



REPORT TO GRAMPIAN JOINT POLICE BOARD – 1 JULY 2011

EVALUATION OF GRAMPIAN POLICE FORCE PRIORITY – 'COMMUNITY FOCUS'

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 Members of the Grampian Joint Policed Board will recall that they endorsed the introduction of the 'Local Policing – Closer to You' community focussed policing model, on 1 April 2010.
- 1.2 This report updates Members on the results of an evaluation of the initiative, 12 months on.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The introduction of the 'Local Policing – Closer to You' initiative was built around key elements contained within the Scottish Community Policing Engagement Principles, the ACPOS Public Reassurance Strategy and the findings of the 2009 HMICS Thematic – 'Strategic Priority Setting in Scottish Forces – consulting the public'.
- 2.2 These principles largely revolve around community 'perceptions' and thus, a communities charter was identified as central to the initiative with an associated commitment that we would;-
 - Make sure you know who your local Officers are
 - Make it easy for you to contact us
 - Be visible and provide reassurance
 - Attend local meetings and involve communities
 - Help communities tackle their local problems
 - Keep you up to date with local policing services
 - Tell you how we are dealing with community concerns
 - Work with others to solve local problems
- 2.3 Additionally, in the associated delivery plan, the assessed 'impact of change' was determined as;-

'improving policing services based on the principles of a community focussed approach'.

- 2.4 Thus, the remit for this evaluation was determined as;-

'Evaluate whether 'policing services have improved' in terms of the impact and effectiveness of the commitments made in our Communities Charter between 1 April 2010 and 31 March 2011.

2.5 Implicit in the remit was a recognition that whilst quantitative data (numbers) built around financial efficiencies (fuel costs/staff savings etc) and more traditional 'crime and disorder' related statistics (reports of violence and ASB measured elsewhere) were available, this report would concentrate on an evaluation of qualitative data (perceptions) relative to the eight commitments made.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1 Despite a disappointing response to public survey, there are clear indications that through adoption of our Community Focussed policing model, we continue to improve policing services within our communities.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 In order to establish baseline data, a series of public surveys and focus group activities took place across the territorial divisions in spring/summer 2010.

4.2 These were largely repeated between 28 March 2011 and 24 April 2011 and the exercise was energetically 'marketed' through:-

- Media advertising
- On line survey
- Availability of paper copies within majority of libraries
- Poster campaigns at supermarkets, universities, hospitals, military bases etc
- Internet advertising
- Aberdeenshire Live
- Personal invitation to participate made to Community Councils and KINS (key individual networks)
- Personal marketing by LPT (Local Police Team) Officers

4.3 Additionally, our own staff (466 respondents) were surveyed and focus groups with representatives from public, private and third sector partners were held.

4.4 Finally, analysis of service centre user satisfaction surveys (almost 2000 respondents), social network site 'hits' and entries in our community engagement database (over 2000) took place.

5. DATA GATHERING AND ANALYSIS

- 5.1 Corporate evaluation took place over a period of 6 weeks although it should be noted that even despite the very intensive marketing exercise, only 58 (Community) responses were received relative to the 'Local Policing Team Evaluation' (LPTE) survey conducted in 2010 with only 232 responses subsequently received during 2011.
- 5.2 Accordingly, whilst the 232 responses received in 2011 represents the largest response to date for a Grampian Police public survey of this type, Members will appreciate the caution associated with interpretation of the limited returns in this area.
- 5.3 The summarised response rate to the LPTE survey is as follows;-

	2010		2011	
	Count	%	Count	%
Aberdeen	N/A	N/A	59	25.4
Aberdeenshire	41	70.7	117	50.4
Moray	17	29.3	50	21.6
Not Specified	0	0.0	6	2.6
Total	58	100.0	232	100.0

6. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS – The external (Community) View.

