

RESULTS FROM OPINION WAVE 4

The Authority maintains a representative panel of 4,000 individuals for the whole of Lancashire. Panel members are consulted 3 times a year on various policing issues. The report below details the results from the consultation that took place in November and December 2003

Topics we Consulted on:

- Confidence in Lancashire Constabulary
- Lancashire's policing objectives 2004/05
- Resources for Policing 2004-05
- Answering Non-emergency Calls
- Expectations of Police Response to Various Types of Crime:

Confidence in Lancashire Constabulary:

- We track levels of confidence in Lancashire Constabulary over time to see if it increases or decreases. Confidence in the Constabulary has remained at a similar level for the past year. This wave, 79% of respondents were very/fairly confident in Lancashire Constabulary and 17% were not very/not at all confident
- The main factor that influenced confidence tends to be the attitude of the Police. This could be as a result of respondents direct experience, the experience of people they know or reports in the media about other peoples' experiences
- One of the main explanations for the decrease in confidence this wave was the 'Secret Policeman' programme about racism in the police force, which – although it did not contain any footage about Lancashire Constabulary – did undermine confidence in us

Action/outcome:

We are committed to delivering a fair and equitable service and not tolerating inappropriate behaviour of any kind. In addition to our current policies and in reaction to these results we will be conducting more in-depth research with some panel members to establish how you think we can go about ensuring this service is effectively managed and communicated. The Deputy Chief Constable, as Diversity Champion for the Constabulary, has also commissioned a review across all areas of the Lancashire force.

Lancashire's Policing Objectives 2004-05

The objectives put forward for consideration were:

- **To reassure the public, particularly those who are vulnerable.**
Giving emphasis to: Public safety and security; Alcohol related and other anti-social behaviour; Accessibility and visibility; Road safety
- **To reduce and investigate crime, particularly those offences that are of concern to the public.**
Giving emphasis to: Crime associated with Class A drugs; Domestic burglary; Vehicle crimes; Street crimes; Counter terrorism; Hate crimes

Respondents were provided with the above policing objectives and asked for their level of approval of these objectives for the coming year.

RESULTS

- 94% agreed with both of the proposed policing objectives for 2004-05
- There was a great deal of resistance to removing any of the issues from within each of the objectives. 'Road Safety' was the most frequently nominated, with 6% of you nominating it for removal

Action/outcome:

The top three additional issues for inclusion were: 'Serious and organised crime', 'Violent crime such as assault' and 'Increasing the number of offences brought to justice'. These were all incorporated into the revised objectives for 2004-05.

Resources for Policing 2004-05

Respondents were informed of the details of the Chief Constables' Blueprint for an extra 500 officers. They were presented with 2 resource options for achieving the Blueprint (based on Band D council tax rates), these being:

- Option 1: an average increase of 43p per week (£22 per year) over 3 years
- Option 2: an average increase of 57p per week (£30 per year) over 2 years

RESULTS

- 49% fully understand the need for an increase in Council Tax, 31% partly understood and 14% did not understand
- 69% were willing to pay an average increase of 43p per week over 3 years
- 58% were willing to pay an average increase of 57p per week over 2 years

Action/outcome:

On the 20 February 2004 the Authority made the decision to increase the police element of the council tax by 14.99% - an increase of 25p per week or £13.13 on a Band D property.

Answering Non-emergency Calls

- 27% had contacted Lancashire Constabulary by telephone for a non-emergency in the past 12 months
- 43% think that Lancashire Constabulary is good at dealing with these calls quickly and efficiently
- However, the remaining 57% do not think the service is good. The reasons given for this are that there is no answer or it takes too long to answer your calls and that once the call is answered the response/action is not acceptable
- 56% want non-emergency calls to be handled in the area where the call is made due to the increased local knowledge of the operator and their familiarity with the area, 32% don't mind as long as calls are answered quickly and 9% have no preference
- Answering a non-emergency call within 1 – 1.5 minutes is acceptable for 65% of you

Action/outcome:

These results are being considered by the Constabulary's call handling team and will be used to inform decisions on revised performance targets

Expectations of Police Response to Various Types of Crime:

- Recent experiences of crime by panel members included:
 - 38% have experienced anti-social behaviour
 - 17% have been a victim of theft of or from a vehicle
 - 11% have been victims of burglary
 - 6% have been a victim of an assault resulting in minor or no injury
 - 2% have been a victim of assault resulting in major injury
- 91% expect the police to respond immediately to 'assault resulting in major injury'
- Over half expect the police to respond immediately to all types of anti-social behaviour
- For all other crimes included in the survey, attendance within 1-3 hours is acceptable, with crimes such as theft from a vehicle or outbuildings requiring the least urgent attendance
- For all of the crimes detailed in the survey the main requirements of a police response are:
 - Finding the person responsible
 - Attendance by an officer
 - Being given a crime/incident reference number

Action/outcome:

These results will be used in line with the national standards, which are being set by the Government, to develop supplementary local service standards which have to be met by all police officers.