

PUTTING VICTIMS FIRST

Police, Crime and Victims' Plan 2016-2021

Consultation Findings Report

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Introduction

Immediately following my re-election in May 2016, I amended my job title to include the word 'victims'. I did this to show my commitment to victims; they will be at the heart of my work throughout my second term of office. Subsequently, I published a draft ***Police, Crime and Victims' Plan 2016-21*** to set out my proposed direction for the Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary over the next 5 years.

As your **Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner (PCVC)**, my role involves representing all those who live in, work in, and visit County Durham and Darlington and ensuring they have a voice in policing. Therefore, it is enormously important to me that you, the public, have the chance to give your views and provide feedback on my proposals.

The public consultation on my draft ***Police, Crime and Victims' Plan*** launched on 22nd July and closed on 30th September. My proposal consisted of four key areas for consideration, as follows:

1. Aims and Outcomes:

- Inspire confidence in the police and criminal justice system (*confidence and trust in the police and criminal justice system is high, measured through the Crime Survey for England and Wales*),
- Support victims and the vulnerable (*victims and the vulnerable are supported, measured through local victim satisfaction surveys*),
- Tackle crime and keep our communities safe (*crime is tackled and communities feel safe, measured through the police recorded victim based crime statistics*);

2. Objectives:

- Understand and tackle emerging threats,
- Ensure that victims are supported at all stages of the criminal justice system,
- Safeguard vulnerable people,
- Tackle cybercrime,
- Improve road safety,
- Reduce the harm caused by alcohol and drugs,
- Reduce re-offending,
- Reduce the impact of hate crime,
- Tackle anti-social behaviour,
- Address the incidence and impact of domestic abuse and sexual violence in all its forms,
- Understand the issues facing our rural communities and provide an appropriate response;

3. Approaches:

- Problem solving,
- Collaborating with partners,
- Being innovative,
- Delivering efficient services,
- Operating strong governance and accountability approaches,
- Communicating with and listening to communities and partners,
- Campaigning for change;

4. And any **additional comments, aims, objectives and/or approaches** that the public feel should be included in the Plan.

I am extremely grateful to those who have given their time to consider my proposals and to provide their views and I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation. Without your feedback I would not be able to ensure that the plan I give to the Chief Constable to set the direction for Durham Constabulary reflects the wants and needs of the local communities.

All of the responses have been thoroughly read and considered, and I have made a number of changes to the final document as a result. This report sets out the main findings from the consultation period and details the changes I have made in response.

Consultation

The public consultation on my draft Police, Crime and Victims' Plan lasted for over two months and consisted of a variety of engagement methods to reach as many people as possible. Over the consultation period, approximately **1000** people provided their feedback in some form. The consultation was promoted through partnership organisations, boards and meetings, on social media and by attendance at local community events and groups.

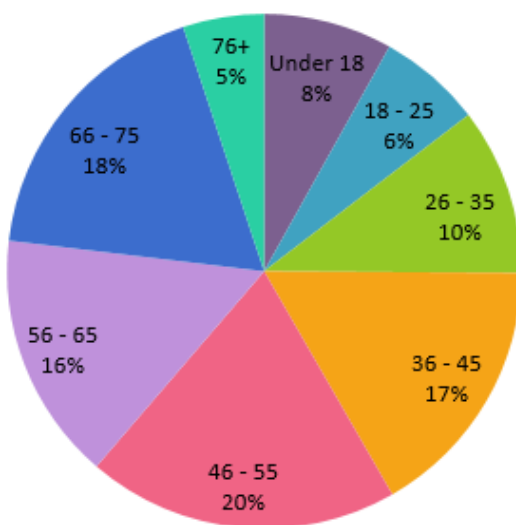
Survey Responses

A survey was developed to gauge public opinion on the inclusion of each of the aims, objectives and approaches, using a scale to measure the level of agreement or disagreement. This survey was available both online and in hard copy format to maximise the number and demographics of people reached.

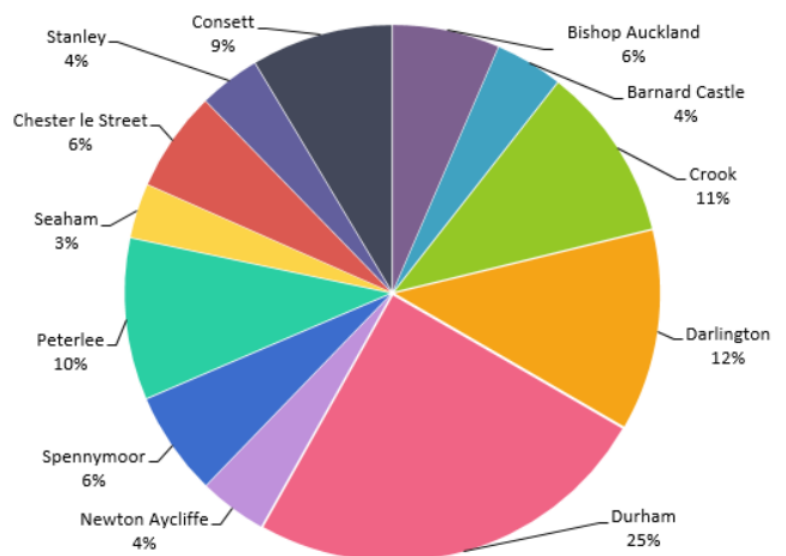
I. Respondents

508 people completed the survey and there were a further 33 partial completions, totalling **541** survey respondents. Of those who specified their gender (n=489), 59.5% were female, 40% were male and 0.5% were transgender. Respondents were also spread across all neighbourhood policing team areas and all age groups, the breakdown of which is set out in the pie charts below.

Age



Location



II. Aims

Survey respondents were asked to rate each of my proposed aims on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning 'very poor' and 5 meaning 'excellent'. The table below shows that the average score for each aim was greater than 4 out of 5.