6.1 Commitment No 1:

- 'We will make sure you know who your local Officers are'

- 6.1.1 Forcewide, a majority (65.9%) of respondents to the LPTE survey felt, at least to some extent, that Grampian Police had achieved it's commitment to make sure that the public know who their local Police Officers are.
- 6.1.2 Whilst divisional results vary, it is interesting to note some contextual comment provided which revolves around 'LPT Officers not being as well known in the wider community as they are within community councils'.
- 6.1.3 Given that organisationally, we set our key community interface at Community Council level, this is perhaps a cause for both satisfaction and disappointment in equal measure.
- 6.1.4 Nevertheless, there are clear indications that we continue to make progress in this area and opportunities arising from identification of divisional variations are being addressed.

6.2 Commitment No 2:

- 'We will make it easy for you to contact us'

6.2.1 Forcewide, over 70% of the respondents to the LPTE survey felt, at least to some extent, that Grampian Police had made it easy for the public to contact them.

6.2.2 Again, whilst there are Divisional variations, there appears to be a clear indication that corporately, we have met this commitment.

6.2.3 Within the detail of the evaluation however, there are indications that communities within Moray (in particular) are uncomfortable in contacting us by telephone and we are further considering the implications and options surrounding the comments made regarding the perceived effectiveness of the service centre and the associated 'user-friendliness' of the '0845' number.

6.3 Commitment No 3:

- 'We will be visible and provide reassurance'

6.3.1 A majority (66.8%) of the respondents to the LPTE survey, at least to some extent, agree that Grampian Police are visible and provide reassurance.

6.3.2 This conclusion is reinforced by analysis of the associated Service Centre User Satisfaction Survey (SCUS) and whilst there is always scope to improve further, we do appear to be continuing to make a positive impact in this area.

6.4 Commitment No 4:

- 'We will attend local meetings and involve communities'

6.4.1 Arguably, this commitment is at the heart of our 'Local Policing – Closer to You' ethos and it is reassuring therefore that the majority (72.9%) of respondents feel that we have, at least to some extent, met our commitment to attend local meetings and involve communities with about 40% of respondents indicating a belief that our attendance at meetings has actually increased over the last year.

6.4.2 These results are even more striking when compared against the level of LPT officer attendance at Community Council meetings over the last 12 months.

LPT	Community Council meetings held	Community Council meetings attended by Police	Attendance
Bucksburn	31	27	87%
Bridge of Don	11	11	100%
Tillydrone	22	22	100%
Northfield	8	7	88%
Mastrick	11	11	100%
Seaton	10	10	100%
Kittybrewster	22	22	100%
Nigg	44	42	95%
West end	32	31	97%
Torry	11	11	100%
Hazlehead	45	44	98%
Rosemount	12	12	100%
TOTAL	259	250	97%

(Aberdeen Division Community Council meetings held and attended between 1 April 2010 and 31 March 2011).

LPT	Community Council meetings held	Community Council meetings attended by Police	Attendance
Banff & Buchan West	134	122	91%
Banff & Buchan East	99	76	77%
Buchan	70	61	87%
Formartine	128	99	77%
Garioch	103	90	87%
Marr	159	116	73%
Kincardine and Mearns	196	141	72%
TOTAL	889	705	79%

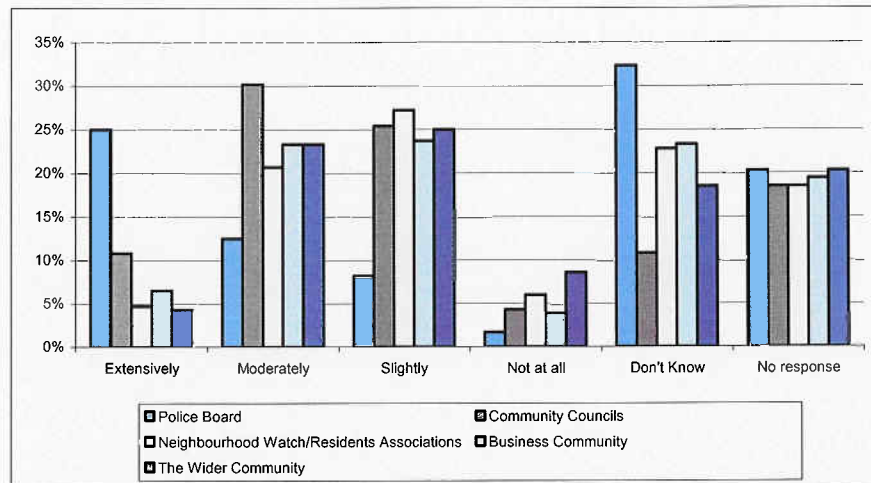
(Aberdeenshire Division Community Council meetings held and attended between 1 April 2010 and 31 March 2011).

