



## OUR PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGE: NORTHERN DIVISION EVALUATION

### Background and objectives:

Lancashire Police Authority as one of the statutory partners within the Community Safety agenda hosted 6 divisional "Our Partnership Challenge" events across Lancashire.

The events sought representation from a wide range of partner agencies and organisations to meet together to identify and discuss some of the major issues and challenges facing community safety and resident confidence over the next 12 – 18 months.

The evenings provided a key opportunity for open and honest discussion and debate around a range of issues relating to the trust and confidence agenda and provided an opportunity for participants to share what they saw as the major challenges, identify where these are shared with other partners, and then develop shared thinking about how best to address these in a way that helps to build local resident confidence and satisfaction.

This report details the core emerging themes identified from the evening.

### Event Format

3 x Round table workshop sessions using pre-prepared questions and information.

### Northern Division Event - Lancaster and Wrye Council areas.

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November at Lancaster Town Hall

### Who took part?

51 participants took part and they included representatives from:

Lancaster City Council	Fleetwood Town Council
Wyre Borough Council	
Her Majesties Court Services	Lancashire County Council
Lancashire Constabulary	Lancashire Fire & Rescue
Lancashire Police Authority	Crown Prosecution Service
Lancashire Probation Service	Lancashire Drugs & Alcohol Action Team
Lancashire Youth Offending Team	Lancaster University
NHS North Lancashire	Places for People Housing
Forensic Science Service	Signpost

## What did we ask about?

### Workshop Session 1:

Identifying and prioritising the challenges facing community safety over the next 12-18 months for the agencies and organisations represented.

This workshop session classified challenges under four 'priority headings' – *Urgent & Essential*, *Urgent but not Essential*, *Not Urgent but Essential* and *Not Urgent or Essential*. For the purposes of this report the Key Themes are primarily taken from challenges identified as *Urgent & Essential* and *Urgent but not Essential*.

The Workshop also looked at those challenges that are specific to the local neighbourhoods represented and those felt to be better addressed at a divisional or county level.

### **Key Themes Identified –**

- Identify the visible impact of reducing resources and funding on services for all partner agencies whilst continuing to work together effectively. Ensuring that individual partner targets do not conflict.
- Involvement of the wider Criminal Justice System and Probation Service to improve how public perceive offenders are treated – e.g reduction in sentences for minor crimes, early release programme etc. Ensure that a 'problem solving' approach is developed by the Courts and identify how this can support developing public confidence. Emphasis on victim and public and not on the offender and ensuring that the "punishment is seen to fit the crime".
- Ensuring that there are resources to deal with the particular issues related to rural areas and in areas of high transient populations.
- Tackle residents' perceptions of crime with improved communication and better understand residents experiences and expectations.
- Need to maintain focus on issues such as: Anti-Social Behaviour, Domestic Burglary, Drugs, Alcohol, Domestic Violence, Vehicle Crime and Road Safety.

### **Key Challenges that have an impact at the Local / Neighbourhood level:**

- Need to develop partnership working to include the private sector to maximise on available resources.
- To monitor the impact of the recession, and any possible increase in crime, on the agreed targets and measures.
- Recognise the differing needs and issues of the different communities within the area and make more use of local knowledge and information.
- Future funding and role of PCSOs
- Review timing of PACT meetings – current 5pm -7pm timing may conflict with evening meal time for a large number of residents

### **Key Challenges that have an impact at Divisional / County level:**

- Improved awareness of, and resources for, rural crime.
- Tackling organised crime in urban areas.

### **Top Priorities for Community Safety:**

From the Challenges identified a top priority was agreed by each group resulting in the following themes:

- Funding and Resources to enable delivery to continue.
- Managing public perceptions and improved communications.

- Identifying and “plugging” gaps in service provision.
- Ensuring that residents perceive that the “punishment fits the crime”.

### **Workshop session 2:**

Do organisations and agencies have a robust strategic approach to developing resident confidence and what are the internal barriers to this happening?

This Workshop session explored what barriers or issues within the organisations represented at each table may exist to reduce the effectiveness of developing resident confidence and trust. The session also looked for examples of good practice with organisations helping to develop resident confidence and trust.

### **Main barriers identified included:**

- Slow decision making processes within organisations often hampered by “red tape” and bureaucracy and staff not always able to carry out promises made, creating the impression of false promises being made.
- Over reliance on web-based solutions and a 9am – 5pm operation for most agencies make access difficult for a number of residents.
- Need to maintain current level of services whilst improving communication with residents. Is communication/consultation seen as part of the regular work? Communication can be expensive.
- Dealing with negative perceptions created by the press and the media.

### **Examples of good practice:**

- Positive community engagement activities such as ‘Magistrates in the Community’, ‘Face the Public’ and the ‘Every Penny Counts’ campaign.
- Work with students at the University around personal safety.
- High visibility activities by partners such as Community Payback and Home Fire Safety Checks.
- Using Parish Councils to keep local residents informed about what is happening in their areas.

### **Workshop session 3:**

A range of resident types were identified through the use of life size cut-outs and working groups considered the potential barriers and issues that “their” resident might raise and what actions could be taken to resolve these.

In this session some groups chose to develop a “back story” for their particular resident and looked at barriers and issues relating to the particular resident group or type represented by their cut-out.

### **Key issues and barriers identified included:**

- Accessibility – ensuring that issues such as use of plain English, access to partners’ offices and facilities and the communication channels chosen are suitable for the residents who partners are trying to engage with.
- Need to avoid stereotyping residents and improve understanding and awareness of their particular needs and issues.
- Residents in rural areas can easily feel that they are not listened to cut off from local services due to lack of public transport..
- Environmental issues can often impact residents perception of, and willingness to engage with partners – e.g. general litter, dog mess and overgrown areas or poor street lighting making residents feel unsafe.

**Actions to overcome barriers included:**

- Be more proactive in working with local residents and ensure that residents are given the “full story”.
- Use a range of techniques and resources to engage with people, especially those identified as "hard to reach" groups such as young people, disabled, elderly, etc.
- Adopt a “do it” attitude!.

The full list of data and information from the evening that the above report has been compiled from is available on request from Robert Ruston, Partnership & Performance Office:

E: [robert.ruston@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:robert.ruston@lancashire.gov.uk)