

Draft Cleveland Police and Crime Plan 2024-2029

Public, Stakeholders, Partners and Organisations Consultation Results

Background

Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) are elected by the public to hold Chief Constables and the Force to account, effectively making the police answerable to the communities they serve.

A key role for PCCs is representing and engaging with local communities to help deliver their policing priorities. The PCC produces a Police and Crime Plan covering their term of office that sets out the priorities for local policing for the whole force area, and how they are going to be addressed.

This document sets out the PCC's objectives for policing and reducing crime and disorder in the area, how policing resources will be allocated, agreements for funding, and performance reporting requirements.

Delivery

On Monday 15th July 2024, the PCC launched a consultation on his draft Police and Crime Plan, setting out six clear objectives for his four-year term of office.

They are:

- **Reduce crime, antisocial behavior and harm**
- **Deliver more visible and effective policing**
- **Improve safety for women and girls**
- **Build trust and confidence in policing and the criminal justice system**
- **Ensure the right support for victims and vulnerable people**
- **Tackle offending and re-offending**

The aim of the consultation was to inform the final version of the Plan, which will be presented to the Cleveland Police and Crime Panel on Tuesday 12th November 2024.

Initially planned as a six-week consultation, there were five main strands to the engagement activity:

- **An online survey** - community members were asked to rank the PCC's main six priorities and provide feedback on how these objectives may be achieved.
- **Engagement stalls** – residents are asked to rank the PCC's six priorities at a range of community events and on stalls in local supermarkets.
- **Briefings and meetings** – the PCC presented his draft plan to a range of stakeholders within the criminal justice and community safety landscape.
- **Victim/survivor focus groups** – the PCC is required by law to engage with people affected by crime and focus groups were held to seek their views.

Draft Cleveland Police and Crime Plan 2024-2029

Public, Stakeholders, Partners and Organisations Consultation Results

- **Workshops with diverse groups** – the PCC visited young people, older people, people with learning disabilities and the hearing-impaired community, and ethnically diverse communities.

The consultation was promoted via the OPCC's social media channels and through press releases, together with raising awareness of the consultation with elected members, stakeholders, partners and organisations including the voluntary sector agencies.

In light of the violence and disorder that took place in Cleveland during the summer, the PCC and his team reprioritised engagement activity to focus on recovery in affected wards in Hartlepool and Middlesbrough.

As a result, the Police and Crime Plan Consultation was extended for a further four weeks until 30th September 2024.

See spreadsheet Appendix 1 detailing the OPCC's engagement activity during the consultation.

Results

Participation summary

1,523 people participated in the consultation for the draft Police and Crime Plan 2024-2029

This can be broken down as follows:

- **163 people from stakeholders, partners, and organisations** engaged with online stakeholder briefings and partnership meetings.
- **588 people** participated in the online survey which was open to the general public within Cleveland.
- **510 people** across Cleveland participated in the consultation on engagement stalls roadshows at family events, libraries, supermarkets, and shopping centres.
- **20 victims and survivors of crime** participated in the focus groups.
- **242 people from diverse groups** attended workshops on the Plan.

Demographics

Demographic information was only collected for the online survey, as specific questions could be posed about age, gender, ethnicity and other characteristics.

- Those who identify as female were more likely to complete the survey than males – 43.36% of respondents identified as male and 51.33% as female.
- There were a small number of respondents who preferred not disclose their gender and none of the respondents disclosed as non-binary.
- The majority of respondents (88.17%) identified as White British. There were a small number of responses from other white backgrounds (2.96%), South Asian (2.08%), mixed ethnic background (2), and a Black African or Black Caribbean background (3). The remaining respondents preferred not to disclose their ethnicity.
- Whilst responses were spread across all age groups three quarters of respondents (70.88%) were aged between 40 and 60+.
- 31.87% of respondents have been a victim of crime in the last 12 months. 64.62% have not been affected and 3.51% preferred not to disclose.
- Of those victims of crime, over two-thirds (69.9%) were victims of antisocial behaviour. Vehicle theft or damage was the next most common crime type (25.45%).

