



WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S ANNUAL TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL SURVEY 2018

SUMMARY REPORT

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Section 1. About the Survey

Introduction

This report provides a summary on the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) town and parish council survey. The survey has been conducted to understand the views of town and parish councils on local policing, contact and engagement and crime and anti-social behavioural issues. This survey is the first time the PCC has undertaken such a survey; a similar survey was last undertaken in 2015.

As both the 2015 and 2018 survey are different both in questions that make up the survey and it yielding different samples of data from different areas it is not statistically significant to make comparisons between the two.

This survey aimed to help inform priorities for both the PCC and the police force. This includes identifying where and how local police relationships are working well and where they can be improved. It also provides the local communities a voice on issues they feel affect their local area.

Executive summary

- In total 107 town and parish councils responded to this survey, this is approximately 23% of the total number of towns and parish councils in West Mercia. This report only reflects the views of those councils who submitted a return. It is not possible to conclude that the findings are representative of all town and parish councils within West Mercia.

Local Policing

- Around 60% of councils consider the police to be doing a good or fair job in the local area but police visibility was rated as poor or very poor by around 64% of councils.
- Mixed responses have been received for how well the police work with the council to identify and address local crime disorder issues.
- The councils generally show that they had confidence in the police to resolve crime and disorder issues.

Contact and engagement

- The majority of councils suggest that it is fairly easy to contact the local policing teams with emails being the most common method to contact the police.
- A majority of the councils suggest that they are familiar with their local SNT team
- Around 27% of councils suggest that police never attend council meetings whereas around 26% state police attend every 2-6 months.

Crime and antisocial behavioural issues

- Over 60% of towns and parish councils suggested that crime and antisocial behavioural issues were not a problem.
- Rural crime and road safety were highlighted as being a very big problem by towns and parish councils.

Methodology

This survey consists of multiple choice questions covering three question areas; 'Local policing', 'Contact and Engagement' and 'Crime and Anti-social Behavioural Issues'.

A copy of the 2018 survey questionnaire is included in this report in Appendix A.

The survey was accessed online through a link that was emailed to town and parish councils across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and Worcestershire by the Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC), the Worcestershire County Associations of Local Councils (CALC) and the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) on behalf of the PCC.

The link to the survey was originally sent out on the 5th April 2018 with the survey closing on the 6th July 2018. The link was also accessible on the Police & Crime Commissioner's website. A total of 107 responses were received and analysed to create this report.

The survey was shared online but some town and parish councils requested an electronic copy to allow them to make a collective response to the questions so they submitted a paper copy of their response.

It is acknowledged that not all of West Mercia's 463 town and parish councils are members of their local association, however it was felt that this method of distribution was the most efficient and effective method of engaging with the largest number of councils.

Demographics

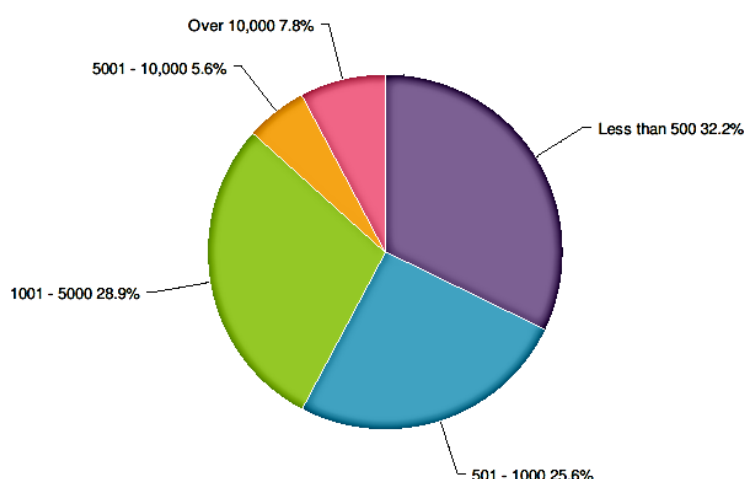
This survey was distributed to town and parish councils across the West Mercia police force area, which covers the three unitary councils of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and the two tier county of Worcestershire. Across West Mercia there are 463 town and parish councils where 133 are in Herefordshire, 180 in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin and 150 in Worcestershire.

In total 107 town and parish councils responded to the survey and have been included in this report which is approximately 23% of the total number of such councils within West Mercia. Overall, 91 of the towns and parish councils confirmed their local authority area. The 2018 figures are presented in Table 1.

Policing Area	Count	Percent %*
Herefordshire	14	13
Shropshire	45	42
Telford & Wrekin	12	11
North Worcestershire	6	6
South Worcestershire	14	13
Not answered	16	15

*Figures have been rounded so may not add up to 100%

Respondents were asked to indicate the population size of their town or parish council area.



