

Review of Neighbourhood Policing

Housing and Community Safety Select Committee

Final Report

February 2015

Housing and Community Safety Select Committee
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Municipal Buildings
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Acknowledgements

The Committee would like to thank:

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The Officers and PCSOs from the Thornaby and Stockton Teams who took the time to attend the discussion group in December.

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Foreword

On behalf of the Committee, I am pleased to introduce our final report on Neighbourhood Policing.

Cleveland Police has had significant reductions in the amount of government funding it receives.

In response to this the Force has reduced the number of officers under its command, and undertaken a major restructure. The Committee has investigated the impact of this on Stockton Borough and reviewed the work of the Borough's Integrated Neighbourhood Team (INT).

We have seen the wide range of issues that the police continue to deal with, and the INT make a major contribution to protecting people from harm.

In this context of reduced resources, partnership working, particularly with the Council, is crucial to achieving ongoing reductions in crime and disorder.

Communication is vital to this and we have made recommendations to ensure that communication with and between the police, Council, Members, and the public is improved.

The Committee would like to thank all those who contributed to the review, and to place on record its appreciation of the work of Stockton's Integrated Neighbourhood Policing Team and the Council's Community Safety Team.



Councillor Derrick Brown
Vice-Chair

Original Brief

Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address?

SBC Council Plan 2014 – Community Safety – Objective - Reduce crime and the fear of crime

The Safer Stockton Partnership Community Safety Plan 2014-17 outlines the joint work that SBC, Cleveland Police and partners will undertake to deal with crime, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse related crime and anti-social behaviour. It includes the following relevant priorities:

1. Reduce Anti Social Behaviour
2. Reduce Violent Crime And Robbery
4. Reduce Criminal Damage
5. Reduce Alcohol Related Crime And Anti Social Behaviour
6. Reduce Domestic Abuse

What are the main issues and overall aim of this review?

The review will focus on the operation of Neighbourhood Policing within Stockton-on-Tees.

This is to examine the impact of funding reductions and the recent Force-wide restructure on the presence of visible, accessible and locally known police constables and police community support officers, and how this will impact on the achievement of the Borough's Community Safety Plan.

It is important to note that the Chief Constable has operational independence in relation to the deployment of officers and resources.

Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report presents Cabinet with the outcomes of the review of neighbourhood policing undertaken by the Committee during the municipal year 2014-15.
- 1.2 For the period 2011-15, the national police service has seen a significant reduction of 20% in the Government grant it receives. For Cleveland, this has meant a requirement to find savings of approximately £26m in real terms over the same period.
- 1.3 In response to this, Cleveland Police has undergone a period of major change. Since 2010-11, significant savings have had to be made and there are further reductions in spending planned for the medium term. To respond to these pressures the Force has reduced the total number of police officers, PCSOs, and staff members available to it, and undertaken a wide ranging restructure. The review was undertaken in order to understand the impact of the funding reductions and this restructure on Stockton Borough.
- 1.4 Within Stockton this has led to the creation of an Integrated Neighbourhood Team bringing together neighbourhood officers and PCSOs with volume crime detectives in order to provide a flexible team to meet demand.
- 1.5 There is still a focus on providing a neighbourhood-based policing service, however this must be balanced against the requirement to respond to a wider range of issues and meet force wide priorities.
- 1.6 The levels of crime and disorder have fallen consistently in recent years, however there are signs that this may be levelling off. Stockton Borough's performance remains strong when compared with the other Tees Valley authorities. The range of issues dealt with by the police and partners continues to be complex and all demands must be addressed, particularly protection of the vulnerable.
- 1.7 It is therefore important to recognise the new shape of neighbourhood policing and how services are being delivered, and ensure that the police are able to focus on the most important issues. The excellent partnership working that already exists, and the maintenance of good operational relationships, will become ever more important, as will managing public expectations.
- 1.8 It is clear that the role of 'neighbourhood policing' has changed significantly and it is important to define this more clearly for the local community.
- 1.9 The Committee has made a series of recommendations in order to make further improvements, particularly around the use of communication. The Committee recommends that:
 1. **as part of its overall consultation and engagement strategy, Cleveland Police and the Council should ensure a consistent approach to communications, including:**