Inspire confidence in the police and criminal justice system	★★★★★	Count: 540	Average: 4.1
Support victims and the vulnerable	★★★★★	Count: 540	Average: 4.3
Tackle crime and keep our communities safe	★★★★★	Count: 540	Average: 4.3

III. Objectives

On a scale of 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'agree' and 'strongly agree', respondents were asked to give their level of agreement to the inclusion of each of the proposed objectives. Overall, between **93.2% and 97.5%** of respondents agreed with the inclusion of all my objectives (calculated by combining the percentage of agree and strongly agree responses). However, the level of consensus varied slightly and the

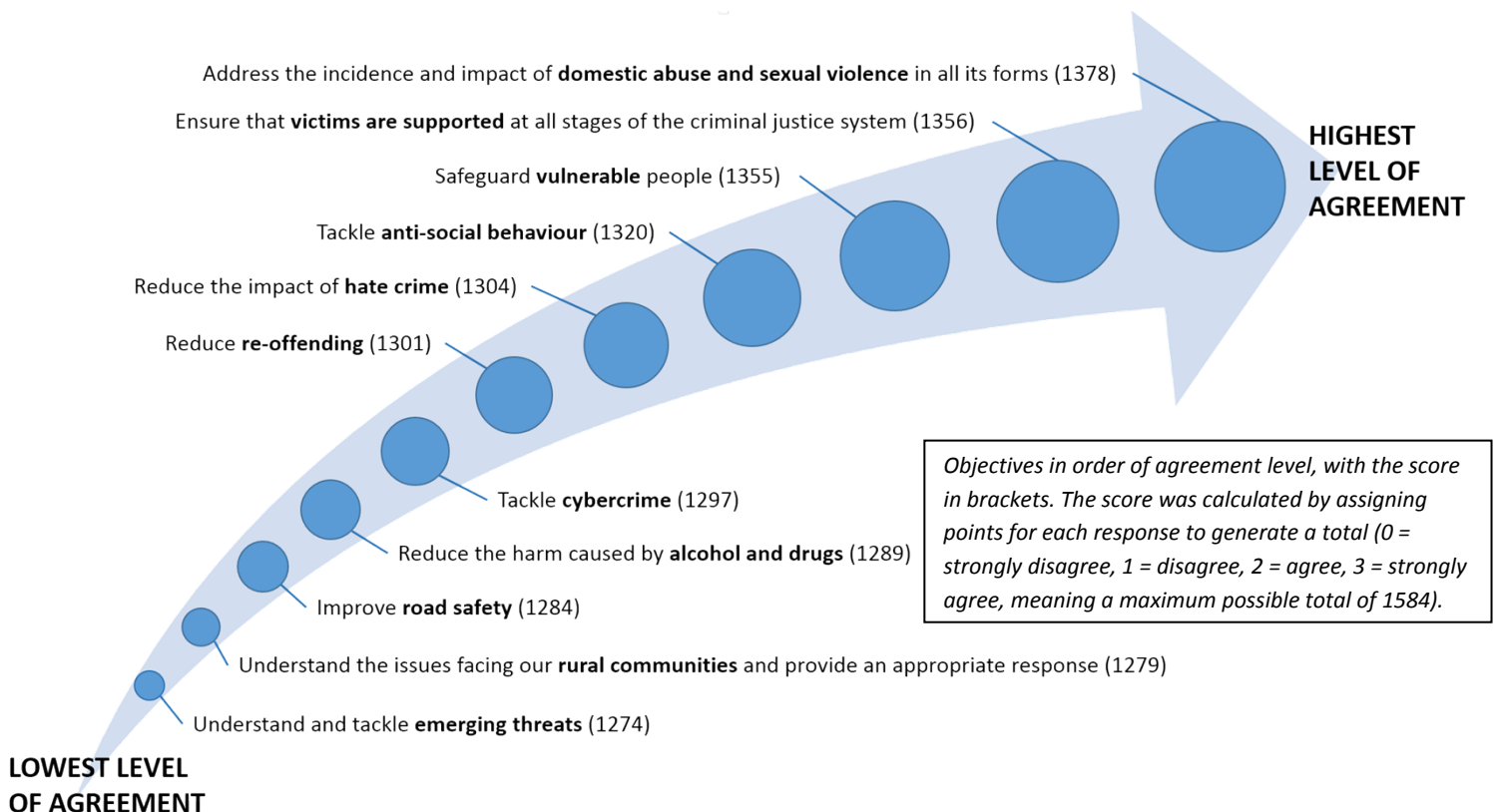
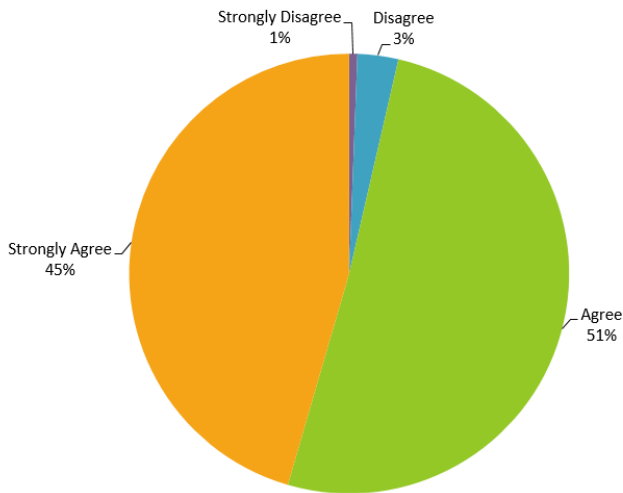
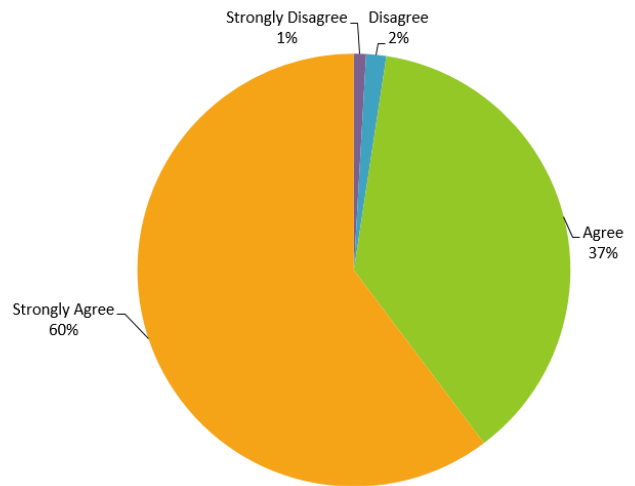


diagram below ranks each objective in order of the strength of agreement from survey respondents. The series of pie charts below detail the full results for each objective.