Draft Cleveland Police and Crime Plan 2024-2029

Public, Stakeholders, Partners and Organisations Consultation Results

Overall rankings of priorities

Combining quantitative feedback from the online and face-to-face ranking exercises, respondents ranked the PCC's Police and Crime Plan objectives as follows:

Ranking	Online
1	Reduce crime, antisocial behaviour and harm
2	Deliver more visible and effective policing
3	Improve safety for women and girls
4	Ensure the right support for victims and vulnerable people
5	Build trust and confidence in policing and the criminal justice system
6	Tackle offending and re-offending

To reflect the concerns and priorities of the public, the PCC's six objectives will be presented in his Police and Crime Plan as above. The activity in the Delivery Plan, which sits behind the Plan, will prioritise the issues of most importance to the public.

Qualitative feedback on the six priorities

Further feedback on the six priorities was collected via the online survey, during briefings delivered by the PCC and during discussions with a range of focus groups and workshops. They are summarised as below.

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Reduce crime, antisocial behaviour and harm

The overall main concerns raised under this priority are antisocial behaviour (particularly nuisance bikes and quads), drug-related crime, knife crime, shoplifting and aggressive begging.

Victims/survivors of crime felt that knife crime had become 'normalised' among young people, whether due to peer pressure or trying to feel safe. They felt there is a need for more school visits to provide education on knife crime, delivered by someone with lived experience.

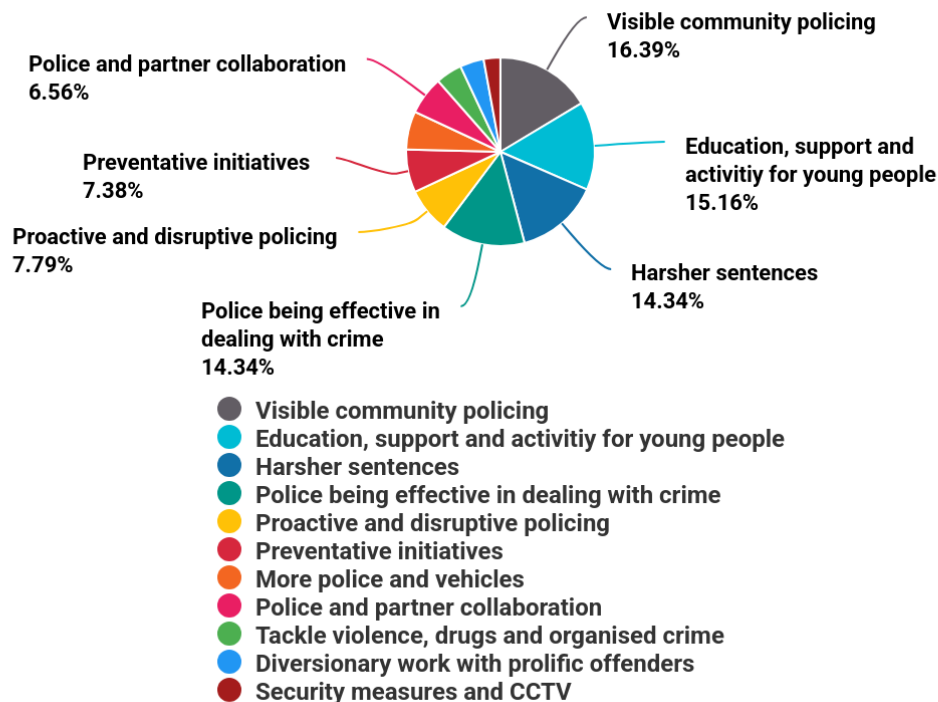
Diverse groups raised concerns about hate speech and hate crime, particularly around social media and how it can be used to cause fear, hate and division. Attendees felt there is a requirement for education programmes for anti-racism to reduce prejudice and discrimination in schools.