- a) a consistent approach to the use of social media by local neighbourhood teams, using the good practice that exists in the Force;
 - b) the Council's Community Safety Manager and Police keep under review information sharing with the Council to ensure it remains effective and any changes in key contacts are communicated in a timely manner;
 - c) a recommendation to all Members that they should keep up to date with changes in their local areas, including by accessing Cleveland Police's 'My Neighbourhood' website. A link to this should be included on the Council's intranet;
 - d) and that following the election, all Members consider what, if any, additional, appropriate methods of communicating with their local police team are required.
2. Cleveland Police should provide annual updates on the policing of Stockton Borough to all Members, and this should take place using the existing update session when the Police and Crime Commissioner consults all Members on his Budget and Plan;
3. a) the increased range of responsibilities of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams be noted, and that work to define and explain the revised role of neighbourhood policing be supported;
b) that all Members recognise the recent changes, and use their key role in communities to explain the role and capacity of local police teams;
4. a) the Committee notes and values the work of the Community Safety Team, and Members should continue to receive regular ASB patrol updates from the community safety team and maintain links with their local ASB officer;
b) the Committee notes and values the work of the Safer Stockton Partnership, and the importance of maintaining representation from all appropriate bodies.
5. the excellent partnership working between the Council and Cleveland Police be recognised and supported.
6. a) Cleveland Police should regularly monitor and share with partners the Public Confidence Survey results and other related consultation feedback
b) That work be undertaken by the Police and Crime Panel to further understand changes in public confidence, expectations, and fear of crime issues.
- 1.10 The Committee wishes to place on record its support and appreciation of the work of Stockton's Neighbourhood Policing Team, and its partners in Community Safety.

Introduction

- 2.1 The report presents Cabinet with the outcomes of the review of neighbourhood policing undertaken by the Committee during the municipal year 2014-15.
- 2.2 For the period 2011-15, the national police service has seen a significant reduction of 20% in the Government grant it receives. For Cleveland Police, this has meant a requirement to find savings of c.£26m in real terms over the same period.
- 2.3 In response to this, the total number of police officers, PCSOs, and staff has reduced, and the force has undertaken a wide ranging restructure to remodel the way it operates.
- 2.4 The review was undertaken in order to understand the impact of the funding reductions and this restructure on Stockton Borough.

Background

- 3.1 Police Authorities have been abolished and replaced with Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs). These are responsible for setting the police budget and setting the strategic direction of their areas of responsibility. It is important to note that Chief Constables retain operational independence.
- 3.2 Cleveland Police has seen significant budget pressures. The funding available to the Cleveland Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is made up of government grant, the police precept on council tax, other specific grants (eg. for PFI schemes), and income (eg. earnings through secondments). Changes in the main Government grant funding to Cleveland Police Authority/PCC between the period 2011-12 to 2013-14 have been as follows:

2011-12	-£5.3m	(-5.1%)
2012-13	-£6.5m	(-6.7%)
2013-14	-£1.5m	(-1.6%)
- 3.2 In 2014-15 the final grant was reduced by £4.5m or 4.8% and the overall funding available to the PCC was reduced by 2.3%. In 2015-16 the grant was reduced by a further £4.5m in line with expectations.
- 3.3 The PCC funds PCC Initiatives (eg. community safety spending), Victim and Witness Services, and the police force. The vast majority of spending, and the savings requirement, is directed at the police force.
- 3.4 The overall budget has been balanced for 2015-16. To date, the delivery of savings has been in large part due to a reduction in officers and a force restructure. Future savings are required beyond 2016 and plans are being

developed to achieve this. This will increasingly need to include collaboration with partners, and use of technology, in order to avoid further reductions in operational policing.

- 3.5 HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) is reviewing each force's response to the financial challenge. In July 2014 the latest report on Cleveland found that:
- as a proportion its overall budget, the savings requirement was higher than most other forces, and in 2013-14 the force area had the fourth highest level of crimes per head of population in England and Wales;
 - the force spends more on policing per head of population, has higher numbers of officers per head of population, and had a higher cost for officers per head of population, than most other forces;
 - the total workforce (officers, PCSOs, and staff) had reduced, and of the remaining workforce the proportion on operational frontline roles (instead of 'operational support' or 'business support') had increased from 76% to 87% between 2010 and 2015. This compares to 74% increasing to 78% across England and Wales;
 - the force was projected to lose proportionately more police officers than other forces;
 - out of the remaining police officers, the proportion working on the frontline had increased from 87% to 91%. This compares to 89% and 92% in England and Wales.
- 3.6 The overall judgements were that Cleveland provided 'Good' value for money, had 'Good' ratings for affordable policing and efficiency, and were 'Outstanding' in relation to securing the long term financial future of the force.

Findings and Recommendations

The shape of Cleveland Police force

- 4.1 In order to meet demand and operate this new structure, Cleveland Police has 1333 police officers from 2014-15, which is down from 1727 in 2010. PCSO numbers have reduced and will stabilise at 132.
- 4.2 In 2014 the force undertook a major restructure under the Orbis Programme. Previously each Borough had Basic Command Units responsible for a number of functions in each area. These have been replaced by four force-wide commands: Operations Command, Crime and Justice Command (eg. major crime, protecting vulnerable people), Neighbourhood and Partnership Policing Command, and Tasking Coordination Command.