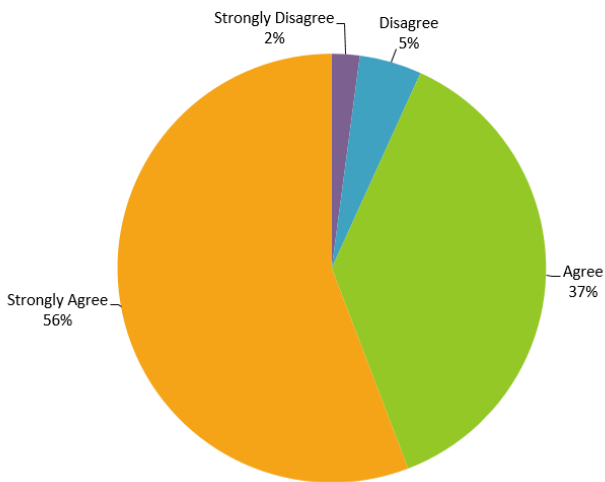
Understand and tackle emerging threats (for example, terrorism)



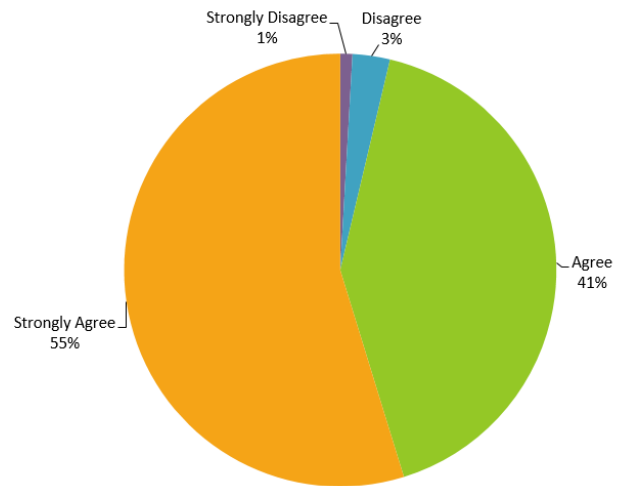
Ensure victims are supported at all stages of the criminal justice system



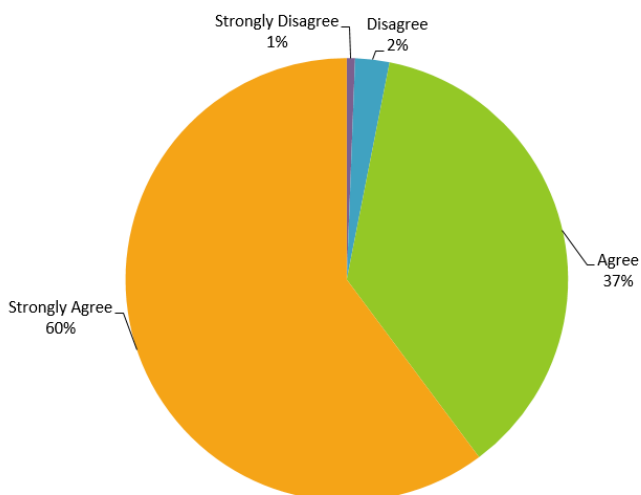
Reduce re-offending



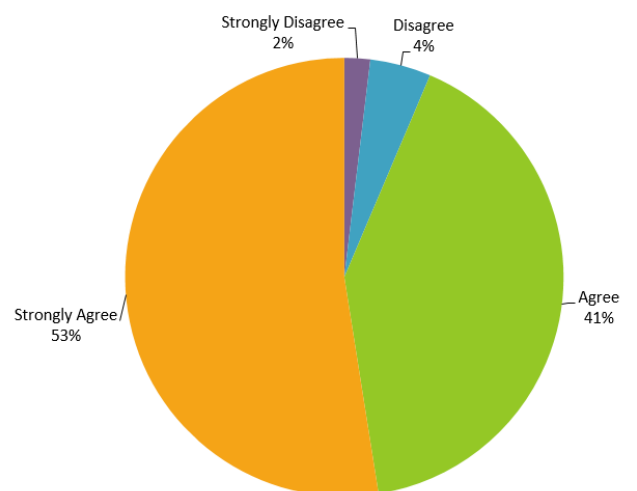
Tackle anti-social behaviour



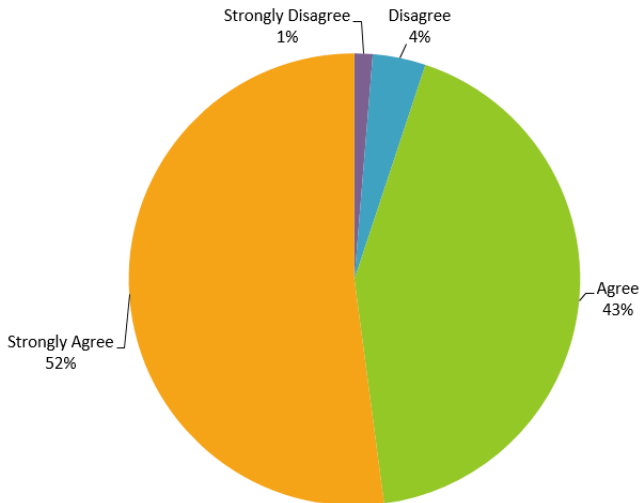
Safeguard the vulnerable (e.g. through mental health)



