2001, examine underlying causes and produce a detailed action plan proposing ways of addressing issues raised by the disturbances and (ii) to identify clearly within the action plan recommendations that it wishes to be taken forward by other agencies, organisations and partnerships.

Main findings

- B5 The primary emphasis was on producing an action plan to tackle the housing crisis, poverty and deprivation, ethnic divisions and distrust in Burnley, while at the same time ensuring maximum participation and ownership of the plan

by local people, including youth, from all major ethnic groups. The report deals with the violent events of 23rd June to 25th June 2001, concluding that they were caused originally by criminal acts followed by deliberate attempts on the part of both white and Asian groups to turn the violent acts into racial confrontation.

- B6 The task force takes the view, however, that the disturbances needed to be explained at a more profound level. Sections on housing and community relations show how the respective communities' misunderstandings of, and myths about, each other have arisen.
- B7 Burnley has a large surplus of housing, much of it in a poor state and unfit for occupation. Ethnic minorities with larger families are housed in smaller, older, privately-owned property, inadequate for their needs, while demand from whites for social housing is falling. The physical and environmental decline associated with both these processes has created a context in which disadvantaged communities feel neglected, a situation further exacerbated by the obsolescence of much terraced housing, falling house prices, and increased vacancy rates. Many residents, living among derelict and abandoned property and accumulated rubbish, have to endure appalling conditions and are, in effect, trapped, having invested their earnings, time and effort in their homes as house values spiral downwards. There is little chance of moving to a better part of town.
- B8 The report concludes that, for many people, the equity in their home is their major source of wealth after a lifetime of work. The collapse of the local housing market has increased social exclusion, threatened social cohesion and made some of the poorest communities even poorer after a decade of economic growth. The social costs – evidenced in the June disturbances – of allowing these trends to continue could well be severe.
- B9 The task force is of the view that current levels of funding for housing regeneration and development are inadequate and that local authorities and the Housing Corporation do not have the capacity to deal with the extent of the housing market failure. The task force sees advantages in improving the Asian community's access to social rented housing.
- B10 In regard to community relations, the report describes how Burnley has developed areas with predominantly minority ethnic communities, centred around places of worship, clothing and food shops, voluntary organisations and their community facilities. There is a perception that these areas are exclusive to Asians, although there is still a high proportion of white residents.
- B11 The report repeats the argument that statutory and voluntary organisations have contributed to racial segregation through their employment policies, by colour matching whites to work with whites and Asians to work with Asians. It also mentions the perception by the white community that local authority money is spent predominantly in Asian areas, when much of the funding received is geographically restricted and cannot be spent in other areas.

- B12 Towns such as Burnley with so much deprivation, the task force believes, face even bigger challenges in bringing about racial harmony. Few opportunities exist for white and minority ethnic groups to mix. The chances of integration outside of the work place are remote. Communities remain separate and segregated, both at home and in the schools, where schools in, or near, predominantly Asian areas are virtually all Asian and, in white areas, virtually all white.
- B13 Significant divisions within Asian communities: Pakistani and Punjabi, Pathan and Kashmiri, Bangladeshi, Indian and Chinese, add to the problems of inclusion, representation and political articulation. The task force thinks that, if the Asian communities want to progress, then they have to be honest about the failings of their own communities. The white community, meanwhile, have been influenced by the British National Party, with local by-elections demonstrating a vote for this party of 21 per cent.
- B14 The task force observes that there is no single truly multicultural structure in the town, allowing young people from all sections of the community to interact: multicultural structures should be set up on a borough-wide basis as a matter of priority.

Recommendations

- B15 The role of the task force was conceived from the outset as a practical one of producing a set of recommendations, the majority of which form a comprehensive local action plan, the delivery of which is to be monitored by the developing Burnley Local Strategic Partnership. The range of issues is considerable and extends well beyond crime, police and community relations issues to wider social and economic problems. Recommendations are made for action with the various agencies expected to act in the following fields: local strategic partnership (2), planning for future disturbances (1), housing (17), community relations (8), community and voluntary sector (3), Burnley Borough Council (7), regeneration (6), Burnley's economy (5), the police (4), the media (2), education (7), youth and community (12), crime and disorder (5), taxi and private hire industry (3), correspondence with Home Secretary re compensation (1), making a total of 83 recommendations (pp. 11-23).

Comment

- B16 Housing policy is seen to be of great significance, with Government, the Regional Development Agency and the Housing Corporation being urged to tackle the serious issues of private sector housing conditions and abandonment in Burnley and East Lancashire. The issues raised by Clarke are taken up by the government's housing market renewal strategy, rather than the community cohesion initiative.

Appendix C

Report on Oldham (Ritchie)

Background

- C1 Following a meeting between the Home Secretary, David Blunkett, and a delegation of local Oldham politicians, council officials, and police officers, an independent inquiry was set up to review the racial attacks, rioting and the activities of the British National Party, which took place in Oldham in the run-up to the General Election of 7 June 2001.
- C2 Chaired by David Ritchie, a civil servant, and with a panel of six other expert members, half from ethnic minorities, the inquiry issues its report, entitled *Oldham Independent Review: One Oldham, One Future*, on 11 December 2001, reporting to Oldham Borough Council, the Greater Manchester Police and the Home Office (which also funded the exercise).

Social integration and voluntary self-segregation

- C3 The report makes extensive use of the concept of *social integration*, seen as requiring respect for cultural diversity but involving greater degrees of residential, educational and social mixing and a recognition of the need for improved communication between communities through the medium of English, greater education in cultural awareness, more prosperity, and a safer environment (p.7).
- C4 A further concept, regarded as hindering integration, is that of the voluntary *self-segregation* of communities (see p.4 and p.99). This idea is clearly derived from Sir Herman Ouseley's report on Bradford, which preceded the Ritchie report on Oldham by six months.

Terms of reference

- C5 The Oldham Independent Review's terms of reference were:
- (i) To consider the underlying causes and problems of tension between the communities in Oldham which have given rise to individual and collective acts of violence and disorder over a number of years;
 - (ii) to consider, in particular, the responsibility of the statutory agencies in delivering social inclusion and securing the regeneration of the town, and to assess the contribution those agencies, the business community, and the community and voluntary sectors can make to bringing about those ends;
 - (iii) to identify and recommend courses and programmes of social action designed to tackle problems at source and rebuild community confidence.

