

**Report of the Chief Constable to the Chair and Members
of the Operational Performance Panel
18th March 2010**

**Executive & Presenting Officer: Mr Sean White, Assistant Chief Constable
(Territorial Operations)**

Status: For information

Local Public Confidence Survey - Baseline Results 2009-10

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To present to the Police Authority the baseline findings from the Local Public Confidence Survey.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members note and comment on the findings presented in the report.

3. Reasons


- 3.1 To monitor levels of public confidence and understand the issues affecting it, in order to assist with the successful delivery of the 2010-11 Policing Plan Priority: ***'to enhance public confidence in Cleveland Police'***.
- 3.2 The National confidence measure (APACS 2.2) is currently the only top down numerical target set by the Home Office for individual police forces. The National target is to achieve a 60.0% level of confidence by March 2012 (from a baseline of 45.0%). The local target for Cleveland is 66.0% by 2012 (from a baseline of 54.0%). Progress towards these targets is measured via the British Crime Survey (BCS).

4. The Local Public Confidence Survey

- 4.1 As Members will recall, the Local Public Confidence (LPC) Survey was introduced in October 2009 to replace the previous Quality of Life and Neighbourhood Surveys. It is commissioned jointly by the Force and the Authority.
- 4.2 The survey is conducted via telephone interview with sample selection and other methodology issues designed in accordance with the Home Office minimum technical requirement. The survey is conducted on a monthly basis by an independent market research company, Maven Research. The aim of the survey is to measure public confidence and to understand the factors that influence it. Between October 2009 and January 2010 a total of 2,400 interviews were completed across the Cleveland area.
- 4.3 For comparative purposes, the survey includes a number of British Crime Survey questions, including the National confidence indicator (APACS 2.2): *'the percentage of people who agree that the police and local council are dealing with the crime and anti-social behaviour issues that matter in their area'*.
- 4.4 According to the BCS, Cleveland currently has a confidence level of 55.3% (+/- 4.2%). However, the LPC survey suggests a comparative figure of 71.0% (+/- 1.8%).
- 4.5 The following table provides a summary comparison of the results obtained compared to the most recent data available from the British Crime Survey (12 months to September 2009).

Table 1: Comparison of APACS performance measures using the Local Public Confidence survey and the British Crime Survey

APACS ref:	Performance Measure/Survey Question	LPC	BCS
2.1	Understanding local concerns (agencies)	57.6%	51.5%
2.2	Dealing with local concerns (agencies)	71.0%	55.3%
2.3	Residents perception of police performance	62.5%	56.4%
4.1	Perceptions of anti social behaviour	7.7%	19.1%
4.2	Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour	18.0%	27.1%
4.3	Perceptions of drug dealing and usage	18.4%	33.4%

 Area where LPC survey indicates a higher level of performance than currently measured via the British Crime Survey

4.6 A 'True' Measure of Confidence

The APACS performance measures detailed above provide both an informative and comparable insight into the issue of public confidence in the police service and perceptions of police performance. However, the questions posed do not

explicitly reference the issue of confidence. The LPC survey includes a more explicit question which directly asks residents for their opinion in relation to the issue of confidence; that is 'How confident are you in Cleveland Police?' 86.1% of people surveyed during the baseline period stated that they were either 'very' or 'fairly' confident.

4.7 The results of this survey would suggest that those people expressing higher levels of confidence to this question associate this to:

- Previous experience of a good or efficient service.
- A belief that the police can be relied upon to be there when needed.
- A lack of problems in the local area.
- The skills and attitude of staff.
- A proactive approach to problem solving.
- Police presence on the streets.

4.8 Conversely, those people expressing lower levels of confidence associate this to:

- A perceived lack of action in relation to local problems.
- Unreliability of the police to be there when needed or to response to requests for assistance.

4.9 Understanding Confidence

Public confidence can only be improved through understanding and addressing the issues that directly affect it. The findings of the current survey would generally appear to support those highlighted via other sources of research and previous studies. The factors most closely associated with public confidence would appear to be:

- Community engagement and problem solving
- Procedural justice (fair treatment)
- Police effectiveness
- Contact with the police

and to a lesser extent:

- Targeted foot patrol
- Dealing with anti social behaviour

4.10 Diagnostic analysis has shown a significant association between public confidence and a number of diagnostic questions. The strongest associations are found in relation to the following (shown below in order of strength): The police in this area:

- are dealing with the things that matter to the people in this community.
- understand the issues that affect this community.
- can be relied on to be there when you need them.
- can be relied on to deal with minor crime.
- treat you with respect if you have contact with them for any reason.
- treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are.

A more detailed breakdown of the survey findings and diagnostic analysis can be found in Appendix 1.

5. Implications

5.1 Finance

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5.2 Diversity and Equal Opportunities

There are no diversity or equal opportunities implications arising from this report.

5.3 Human Rights Act

There are no Human Rights Act implications arising from this report.

5.4 Sustainability

There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

5.5 Risk

There are no risk implications arising from this report.

6. Conclusions

6.1 The baseline findings of the LPC survey are positive. The responses given would suggest a higher level of public confidence and a more positive perception of police performance than those indicated via the BCS. It is recognised however that public confidence can only be improved through understanding and addressing the issues that directly affect it.

6.2 Attempts to measure public confidence through the use of a single question will only capture some aspects of this complex and multi-faceted concept. Having examined some of the factors most closely associated with public confidence in the police, it should now be possible to direct activity towards the area in which effective actions might bring about an improvement in perceived performance. The results of the Local Public Confidence survey will help us to deliver our local policing priority; 'to enhance public confidence in Cleveland Police', and will assist us to achieve our vision of Putting People First.

Sean Price
Chief Constable

Prepared by Corporate Planning and Performance