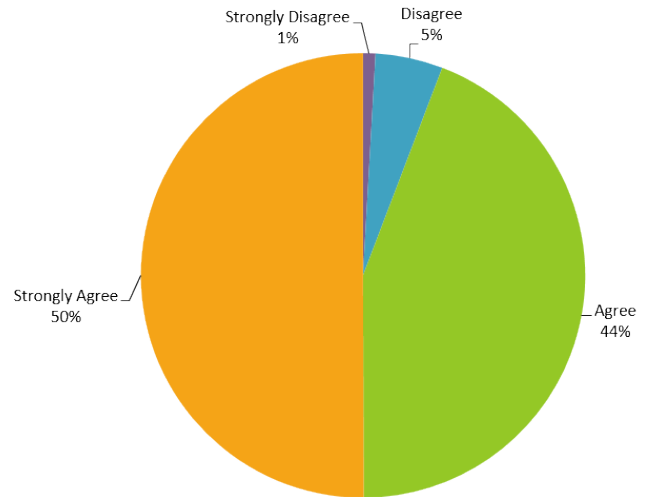
Reduce the harm caused by alcohol and drugs



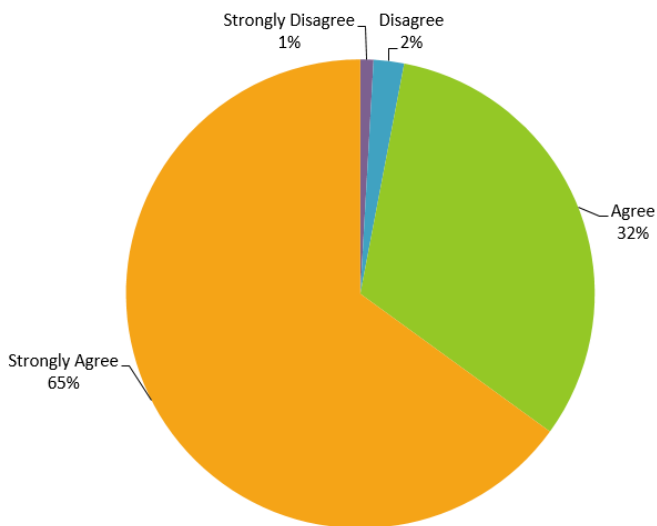
Tackle cyber crime



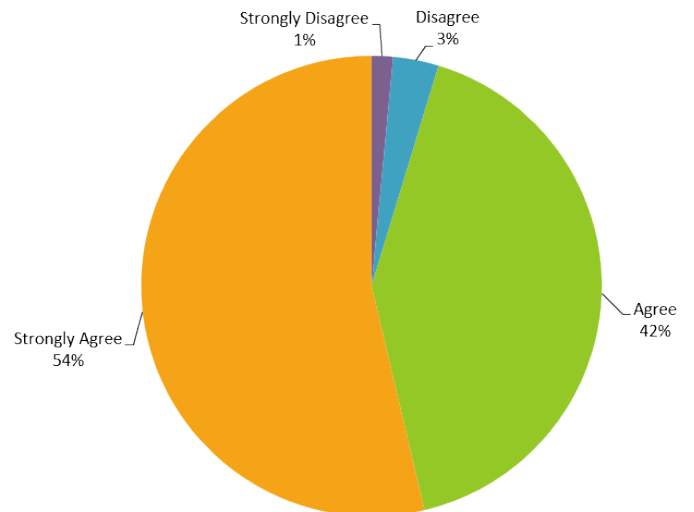
Improve road safety



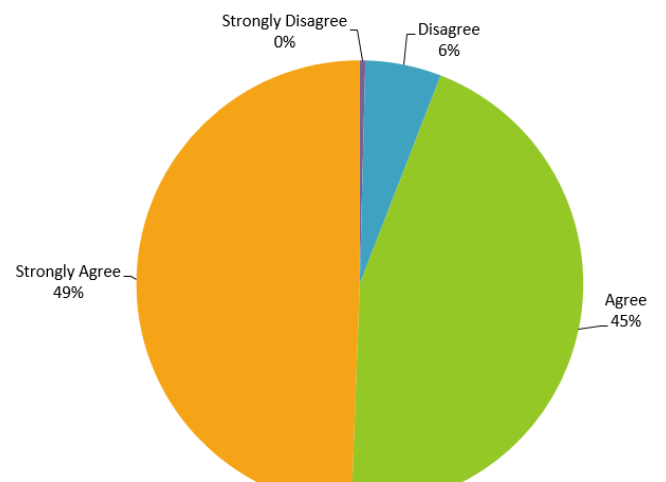
Address the incidence and impact of domestic abuse and sexual violence in all its forms