Main findings

- C6 The report first examines the industrial history of the town and its dependence on cotton textile production. In the 1960s, labour for the mills was recruited mainly from the Mirpuri area of Pakistan and later from Bangladesh and came to live in particular neighbourhoods of Oldham encouraged by the availability there of cheap housing, shops and other facilities, places for worships and the presence of other mother-tongue speakers sharing the same customs. Simultaneously, white people moved elsewhere to new or larger properties. Patterns of settlement meant that Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and whites simply did not meet one another to any significant degree. The panel was sceptical as to whether communities currently wanted to have much to do with one another, concluding that the main cause for residential segregation were the preferences, both within the indigenous and the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, of people 'to live with their own kind'. The panel felt that the patterns of separate development had to be challenged vigorously.
- C7 The report deals thoroughly and in turn with 'segregation' in housing, education, the local economy generally, health, policing, leisure, culture and community interaction, regeneration, governance, and the media. The panel concludes that Oldham lacks strategic direction and any vision for future development and, in particular, has failed to face up to the deep-seated issues of segregation in the town.
- C8 The report comes across as comprehensive, incisive and hard-hitting as, for example, in its section on governance:

'Since the riots, there has been little evidence of a bi-partisan approach to the future of the town, despite efforts of the current leadership to share more information with the opposition, and offer more participation through the new governance arrangements for local authorities, than had been the case under Labour. There has been no real evidence of the parties coming together to form a strategy for community relations within the town, Above all, the sense of urgency of the present situation, and the need for high profile leadership to guide the town towards a new future has not been at all clear to us'.

Recommendations

- C9 Recommendations relate to all the main sections of the report as follows: housing (12), education (25), employment and economy (10), health (9), policing (17), leisure, culture and community interaction (23), regeneration (5), governance (18) and media (6), making a grand total of 125. Those relating to housing, education, and the police are possibly the most significant. In regard to housing, the Panel recommends the creation of an Urban Regeneration company by June 2002 to undertake a targeted programme of housing clearance with replacement of some 300 homes a year. (This should be considered in an Oldham context in which almost 9000 privately-owned homes are unfit and 13,000 are in need of substantial renovation). In regard to education, the report has provoked controversy on account of the importance it

attaches to people from the Indian sub-continent achieving proficiency in English. It also criticises local faith secondary schools (Blue coat, Crompton House and Our Lady's) for having no Muslim pupils, and recommends that 15 to 20 per cent of places to be open to pupils of non-Christian background.

- C10 The panel observed that there was no forum in Oldham where people could openly discuss, in an unthreatening environment, the issues of race relations, including the stereotypes and myths about other communities, or be consulted about and involved in decision-making on issues connected with race and diversity. A new multi-agency forum was needed at which frank discussion could be had, good practice learned, and decisions taken, by key individuals on how better understanding could be promoted and communities brought together.
- C11 The Local Strategic Partnership would take responsibility for setting up a Race and Diversity Strategy Committee, to be chaired by the leader of the Council, with the Chief Executive and Divisional Commander of Police as members, along with key voluntary and other statutory agencies, including the Oldham Race Equality Partnership, ODACA, the Police Authority and local media. A series of local Race and Diversity Forums, focussed on three or four areas of greatest community tension and including community organisations, local councillors and individuals from the relevant estates, elected by local residents, would nominate representatives to the Race and Diversity Strategy Committee.
- C12 To support this work, the Council would appoint a policy officer in an overall co-ordinating role, with community facilitators in the local neighbourhoods seconded from relevant council, police or police authority departments. The overall cost of this arrangement would be in the region of £80,000.
- C13 Another proposal is that of 'integration proofing' – the suggestion that every submission/paper/document coming to the Council for a decision would include a specific section entitled 'effects on integration within Oldham'.

Comment

- C14 The report is strong on the historical context of immigration and settlement in Oldham, and the role of ethnic minorities in the economy. It also recognises the mutually-enforcing relationships between housing, education, employment, health, policing, leisure, culture, regeneration, governance and the media. It acknowledges the role of politics in the equation and is not afraid to criticise politicians for their lack of leadership. The report's uncritical acceptance that residential and other segregation is self-inflicted and its attribution 'of blame in equal measure to all parties' has quite understandably been challenged, and more than impressionistic evidence demanded.

Appendix D

National Community Cohesion Report (Cantle)

Background

- D1 The spring and early summer 2001 disturbances in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford led the Home Secretary to set up a Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion Review Team (CCRT). Chaired by Ted Cantle, the CCRT of eleven, at least half from ethnic minorities, sought the views of local residents and community leaders in the towns affected, as well as other urban areas, including Birmingham, Leicester and Southall. The report, entitled *Community Cohesion: a report of the Independent Review Team*, was issued to the Home Office Ministerial Committee on 28 November 2001 and published in December 2001.

Definition of 'community cohesion'

- D2 As the title reflects, central to the report was the concept of *community cohesion* explored at some length on Chapter 3 and Appendix C to the report. Following Forest and Kearns, the domains of community cohesion were described as common values and a civic culture, social order and social control, social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities, social networks and social capital, and place attachment and identity (p.13). Community cohesion was about helping micro-communities to gel or mesh into an integrated whole. Divided communities needed help to develop common goals and shared vision (p.70).

Terms of reference

The CCRT's terms of reference were:

- D3 (i) To obtain the views of local communities, including young people, local authorities, voluntary and faith organisations, in a number of representative multi-ethnic communities, on the issues that need to be addressed in developing confident, active communities and social cohesion, and (ii) to identify good practice and to report this to the Ministerial Group, and also to identify weaknesses in the handling of these issues at local level.

Main findings

- D4 While conscious of the existing physical segregation of housing estates and inner city areas, the team were surprised at the depth of polarisation of other aspects of daily living, with separate educational arrangements, community and voluntary bodies, employment, places of worship, language and social and cultural networks. This separation resulted in people living parallel lives that seemed not to touch at any point. With so little contact between communities, it was easy to see how ignorance could be exploited by extremists. There was a widespread failure running through most institutions, including voluntary organisations and political parties, to debate the issues raised by polarisation

and to find solutions to it. A plethora of community initiatives with a baffling array of outcomes, boundaries, timescales and other conditions contributed still further to the divisiveness and perception of unfairness. The promotion of cross-cultural contact and community cohesion was rarely valued as an end in itself.

- D5 The team concluded that there was an urgent need to promote community cohesion and a greater sense of citizenship based on common principles. There should be a well-resourced national debate, influenced by younger people, leading to the development of an *infrastructure* that gave younger people a voice in democratic activity. A more coherent policy on education, housing, regeneration, employment, etc., should be based on a new concept of citizenship. To combat fear and ignorance stemming from lack of contact, each area should prepare a local community cohesion plan involving the promotion of cross-cultural contact, understanding and respect, and the ‘busting’ of myths. To ensure action ensured from the report, a new Community Cohesion Task Force should be established to oversee the development of local community cohesion strategies and the other proposals made.