Graph 1 shows that of the councils responding to this survey question, 32.2% had populations of less than 500. Councils with 1001- 5000 were the second biggest group to return with 25.6%.

Graph 1

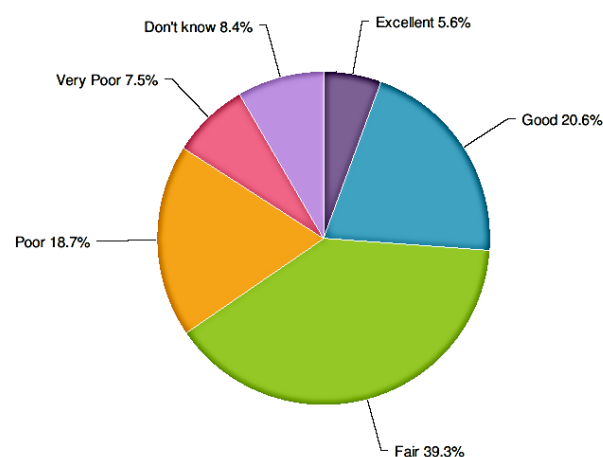
Section 2. Findings

Local Policing

The first set of questions in the survey were associated with local policing teams and the councils overall perception of the local police. All 107 responses received answered this section of the survey.

Graph 2 indicates how good of a job the councils perceive the police to be doing in their area. Around 26% of the councils thought their local police were doing a 'good' or 'excellent' job whereas around 26% perceived policing in their area as being 'poor' or 'very poor'.

In the Council's opinion, how good a job do you think the police are doing in your town / parish?

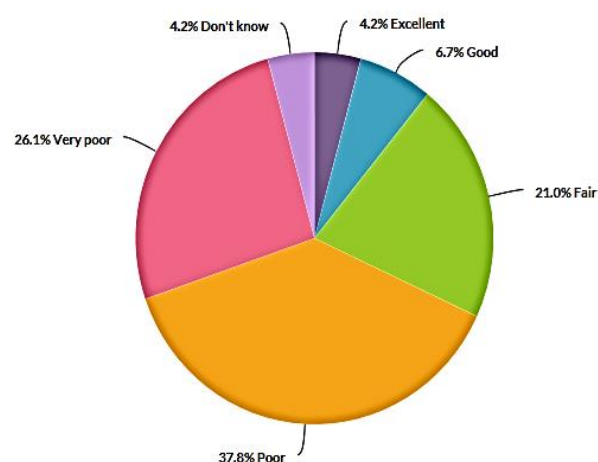


or 'very poor'. A majority of the towns and parish councils perceived the policing in their area as being 'fair'.

Graph 2

As shown results suggest that approximately 63% of the towns and parish councils rate the visibility of the police in their local area as being 'poor' or 'very poor'.

In the Council's opinion, how would you rate the visibility of police in your town parish?



Around 11% of respondents rated the visibility of police in their town or parish as being 'excellent' or 'good'. Around 45% of those who suggested police visibility was poor or very poor were from Shropshire.

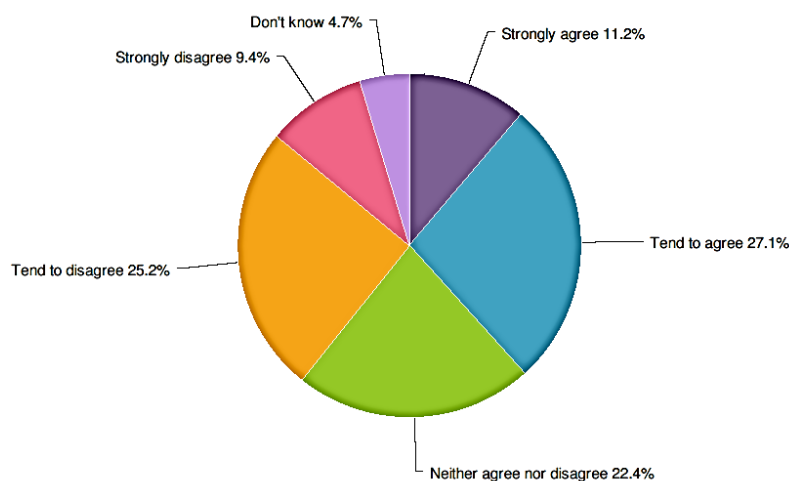
Graph 3

Councils were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements. The two statements were;

- The police work well with the council to identify and address local crime and disorder issues (Graph 4).
- The council has confidence in the police to resolve crime and disorder issues raised within the local community (Graph 5).