- 4.3 One of the principles behind the structure is 'people not buildings' and the review of estates has led to changes with local offices, including the closure of Yarm Police Station in May 2014.
- 4.4 All calls for service should be resolved appropriately at the earliest point possible, and there is to be an increasing use of mobile technology. Responses to incidents are made by the nearest appropriate unit, which would no longer be tied to localities. This may include, for example, specialist traffic officers attending incidents at residences if necessary.
- 4.5 Within the new structure there was a commitment to retain a foundation of neighbourhood teams with identified officers and PCSOs, and the Neighbourhood and Partnership Command retains a geographic focus. It is led by a Chief Superintendent with a Chief Inspector in each Borough (or Local Policing Area). These lead Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs) made up of the following:
- Neighbourhood Police Officers
 - Volume crime officers

- PCSOs
- Youth Offending Team
- Integrated Offender Management
- Community Drug Enforcement

4.6 The Committee considered the factors used to determine the distribution of INT resources across the force area. These were:

- Community vitality index (housing; unemployment and income; community safety; education; health; sustainable communities)
- Key neighbourhood crimes and incidents e.g. criminal damage and ASB
- Calls for service
- Indices of deprivation

The Committee understand the methodology used however this will need to be kept under review.

4.7 The Committee found that 60% of the Force's detective resource was now in the INTs with the remainder in Major Crime Command. Volume crime includes issues such as theft, and benefits of the combined teams have, for example, come from detectives working closely with PCSOs and using their 'street-level' intelligence.

4.8 Each INT is responsible for responding to a variety of demand-led priorities. These are set by the daily force-wide prioritisation Pacesetter conference that take account of threat, harm and risk. Previously tasking had been decided within each Borough. The July HMIC report praised the force's new approach to understanding and responding to demand across the force area.

4.9 The overall focus of the police was the protection of people and property, and protection of the vulnerable took priority. The teams in each Borough therefore had to be more flexible and respond to a wide range of issues, and the service was now much more than providing visible patrols and community involvement.

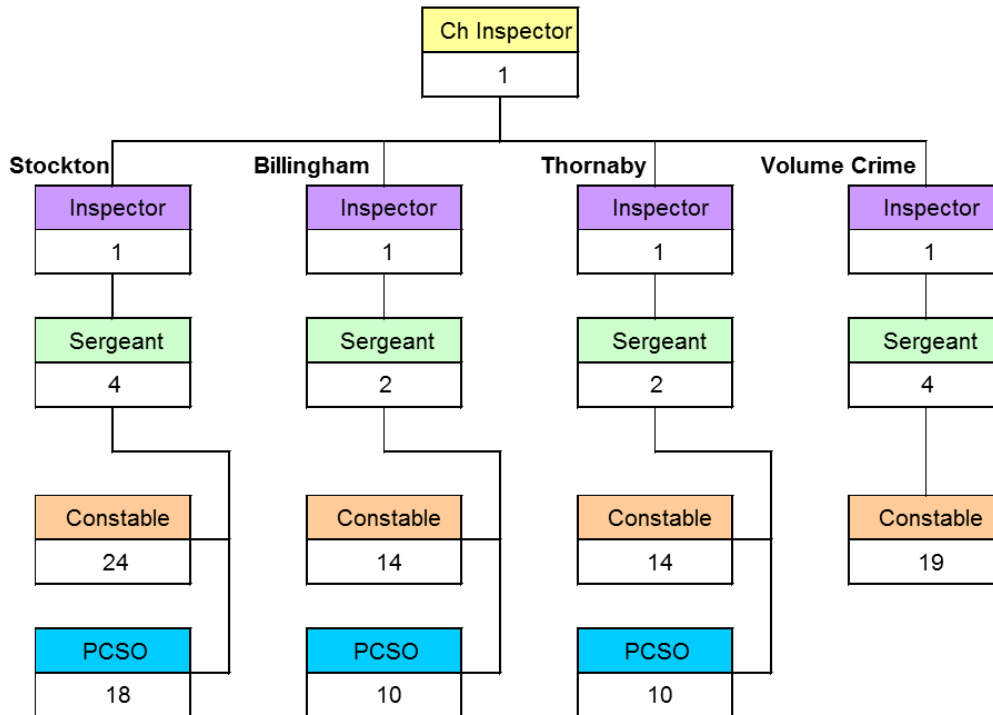
4.10 HMIC reports give some indication as to how police forces are performing (in addition to the regular reporting of key data such as crime – see below). Police forces are not required to achieve a certain target response time, and so data between forces is not comparable. Cleveland maintained a target response of ten minutes for emergencies in urban areas, and twenty minutes for rural call outs. Grade 2 'Priority' calls had a response of 60mins. Performance was as follows:

Calls for service	2010/11	2013/14
Percentage of urban emergency calls on target	90	89.9
Percentage of rural emergency calls on target	88	97.5
Percentage of priority calls on target	72	87.6

- 4.11 HMIC recognises that much police activity needs to take place outside of ‘visible’ roles (eg. protection work, major crime, counter terrorism), but that the public value seeing police on patrol, and higher satisfaction with visibility leads to higher confidence in their local force.
- 4.12 In early 2014, HMIC found that Cleveland had 61% of officers in visible roles (65% including PCSOs) which was higher than most other forces (56%) (this is in the context of fewer officers available overall). It will be important to continue to closely monitor these indicators as the restructured force moves forward.

Stockton’s Integrated Neighbourhood Team

- 4.13 The structure of Stockton’s INT is as follows:



- 4.14 As across Cleveland, these officers may be involved in response work, and may now be contributing to drug enforcement and aspects of organised crime. Aspects of the protection of vulnerable people involved neighbourhood teams, and this included child sexual exploitation, hate crime and domestic violence. INT workload therefore includes working on non-‘visible’ police work to assist the more specialist teams and the Force as a whole.

- 4.15 Particular geographical areas facing challenges could see resources transferred accordingly. For example Stockton Town Centre has been allocated additional officers this year.
- 4.16 The Committee found that PCSOs remain highly valued by the public and their fellow team members. Work they undertake ranges from attending public meetings, to visiting repeat victims of ASB and identified prolific offenders.
- 4.17 Overall numbers in Stockton's INT are similar to the period prior to the restructure (officer numbers have increased and PCSO numbers have reduced). However, due to officer reductions elsewhere, the INTs need to respond to a much wider range of duties.
- 4.18 To achieve these aims, officers take part in a range of partnership meetings and networks focussing on a range of issues, including but not limited to:
- Hate Crime
 - ASB / Criminal Damage
 - Joint Action Groups (chaired by Neighbourhood Inspectors), and Problem Solving Groups (chaired by SBC Community Safety Manager)
 - Violence Tactical meetings
 - 'Top 10' Domestic Abuse
 - Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing, Trafficked (VEMT) Practitioners Group
 - Acquisitive Crime.
- 4.19 In order to inform the review, a discussion group with officers from Stockton and Thornaby teams took place in December. Officers described a variety of demands on their time, particular issues included:
- the demand generated by keeping people safe, including reducing self harm and responding to mental health needs (the Street Triage Team was valued but has limited capacity)
 - dealing with relatively low priority and/or not appropriate call outs for example comments made on social media
 - pressure on access to vehicles, and travel time, for example to cells in Middlesbrough, and Place of Safety at Roseberry Park (for people needing a mental health assessment)
 - responding to response call outs when they were the most appropriate officer to do so.
- 4.20 HMIC's Crime Inspection in November noted the capacity issues in INTs and their more limited ability to deliver on the levels of service they would wish to provide. The competing demands on officer time was leading to abstraction from community duties to response and investigative work.
- 4.21 Many community policing activities were being led by PCSOs, and both officers and PCSO are not able to attend the full range of community level meetings that they were previously able to. The inspection also noted that the force needed to

better share examples of good practice internally, including successful problem solving at the neighbourhood level.

- 4.22 HMIC made a recommendation that 'within three months the force should review the abstraction of neighbourhood officers to assure itself that officer abstractions are not having a negative impact on its ability to deliver effective neighbourhood policing, engagement with the community and tackle ASB'.

Police and Crime Commissioner

- 4.23 Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) were first elected in November 2012. Cleveland's PCC is Barry Coppinger. PCCs are required to set out their priorities in a Police and Crime Plan, and the 2014-17 Plan contains the following priority: 'retaining and developing neighbourhood policing'.
- 4.24 Actions to achieve this Priority to date have centred around reinforcing the community nature of policing. For example, increasing the number of Special Constables, hosting Criminal Justice Volunteer Fairs, Community Safety Awards, and a widespread programme of consultation activity – 'Your Force Your Voice'. The Commissioner has endorsed the Force-wide restructure discussed above.
- 4.25 The Cleveland Police and Crime Panel has recently completed a Task and Finish Review of the Commissioner's Priorities and how they are understood and communicated with partners and public. It is clear that the role of 'neighbourhood policing' has changed significantly and it is important to define this more clearly for the local community.
- 4.26 The Task Group recommended that the PCC puts forward a clearer definition of neighbourhood policing in order to provide clarity and assist with managing public expectations around the resources available and different ways of working.
- 4.27 One definition outlined during the review by the police was that Neighbourhood Officers now provide a 'multi-functional role in order to deliver a quality service to local people'.
- 4.28 The Police and Crime Plan has been updated for the period 2015-17. In this, the PCC now describes neighbourhood policing as 'aiming to provide communities with access to policing services through a named point of contact, influence over local policing priorities and feedback on local issues and solutions'.
- 4.29 When defining neighbourhood policing, there is therefore an operational element regarding the increased flexibility of teams, but this is within the context of aiming to maintain close links with the local community.
- 4.30 To take forward the Police and Crime Plan, the latest version contained the following actions:

- a) 'Continue to listen to community and neighbourhood concerns and follow up issues where possible.
- b) Strengthen links with communities to improve awareness and understanding of neighbourhood policing.
- c) Champion the development of Neighbourhood Watch via Cleveland Connected, working alongside Cleveland Police and other partners to raise community awareness.
- d) Work with Community Safety Partnerships to develop joint approaches to address crime and antisocial behaviour.
- e) Encourage a consistent approach to tackling antisocial behaviour across all agencies and geographical areas.
- f) Commission and develop local community safety crime prevention initiatives.
- g) Further strengthen liaison with local businesses.
- h) Host a further antisocial behaviour summit to monitor the development of the use of the legislation to ensure that good practice is shared and to maximise the effectiveness of the available sanctions.
- i) Work to develop a range of interventions for use through the Community Remedy process implemented through new antisocial behaviour legislation.
- j) Monitor and support Cleveland Police activity in tackling serious and organised crime.
- k) Champion community activities in tackling hate crime.
- l) Influence improvements in partner responses to hate crime to help increase public confidence and satisfaction.
- m) Identify demand for services from victims of hate crimes.
- n) Develop a programme of hate crime education in various schools across Cleveland to increase awareness and encourage community cohesion and understanding.'

The Committee would strongly support action b).

Communication and Member Engagement

- 4.31 Members of the Committee outlined varying experiences from engaging with their local policing teams as ward Members. A survey was undertaken to gather more feedback although there was a low response rate of six replies.
- 4.32 There appears to be a range of views in terms of the relationship between local police teams and their ward councillors. For example, in some cases members have not been updated as to changes in their area in terms of changing officer contacts. Others report very good, regular contact with their local officers. Ward surgeries have been used as opportunities for Members and officers to update each other on key issues, and resident meetings are used as another forum.
- 4.33 Members at Committee have reported that there were previously updates across each police locality in the Borough covering a number of wards. These were felt to be useful by some and could be reinstated, providing the issues of one or two wards did not dominate discussion. However, it is important that whatever forum is developed locally is well utilised to avoid a waste of resources.

- 4.34 There is an opportunity with the forthcoming election to ensure clear communication links are established with the new Council membership based on their preference.
- 4.35 A range of information is available via the Cleveland Police website on the 'My Neighbourhood' section. This facility would be useful for members of the public if more widely publicised, but particularly ward councillors as it highlights key events and actions taken in their wards. There is a responsibility on each Member to proactively keep up to date with local developments using the information available to them.
- 4.36 Full Council previously received an annual update from the Superintendent in commanding the Stockton BCU, and Members expressed an interest in reviving this in an appropriate format.
- 4.37 Social media is used by the Force and each neighbourhood team has a Twitter account, and the Committee discussed some good examples of its use.
- 4.38 HMIC noted that there may be scope for better co-ordination and targeting of the Police's social media presence. Social media can be a double edged sword and must be used responsibly when discussing crime. It is therefore important for the police to use it effectively to ensure key messages are shared appropriately.
- 4.39 The Committee recommend that:
1. **That as part of its overall consultation and engagement strategy, Cleveland Police and the Council should ensure a consistent approach to communications, including:**
 - a) **a consistent approach to the use of social media by local neighbourhood teams, using the good practice that exists in the Force;**
 - b) **the Council's Community Safety Manager and Police keep under review information sharing with the Council to ensure it remains effective and any changes in key contacts are communicated in a timely manner;**
 - c) **a recommendation to all Members that they should keep up to date with changes in their local areas, including by accessing Cleveland Police's 'My Neighbourhood' website. A link to this should be included on the Council's intranet;**
 - d) **and that following the election, all Members consider what, if any, additional, appropriate methods of communicating with their local police team are required;**
 2. **Cleveland Police should provide annual updates on the policing of Stockton Borough to all Members, and this should take place using**

the existing update session when the Police and Crime Commissioner consults all Members on his Budget and Plan;

- 3. a) the increased range of responsibilities of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams be noted, and that work to define and explain the revised role of neighbourhood policing be supported;**
b) that all Members recognise the recent changes, and use their key role in communities to explain the role and capacity of local police teams.