There was feedback across the consultation that long-term funding was required to invest in young people, as short-term and restrictive funding pots exclude some organisations from applying and hinder long-term behavioural change.

Draft Cleveland Police and Crime Plan 2024-2029

Public, Stakeholders, Partners and Organisations Consultation Results

Online respondents felt the way to reduce crime, antisocial behaviour and harm is: visible community policing, support for young people, harsher sentences and effective policing (positive outcomes, swift response times and thorough investigations).



Deliver more visible and effective policing

Across the entire consultation, there is a strong message that respondents want officers and PCSOs to be visible within their local area – and for there to be more officers available to Cleveland Police.

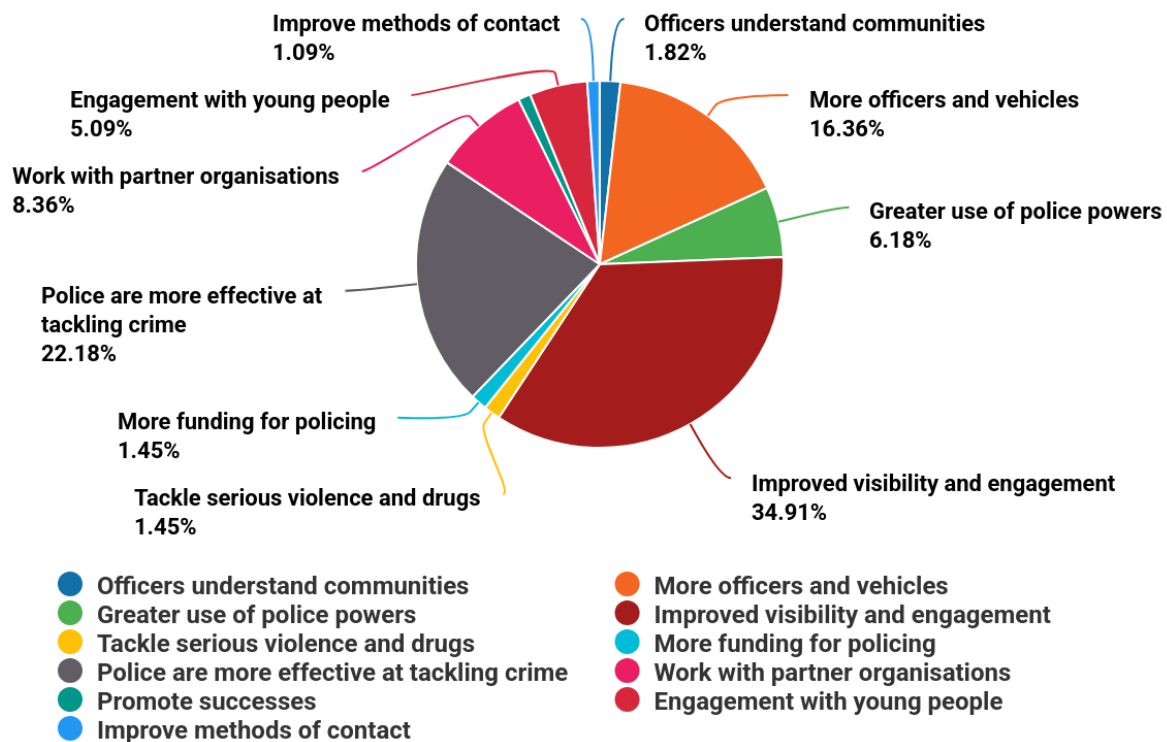
Victims/survivors supported having a named officer for each ward and encouraged partnership patrols between police and civic enforcement by the local authority.

Diverse groups felt there should be more contact options for police, rather than using telephone. Although older people preferred non-digital contact methods as they are not all digitally enabled and prefer printed resources.

Online respondents felt the way to deliver more visible and effective policing is: more police resources, improved police visibility and engagement, and effective policing (positive outcomes, swift response times and thorough investigations).