Reduce the impact of hate crime

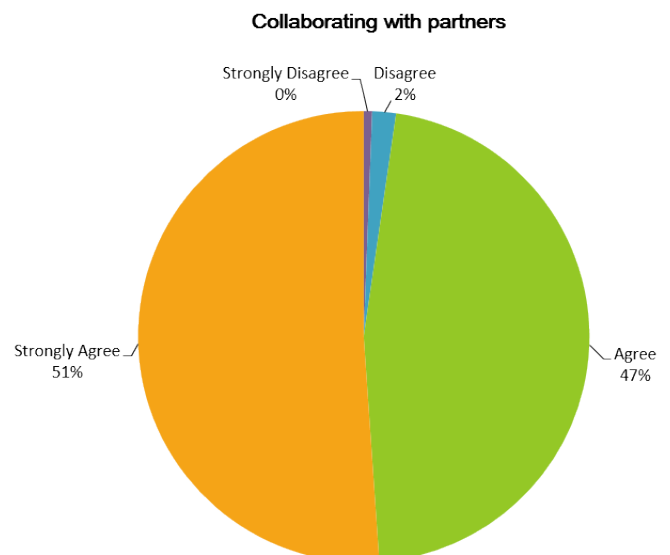
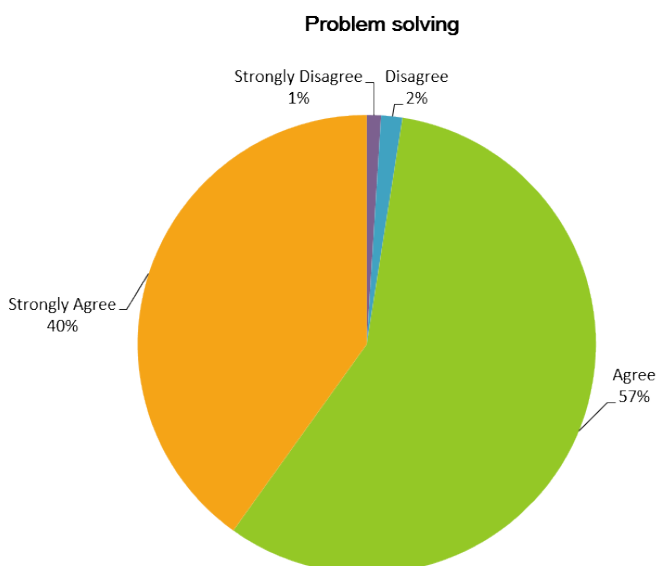
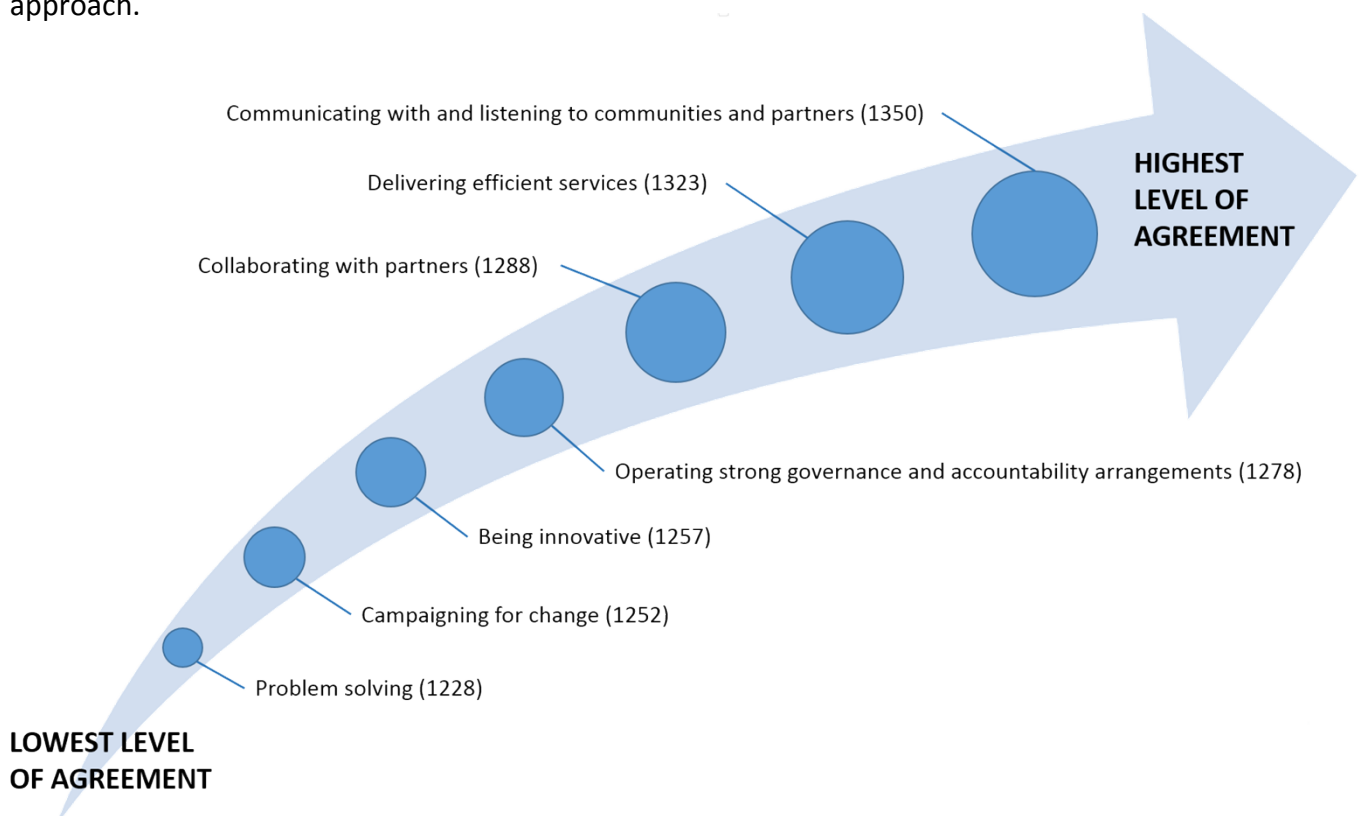


Understand the issues facing our rural communities and provide an appropriate response