Recommendations

- D6 The report contains 67 proposals (to be undertaken by a range of agencies) under the following headings: people and values, political and community leadership, political organisations, strategic partnerships, regeneration initiatives and funding, integration and segregation, younger people, education, community organisations, disadvantaged and disaffected communities, policing, housing, employment, the press and media.
- D7 The press focused on the proposal that church and faith leaders should voluntarily limit the faith intake in independent and state sector schools, by offering at least 25 per cent of places to other faith or denominations in order to ensure a better mix of cultures or ethnicities. This lent official support to criticism of the government’s policy of creating more faith and specialist schools as potentially divisive. The recommendation has not been supported by government.

Comment

- D8 The Cantle report emphasises the importance of sharing ideas (particularly, the value of cultural pluralism) to bring about community cohesion, hence the proposal of a well-resourced national debate, influenced by young people. Less attention is devoted to the existing socio-economic structural or institutional divisions that have led to fragmentation and ethnic polarisation, although the contribution of housing, education, employment and policing to local community relations is acknowledged. But primacy appears to be given to the development and ownership of the shared principles of a ‘new citizenship’.

- D9 The report also attributes the fear and ignorance of different communities (and presumably, prejudice and discrimination) to the lack of contact between ethnic groups. The solution, in the form of a local community cohesion plan, lies in the promotion of cross-cultural contact between different communities at all levels, the fostering of understanding and respect, and the ‘busting’ of myths.
- D10 One consequence of the focus on shared values is the insistence that citizenship must involve fluency in English to facilitate full participation in society. One recommendation, clearly thought to have a bearing on cohesion, is that the acquisition of British citizenship should require a formal statement of allegiance.
- D11 The report has been criticised for seemingly holding ethnic minority immigrants responsible for poor community relations as a consequence of their lack of fluency in English and failure to come to terms with, or commit themselves to, the British way of life. This has been interpreted as a classic manifestation of the ‘blame the victims of racism’ syndrome.

Appendix E

Report of the Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion (Denham)

Background

- E1 The Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion, chaired by John Denham, was announced in the Home Secretary's statement on 10th July 2001 to the House of Commons, following the serious disorder in Bradford in early July. With a membership of ten: seven MPs, the Permanent Secretary at the Home Office, a representative from No 10's policy unit, and the Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality (Gurbux Singh), the ministerial group was asked to report on action to minimise the threat of further disorder and to build strong, more cohesive communities. It was expected to gain the agreement and support of the different government departments for a work programme and to determine the future role of the Community Cohesion Review Team chaired by Ted Cante. Entitled *Building Cohesive Communities*, the Denham report draws extensively on the Ouseley report on Bradford, the Ritchie report on Oldham, the Clarke report on Burnley, Cante's national community cohesion report, and an earlier draft of the CRE's report.
- E2 Recognising that there are no easy answers to the current fracturing of particular communities on racial, generational and religious lines, the ministerial group stresses the need to make community cohesion a central aim of government. An important distinction is made between the role of central government in empowering and enabling local communities and the need to find and implement solutions at local community level, rather than to have them externally exposed.
- E3 The report focuses heavily on the seriousness of the disorder and the damage and destruction of property. The disorders in Bradford (Easter and July), Burnley and Oldham involved hundreds of mainly young people, inflicted injuries on over 400 police, and caused millions of pounds worth of damage. Nearly 400 people were arrested, some charged with rioting and violent disorder. The Ministerial Group believes that the violence and destruction is inexcusable, but that condemnation is insufficient to prevent further disturbances: the underlying causes need to be addressed.
- E4 While the group accepts there is room for further research and analysis, it believes that issues raised cannot be resolved purely through academic research and analysis: local people's views have to be taken into account in shaping policy responses. To respond successfully, the complex interaction between economic, social and cultural factors also has to be taken into account.
- E5 The group sets out to highlight the features shared by the areas that suffered disturbances, eg., that the participants were overwhelmingly young men, white and ethnic minority, and local to the areas, and that the areas inhabited

predominantly by Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, were some of the most deprived in the country.

Discussion on cohesion and segregation

- E6 The Denham report points out that until Lord Ouseley observed that different ethnic groups in Bradford were ‘increasingly segregating themselves from each other and retreating into ‘comfort zones’ made up of people like themselves’, the term ‘segregation’ had rarely been used in discussion of community relations in Britain. While acknowledging that there is nothing intrinsically wrong about people exercising choice in where and who they live with, the Ministerial Group believes that geographical segregation is likely to reduce opportunities for different communities to collaborate and may be symptomatic of deeper concerns (for example, fear of racist attack).
- E7 The report also places less emphasis than Ouseley on self-segregation, raising the question of whether the segregation observed results from choice, or a real and damaging *lack* of choice about housing, jobs and schools. The difficulty of distinguishing between cause and effect in the development of segregated communities is clearly recognised.

From fragmentation to cohesion

- E8 Factors that have led to community fragmentation are identified as follows:
- the lack of a strong civic identity or shared social values to unite diverse communities.
 - the fragmentation and polarisation of communities - on economic, geographical, racial and cultural lines - on a scale which amounts to segregation, albeit to an extent by choice.
 - disengagement of young people from the local decision-making process, inter-generational tensions, and an increasingly territorial mentality in asserting different racial, cultural and religious identities in response to real or perceived attacks.
 - weak political and community leadership.
 - inadequate provision of youth facilities and services.
 - high levels of unemployment, particularly amongst young people.
 - activities of extremist groups.
 - weaknesses and disparity in the police response to community issues, particularly racial incidents.
 - irresponsible coverage of race stories by sections of the local media.

Policy framework and recommendations

- E9 Summarised under various headings, these issues and the policies intended to address them provide the framework for subsequent attempts to positively define and promote community cohesion. Each of the issues is discussed in chapter two, with action in progress of proposed set out in chapter three.

Chapter 2	Chapter 3
	<p><i>High quality services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The government's commitment to delivering high quality public services to all is reasserted, particularly in the context of current areas of deprivation.
<p><i>Identity and shared values</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Them' and 'us' attitudes are prevalent. 	<p><i>Identity and shared values</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The government is to initiate a debate about citizenship, civic identity, shared values, rights and responsibilities.
<p><i>Cohesion and segregation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different ethnic groups are 'increasingly segregating themselves'. 	<p><i>Cohesion and segregation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community cohesion should be made an explicit aim of government at national and local levels (cross-governmental working, local authority community cohesion plans, research programme into segregation. - The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 imposes a positive duty on public bodies to promote race equality.
	<p><i>Housing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policies must be developed to ensure that individuals have real housing choices and ethnic groups are not concentrated in the worst housing stock.
	<p><i>Education</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There should be inclusiveness at the heart of faith school policy, partnership arrangements between schools, schools as a community resource, narrowing of the achievement gap between different ethnic groups, promoting community cohesion through post-16 education and training, and more ethnic minority head teachers, teachers, governors and support staff.

