

Police & Crime Panel (P&CP) Meeting – 23rd October 2012

Arrangements for obtaining views of the community and victims on Policing

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 will replace the current governance arrangements with a Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in November 2012. The Act introduces various provisions relating to the issue of a Police and Crime Plan and its contents, **arrangements for obtaining views of the community and victims**, cooperative working, issuing policing precept and the introduction of Police and Crime Panels.

1. Obtaining views of people of Suffolk about policing of Suffolk (S96 (1) PA96)

- **Local Policing Survey**

In June 2012 a telephone survey of 3,570 Suffolk residents was undertaken to capture views on local policing issues. The survey is statistically representative of the population of Suffolk (gender, age, BME etc.) and to Local Policing Command level.

Overview

- 67.5% of respondents think that the 'police are dealing with things that matter...'
- 92.2% feel very/fairly safe in the area where they live
- 1. ASB, 2. House burglary, 3. Criminal damage/Vandalism are the top three priorities for policing
- 26.8% think there is 'a lot/little more' ASB since two years ago, however 23% think there is 'a lot/little less'
- 30.8% think there is 'a lot/little more' crime since two years ago, and 17.5% think there is 'a lot/little less'
- 15.7% say they have been a victim of crime in the last twelve months (N.B. this is not necessarily recorded crime)
- 69.6% of people think that the police provide value for money
- 60% think it is acceptable to raise the police part of council tax to maintain the same level of service

- **Local engagement/consultation**

A consultation team action plan has been developed to target core consultation activity. This was designed to ensure that a wide range of communities and community groups could 'have their say' and also takes into consideration engagement activities over the past two years to ensure a representative set of results is achieved. A summary document of consultation activity has been produced to provide information on key findings.

Key activities include:

(N.B. A wide range of methods have been used to consult with local communities, e.g. postcard surveys, focus groups, workshops, interactive voting).

- Elderly people in rural community, Sudbury
- 18-26yrs US personnel, RAF Lakenheath
- Parents and residents community group, Stowmarket
- Mid Suffolk rural communities
- Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) network, Ipswich

- Faith groups, Ipswich
- Residents with disabilities, Thorndon
- Young people, DriveWise, countywide
- UCS students, Ipswich
- Business community, countywide
- Supporting Contemporary Adolescent (troubled youths), Bury St Eds,
- Black Minority Ethnic (BME) women, Ipswich
- Adults with learning disabilities, Forest Heath/St Eds/Babergh/Ipswich
- Migrant workers, Waveney
- Gypsy Travellers, Waveney/Mid Suffolk
- Afghan/Portuguese youths, Ipswich

2. Obtaining views of victims of crime about matters concerning policing of Suffolk S96 (1) PA96

- The Customer Service Desk (CSD) conducts a 14 day call back process for crime victims which currently include the question, 'Do you have any further comments around policing within your area?'. The response is 'free text' so provides the victim with a good opportunity to respond in an open way - *one of the main issues highlighted is lack of visibility.*

N.B. The CSD contacts victims of crime, with a particular focus on victims of vehicle, violent and burglary, however other victims can be contacted; certain crimes are excluded (on account of being 'inappropriate'), for example, domestic abuse related crimes, drugs, fraud, handling stolen goods, public order & harassment, shoplifting, sexual offences. The CSD staff make two calls, the first 48-96 hours after the crime is reported and the second, 14 days later.

- A 'Local Policing Survey of victims' has been completed with 308 victims to provide a robust, representative sample for Suffolk. The survey was undertaken by the Customer Service Desk, asking the same questions as the Local Policing survey outlined in section 1.

Overview

- *80.9% of respondents think that the 'police are dealing with things that matter...'*
 - *75.1% feel very/fairly safe in the area where they live*
 - *1. House burglary, 2. ASB & violent crime in public 3. Drug related issues are the top three priorities for policing*
 - *36.9% think there is 'a lot/little more' ASB since two years ago, however 28.3% think there is 'a lot/little less'*
 - *43.5% think there is 'a lot/little more' crime since two years ago, and 23.8% think there is 'a lot/little less'*
 - *77.6% of people think that the police provide value for money*
 - *73% think it is acceptable to raise the police part of council tax to maintain the same level of service*
- (It is interesting to note the different perceptions of views of people who have been a victim of a crime as against those who have not – for example, feelings of safety drop by 17% for crime victims).

3. Obtaining views of people, and victims of crime, in Suffolk on P&CP before issuing P&CP S96(1A) PA96 & Obtaining views of people in police area and ratepayers representatives on proposals for expenditure S96(1B) PA96

A number of methods are being employed to ensure that consultation on the P&CP is as wide and varied as possible. This includes:

- Provision of web links via both the Constabulary / PCC website encouraging wider public engagement
- Utilising the Virtual Policing Community (VPC) - more than 3,000 interested community members who have volunteered to be consulted by email
- Utilising victim support to disseminate the P&CP
- Encouraging victims who take part in the Force user-satisfaction survey (currently carried out by SMSR) if they are willing to take part in any future Suffolk Police research, such as surveys or focus groups. From those that volunteer, a selection will be contacted to obtain their views
- The CSD (at the point of 48-96hr call back to maximise response) asking victims if they would be willing to share their views in future and allow us to send a copy of the Police & Crime Plan (an abridged version is recommended to ensure a good response rate).*So far response to this has been low*
- Suffolk Constabulary Business Liaison Group will be used to disseminate consultation on proposals (on-line/email)
- Circulating the plan to other agencies, councils and relevant partners, - for example, Business Representatives, Criminal Justice partners, Voluntary Community Service (VCS)

N.B. The Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive have also met with Victim Support, Suffolk Congress and Business Representatives as part of wider engagement activity.

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