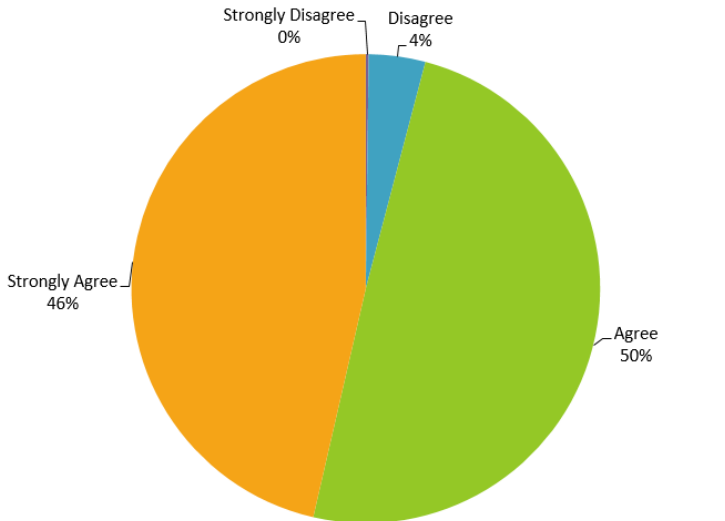


IV. Approaches

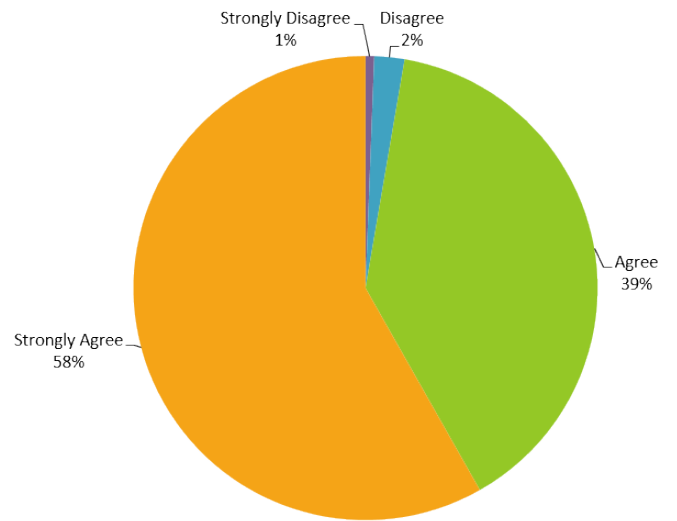
To measure the respondents' agreement with the inclusion of my different proposed approaches, the same scale was used as to measure the objectives. Between **93.9% and 97.7%** of respondents agreed with each approach. As with my objectives above, the diagram below ranks each approach in order of the strength of agreement from survey respondents and then the series of pie charts detail the full results for each approach.



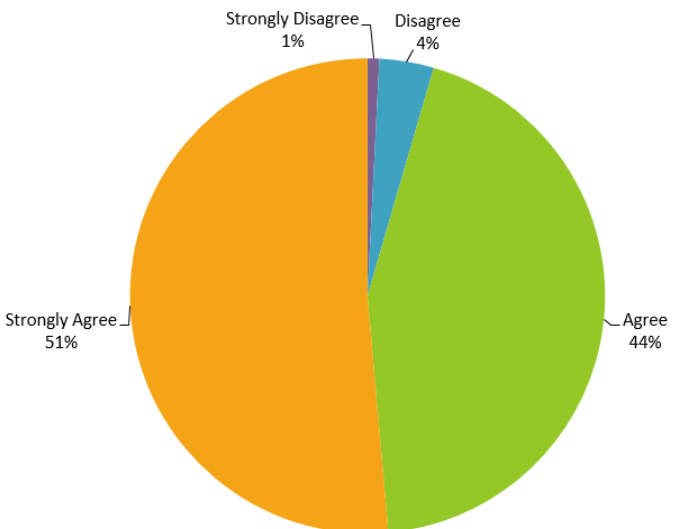
Being innovative



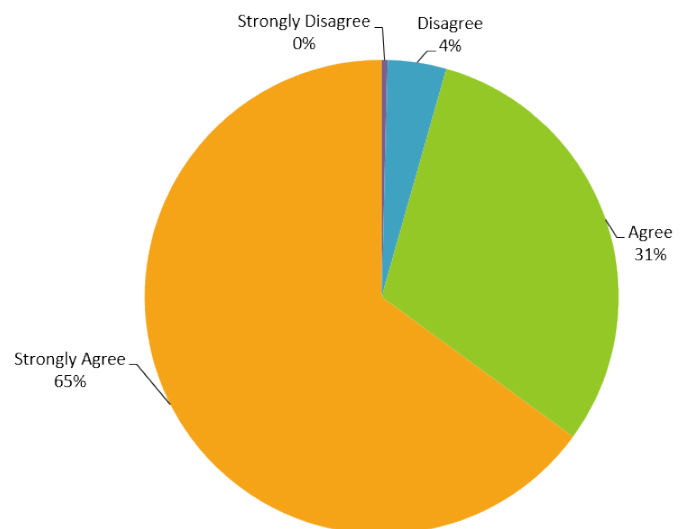
Delivering efficient services



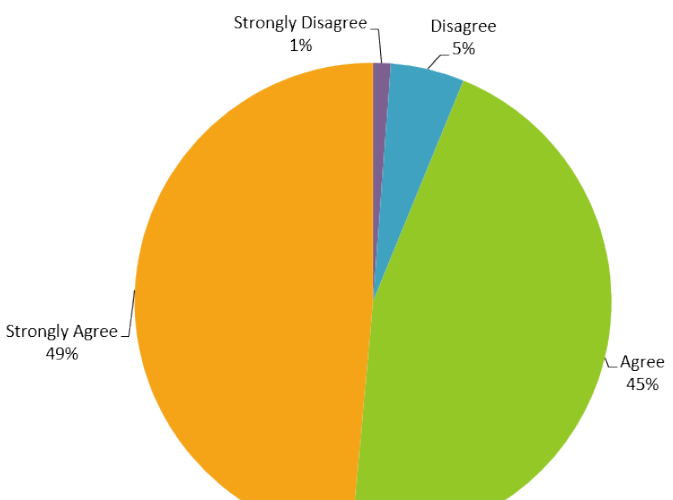
Operating strong governance and accountability arrangements



Communicating with, and listening to, communities and partners



Campaigning for change



V. Whole Police, Crime and Victims' Plan

To gauge the overall opinion of the survey respondents, they were asked to rate the overall draft document on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning 'very poor' and 5 being 'excellent'. As can be seen below, the plan as a whole was determined by the respondents to be greater than 4 out of 5.

Draft Police, Crime and Victims' Plan	★★★★☆	Count: 516	Average: 4.2
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VI. Additional Comments

All of the comments written by the respondents in the free text sections of the survey have been read and collated into the key themes that have emerged. The main feedback that was provided is set out below, using direct quotations from anonymised responses to illustrate an example for each topic area.

'I believe the plan is well structured and includes all of the vital points the public across County Durham and Darlington are looking for to make the area a better and safe place.'