Chapter 2	Chapter 3
<p><i>Weak political and community leadership</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Absence of an agreed vision, inability to broker relations between key interests, lack of drive to create inclusive LSPs, and lack of organisational capacity, amount to weak political and community leadership. 	<p><i>Community leadership-supporting communities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support must be offered to local communities, local government and other delivery partners before problems become acute. - The government has introduced statutory community strategies and agreed a series of measures to respond to communities where relationships have broken down. - Government office regional coordinators will be responsible for building a longer-term strategic approach to capacity-building, etc.
<p><i>Children and young people</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Young people's voices are largely ignored by decision makers. 	<p><i>Children and young people</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interaction and reengagement of children and young people from different faiths and communities must be encouraged. - A new vision for childhood and youth is to be produced. - There are plans for encouraging youth participation.
<p><i>Youth facilities and services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attention needs to be paid to the lack of youth facilities, particularly of young men, in anti-social behaviour. 	<p><i>Youth services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The government is committed to rebuilding youth services.
	<p><i>Sport and culture</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sport and culture can play an important part in re-engaging disaffected sections of the community: £7 million to be invested in sports leadership awards, Sport England Active Community Development, Sporting Equals (CRE/Sport England) to address racial inequality in sport, Space for Sports and the Arts, providing £130 million to improve sport and art facilities in primary schools in deprived areas.

Chapter 2	Chapter 3
<p><i>Employment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decline in traditional employment opportunities: wide variation in unemployment levels within relatively small areas, high unemployment in Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities, racial discrimination in the labour market, are underlying factors in the breakdown of community cohesion. 	<p><i>Employment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a government commitment to increasing the employment rate of people from ethnic minorities. Action Team for Jobs works from outreach sites with people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Regional Development Agencies aim to promote economic development and regionally based growth in run-down local economies. The PIU project, <i>Improving Labour market achievements in British Society</i> reports in Summer 2002.
<p><i>Regeneration</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grants and regeneration funds are a source of tension between communities. The public, private and voluntary sectors, and residents need to be involved in regeneration initiatives. 	<p><i>Regeneration</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal is the government's main vehicle for tackling the underlying causes of poverty and deprivation in communities experiencing conflict. The strategy places emphasis on the role of LSPs, neighbourhood management, Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, the Community Empowerment Fund, and the Street Wardens Programme.
<p><i>Activities of extremist groups</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The far right plays a role in fomenting tension, leading to disorder. 	<p><i>Activities of extremist groups</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The government should take measures to prevent disorder arising from the activities of far-right organisations. - ACPO is identifying best practice in responding to activities that may trigger disorder.
<p><i>Local media</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There has been biased reporting of race issues, particularly of racial attacks by Asians on white people. 	
<p><i>Policing and crime reduction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are public order challenges. The quality of policing varies in different areas and for different communities. 	<p><i>Tackling crime and disorder</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships must play an important role in creating public understanding and confidence in the way in which crime and anti social behaviour are tackled and communities are policed. - The police must respond effectively to racist attacks and incidents, etc.

Comment

- E10 With its calculations of the injuries to the police and general public and the cost of damage, the Denham report makes clear why the government was so concerned about disturbances in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham. The report also tacitly acknowledges that the institutions of national and local government, with their separate responsibilities and narrow departmentalisation, often reflect and replicate the same lines along which local communities are fractured. There is a stark recognition that community cohesion – holistic thinking – should be a central concern of all government policy and must be promoted through inter-departmental working.
- E11 Denham develops community cohesion policy in two ways. Firstly, it separates the role of central government in developing a unifying national civic identity from policies and decisions to be made and implemented at local government level. Secondly, it provides a list of the factors identified as resulting in community fragmentation, accompanying this with a set of policy recommendations as a solution, which subsequently leads on to the positive definitions of community cohesion provided in the LGA and CRE reports. The report also recognises the need to maintain an inter-departmental ministerial group, to establish a community cohesion panel, and to fund community cohesion initiatives, if further work is needed to be done in this area.

Appendix F

Commission for Racial Equality report on the lessons of Bradford, Oldham and Burnley (CRE)

Background

- F1 In 2002, the Commission for Racial Equality published *A Place for Us All, learning from Bradford, Oldham and Burnley*, a report of 61 A4 pages based on an examination of the factors leading to the disturbances in the north of England and claiming to be a small contribution to wider debates on social and community cohesion. It is a development of an internal report on the extent of segregation in Burnley, Oldham and Bradford, that was used as background by both the national community cohesion review team (see Cantle report) and the ministerial group on public order and community cohesion (see Denham report).
- F2 Accepting the findings of Sir Herman Ouseley's report, that ethnic groups live segregated lives in housing, education, work and everyday social intercourse and that communities are fragmenting along racial, cultural and faith lines, the Commission proposes various practical policies that might be adopted to remedy the situation. It points out that public authorities are now required under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to promote good relations between persons of different racial groups.
- F3 The report deals in turn with residential separation ('a sense of place'), the quality of housing ('a place to live'), ethnic segregation in education ('a place to learn'), community safety, including racist incidents ('a safe place'), employment prospects ('a place of opportunity'), and regeneration strategies ('a place of neighbourhood renewal'), each chapter making reference to the conditions in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley.
- F4 An important distinction is made between 'segregation' and 'congregation'. The 1968 Race Relations Act outlawed segregation on racial grounds and, as a signatory of the UN International Convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, the government must 'prevent, prohibit and eradicate' racial segregation. The law, however, applies only to enforced segregation and not to what is termed as 'congregation', where people from a particular group choose to live or work together. In discussing the observed separation between racial groups as background to the violence in the northern towns, a broader question is raised about the negative effects of what was then described as 'self-segregation', thus raising fundamental issues about people's right to choose where and how they live.
- F5 While acknowledging the right 'to congregate', the CRE points out that for many people from the ethnic minorities, choice is constrained by social and economic factors as well as by the fear of exposure to discrimination and harassment. While compelling people to disperse and integrate would be as unlawful as intentionally segregating them, the choices open to people can be increased by tackling advantage and discrimination.

F6 The CRE offers the following definition of a cohesive society. It is one where there is/are:

- shared values that can be upheld despite other differences between groups; a sense of belonging and an acceptance that this means different things for different groups;
- an intolerance of racial discrimination and harassment;
- shared pride in the place where people live;
- respect for people's lifestyles, as long as these do not infringe on others' rights;
- genuine opportunities for everyone in education, employment, health, and civic and democratic activity; and
- national and local leaders who tackle inequality and respect differences in background and outlook.

F7 This list is similar to the later one provided in the Local Government Association guidance, but places greater emphasis on racial justice, diversity, the intolerance of racial discrimination and harassment and respect for others' life styles. It also mentions national and local leadership. The LGA definition, however, brings out the importance of developing strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the work-place, schools and neighbourhoods.