Graph 4 shows that 38.3% of respondents 'strongly agree' and 'tend to agree' that the police work well with the council to identify and address local crime and

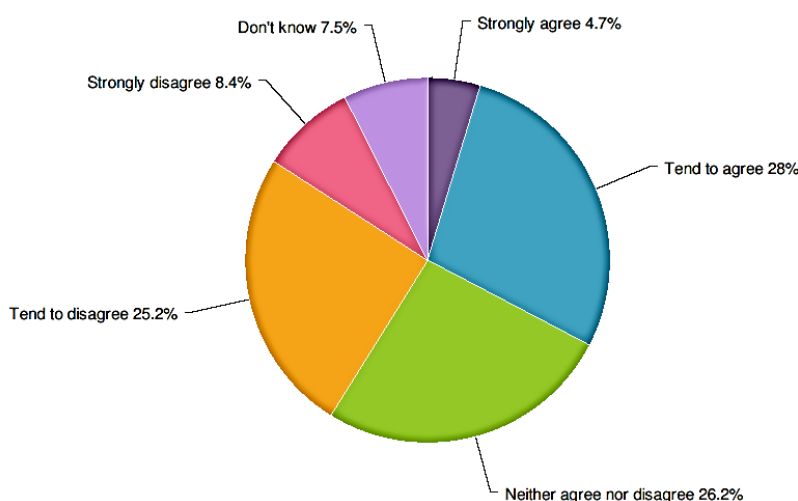
disorder. It also shows that 34.6% of respondents 'strongly disagree' or 'tended to disagree' that the police work well with the council.



Graph 4

Graph 5 shows the overall confidence in the police to resolve issues raised by the council. In total, 28% of the councils 'tend to agree' about whether they had

confidence in the police to resolve crime and disorder issues raised. Those that 'strongly disagreed' about having confidence in the police amounted to 8.4%.

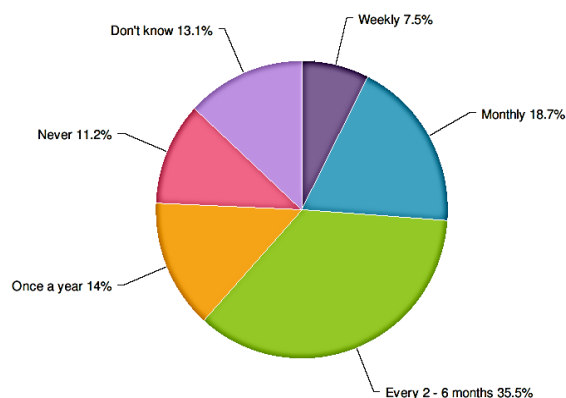


Graph 5

As shown in Graph 6, results suggest that approximately 36% of towns or parish councils contact the police to raise concerns about crimes or incidents every 2-6 months.

On average, how often does the Council contact the police to raise concerns about crimes or incidents?

months.
Alternatively, around 13% of towns or parish councils responded that they 'don't know'.

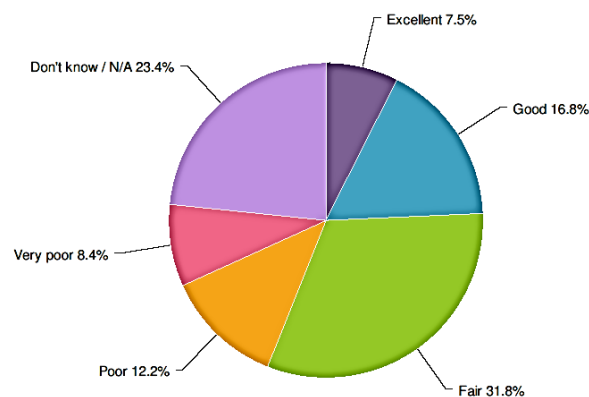


Graph 6

For the next question towns and parish councils were asked to rate how well the police respond to crime and disorder issues raised by the council. Approximately 31.8% of the councils rated the police response as 'fair', whilst over 23% of the councils they stated that they 'didn't know' or that this question was 'not applicable'

Overall, how would you rate the police response to crime and disorder issues or incidents raised by the Council?

to them, this data is shown in Graph 7.



Graph 7

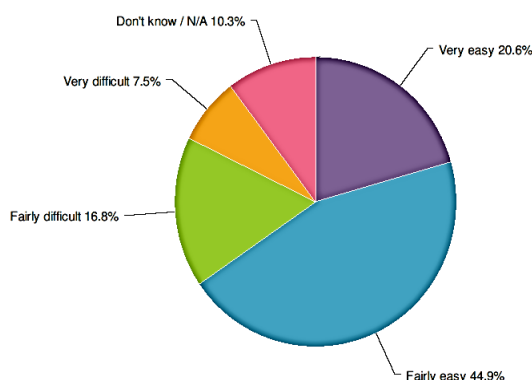
Contact and Engagement

This second section of the survey looked at how involved the towns and parish councils perceive that their local policing team are with them. All 107 towns or parish councils that responded to this survey responded to this question also.

