

4 December 2006

Agenda Item No 11

## **SATISFACTION LEVELS**

### **A Report by the Chief Constable**

#### **1. SUMMARY**

The annual Public Consultation Survey was conducted during the period of June and July 2006. A total of 6,370 surveys were distributed to members of the public, 2,043 surveys were returned, a response rate of 32.1%. The survey showed people's overall satisfaction with the service provided by the police went up from an already high level (82%) last year to 87% in 2006.

This report is to highlight and explain the variations in satisfaction levels across the Cumbria Constabulary BCUs and areas of good practice.

#### **1.1 RECOMMENDATION**

That members note the contents of the report.

#### **2.1 DETAIL**

##### **Background**

The Public Consultation Surveys covers two related issues; confidence and satisfaction. Confidence tends to be a measure of those who haven't used our service and satisfaction a measure of those who have. There is a strong brand image so confidence is normally higher than satisfaction, i.e. the public have high expectations that we have to manage.

The survey paper shows that of the 2043 returned only 30% had any contact with the Constabulary so it's probably a truer measure of confidence rather than satisfaction. Analysis of the survey results and break down by BCU highlighted significant differences depending on where in the county the respondents happened to live.

A concern in West Cumbria is 15% of those responding were not very or not at all confident in Cumbria Constabulary. The same survey could be done on a different day and would probably yield different results. West BCU Commander has already identified and acknowledged that they have a lot of work to do in the area of marketing, this has been opened up for discussion on two fronts - CDRPs and internally. On a positive note, more than 8 out of 10 are confident in the Constabulary in West BCU.

In North BCU 84.4% of respondents said they found it easy to make contact with the Constabulary in a non emergency situation by phone. A major contributing factor to this is that Community Officers provide locals with Mobile phone numbers and these are used. Officers also apply the corporate approach to the issue of business cards.

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Geographical location may be an influencing factor in how important members of the public view preventing terrorist attacks. Fear of terrorism may be higher in the West BCU due to the location of Sellafield and in the South BCU due to BAE (Vickers) and nuclear submarines, this may be more of a worry contributing to the 85% of respondents who consider preventing terrorist attacks as very or fairly important compared with North BCU, where the level is 76.9% and where they don't have an equivalent site.

The importance of helping and protecting the public in emergencies is viewed very or fairly important by 93.7% of respondents in the North BCU area. The flooding in Carlisle and the surrounding areas might well have influenced peoples' views a little. I think it is fair to say that the public in the BCU were well serviced during and post floods. Public spiritedness was high and the Constabulary featured highly amongst all of this receiving positive publicity.

A concern highlighted from the Survey is that in West BCU 69.4% of respondents didn't know if they had a police officer responsible for their local area, this is compared with 54.8% (North BCU) and 56.8% (South BCU). The fact that big chunks of West people don't know if they have a local officer is a concern acknowledged by the BCU Commander. Due to the nine small towns in West BCU many areas don't have a dedicated Community Officer although they do have a number of Patrol Officers with responsibility to the area, the details of those individual officers are not publicised in the same way the Community Officer details are. This may be more an issue of marketing than service provision, an area already identified and being progressed in the BCU.

In North BCU 42.1% of respondents know they have a Police Officer responsible for their area. This higher level of awareness can be attributed to good attendance at Neighbourhood Forums in accordance with policing plan priorities. At present, in North BCU Community Officers are increasing their capacity to connect with local communities, advertising their presence in differing ways including video loops in local supermarkets. North BCU is always keen to use the press to notify changes in Community Policing responsibilities.

A concern in West BCU, 69.5% of respondents were fairly or very dissatisfied with patrol levels in their local area and 58.2% overall. The BCU Commander acknowledges that satisfaction with patrol levels is an issue with town councils like Aspatria and Silloth who publicly say they haven't got enough police cover. Media coverage may affect peoples' perception of service levels.

Awareness of the Respect campaign throughout the Constabulary has varied generally; a lot of publicity has gone out centrally driven and supported by A/DCC Graham Sunderland. North BCU have enjoyed good media support with use of the 'Respect' logo. CDRPs have supported the use of bill boards and public banners. Public statements regarding a rise in football violence in North BCU are covered under the Respect banner. South BCU has the highest confidence level, 87.7% yet 75.1% of South BCU respondents were fairly or very unaware of the Respect campaign. I think this is (in part) as a result of the differences in media reporting between the North and South of the County. South BCU regularly get good news stories in the media which impact upon confidence levels but the local press are reluctant to brand these under the 'Respect' banner. This is work in progress.

**Michael Baxter**  
**Chief Constable**

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