Stockton Council Community Safety Team / Safer Stockton Partnership

- 4.40 Within this context of reduced resources the Committee agree that partnership working at the operational level is more important than ever. This was reinforced by the Chair of the Safer Stockton Partnership who reiterated the need to maintain the partnership approach to tackling crime and not to retreat into silo working.
- 4.41 Stockton Council and Cleveland Police have a long history of working closely together, and SBC's Community Safety provides a range of services that complement and enhance the Neighbourhood Team's work.
- 4.42 SBC services primarily focus on tackling ASB and include:
- ASB Officers; Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers (NES); CCTV; prevention and support (including mediation and counselling); work in schools; performance analysis; landlord liaison/Safe at Home (for victims of burglary and domestic violence); and operation of the Council's ASB hotline (607943).
- 4.43 The major 3-yearly consultation held to inform the prioritisation of the local Community Safety Plan identified that the types of ASB most concerning to local residents are:
1. vandalism
 2. poor parental responsibility
 3. threats / verbal abuse
 4. alcohol misuse
 5. littering / dumping rubbish
 6. dog fouling
- 4.44 ASB and NES officers are able to issue AS13 forms which lead to the citation of individuals and further sanctions, liaise with police and attend community groups. NES officers now patrol on a 24hr basis and have power to tackle ASB together with other environmental offences. NES officers can also issue AS13s.

- 4.45 Community Safety teams contribute to the Joint Action Groups and Problem Solving Groups outlined above, and police officers praised the joint working and approach of the SBC teams. This includes attendance at the Police demand priority setting meetings. Senior officers at the Police have specifically praised the contribution made by Stockton's Community Safety and Enforcement teams.
- 4.46 HMIC found evidence of good partnership working, particularly to tackle ASB, and did not attribute increases in ASB to reductions in partner services across the force area as a whole.
- 4.47 The Committee recommend that:
4. **a) the Committee notes and values the work of the Community Safety Team, and Members should continue to receive regular ASB patrol updates from the community safety team and maintain links with their local ASB officer;**
 - b) the Committee notes and values the work of the Safer Stockton Partnership, and the importance of maintaining representation from all appropriate bodies.**
 5. **the excellent partnership working between the Council and Cleveland Police be recognised and supported.**

Levels of Crime and Disorder

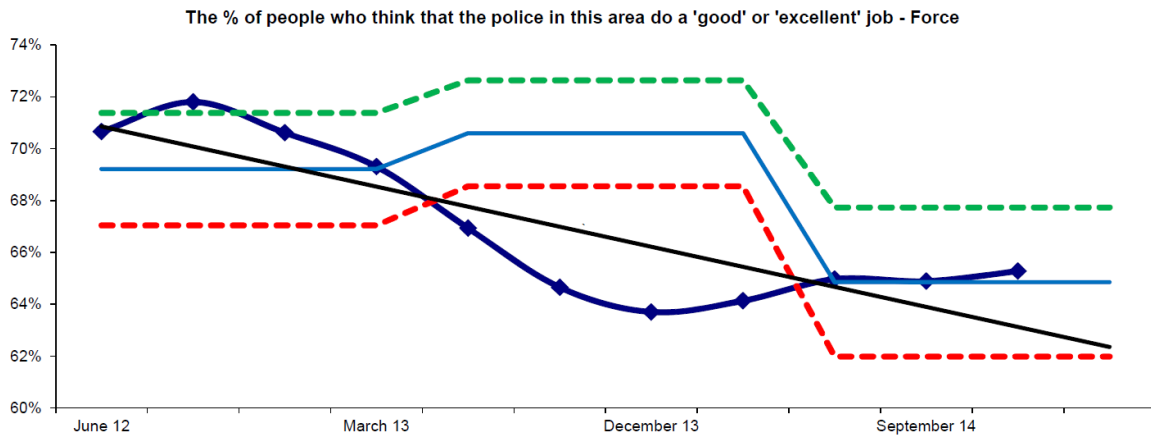
- 4.48 The overall long term trend for the UK, Cleveland and Stockton Borough has been one of falling levels of crime.
- 4.49 As of January 2015, for Cleveland as a whole, the Force is projected a rise in crime for 2014-15, and a similar level of ASB, compared to 2013-14. By end of January, in Stockton there had been a year-to-date increase of crime of 0.7% with a projected increase of 1% across the full 2014-15 period. This was the lowest increase in the Force area. There was a year-to-date reduction in ASB of 4.2% whereas other areas in the Force had seen an increase.
- 4.50 By the nature of crime and disorder statistics, these have fluctuated throughout the period of the review. The consistent element has been one of better performance compared to other the Tees Local Authority/Policing Areas.
- 4.51 The November HMIC Crime Inspection for Cleveland found that, in comparison to other areas of the country, levels of ASB in the area were high (the highest per 1000 population and twice the England and Wales rate – 12 months up to June 2014). The report found that Cleveland Police needed to better understand what was driving the ASB rate. HMIC also raised concerns regarding the accuracy of police recording of crime. The Force did however have a better detection rate compared to the average (35% compared to 26% in 2013-14).

