Criminal Justice Policy Planning Process
"What should we do and why?"

1. The policy issue
Briefly describe/define the policy-level issue to be examined.

2. How things are
Describe the existing situation and outcome(s) in specific and observable/measurable terms. Include data, and lists of statutes or ordinances, written policies, operational procedures, etc.

3. The public's opinion(s)
Describe and consider the public's opinion(s) about how things are and how things could be.

4. How we want things to be
Describe the desired outcome(s) in specific and observable/measurable terms.

5. What we could do
List all of the options for changing the existing situation.

6. What are the advantages and disadvantages of what we could do
List the pros and cons of each option. Consider both the short-term and long-term consequences.

7. What we're going to do and why
Choose the apparent best option and document the rationale.

8. Do it
Implement the newly chosen action.

9. What happened and what we think about it
Document and evaluate the new outcome(s).

10. What we need to do next time
If the new outcomes are the desired outcomes, then repeat the process. If not, then modify the process at one of the above steps (e.g., #7).