LPT	Community Council Meetings held	Community Council Meetings attended by Police	Attendance
Elgin	12	11	92%
Buckie/Keith	65	49	75%
Forres/Upper Speyside	28	23	82%
Lossiemouth/Fochabers	51	44	86%
TOTAL	156	127	81%

(Moray Division Community Council meetings held and attended between 1 April 2010 and 31 March 2011).

6.4.3 All told, these meetings represent attendance, by LPT officers, at 1082, formal, Community Council meetings within the last 12 months, an enviable public sector commitment and performance by any standard.

6.4.4 In terms of ability to influence Policing activity, respondents feel that the Police Board and Community Councils are the most effective in this area.



Perception of influence on Police activity by various group

6.4.5 The high level of 'don't know' responses with regards to the Police Board however may suggest a disconnect between the Police Board and the community and the board may wish to consider whether there are further opportunities for creating a greater awareness in this area.

6.4.6 Interestingly, there is also a view which suggests that 'the wider community' are considered to be amongst the least influential with some respondents commenting that Community Councils are unrepresentative and poorly attended and thus a poor conduit for wider public discussion with the Police.

6.4.7 In some respects, it could be argued that this is for the community themselves to resolve, ensuring that they have an organised and reliable mechanism through which a much larger 'voice' can be heard. Nevertheless, the Community Focus Strategic Group are considering this further.

6.5 Commitment No 5:

- 'We will help communities tackle their local problems'

6.5.1 This has been a difficult response to interpret with just over half of respondents indicating that we have, at least to some extent, helped communities tackle their own problems within the last 12 months with the remainder, almost equally split between 'no we haven't' and 'no response'.

- 6.5.2 Divisionally, the results vary although Aberdeen respondents in particular appear to have perceived a greater increase in help than their contemporaries in Shire or Moray. This is believed to be connected to the more fundamental change of the policing model in the city.
- 6.5.3 Taken together however, there are further complexities apparent and these appear to revolve around some respondents feeling that either 'the public are too quick to involve the Police', or that the 'Police are too quick to take ownership' of problems.
- 6.5.4 It is also interesting to note some negative comment around 'lack of Police attendance at local meetings' when balanced against our evidenced, positive attendance at same and summarised earlier.
- 6.5.5 All told, this response appears to suggest a lack of clarity around what this commitment actually seeks to facilitate and clearly, further work will be required in this area.
- 6.6 Commitment No 6:**
- 'We will keep you up to date with local policing services'
- 6.6.1 Again, a majority (64.2%) of respondents to the LPTE survey feel, at least to some extent, that Grampian Police keep the public up to date with local policing services.
- 6.6.2 Force wide, there has also been a significant positive change in terms of the SCUS survey respondents being adequately informed about the progress made with an enquiry – a development which is believed to be connected to the introduction of the 'Complainer Update' task on Crimefile which seeks to ensure that people who report crimes are kept up to date.
- 6.6.3 As ever however, there is scope for improvement in this area with 'newspapers' apparently being the most effective medium (see figure 4.40 below).