Residential separation

F8 The report provides data (from the 1991 census, as 2001 census data was not yet available) on the extent of ethnic concentration and residential separation in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley. In all three towns, the main ethnic minority population is of Pakistani origin and concentrated in very few wards. More than 70 per cent of families of Pakistani origin in the north of England originated from Mirpur in Kashmir. Mixing between people of different ethnic backgrounds in public places was not in evidence and there was little to promote a sense of belonging to a wider community.

F9 As examples of what might be done to bring about greater contact, various schemes developed for Northern Ireland and ethnically-diverse urban neighbourhoods in the USA are described. Conclusions from the United States were that the development of diverse neighbourhoods could not be left to the market, or to communities on their own, and that government support was essential. 'Social seams' needed to be created by locating inclusive attractive facilities, such as good schools, shopping centres, clubs and social centres, in places where people from different communities in adjacent neighbourhoods could access them. Youth and community facilities, designated for people from all backgrounds, could be sited on the borders of segregated areas.

F10 In the United Kingdom, the role of race equality councils and the local strategic partnerships (in the 88 NRF areas) are mentioned, with the recommendation that the government with the CRE should consider funding a

network of local community organisations to bring together people from different ethnic groups and faith communities.

Housing

- F11 Information is provided on the extreme levels of housing deprivation in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley. It is pointed out, again, that circumstance rather than choice has played an important part in the way communities have developed. Newcomers may have wanted to live close to those sharing the same background, language, faith and culture, but economic circumstances, housing discrimination, ‘white flight’ and experience of racism have played a part in the ensuing polarisation of communities. Thirty years on, the owners of sub-standard housing in these areas are unable to move because of their limited economic means and the collapse of the housing market. The report also explains the under-representation of ethnic minorities in social housing.
- F12 The Commission recommends widespread consultation on housing needs by local authorities and registered social landlords (RSLs), the development of race equality schemes, the use of the Housing Corporation’s code of practice for social landlords on tackling racial harassment and the setting of targets to improve racial equality in the sector. The report draws on the experience of the United States with its long history of residential segregation, and advocates housing mobility and residential mixing schemes as a promising approach.

Education

- F13 In so far as the information is available, the ethnic make-up of schools in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley is described, showing significant levels of ethnic segregation. At primary level the schools reflect the ethnic make up of the population of their catchment areas: where the population is residentially segregated, so are the primary schools. Some of the secondary schools, too, have more than 70 per cent of Asian pupils and schools have come to be seen as either ‘white’ or ‘Asian’. While residential segregation leads to segregation in schools, parental choice, ‘white flight’, faith schools (which give priority to families of their faith), and fear of racial harassment also play a part.
- F14 School attainment levels vary according to ethnicity. Pupils from Bangladeshi and Pakistani backgrounds do not perform as well as pupils from most other backgrounds because of factors such as recency of arrival in Britain, English being spoken only as a second or additional language, and levels of deprivation in the home. Some families move house in order to avoid inner-city schools with a record of, or reputation for, poor performance.
- F15 The experience of desegregation policies in the United States is discussed, including the failure of compulsory desegregation and bussing, and the idea of magnet schools, set up to promote desegregation, equity and excellence.
- F16 The Commission makes a number of proposals, for example, that LEAs and schools should concentrate on achieving high educational standards for all pupils, review admission policies, make schools more attractive to parents and

pupils from all ethnic groups, and take steps to increase contact between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Mentoring and work experience opportunities should be provided, possibly through the Connexions programme, for all young people.

Community safety

- F17 Fear of racial harassment is a good reason for people from a particular community to congregate and avoid situations where they might experience abuse. The report provides figures on racist incidents reported in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley. Oldham has the highest number. While persons of Asian, as well as white, origin initiate racist incidents, ethnic minority individuals are disproportionately victims.
- F18 The role of crime and disorder reduction partnerships, multi-agency schemes, and the police taking action to reduce racist incidents is explored. The police and local authorities are urged to make sure that membership of crime and disorder reduction partnerships reflect all sections of the local community and that the partnerships deal with racial harassment and violence as a priority. Racist crime needs to be monitored effectively. The police and local communities should work together to encourage dialogue, especially with young people.

Employment

- F19 Bradford, Oldham and Burnley all have high rates of economic deprivation and poverty, and pockets of high unemployment, which affect many ethnic minority and some white communities. The high unemployment rates in the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities also signify high levels of deprivation and low rates of academic achievement. The report refers to the decline of manufacturing in the 1980s and 1990s and its disproportionate effect on the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. These communities are also affected by discrimination.
- F20 Again, a number of recommendations are made to employers on how to improve employment opportunities and achieve a workforce that reflects the diversity of the population from which it is drawn.

Regeneration

- F21 The Commission points out that Bradford, Oldham and Burnley have recently all received large amounts of regeneration funding, but have failed to attract sufficient investment to make a difference to the levels of deprivation. Worse, the sheer number of regeneration schemes, the need to bid competitively for them, and the lack of transparency in their allocation, has generated suspicion and jealousy between communities over whether the money is being distributed fairly.
- F22 The CRE has for many years expressed concern about the lack of a strategic approach to regeneration funding and welcomes the possibility provided by

local strategic partnerships to coordinate the various initiatives and play a vital role in achieving community cohesion. Local strategic partnerships need to consult with and involve all sections of the community, especially the most deprived. Local authorities should use their community plans to improve community cohesion.

- F23 Regeneration policies should aim to build socially-cohesive communities. Towards this end, some funding should be allocated on thematic lines, rather than for specified geographical areas, with more emphasis placed on cross-community projects.

Comment

- F24 The Commission for Racial Equality's report has a number of strengths. It is historically and economically grounded, basing its analysis and recommendation on the situation in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley. It cites examples of good practice in severely ethnically-segregated residential areas elsewhere, as in the United States and Northern Ireland.

- F25 A number of practical proposals are provided for encouraging greater inter-ethnic contact and congregation in housing, education and employment, supported by more carefully coordinated regeneration schemes and the creation of a safer crime-free environment.

Appendix G

Local Government Association Guidance on Community Cohesion (LGA)

Background

- G1 Published by the Local Government Association in May 2002, the guidance was jointly produced by the LGA, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Home Office, Commission for Racial Equality and the Inter-Faith Network for the United Kingdom, and supported by the Association of Police Authorities, Department for Education and Skills, Employers' Organisation for Local Government and the National Youth Agency. It is designed to assist local authorities and Local Strategic Partnerships in strengthening and building community cohesion, with a further publication to follow to show how to assess and measure progress.