The general response was very positive about the overall content and structure of the plan. A number of positive comments were written by people stating that they did not disagree with any of the content, that is appears to be well thought out and that they hope it can and will be followed.

'Officers need to engage/visit their local community centres more, be visual.' ... 'Greater police visibility could give confidence.'

A large number of people (nearly 10%) stated that they feel there needs to be an increase or continuation of neighbourhood policing and local beat officers visibly seen in their area or engaging with the community. This was also linked by a number of people to issues such as confidence, reassurance and deterrence.

'I think protection of the vulnerable is vital for the benefit of the community at large.' ... 'But should the police really be dealing with mental health support?'

From the written comments, it appears that there is an overall agreement that safeguarding vulnerable people is important, including providing mental health support, but there were some doubts about whether this should be a responsibility of the police. It was suggested by a few people that this should be a partner objective.

'Build bridges with younger people in our communities so this fear or mistrust of the police is stopped early on.' ... 'Need police going in to schools to explain what crime is.'

Engaging with young people was another recurring topic for a number of reasons, including building trust in the police, explaining crime and its consequences, and educating them about a range of different forms of crime. This was from both angles of protecting them from becoming both victims and offenders.

'The police can no longer deal with the majority of cases, seem to be classed as soft crimes.' ... 'Crime needs harsher and more serious punishment.'

There were a number of comments made about the wider criminal justice system, sentencing guidelines and other areas that are outside the role of the police, which implies that there is some uncertainty as to who is responsible for which element of the criminal justice process.

'Reducing reoffending shouldn't be a police job – other agencies should do that.'

Positive feedback was received on the use of early intervention initiatives and a number of respondents stated that this should continue or be increased. However, there were several comments that reducing reoffending is not a sole responsibility of the police and, although important, it should fall to other organisations.

'Road safety is certainly a priority...I'm afraid that one day soon there is going to be a bad accident.'

There were comments written about a number of different aspects of road safety including speeding and mobile phone use, supporting the inclusion of this objective in the plan.

'It is good to see rural areas are included in the plan.'

Several respondents specified that they were particularly pleased that rural communities are represented in the plan, and that there is the understanding that they face different issues to urban communities.

Focus Groups

5 focus groups were carried out with participants ranging in age, geographical location and organisational background to seek the views of our diverse communities, as follows:

- East Durham – Members of the public;
- Darlington – Voluntary and community sector representatives;
- Bishop Auckland – Members of Durham County Council's Area Action Partnership (AAP);
- Teesdale – Residents and AAP staff; and
- Durham City – Police Cadets aged 13 to 16 years old.

The overall purpose of the Police, Crime and Victims' Plan was explained to each group, but the participants were not given any details as to the proposed content of the plan. They were then asked what they felt should be included and what issues matter to them, and were encouraged to discuss this within the group. This approach helped to gain a greater understanding of the views of different communities within our area and ensured that those opinions given were not influenced by my proposals.

There were a variety of topics covered and issues discussed, with a number of recurring themes throughout the focus groups. The importance of **police visibility, local patrols and engagement** with local people was raised by all of the groups. They all also agreed that **road safety** was of some concern, including issues ranging from speeding to drink and drug driving, to using mobile phones. There were also a number of discussions around **early intervention and education** to help **reduce the number of young people entering the criminal justice system** and to **reduce re-offending**, which also led to conversations about the increased demand caused by **alcohol** and **drugs** and the need to tackle this.

Public Meetings and Events

I, or a member of my office, attended 10 of the 14 **Area Action Partnerships (AAP)** across County Durham over the course of the consultation, and attended meetings and spoke to groups in Darlington. I also attended a number of other organisations, for example **Town and Parish Councils**, across the area, particularly focusing on those areas where I was unable to attend an AAP. Durham County Council, Darlington Borough Council and other local agencies have been involved in the consultation process, through the **Safe Durham Partnership** and **Darlington Community Safety Partnership**, and I am grateful to them for their written responses.

To reach those members of the community who do not actively engage with the local authorities or police and therefore would not attend one of the public meetings or see the posts on social media, my team and I have also visited a number of public events across the force area. We have engaged with a whole host of people of all ages by attending family fun days, carnivals, shows and fairs, including:

- Bikewise in Durham City;
- Darlington Emergency Services Open Day;
- Chester le Street Activity Week;
- Party in the Park in Consett;
- Wolsingham Show;
- Peterlee Show; and
- Hurworth Country Fair.

The overall response to my proposed Police, Crime and Victims' Plan was very positive. The majority of comments that were made and discussions that took place were in support of the draft objectives, especially **cybercrime**, **road safety**, and **alcohol**. There was also particular support given to the inclusion of **collaborating with partners** and **campaigning for change** as approaches within the plan.

However, there was a general opinion conveyed that **police visibility**, **neighbourhood policing** and **local police engagement** is extremely important and that this should feature within the plan. Conversations also took place about some of the elements of the **criminal justice system** that are outside the role of the police, including sentencing, and the extent to which this forms part of my responsibilities.

Key Findings and the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner's Response

Aims

Overall, there was a very positive response to the draft plan. The plan as a whole and all three of the aims: **'inspire confidence in the police and criminal justice system'**, **'support victims and the vulnerable'**, and **'tackle crime and keep our communities safe'** received an average of greater than 4 out of 5 through the survey. There were also no objections voiced against any of these aims at the public and partner meetings I have attended, and all of the areas discussed through the focus groups fit under one or more of these aims. Therefore, I have decided not to make any changes to my aims.

This means that my vision is as follows:

'County Durham and Darlington are areas where people have confidence in policing and the criminal justice system, victims and vulnerable people feel supported, and all our communities are safe.'

However, I have changed the term 'key performance measure (KPM)' to 'key performance indicator (KPI)' to highlight that I will be closely monitoring and scrutinising the police performance but will not be setting targets. I have also decided to use the Cambridge Harm Index as an additional indicator to monitor the outcomes as well as crime, as certain crime types inflict more harm than others and so an increase in crime does not necessarily mean an increase in harm.