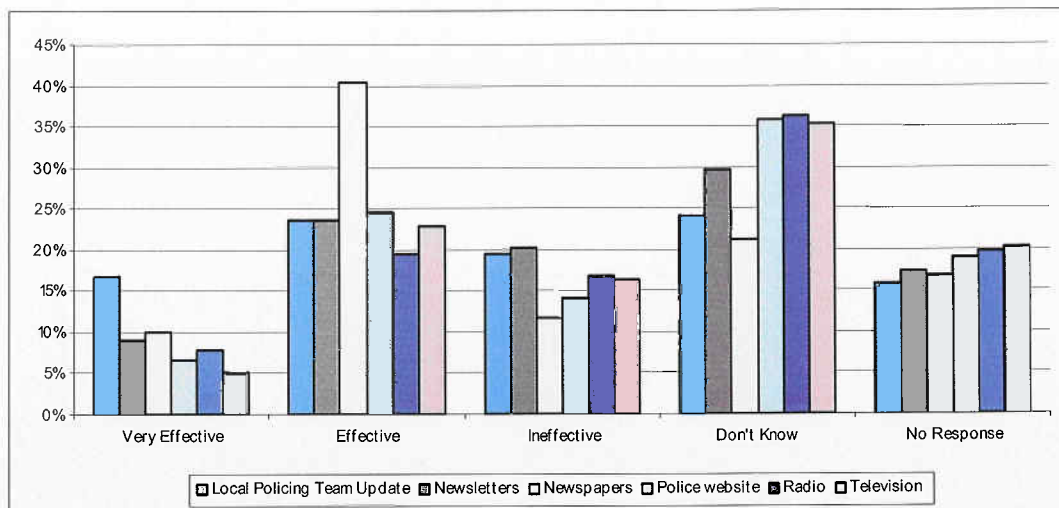


Figure 4.40 – how effective have the various methods of information sharing been at keeping communities informed of Policing issues over the past year?

6.6.4 That said, it is extremely positive to note that our own LPT quarterly updates, an innovation bespoke to our own, unique LPT structure (and introduced on 1 April 2010), apparently outshines even radio and television as an effective medium through which to update and inform.

6.6.5 In terms of 'Local Policing – Closer to You', this is an extremely positive result.

6.7 Commitment No 7:

- 'We will tell you how we are dealing with community concerns'

6.7.1 A majority (62.5%) of the respondents to the LPTE survey, at least to some extent, felt that Grampian Police were dealing with community concerns.

6.7.2 Examining further, 35% of respondents felt that Grampian Police's commitment to deal with community concerns over the past year had increased with approx 39% saying it had stayed the same. Significantly perhaps, only 7% said it had decreased.

6.7.3 Our performance in relation to this commitment requires to be considered alongside our performance in commitment 6 (keeping communities updated) with the marketing opportunities demonstrated in relation to LPT updates in particular, being fully utilised.

6.8 Commitment No 8:

- 'We will work with others to solve local problems'.

6.8.1 A majority (72.4%) of respondents to the LPTE survey feel that we have, at least to some extent, met our commitment to work with others to solve local problems with significantly, 85.8% of respondents indicating that we have either increased or maintained the effectiveness of our partnership approach.

6.8.2 This is another positive response with respondents clearly identifying that Grampian Police perform a meaningful 'partnership' role.

7. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS – The internal (Police Officer and Staff) view.

7.1 There were 466 internal responses with respondents indicating that they knew their LPT areas and the policing issues therein. It was also noted that they felt empowered to make decisions and were encouraged to identify solutions.

7.2 It was identified however that many respondents felt unable to carry out foot patrols within their LPT area and this echoes a community view who saw officers on foot as a useful engagement opportunity.

7.3 Some Aberdeen Division staff clearly still have some reservations surrounding the merits of the 'Community Focussed' model -v- the historic 'response/neighbourhood' model and some further work in this area is being progressed by Aberdeen Division Command.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 On balance, this evaluation has yielded a positive result and whilst culturally, the new model is still maturing, there is clear evidence that we continue to 'improve policing services based on a community focussed approach'.

8.2 There are continued opportunities for enhancement however and these are being addressed in accordance with our ongoing strategic priorities.

8.3 The board are invited to note and discuss the content of this report.