Emphasis on the practical

- G2 While providing a definition of 'community cohesion', the approach is unapologetically atheoretical, setting out '*practical steps*' that authorities and their partner organisation can take to build the promotion of community cohesion into their policies and delivery of services. Since the publication of the Cantle and other reports, it is assumed that the challenge is to translate an understanding of the issues raised into *practical action* to improve the situation on the ground by tackling the causes leading to conflict and guarding against circumstances that might lead to 'the fracturing of communities'.
- G3 Local authorities and Local Strategic Partnerships and Community Strategic Partnerships and Community Safety and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships are given key areas in driving forward the agenda. Central government is expected to provide advice and guidance, act as a source and dissemination of good practice, and encourage and facilitate new learning through the community cohesion pathfinder programme (see below).

Definition of community cohesion

- G4 The guidance explains that community cohesion includes but goes beyond concepts of race equality and social inclusion. A cohesive community is one where:
- (i) there is a common vision and sense of belonging for all communities;
 - (ii) the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued;
 - (iii) those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and
 - (iv) strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, schools, and within neighbourhoods.
- G5 Supporting the definition, a further section draws attention to the positive duty under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to have due regard to the

need to promote good relations between people from different racial groups. While promoting good race relations is part of bringing about community cohesion, the guidance makes clear its remit is far broader and extends to other groups distinguished by wealth, age, beliefs, gender and disability.

Summary of the guidance

Ownership of the community cohesion agenda

- G6 The guidance stresses the importance of the plan to achieve community cohesion being developed and owned by local agencies and organisations, which should work in partnership to deal with the issues in their community strategy and service delivery. A key role will be played by Local Strategic Partnerships which have been set up to improve joint working between the public, private voluntary and community sectors.

Community and political leadership

- G7 Local authorities and local councillors need to play a leadership role in promoting the wellbeing of their areas and building community cohesion. A local vision and action plan has to be agreed with local stakeholders and developed with the help of strategic partners. Councillors need to bring different community interests together in local forums and to address conflict and misunderstanding between different groups. The views of local representatives, whether democratically elected or less formally selected, and of young people, need to be sought. A number of practical proposals are listed.

Vision and values

- G8 The guidance stresses the importance of developing a shared vision of the kind of place people want their locality to be, because if they share such a vision they are more likely to interact, understand and value differences positively. The theme should be 'unity in diversity': that cultural pluralism and integration are not incompatible. The vision should then be turned into action by, for example, the development of a conflict resolution strategy, a programme of 'myth busting', a series of events to foster cross-cultural contact, and the development of festivals and celebrations involving all communities.

Baseline assessment

- G9 The guidance suggests that all local agencies (not just local authorities) should acquire a detailed understanding of the nature of their local communities and their degree of cohesiveness. Each local authority is expected to assess how it is performing in relation to the various themes of community cohesion, asking questions, such as: Are we clear about the regeneration needs and aspirations of all sections of our community? Do we listen to people who truly represent all sections of our community? Do we have mechanisms to listen to the views

of young people? The 2001 Census data is considered crucial to this baseline assessment.

- G10 The Audit Commission has also attempted to measure community cohesion by including in its quality of life indicators the following criterion: “percentage of people surveyed who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds and communities can live together harmoniously”.

Involving communities and including hard-to-reach groups

- G11 Further sections of the guidance deal with the need to involve key sections of the community – organisations and individuals – in action to bring about community cohesion. The role of Local Strategic Partnerships in preparing community strategies, bringing together local plans, and engaging in joined-up working is explained. Community and voluntary organisations at the local level are also crucial in supporting a ‘bottom up’ approach to building cohesion. The contribution of faith communities to public life needs to be recognised and inter-faith structures, bringing together representatives of different faiths, supported.
- G12 Children and young people are another core group that has to be centrally involved in helping to build cohesion. This involves recognising the role of the local youth service, voluntary and community sectors, and Connexions partnerships, in providing local facilities and activities. Various proposals for engaging with young people, in particular, the ‘disaffected’, are offered.
- G13 Communities also need to be prepared for the arrival and presence of asylum seekers and refugees who may be dispersed to new areas, thus resulting in changes to the ethnic and cultural ‘mix’ of a neighbourhood. A check list of practical measures for helping a local population come to terms with the presence of asylum seekers is provided. The government intends to publish good practice guidance for local authorities and the police on travelling communities.

Regeneration

- G14 Ostensibly, drawing on one of the themes of the Ouseley report on Bradford, the guidance draws attention to the way in which methods of allocating regeneration funding have led to unhelpful competition between neighbourhoods, resulting in resentment and suspicion being generated in some areas that others were benefiting at their expense.
- G15 While resources will always need to be targeted at areas and communities suffering the worst deprivation, the new approach, reflected in the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, puts the onus on local agencies, through the Local Strategic Partnership, to prioritise and target expenditure. In order to avoid perceptions of unfairness, local authorities need to ensure the analysis of local need and the allocation of resources are open and transparent, communicating reasons not only to targeted communities but to neighbouring areas, too. The benefits of targeted regeneration projects need to be shared

more widely and segregated communities encouraged to work together on projects of mutual benefit.

Sports and cultural services

- G16 The guidance points out that sport and leisure activities are engaged in voluntarily and provide a way of involving wider sections of the community and of breaking down barriers. An opportunity exists here for 'joined-up working' with other public and voluntary agencies, to bring about community cohesion. The Department for Culture, Media and Sports, in partnership with the LGA and other bodies, has produced guidance on *Local Cultural Strategies* (December 2000). In order to harness the power of sport and culture to break down barriers, particular attention should be paid to the means of accessing facilities and of providing incentives to encourage cross-community projects.

Education

- G17 The guidance dwells on the role of education in developing common values and a common identity. Schools, it is claimed, are well placed to tackle social exclusion and make communities more cohesive. Also, by raising attainment, and increasing participation in education and training of those who under-achieve, educational institutions improve employment opportunities and life chances. Among various initiatives in education, are mentioned in the teaching of citizenship in primary and secondary schools, the Learning and Skills Council's statutory duty to promote race equality and diversity within post-16 education, and the government's wish for more faith schools (schools with a religious character).
- G18 It is pointed out that the category of maintained schools with a religious character is not conterminous with that of mono-cultural schools, which includes many non-faith schools. Schools, however, often reflect patterns of segregation in housing and the wider community. To address these, there should be cross-agency work between education and housing and, in areas of segregated schooling, inter-school activities should be developed to promote shared values and awareness of others' cultures.

Housing

- G19 Accepting that concentrations of people from one ethnic background in certain areas of housing and their separation from other groups living in adjacent areas has contributed to inter-community tensions, the guidance recognises that the issue of housing segregation has to be addressed within a context in which people must be able to exercise choice as to where they live. Historical and cultural preferences, proximity to work and to cultural facilities, willingness and ability to travel, lack of experience in accessing social housing, and fear of harassment are all factors that contribute to ethnic residential concentration. It is not easy to decide whether segregation is 'voluntary' or 'enforced', nor to intervene to reverse it once it has occurred.