Responses show that approximately 66% of towns or parish councils find it 'very easy' or 'fairly easy' to access their local policing teams. However, approximately 24% of the responses suggest that it is 'very difficult' or 'fairly difficult' to contact the

In the Council's opinion, how easy and convenient is it to access your local policing teams? (This may be in any form - face to face, email, telephone etc)

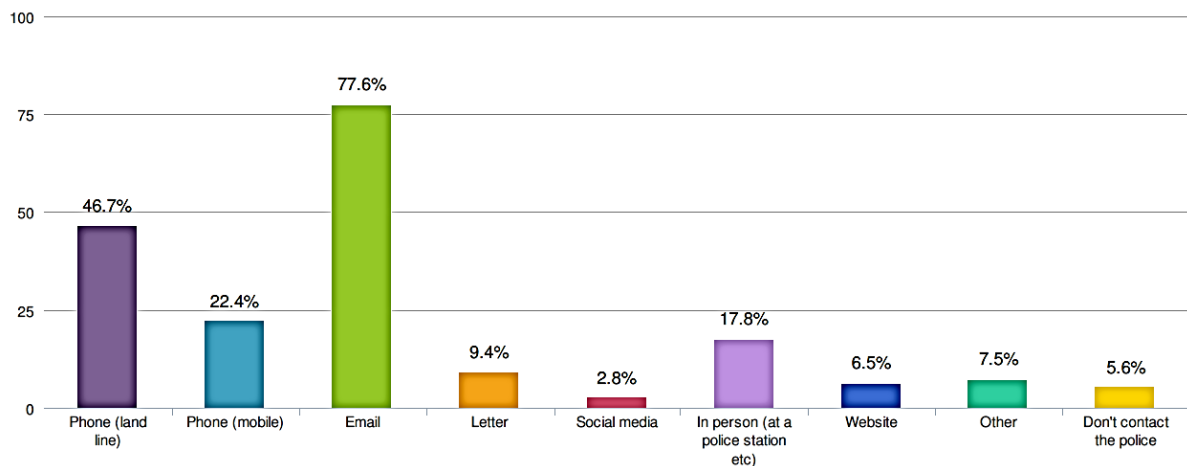
local policing teams, this data is shown in Graph 8.



Graph 8

Following on from this, 37.4% of responses suggest that it is 'fairly easy' to access relevant information for the local community from the police. Only 7.5% of respondents found it 'very difficult' whilst 23.4% stated that they 'don't know' or that it was 'N/A'.

Furthermore, responses show that from the 107 towns and parish councils that responded 77.6% of them contact the police to discuss local issues, seek information or invite them to meetings or community events by email. Social media was the least common method to contact the police with only 2.8% of towns and parish councils using it as a method. Around 5.6% of councils indicated that they do not contact the police. These results are shown in Graph 9.

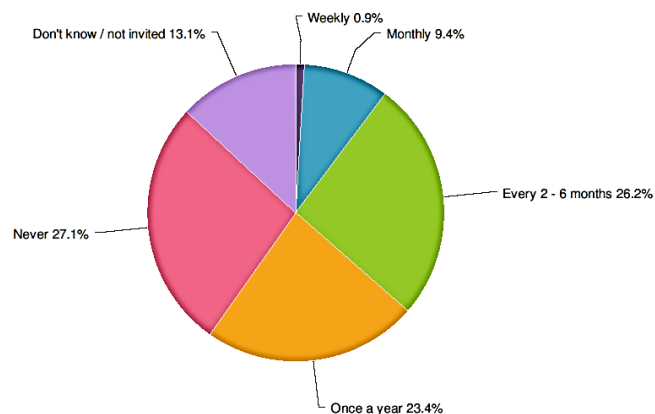


Graph 9

After this 33.6% of the councils that responded indicated that that they most commonly contact the police 'every 2-6 months' to discuss local issues, seek information or invite the police to meetings or community events. Only 3.7% of the councils indicated that they never contact the police for these issues.

When asked to rate the police response to requests for information or meetings, around 31% rated them as 'excellent' or 'good', whilst around 18% rated the police as being 'very poor'. As shown in Graph 10, around 27% of councils that police 'never' attend council meetings whereas 26.2% state the police attend 'every 2-6 months'. Over 50% of those that suggest the police never attend council meetings

How often do the police attend Council meetings or other community events in your town or parish area? were from Shropshire.