- 4.52 Some of the increase in crime during 2014-15 will be due to improved recording, but the police also recognise that there will potentially be an actual increase in crime incidence for the year.
- 4.53 The HMIC report made the following judgements overall:
- How effective is the force at reducing crime and preventing offending? – Good
 - How effective is the force at investigating offending? – Good
 - How effective is the force at tackling anti-social behaviour? - Good

Public expectations and feedback

- 4.54 The Committee considered various sources of feedback from the public, being conscious of making use of existing methods and statistically valid feedback to ensure a representative response wherever possible.
- 4.55 A SBC Viewpoint Survey in September 2014 gathered resident views on the local area and satisfaction with Council services, including community safety¹.
- 4.56 Nine out of ten respondents said 'I feel safe in my local area during the day' which is 1% point less than was the case in 2013 and 2012 when the question was asked. Just over 60% of respondents said 'I feel safe in my local area after dark'. This showed an increase since the question was last asked.
- 4.57 Cleveland Police undertake a Local Public Confidence Survey on a regular basis. The latest results are for the period between January 2014 and December 2014; the survey involves conducting telephone interviews amongst a random selection of 2,503 residents from across the Force area whether or not they had had contact with the police (approx. 600 in each Borough). For the purposes of the survey, the term 'local area' meant the area within 15 minutes walk of where they lived.
- 4.58 65.3% of people think that the police in the local area are doing a 'good' or 'excellent' job. The following chart shows the trend for this measure over time; it had declined but is now in line with the historical average:

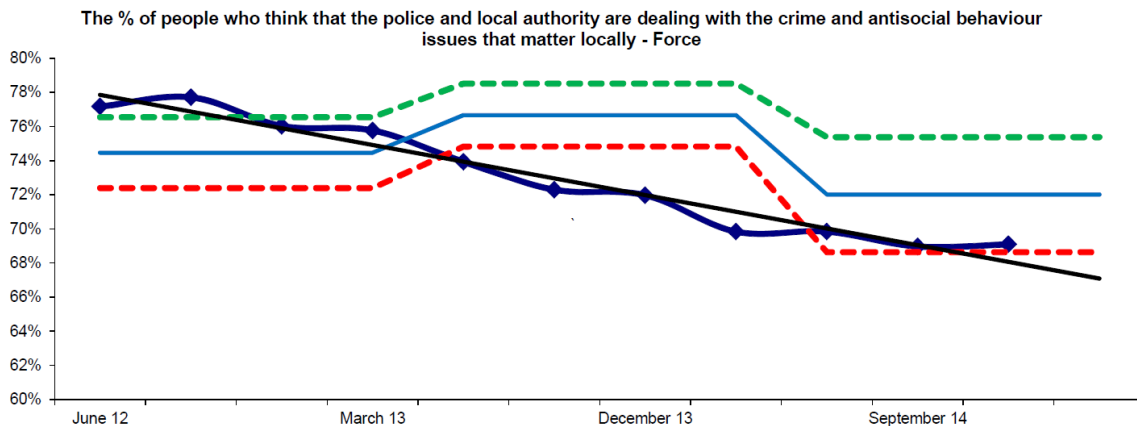
¹ 254 people responded to Viewpoint 38. Viewpoint results are statistically weighted by respondents' age, gender and location of residence in the Borough to help ensure that the messages reported are representative of the Borough. However Viewpoint would wish to have a higher response rate than received by Viewpoint 38.



(The line with the diamond indicator shows the actual results each time.)

4.59 Although the results have stabilised, they do show a reduction of approximately seven percentage points over the two year period, and this needs to be better understood, particularly in the context of a trend of falling crime figures.