- G20 The view is taken that attempts to reverse segregation are likely to fail if the reasons for its occurrence and the aspirations of different groups are not fully understood. There is also a recognition that many of the causes of segregation lie outside the control of local authorities, although there is much they can do, particularly by working in partnership with housing associations. The Housing Practitioner Group, established by the Community Cohesion Panel and the Community Cohesion Unit, have identified the need for further guidance.
- G21 The LGA guidance recognises the importance of long-term strategic approaches through housing investment and of spatial planning. It is suggested that targets for improving the quality of rundown private sector homes occupied by low-income families could address some of the underlying causes of the disturbances in 2001 and redress the imbalance caused by the previous focus on investment in social housing.
- G22 The government's intention to develop low-demand pathfinder projects to tackle those areas in the North and Midlands affected by low-demand and abandonment are welcomed. The key to success is felt to lie in stakeholders working together on a common agenda combining housing market renewal and social and economic regeneration. Also crucial is the need to involve communities in the preparation of local development frameworks to achieve legitimacy and ownership.

Employment

- G23 Communities are adversely affected by poor employment prospects. The variation in unemployment rates between areas and ethnic groups may also lead to resentment. The guidance refers to the Cabinet Offices' interim analytical report, *Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market*, which deals with the differences between ethnic groups in levels of employment, earnings and access to promotion, and raises questions about the degree to which ethnic minorities are integrated into the labour market.
- G24 Remedial intervention may take the form of improved childcare provision, regional action on employment and skills, improved education and training, equal access programmes for the public and private sector, representation of the business sector on the LSPs, etc. Local authorities (for whom the guidance is written) should also recognise that they play a major role as local employers and purchasers of services.

Community safety and policing

- G25 Central to community cohesion is the need to tackle crime and disorder in order to promote the health, well-being and economic welfare of neighbourhoods. Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) led by local authorities and the police are required to undertake an audit of crime in their areas and then develop and implement a strategy for dealing with the problems identified.

- G26 It is clearly recognised that tackling crime is a community issue and not just a matter for the police. Effective policing depends on winning the confidence of all sections of the community through the elimination of discriminatory police practices.
- G27 Currently, the Community Cohesion Practitioner Group on policing and crime is developing a definition of what community cohesion means in the context of policing. Following the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report, the Lawrence Steering Group highlighted five issues crucial to improving police/community relations: racist incidents, stop and search, recruitment, retention and progression of minority ethnic officers, community and race relations training, and the trust and confidence of minority ethnic communities in the wider Criminal Justice System.
- G28 Partnership working is considered essential to the delivery of community safety and tackling crime and disorder. Local authorities, in particular, must consider the impact of crime and disorder on the exercise of their functions. Crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) should have effective stakeholder representation, including a housing association representative.
- G29 The police and partners have to establish strong links, involving rapid communication channels with all sections of the community and, especially, young people. There should be multi-agency approaches to addressing racist incidents (if possible, third-party reporting arrangements), widespread consultation that includes 'hard-to-reach groups' and a strategy to ensure that the police respond systematically and vigorously to racist incidents.

Press and media

- G30 The Cantle report highlighted the role played by local and regional media in influencing opinion. The guidance points out the importance of developing close relations with the media to encourage positive reporting of events in the community, not only to support community cohesion, but to allay public concern over the fear of crime or the presence of asylum seekers.
- G31 The importance of establishing partnerships is emphasised once more, with the suggestion that the media be offered representation on regeneration partnerships, LSPs, or community planning forums. A set of recommendations is provided which includes the development of protocols on the representation of extremist views, positive reporting of diversity and improvements in community relations, and the development of a dialogue about attitudes, behaviour and crime.

Comment

- G32 The exclusive focus on the practical action that might be taken by local authorities has three important consequences.
- G33 Firstly, because proposals are not derived from any appreciation of the need for a theory of, or research into, the social structural forces underpinning

social fragmentation and ethnic polarisation, the guidance consists not of a strategy for clinical, tightly coordinated, controlled, particular and effective interventions, but of a somewhat piecemeal presentation of worthy recommendations to be delivered simultaneously by a number of different agencies, albeit urged to work in partnership.

- G34 Secondly, there is an emphasis on marshalling and coordinating those various activities and initiatives already in train which appear to have a bearing on issues of diversity, race and community, in the hope that more of the same will do the trick.
- G35 Thirdly, by focusing mainly on the practical action that might be taken by local authorities and Local Strategic Partnerships, 'community cohesion' is redefined in terms only of those actions that lie within the power or remit of local government. The guidance does not acknowledge with sufficient frankness the possible limitations on local authorities' ability to tackle the more intractable structural problems of community fragmentation, such as the depressed Burnley housing market.
- G36 Tangentially, it is worth pointing out that the government has traditionally employed a three-fold approach to race relations: tight immigration controls, anti-discrimination legislation and improved public services in urban areas where ethnic minorities are resident. The BNP, of course, have made electoral progress by exploiting the government's current policies in relation to asylum seekers/refugees and economic migration.
- G37 The most important message of the LGA's *Guidance on community cohesion*, however, is of the dangers of working in 'silos' and of the central importance of coordinating and improving policy implementation and service delivery through working in partnership. It remains to be seen, however, whether the Local Strategic Partnership initiative is sufficiently well thought through, resourced, or powerful to reverse the processes of fragmentation and to contribute significantly to community cohesion.

Appendix H

Prospectus for Local Authorities and Partners: Community Cohesion Pathfinder Programme

Background

- H1 The 'prospectus' was issued jointly by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit and the Home Office in November 2002 to local authorities to enable them to identify whether they wanted to apply for funding under the Community Cohesion Pathfinder Programme. While local authorities are to be the accountable bodies it is made clear they must seek partners from the community and voluntary sector and collaborate with Local Strategic Partnerships and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships.
- H2 The Community Cohesion Pathfinder Programme is intended to build on and showcase good practice in promoting community cohesion in fifteen local areas, which must be committed to mainstreaming community cohesion in everything they do. Only those areas that can demonstrate 'capacity, challenge and commitment' and are already beginning to tackle community cohesion issues are invited to apply. They are expected to prioritise the integration of community cohesion and to disseminate their findings to other authorities.
- H3 The fifteen successful areas receive £285,000, to be spent in the period February 2003 to October 2004, with money split between local authority (£150,000 or 53%), the community and voluntary sector (£90,000 or 31%) and the DFES Community Champions programme (£45,000 or 16%), with the first tranche of money in NRF areas going to the Community Empowerment Network.
- H4 The Community Champions programme, as part of the Pathfinder Programme, involves the development of a specialist youth stream to ensure engagement with young people.