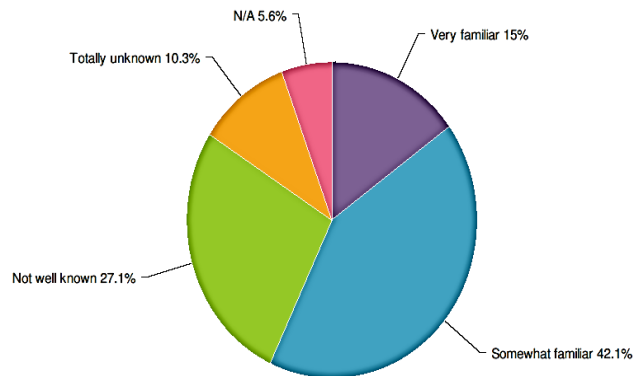


Graph 10

As shown in Graph 11 over 57% of councils suggest that they are 'very familiar' or 'somewhat familiar' with their local Safer neighbourhood team (SNT). However,

Does the Council know the members of the police's local Safer Neighbourhood Team? These teams include Inspectors, Sergeants, PCs and PCSOs

around 10% say that their local SNT team are 'totally unknown'.



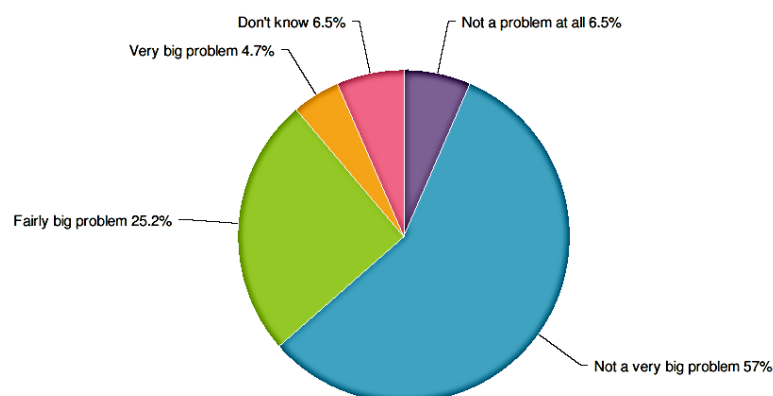
Graph 11

Crime and Antisocial Behaviour Issues

This final section of the survey looked at the local crime and antisocial behaviour issues in the councils area.

All 107 of the towns and parish councils responded to this question of the survey stating how much they view crime and antisocial behaviour as being a problem. Graph 12 shows that 6.5% said it was 'not a problem at all' and 57% said it was 'not a very big problem'.

In the Council's opinion, how much of a problem, if at all, would you say that crime and anti social behaviour is in your town / parish area?