Draft Cleveland Police and Crime Plan 2024-2029

Public, Stakeholders, Partners and Organisations Consultation Results



Improve safety for women and girls

Victims/survivors felt strongly that the system is weighted towards perpetrators rather than victims. They felt much of the messaging around ‘staying safe’ puts the onus on women and girls, rather than on the perpetrators, which is hurtful and traumatic to those with lived experience.

Support for women and girls in the night-time economy via street angel programmes and Safe Havens was welcomed. Victims/survivors felt staff and security should be trained to call out suspicious behaviour.

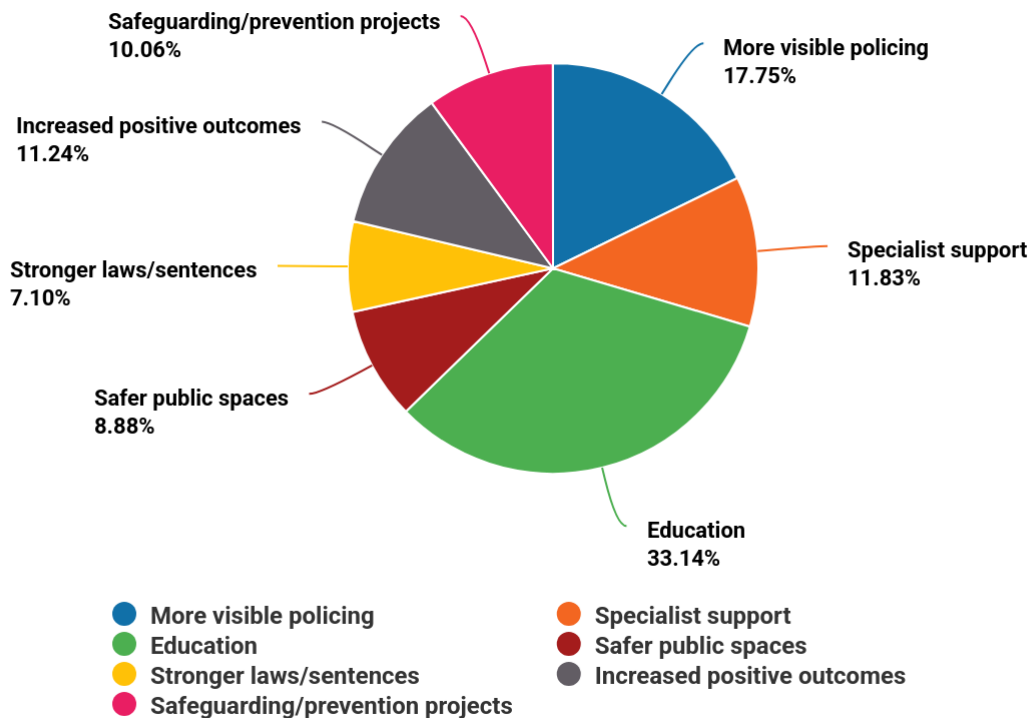
Education around misogyny was a key theme highlighted around this priority. There was a recognition across the board to educate boys and men about appropriate and healthy behaviours. It was noted that there is a lack of role models for young men and more work could be done around ‘upstander’ projects. .

BAME women in a focus group discussed cultural differences and language barriers on how not all words can be translated. There was recognition to translate term ‘misogyny’ and how it could be achieved to educate in other languages. There were suggestions to consider other premises/settings such as working with faith leaders for sharing information about the term misogyny.

Draft Cleveland Police and Crime Plan 2024-2029

Public, Stakeholders, Partners and Organisations Consultation Results

Online respondents felt the way to improve safety for women and girls is: education (particularly for young people), more visible policing and specialist support services.



Ensure the right support for victims and vulnerable people

Victims/survivors felt that mainstream services lack the specialist knowledge to deal with BAME victims/survivors, due to the lack of cultural awareness, including visa requirements or language barriers. They felt that interviews with police were arranged on the availability of the interpreters, rather than what suited the victim.

Ethnically diverse groups identified gaps for people with English as a second language on how to report incidents to 101 or 999. It was highlighted that the resources provided for interpretation and translation services to report crimes are not adequate.