Objectives

All of my eleven proposed objectives received agreement from at least 93.2% of the survey respondents. There were also no strong concerns raised about the inclusion of specific objectives through any other means of consultation. However, the level of agreement did vary slightly and there were some additional topics that people felt needed to be addressed.

Firstly, the five objectives with the highest overall level of agreement (as shown on the diagram) all have over 95% agreement through the survey and received a high level of 'strongly agree' responses, and these objectives will not be changed:

- **Address the incidence and impact of domestic abuse and sexual violence in all its forms;**
- **Ensure that victims are supported at all stages of the criminal justice system;**
- **Safeguard vulnerable people;**
- **Tackle anti-social behaviour;** and
- **Reduce the impact of hate crime.**

Although they received slightly less agreement through the scale rating on the survey, road safety, alcohol and drugs were key issues that were highlighted through the focus groups and public meetings as important. Support for road safety was stressed in the free text comments. Support was also given to the inclusion of cybercrime at a number of public meetings. I believe that there continues to be a lack of awareness of the scale of cybercrime and the associated demand on resources, which could explain why public agreement was slightly less strong. Therefore, the following objectives will also not be changed:

- **Tackle cybercrime;**
- **Reduce the harm caused by alcohol and drugs;** and
- **Improve road safety.**

Although the overall agreement level for the inclusion of 'understand the issues facing our rural communities and provide an appropriate response' was one of the lowest, this objective received the smallest number of 'strongly disagree' responses and there was positive written feedback as to its inclusion. I have therefore decided to keep the issue as an objective but to reword it to make sure my intentions in this area are clearer. Therefore it will now be '**tackle the issues facing our rural communities**'.

Reducing reoffending has been those most contentious area as, despite being 6th in the overall level of agreement and having been raised as an important area in some of the focus groups, it also received the largest proportion of 'strongly disagree' survey responses. However, some of the free text comments stated that they disagreed that this is a responsibility of the police and should be for other partners, rather than disagreeing that it is important. Also, there were a number of comments both in the free text sections on the survey and at the focus groups stating that early intervention, support and education are important, particularly for young people. I absolutely agree that these issues are crucial for reducing offending, but also reoffending, and are matters not just for the police but for partners as well. I intend to work with a range of partners locally including the local authorities, the probation and rehabilitation services, the courts, the Crown Prosecution Service, prisons, and the voluntary and community sector to reduce reoffending. Initiatives such as "Checkpoint" have already proved very successful, led by the police working in partnership with others. Therefore '**reducing reoffending**' will remain in the plan in this form.

Police visibility on the beat, local neighbourhood policing and community engagement by local police officers was an area that was raised through all of the different consultation methods, with a concern that this has not been included in the plan. I have sought to address this feedback and my response is explained in the 'approaches' section below.

Finally, 'understand and tackle emerging threats' received the lowest level of overall agreement through the survey and was not one of the areas that emerged as important to people through the focus groups. However, it is accepted by the Constabulary, Local Authorities and me that preventative work around potential threats such as terrorism is an essential requirement and understanding changing demands moving forward is vital to effectively managing resources. It is important that this element of work remains within the Police, Crime and Victims' Plan in some form, but I have removed it from being an explicit objective and instead this will feature within the approaches (see the next section of this report).

Approaches

As with the objectives, agreement to the inclusion of the approaches was high, with at least 93.9% of survey respondents in agreement, and there were no strong concerns raised about the inclusion of any approaches. However, I have made some changes based on feedback to further strengthen this section.

Due to the high number of positive survey responses, a number of my proposed approaches will remain the same in the final version of the plan, which are:

- **Delivering efficient services;**
- **Operating strong governance and accountability arrangements;** and
- **Being innovative.**

'**Campaigning for change**' had one of the lower levels of overall agreement through the survey, but still not a low absolute level, and it was a particularly well received approach at public and partner meetings. Consequently, I have decided that this approach will also not be changed.

As previously described in the 'objectives' section, being able to understand and emerging threats is an important tool in managing resources and demand, but I have agreed that this applies to many aspects within policing rather than being a separate objective. Therefore, I have developed a new approach to be included in the plan of '**understanding demand and tackling emerging threats**'. As 'problem solving' received the

lowest level of overall agreement from survey respondents, and overlaps slightly with innovation and my new approach, this has been removed as an approach.

‘Communicating with and listening to communities and partners’ and ‘collaborating with partners’ were both very well supported approaches through all the different methods of consultation, but I have made some slight amendments to the wording to incorporate some of the additional elements that people were concerned had been left out. Firstly, there were a number of objectives that people suggested were not the responsibility of the police, including reducing reoffending and safeguarding people with mental health difficulties. There were also discussions around responsibilities of the wider criminal justice system, such as sentencing, which the police do not have influence over. Therefore, I want to make sure that the role partnership working will play, as well as collaboration, is more explicit. Also, the key concern with my draft Police, Crime and Victims’ Plan that has been revealed through this consultation is that a large amount of people feel police visibility and engagement needs more prominence. This includes a greater amount of engagement and education with young people. I have therefore added a greater reference to these areas of work within the body of the plan, and I have amended the two approaches to:

- **Communicating and engaging with our communities;** and
- **Collaborating and working with partners.**

Next Steps

Since the closure of the public consultation period and collation of all results and feedback, I have amended my Police, Crime and Victims' Plan in line with the responses I have explained above. During this process I have endeavoured to take into account as many opinions as possible, including feedback that will filter in to the production of the separate business plans rather than the plan itself.

This amended Police, Crime and Victims' Plan **will be presented** to the Police and Crime Panel on 28th October 2016 and, following any changes and/or their approval, will come into place at the beginning of November 2016. It will be published online on my website www.durham-pcc.gov.uk and hard copies will also be available on request, including in large print.

I will hold the Chief Constable to account for the delivery of this plan using a business plan that will detail key actions to be completed under each objectives, through Executive Board meetings and through the review and scrutiny of performance information.

If you have any further questions please contact my office on:

03000 264 631

enquiries@durham-pcc.gov.uk