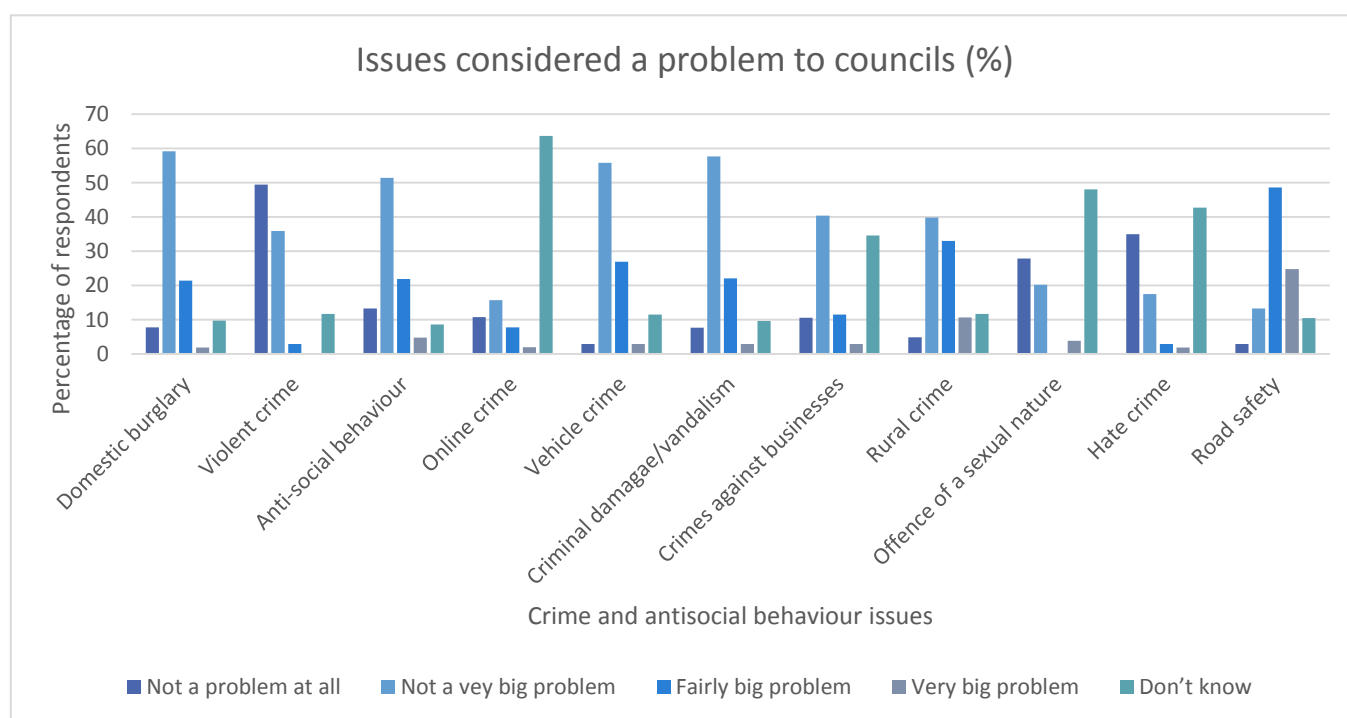


Graph 12

After this, councils were presented with a list of different crimes where they rated whether the crimes were 'not a problem at all', 'not a very big problem', a 'fairly big problem', a 'very big problem' or 'didn't know'. The results to these questions are presented in Graph 10.

It was suggested that 'violent crime', 'offences of a sexual nature' and 'crime committed against people due to their age, race, disability or sexuality' was not a problem at all. However, 'rural crime' and 'road safety' were identified as being a very big problem by towns or parish councils.

Twelve councils provided extra comments to this response. Other issues towns and parish councils stated as being a problem include; drink driving, fly tipping, illegal traveller camps, speeding and parking, enforcement of speeding traffic and visible contact. Speeding traffic was referenced to by 5 towns and parish councils.



Graph 13

Across the policing areas of South Worcestershire, Telford, Shropshire and Herefordshire they suggested that crime and antisocial behaviour was not a big problem for their areas. However, North Worcestershire suggest that crime and antisocial behaviour was a fairly big problem for their local area.

Local policing area findings

Herefordshire

- 14 towns and parish councils that responded to this survey were from Herefordshire

Local policing

- Of the councils from Herefordshire that responded half of them rated the job the police were doing in their area as fair or good. Although, police visibility was rated as poor or very poor by the majority.
- It was suggested that the councils strongly agreed or tended to agree that the police work well with councils to identify and address local crime and disorder issues. However, councils said that tended to disagree or strongly disagreed that they had confidence in the police to resolve crime and disorder issues.
- When asked to rate the police response to crime and disorder issues, 50% of Herefordshire councils rated the response as either fair, good or excellent.

Contact and engagement

- Half of the councils stated that it was fairly difficult or very difficult to contact local policing teams, whereas 42.9% stated it was fairly easy or very easy. The rest stated that they didn't know.
- Requests for information or meetings was rated as poor or very poor by 50% of Herefordshire councils whilst around 43% rated them as fair, good or excellent.
- Around 43% of towns and parish councils state they are never proactively contacted by the police to raise awareness of local issues or share information, alternatively 29% of councils state the police contact them every 2-6 months.
- Local SNTs are totally unknown or not well known by 57% of councils whilst the other 43% said they are somewhat familiar or very familiar with them.

Crime and antisocial behaviour issues.

- Around 57% state that crime and anti-social behaviour is not a problem in their area whilst the remaining 43% believe it is.
- Road safety was deemed a problem by 10 of Herefordshire's towns and councils. Speeding traffic and visible contact were also raised as issues in the local area.

Shropshire

- In total, 45 of the towns and parish councils that responded were from Shropshire.

Local policing

- The police were seen to be doing a fair, good or excellent job by most of the Shropshire councils. However visibility was rated as poor or very poor by 62% of councils and only rated as fair, good or excellent by 36%.
- Views of confidence in the police to resolve crime and disorder issues were disagreed with by 36% of councils with 29% neither agreeing nor disagreeing and only 27% agreeing.
- The police response to crime and disorder issues raised by the council was seen as fair, good or excellent by 47% of councils whilst 31% stated that they didn't know or that it was not applicable.
- Councils suggested that it was easy to contact the local policing teams, and access relevant information for the local community from the police.

Contact and engagement

- Around 46% stated that they thought the level of contact with the police was poor or very poor whilst 40% thought it was fair, good or excellent.
- The police response to requests for information and meetings were rated as fair, good or excellent by 45% of councils.
- Around 40% of council's state they are never proactively contacted by the police to raise awareness of local issues and to share information.
- Although the majority of councils state that the SNT are somewhat familiar or very familiar to them.

Crime and antisocial behaviour issues.

- Crime and antisocial behaviour was rated as being not a very big problem or not a problem at all by 67% of councils.
- Road safety was deemed a very big problem by 8 councils and violent crime was deemed not a problem by the majority of councils. Extra issues raised include concern for safety, drink driving, fly tipping and speeding and HGV's.

Telford & Wrekin

- Overall, 12 towns and parish councils from this survey were from Telford & Wrekin.

