

RESULTS FROM OPINION WAVE 7 (OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2004)

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 June and July 2004

WHAT WE CONSULTED ON

Policing objectives and annual policing budget for 2005-06,
Drugs and alcohol related anti-social behaviour & crime.

Confidence in Lancashire Constabulary

- We track your level of confidence in Lancashire Constabulary over time to see if it increases or decreases. Confidence in the Constabulary for this wave is slightly lower than the previous wave, with 86% of you stating that you are very/fairly confident in Lancashire Constabulary and 14% of you stating that you are not very/not at all confident.
- The main factors that have influenced your confidence this time are receiving a good, efficient service, an increase in the arrests of offenders, increased visible presence of police, positive media coverage and anti-social behaviour being dealt with.
- However, the main reasons given for your decreases in confidence this wave are poor response or lack of response and anti-social behaviour being experienced or witnessed.

Action/outcome:

The main reasons given for both increases and decreases in confidence are down to our service and response, with us either exceeding or not meeting your expectations. There are a variety of initiatives that have recently been implemented in Lancashire Constabulary that should help us to meet your expectations of response and service and to ensure a standard level of service provision regardless of when or how you contact us. These initiatives are:

- A new call management policy for swift and easy access to key services provided by the Constabulary
- PACT (Police and Communities Together) meetings which give you greater access to your local Community Beat Manager and Police and Community Support Officer by providing you with the opportunity to meet up on a regular basis at an informal meeting to discuss any local issues.

Policing Objectives and Annual Policing Budget 2005-06

- You showed overwhelming approval of the proposed objectives, with 95% of you approving of the objective 'to reassure the public, particularly those who are vulnerable' and 94% of you approving of the objective 'to reduce and investigate crime, particularly offences that are of concern to the public'.
- Under the first objective you ranked 'offences brought to justice' and public safety and security' as most important followed by 'accessibility and visibility'.
- Under the second objective you ranked 'serious and organised crime' as the most important issue followed by 'terrorism', 'street crime' and 'violent crime', which were all, considered equally important.
- 58% of you fully understood the need for an increase in council tax for policing and 28% partly understood
- 53% of you opted to pay more than the 15% (or £15.00) required to sustain the same level of service currently provided.

- 23% of you opted to pay the 15% (or £15.00) required to standstill at the current level.
- 8% of you opted for no increase at all.
- 26% of you think that the government should intervene and cap increases in Council Tax, as opposed to 42% who do not.
- If additional officers were available the preferred allocation is in responding to calls for assistance

Action/outcome:

The objectives information will be used by the Lancashire Police Authority and the Constabulary to determine the policing plan for 2005/06. Copies of this plan will be available from the Police Authority website – www.lancspa.gov.uk and can also be accessed at your local library.

The resources information will be used by the Lancashire Police Authority to inform the level of council tax increases considered acceptable for policing resources in 2005/06. The Lancashire Police Authority will meet in February to make its final decision. A Police Authority Budget leaflet explaining the decision process and the charges for 2005/06 will be sent to all tax payers in Lancashire via the council tax bill from your local council.

Drugs:

- There is a general lack of awareness surrounding police response to tackling drug dealing, with 49% of you claiming you don't know whether police response in relation to drug problems has improved or not.
- 36% of you claim that the illegal supply and misuse of drugs does not affect you in any way.
- The biggest issue for the 64% of you who claim that you are affected by drug dealing and misuse is the fear of children being targeted for drug supply.
- Of those of you who are aware of police response, 36% of you believe there has been 'a lot/some improvement' in response to tackling drug related problems. However, 9% of you believe 'very little /nothing has been done' to improve response.
- 85% of you claim that you would report someone who was known or suspected of drug dealing, only 8% of you would not report someone.
- The main incentives for you to report drug dealing or usage are if arrests are made as a result, if drug dealers and users are removed from the area and if drug dealing can be reported anonymously.

Action/outcome:

The information concerning drugs in Lancashire will be used by the Superintendent responsible for drugs to evaluate the impact of policing operations on community perceptions and will inform the discussions around further development of enforcement, education and support policing operations.

Alcohol related anti-social behaviour and crime:

- 99% of you believe that disturbance, anti-social behaviour and crime in towns and cities are related to alcohol.
- 85% of you consider underage drinking to be a 'very/fairly serious' problem, with the main issues seen to be ease of access to alcohol and intimidating behaviour by young people.
- 33% of you think that opening hours should be restricted, 49% think they are currently about right and 14% think they should be extended.

- 53% of you believe that 24-hour licensing will have an overall negative impact and 25% believe it will have a positive impact.
- 57% of respondents think that the Constabulary are making 'a lot/some improvements' in tackling anti-social behaviour, although 18% think that 'very little/nothing is being done'.
- You consider the most effective approach to reducing alcohol related anti-social behaviour and crime is to have a greater police presence at closing time.

Action/outcome:

The alcohol related anti social behaviour and crime information will be used by the force night-safe/licensing co-ordinator to evaluate the impact of current operations and to plan future alcohol initiatives.