4.60 69.1% of people across the Force area agreed that the police and local council were 'dealing with ASB and crime issues that matter in this area', and this was 70.8% in Stockton. The trend across the force is shown below:



4.61 In relation to accessibility, respondents were asked about their local teams and engagement with them. The information and commentary for across the Force is as follows:

- 60.3% of people said they were aware of the existence of a neighbourhood policing team with a specific job of policing the local area and working with the community;
- 27.5% of those people surveyed said they saw neighbourhood teams patrolling the area, either walking or cycling, at least once a week. 15.1% observed such patrols less frequently (once a month or less) whilst 23.2% said they never see an officer or PCSO on foot or cycle patrol in their local area;

- 55.1% of people expressed satisfaction ('completely', 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied) with the level of visible patrol. 26.9% expressed some form of dissatisfaction.
- 4.62 The Committee agrees that perceptions around police visibility is a complex issue. Many people may feel reassured by a visible presence that is often within their community, whereas others may feel that 'something had happened' when they see police officers in their locality.
- 4.63 The survey includes questions around the level of information available to the public. 30.1% of those people surveyed feel that they were 'very' or 'fairly' well informed about the way their local area was policed. However, 32.3% said they get only limited information whilst a further 32.2% claim to get no information at all.
- 4.64 However, the desire for such information is limited. Of those who said they currently receive 'limited information' or 'no information at all', only 37.7% indicated a desire to do so.
- 4.65 If people expressed a desire to receive information about local policing, the following types of information were requested: how to contact the police (including who to contact to report a crime or incident), information on police patrols, where and when patrols take place, reasons for a perceived lack of visibility, details of the local crime rate and the types of crime being committed.
- 4.66 Summary results for each Borough area were as follows:

	H'pool	R&C	M'bro	S'ton	Force
• % of people who think the local police do a 'good' or 'excellent' job	67.5%	61.7%	65.3%	66.9%	65.3%
• % of people who are satisfied with their most recent contact with the police	80.6%	74.2%	85.6%	82.6%	80.7%
• % of people who agree that the police and local council are dealing with the crime and antisocial behaviour issues that matter in their area	69.3%	65.3%	70.6%	70.8%	69.1%
• % of people who are satisfied with the level of visible patrol	56.9%	51.3%	56.6%	56.2%	55.1%
• % of people who perceive high levels of antisocial behaviour in the local area	7.6%	7.2%	5.9%	4.1%	5.9%
• % of people who perceive high levels of drunk or rowdy behaviour in public places in the local area	16.4%	17.2%	14.1%	10.4%	14.1%
• % of people who perceive high levels of drug use or dealing in the local area	19.7%	19.2%	15.9%	10.7%	15.7%
• % of people who's quality of life is affected by fear of crime and antisocial behaviour	17.0%	16.7%	19.9%	12.2%	16.0%
• % of people who have confidence in their local police	85.4%	81.9%	84.4%	85.3%	84.2%

- 4.67 A separate Victim Satisfaction Survey conducted for the Police between August 2013 and September 2014, indicated 80% satisfied with the action taken by police, 97% with the ease of contact, and 91% for the treatment by police.
- 4.68 The discussion group with police officers and PCSOs demonstrated the varied nature of the demand on their services, and although officers reported that the public had noticed a reduction in police numbers, their levels of expectation remained the same, often for relatively low priority issues.
- 4.69 Police officers were confident that the public were using correct channels to communicate with the police (ie. using the 101 number for non-emergencies) and they regularly provided the Council's ASB number to local residents.
- 4.70 The Committee recommend that:
6. **a) Cleveland Police should regularly monitor and share with partners the Public Confidence Survey results and other related consultation feedback;**
 - b) That work be undertaken by the Police and Crime Panel to further understand changes in public confidence, expectations, and fear of crime issues.**

Conclusion

- 5.1 Cleveland Police has undergone a period of major change. Since 2010-11, significant savings have had to be made and there are further reductions in spending planned for the medium term. To respond to these pressures the Force has reduced the overall number of police officers, PCSOs, and staff members available to it, and undertaken a wide ranging restructure.
- 5.2 Within Stockton this has led to the creation of an Integrated Neighbourhood Team bringing together neighbourhood officers and PCSOs with volume crime detectives in order to provide a flexible team to meet demand.
- 5.3 There is still a focus on providing a neighbourhood-based policing service, however this must be balanced against the requirement to respond to a wider range of issues and meet force wide priorities.
- 5.4 The levels of crime and disorder have fallen consistently in recent years, however there are signs that this may be levelling off. Stockton Borough's performance remains strong when compared with the other Tees Valley authorities. The range of issues dealt with by the police and partners continues to be complex and all demands must be addressed, particularly protection of the vulnerable.

- 5.5 It is therefore important to recognise the new shape of neighbourhood policing and how services are being delivered, and ensure that the police are able to focus on the most important issues. Partnership working and maintaining good operational relationships will become ever more important, as will managing public expectations.
- 5.6 It is also important to appropriately 'define' neighbourhood policing in order to aid understanding and communicating key messages.
- 5.7 The Committee wishes to place on record its support and appreciation of the work of Stockton's Neighbourhood Policing Team, and its partners in Community Safety.