Local policing

- In Telford 42% of councils suggest the police are doing a fair, good or excellent job. However, the same amount also suggest the police are doing a poor or very poor job. Police visibility in Telford was rated by the majority (83%) as either poor or very poor with only 17 % rating it as fair. No council rated it as good or excellent.
- Most councils disagreed that they had confidence in the police to resolve crime and disorder issues with only 25% agreeing that they had confidence in the police.
- The police response to crime and disorder incidents raised by the council were generally rated as either fair, good or excellent. The majority also stated that it was easy to contact local policing teams.

Contact and engagement

- The level of contact with the police was rated as fair, good or excellent by 58% of councils.
- Police response to requests for information/meetings were rated by 42% of councils as being fair, good or excellent. However, 42% also said it was poor or very poor.
- Around 33% of councils say the police never proactively contact the council to raise awareness of local issues, although 33% also say they are contacted every 2-6 months.
- SNT's were not well known or totally unknown to 58% of councils.

Crime and antisocial behaviour issues.

- Crime and antisocial behaviour was rated as not being a problem for 58% of councils. However, 6 out of 11 councils stated road safety was a very big problem. Extra issues flagged as a problem include parking and persistent offenders on A41 through the village doing excess speed.

South Worcestershire

- From the towns and parish councils that responded 14 were from South Worcestershire

Local policing

- Over 70% of councils rated the police as doing a fair, good or excellent job. However, police visibility was rated as poor or very poor by 64% of councils.
- Most of the councils agree that they had confidence in the police to resolve crime and disorder issues.
- The police response to crime and disorder issues was rated by 72% of councils as fair, good or excellent whilst 21% stated that it was poor.

Contact and engagement

- Over half of the councils stated it was easy to contact the local police and access the relevant information.
- Level of contact with the police was rated as poor or very poor by 50% of councils whilst 43% stated it was fair, good or excellent. When asked to rate the police response to requests for information or meetings 43% said it was poor or very poor whilst 43% also said it was fair, good or excellent.
- It was suggested that police never attend meetings or community events by 43% of councils, however, it was also found by 43% that police attend every 2-6 months.
- The majority of councils suggest that their local SNT are somewhat familiar.

Crime and antisocial behaviour issues.

- The vast majority of councils suggest that crime and antisocial behaviour was not a problem in their local area. However, speeding traffic through the village was cited as a problem.

North Worcestershire

- From the towns and parish councils that responded 6 were from South Worcestershire

Local policing

- Police are seen to be doing a fair or good job by 83% of councils. However, police visibility has been rated as poor or very poor by 67% of councils.
- The majority of councils tend to agree that they had confidence in the police to resolve crime and disorder issues raised.
- Half of the respondents from North Worcestershire rated the police response to crime and disorder issues or incidents as fair, good or excellent.

Contact and engagement

- Most councils suggest it is easy to contact the police and access the relevant information for the local community. Generally, it was found that the level of contact councils had with the police were perceived as being either fair, good or excellent.
- Councils most commonly contact the police to discuss local issues and seek information on a monthly basis.
- Police response to requests for information were rated as fair or good by 67% of councils. It was also suggested by 67% of councils that police proactively contact them every 2-6 months, this is followed by 33% who say they are never contacted.
- The majority of councils suggest that they are familiar with their local SNT.

Crime and antisocial behaviour issues.

- Crime in the local area was seen as a fairly big problem or very big problem by 67% of councils. Illegal traveller camps was cited as an issue by one of the councils.

Section 3. Conclusions

Conclusions

Since the previous towns and parish council survey more councils have completed the current survey and more responses have been received, although there is no consistent coverage of councils from each areas with some areas yielding more responses than others. However, the results still provide an insight into how local councils view the local policing, the contact and engagement from the police and crime and antisocial behaviour in their area.

Generally, for local policing, police are seen to be doing a fair job, working well with councils who have confidence in the police to resolves issues, however police visibility has been stated as poor or very poor by the majority of councils.

It was largely found that it was fairly easy to access local policing teams, council requests for information were responded to well by the police and councils were somewhat familiar with their SNT.

A majority of towns or parish councils stated that crime was not a very big problem in their local area, however, speeding traffic has been raised as an issue by towns and parish councils.

Section 4. Appendix A

2018 Survey questionnaire



TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL SURVEY 2018

**Please select one answer for each question, unless asked to do otherwise.
Please ensure only one questionnaire is completed and returned for your
individual town/ parish council**

LOCAL POLICING

- 1 In the Council's opinion, how good a job do you think the police are doing in your town / parish?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor ☐ Very poor ☐ Don't know

- 2 In the Council's opinion, how would you rate the visibility of police in your town / parish?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor ☐ Very poor ☐ Don't know

How much does the Council agree or disagree with the following statements:

- 3 The police work well with the Council to identify and address local crime and disorder issues

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Don't know

- 4 The Council has confidence in the police to resolve crime and disorder issues raised within the local community

☐ Strongly agree ☐ Tend to agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Tend to disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Don't know

- 5 On average, how often does the Council contact the police to raise concerns about crime or incidents?

- ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Every 2 – 6 months
- ☐ Once a year ☐ Never ☐ Don't know

6 Overall, how would you rate the police response to crime and disorder issues or incidents Raised by the Council?

- ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor ☐ Very poor ☐ Don't know / NA

CONTACT AND ENGAGEMENT

7 In the Council's opinion, how easy is it to access your local policing teams? (This may be in any form – face to face, email, telephone etc)

- ☐ Very easy ☐ Fairly easy ☐ Fairly difficult
- ☐ Very difficult ☐ Don't know / N/A

8 In the Council's opinion, how easy and convenient is it to access relevant information for the local community from the police?

- ☐ Very easy ☐ Fairly easy ☐ Fairly difficult
- ☐ Very difficult ☐ Don't know / N/A

9 In the Council's opinion how would you rate the level of contact you have with the police?

- ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor ☐ Very poor ☐ Don't know / NA

10 How does the Council contact the police to discuss local issues, seek information or invite to meetings / community events? (Not including reporting crimes)

Please tick all that apply

- ☐ Phone (land line) ☐ Phone (mobile) ☐ Email
- ☐ Letter ☐ Social media ☐ In person (at a police station etc)
- ☐ Website ☐ Other ☐ Don't contact the police

11 How often does the Council contact the police to discuss local issues, seek information or invite to meetings / community events etc? (not including reporting crimes)

- ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Every 2 – 6 months
- ☐ Once a year ☐ Never ☐ Don't know

12 How would the Council rate the police response to requests for information / meetings etc?

- ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor ☐ Very Poor ☐ Don't know / N/A

13 How often do the police attend Council meetings or other community events in your town or parish area

- ☐ Weekly
 ☐ Monthly
 ☐ Every 2 – 6 months
☐ Once a year
 ☐ Never
 ☐ Don't know / not invited

14 How often do the police proactively contact the Council to raise awareness of local issues, share information etc?

- ☐ Weekly
 ☐ Monthly
 ☐ Every 2 – 6 months
☐ Once a year
 ☐ Never
 ☐ Don't know

15 Does the Council know the members of the police's local Safer Neighbourhood Team? These teams include Inspectors, Sergeants, PCs and PCSOs.

- ☐ Very familiar
 ☐ Somewhat familiar
 ☐ Not well known
☐ Totally unknown
 ☐ N/A

CRIME AND ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ISSUES

16 In the Council's opinion how much of a problem, if at all, would you say that crime and anti social behaviour is in your town / parish council area?

- ☐ Not a problem at all
 ☐ Not a very big problem
 ☐ Fairly big problem
☐ Very big problem
 ☐ Don't know

17 Which if any of the following issues would the Council say are currently a problem to people in the town / parish area?

Please tick one box in each row

	Not a problem at all	Not a very big problem	Fairly big problem	Very big problem	Don't know
Domestic burglary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Violent crime	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Anti social behaviour	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Online crime	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Vehicle crime	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Criminal damage / vandalism	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Crimes against businesses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	—	—	—	—	—
Rural crime	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Offences of a sexual nature	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Crimes committed against people due to their gender, age, race, ethnicity religion, disability or sexuality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Road safety	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (please specify in the box below)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other:

ABOUT YOUR COUNCIL

18 What is the name of your council (or councils if it is a combined parish council group)?

19 Please confirm which Borough / District / City / Unitary area your council is in

☐ Herefordshire	☐ Shropshire	☐ Telford & Wrekin
☐ Redditch	☐ Wyre Forest	☐ Worcester City
☐ Malvern Hills	☐ Wychavon	☐ Bromsgrove

20 Approximately how many people live in your town / parish area?

☐ Less than 500	☐ 501 - 1000	☐ 1001 - 5000
☐ 5001 – 10,000	☐ Over 10,000	

21 Please provide an appropriate, current email address the Commissioner or his staff may use to contact the Council when necessary. Your email will be stored in secure web-based systems. It would not be shared more widely with other third parties.

☐ Yes	☐ No	Would you like to receive the PCC's monthly newsletter to this email address?
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Thank you for taking the time to complete our survey. The survey results will be available to view online at www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk

EMAIL RETURNS: If you have chosen to complete a word version of the survey, email your completed survey to: opcc@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

POSTAL RETURNS: If you have chosen to print a copy of this survey to complete and return via Royal Mail (instead of completing online / emailing), post your completed survey to: John Campion, Police and Crime Commissioner, OPCC, West Mercia Police HQ, Worcester, WR3 8SP

CLOSING DATE: FRIDAY 6 JULY 2018