Aims of the Community Cohesion Pathfinder Programme

- H5 The programme's aims are:
- to identify and disseminate models by which community cohesion can be integrated across planning and service delivery.
 - to provide support for the voluntary and community sector to focus on and promote community cohesion, recognising the needs of marginalised communities.
 - to build the capacity

- of communities themselves to challenge statutory and voluntary services and provide ‘bottom up’ approaches to community cohesion via the DFES Community Champions programme.

H6 In describing the background to the programme, the prospectus makes reference in particular to the Cantle and LGA reports, and quotes the LGA definition of a cohesive community.

Selection process

H7 The fifteen areas are to be selected on the basis of capacity, challenge and commitment. ‘Capacity’ refers to the local authority’s ability to deliver a programme of community cohesion that makes a difference to the locality involvement of Local Strategic Partnerships and Crime and Reduction. Partnerships are central to this exercise. ‘Challenge’ involves making an assessment - ‘a mapping exercise’ – of the challenges of community cohesion in the particular locality, showing the risk to public order, incidents of harassment, and racist activities increasing tension. The agencies involved must demonstrate ‘commitment’ to implementing the findings of the programme over the longer term, participating in learning group structures facilitated by an independent body, and involving themselves in a group developing performance indicators for community cohesion.

H8 Local authorities are encouraged to use the ‘themes’ or headings set out in the LGA Guidance on Community Cohesion, eg., community and political leadership, regeneration, leisure and cultural services.

Appendix I

Home Office Guide for Local Authorities on how to build a picture of community cohesion

Background

- I1 Published in June 2003 by the Home Office Community Cohesion Unit entitled *Building a picture of community cohesion. A Guide for Local Authorities and their partners*, this short booklet of 26 pages describes ten social indicators that can be used by local authorities and other local agencies to develop a picture of community cohesion in their areas. This is the detailed advice on how to measure community cohesion promised in the section on local context, baseline assessment and monitoring progress in the LGA Guidance on Community Cohesion (see before). The guidance on measurement is intended to assist local authorities and strategic partners in developing local community cohesion strategies and in assessing their effectiveness.
- I2 It constitutes a further selection and refinement of the Audit Commission's quality of life indicators (see library of local performance indicators at www.local-pi-library.gov.uk). The Audit Commission, along with the government, believe that measurement is essential to policy implementation because, if outcomes cannot be measured, success cannot be distinguished from failure, and mistakes cannot be put right.
- I3 The ten indicators provided are intended to increase its understanding of 'what community cohesion looks like on the ground', but it is acknowledged that measurement of cohesion is not straightforward and that the indicators will still have to be interpreted in the light of local circumstances.
- I4 The so-called headline indicator (or outcome) is:
- the percentage of people who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together.

The nine other indicators are grouped under the four components of the definition of a cohesive community (as originally stated in the LGA Guidance).

Common vision

- I5 Whether a community has a common vision a sense of belonging is to be assessed by:
- the percentage of respondents who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood/town/country/England/Wales/Britain.
 - key priorities for improving an area.

- the percentage of adults surveyed who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area.

Application of diversity

- I6 Whether the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued is to be assessed by:
- the percentage of people who feel that local ethnic differences are respected.
 - the number of racial incidents recorded by police authorities per 100,000.

Similarity of life opportunity

- I7 The similarity of life opportunities of people from different backgrounds is to be judged by:
- the local concentration of deprivation.
 - the percentage of pupils achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C or equivalent.
 - the percentage of unemployed people claiming benefit who have been out of work for more than a year.

Positive relationships

- I8 The development of strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, schools and neighbourhoods is to be measured by:
- the percentage of people from different backgrounds who mix with other people from different backgrounds in everyday situations.

Other features of the guide

- I9 The guide stresses that the government is trying to increase its understanding of community cohesion and what drives it. To this end, it is using the Home office Citizenship Survey and other surveys to gather data on the subject. The guide also provides a list of other useful sources, including the neighbourhood statistics website, which provides census 2001 data at ward level. It is hoped that local authorities will begin to compare their performance with other areas.
- I10 Local authorities and partners are encouraged to contact the Community Cohesion Unit to discuss how they aim to measure community cohesion in their area. An annexe is provided of other relevant best value performance indicators and census 2001 indicators.

Appendix J

Wards in the West Midlands NRF areas with more than 40% ethnic minority populations

AREA	WARD	POPULATION	% white: British, Irish & other White	% mixed: White & Black Caribbean, White & Black African, White & Asian, Other	% Asian & Asian British: Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi Other Asian	% Black and Black British: Caribbean African Other black	% Chinese and other ethnic group	% Pakistani	% Muslim
Birmingham	Aston	26,972	29.45	4.62	42.41	21.51	2.02	20.99	37.95
	Handsworth	25,912	18.45	3.32	56.76	18.52	2.61	25.23	45.37
	Ladywood	23,789	51.02	5.52	24.82	16.43	2.22	10.64	14.21
	Nechells	27,390	37.42	4.60	46.38	9.65	1.97	37.21	43.67
	Sandwell	27,614	31.09	3.48	48.02	16.00	1.42	6.73	10.17
	Small Heath	35,102	25.02	2.62	65.95	5.25	1.17	50.58	62.06
	Soho	25,634	23.85	4.78	46.95	21.99	2.46	13.99	19.80
	Sparkbrook	28,311	22.07	4.58	61.58	9.50	2.28	40.49	58.92
	Sparkhill	30,011	27.33	2.92	63.04	5.37	1.36	45.44	54.01
	Washwood Heath	27,822	42.99	3.07	48.19	4.99	0.76	41.50	46.02
Coventry	Foleshill	17,968	43.41	3.03	48.27	3.23	2.05	18.52	26.54
Sandwell	Smethwick	11,004	56.80	3.84	31.38	7.13	0.87	10.08	12.24
	Soho and Victoria	7,327	41.20	5.14	37.02	15.70	0.92	16.62	19.61
	St Paul's	11,480	36.48	3.27	51.62	8.05	0.57	9.03	18.89

Wards in the West Midlands NRF areas with more than 40% ethnic minority populations (continued)

AREA	WARD	POPULATION	% white: British, Irish & other White	% mixed: White & Black Caribbean, White & Black African, White & Asian, Other	% Asian & Asian British: Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi Other Asian	% Black and Black British: Caribbean African Other black	% Chinese and other ethnic group	% Pakistani	% Muslim
	West Bromwich Central	10,494	50.70	2.68	37.15	8.55	0.90	5.47	9.13
Walsall	Palfrey	14,596	52.24	2.38	42.29	2.65	0.42	16.68	27.34
Wolverhampton	Blakenhall	11,301	39.02	2.39	50.34	7.00	1.26	1.93	2.41
	Graiseley	11,691	59.20	3.26	30.58	6.26	0.70	4.53	5.24
	St Peter's	14,472	50.41	4.66	30.93	11.69	2.30	8.19	10.37