

**Report of the Chief Constable to the Chair and Members
of the Operational Policing Panel
9th February 2012**

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

Status: For information and decision

Local Public Confidence Survey - April to December 2011

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To present to the Police Authority the findings from the Local Public Confidence Survey undertaken between April and December 2011.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members note and comment on the findings presented in the report.
- 2.2 That Members approve the continuation of the Local Public Confidence Survey.

3. Reasons

- 3.1 Although Public Confidence is no longer a Home Office imposed target, it is still a valuable indicator of the success of our *Putting People First* strategy as it measures the community's *'trust, faith or reliance'* in the Force.
- 3.2 The notion of 'confidence' differs from that of 'satisfaction', the latter being a more retrospective assessment based on personal and direct experience. Confidence is acknowledged as a more future-oriented concept which may be influenced by past or present experience (either personal or that of others) or by other external factors. Most importantly, confidence in policing is based on future expectations that the police will be there when they are needed.
- 3.3 Public confidence underpins policing in a democracy and enhances:
- Police legitimacy
 - Public co-operation with the police and compliance with the law
 - A reduction in the fear of crime

- 3.4 The 2011-12 Policing Plan included the following targets:
- Improving the percentage of people who, taking everything into account, have confidence in the police in this area
 - Improving the percentage of people who think that the police in the local area are doing a 'good' or 'excellent' job.
- 3.5 This report is to inform Members of the current levels of public confidence and understand the issues affecting it.

4. The Local Public Confidence Survey

- 4.1 As Members will recall, the Local Public Confidence Survey (LPCS) 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 aim of the survey is to measure public confidence and to understand the factors that influence it. The survey is conducted on a monthly basis by an independent market research company. It is conducted via telephone interview with sample selection and other methodology issues designed in accordance with the Home Office recommendations. This provides a statistically significant sample at BCU level unlike the British Crime Survey which is only statistically significant at Force level.
- 4.3 The survey costs £23,500 per annum. The cost is split between the Force and Authority. The contract terminates on 31st March and the re-tendering procedure needs to begin imminently should Members wish to continue with the survey. However, public confidence can only be improved through understanding and addressing the issues that directly affect it. The Local Public Confidence survey continues to provide a rich source of information in that regard. Other Forces were asked if they were continuing to carry out local confidence surveys, of the 35 that replied 22 confirmed that they were continuing to survey.
- 4.4 Between April and December 2011 a total of 1,800 interviews were completed across the Cleveland area. The responses obtained during the most recent survey have shown that 85.4% said, taking everything into account, they have confidence in their local police. Furthermore, 70.5% of local residents think that the police in their local area are doing a 'good' or an 'excellent job'.
- 4.5 Those people expressing higher levels of confidence associate this with:
- A belief that the police can be relied upon to be there when needed.
 - Previous experience of a good or efficient service.
 - The absence of local problems.
 - The skills and attitude of staff.
 - A good level of police visibility or presence on the streets.

- 4.6 Conversely, those people expressing lower levels of confidence associate this with:
 - Unreliability of the police to be there when needed or to response to requests for assistance.
 - A perceived lack of visible patrol or presence on the streets
 - A perceived lack of action in relation to local problems.
- 4.7 A more detailed breakdown of the latest survey findings can be found in Appendix 1.

5. The British Crime Survey

- 5.1 The British Crime Survey (BCS) is one of the largest social research surveys conducted in England and Wales. It asks people aged 16 and over, resident in households, about their experiences of crime in the last 12 months using face-to-face interviews. These experiences are used to estimate levels of crime in England and Wales. Around 1,000 interviews are carried out in each police force area.
- 5.2 For comparative purposes, the local survey includes a number of British Crime Survey questions, including the previous National confidence indicator (formerly 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’*. 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 2012).

Table 1: Comparison of the Local Public Confidence survey and the British Crime Survey

Ref:	Performance Measure/Survey Question	LPCS	BCS
2.1	Police do a good or excellent job	70.5%	65.0%
2.2	Dealing with local concerns (agencies)	75.4%	64.3%
2.3	Confidence in Local police	85.4%	75.6%

 Indicates a higher level of performance than currently measured via the British Crime Survey

6. Implications

- 6.1 Finance
The annual cost of the survey is £23,500. This could be saved if the survey is discontinued, however, a valuable source of information would be lost as a consequence.

6.2 Diversity and Equal Opportunities

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

6.3 Human Rights Act

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

6.4 Sustainability

There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

6.5 Risk

There are no risk implications arising from this report.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Public confidence underpins policing in a democracy. It can only be improved through understanding and addressing the issues that directly affect it. The LPCS continues to provide a rich source of information in that regard.

7.2 The results of the most recent LPCS 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.

Jacqui Cheer
Temporary Chief Constable