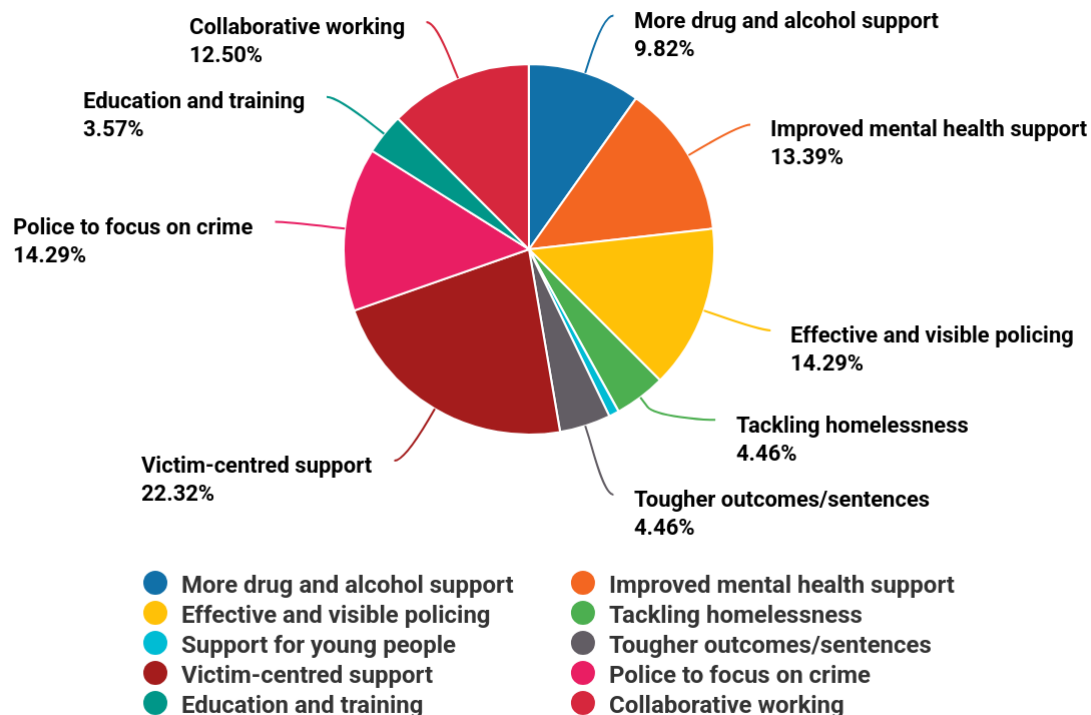
Young people felt strongly about good aftercare for victims of crime, including therapy and PTSD support. They supported welfare checks by community officers or having a hotline number for when they need help.

Online respondents felt strongly that issues such as mental health, alcohol/drug misuse, homelessness and victim support were important, but **should not be dealt with by police.** There was a clear message that police are not 'therapists' or 'social workers' and should focus on crime.

Draft Cleveland Police and Crime Plan 2024-2029

Public, Stakeholders, Partners and Organisations Consultation Results

The other key themes in the online responses on this priority were: ensuring there is victim-centred support, effective policing (positive outcomes, swift response times and thorough investigations) and improved mental health support.



Build trust and confidence in policing and the criminal justice system

Feedback from focus groups highlighted a common need for strengthening communication with the police when reporting crimes. Many people reported not receiving updates of their investigations - this reduces confidence in policing.

Victims/survivors felt this strongly, in particular around a lack of consistency in the police's response and poor compliance with the Victims' Code of Practice. Victims report feeling undervalued.

Diverse groups felt that there was a need for greater representation within Cleveland Police's workforce.

There is some distrust of police among asylum seekers and refugees, due to the experiences in their 'home countries', assuming police in the UK to be violent and oppressive also. This can lead to under reporting.

Concerns were raised about pressure on the police with early prison releases and concerns among groups about where former offenders will be housed.

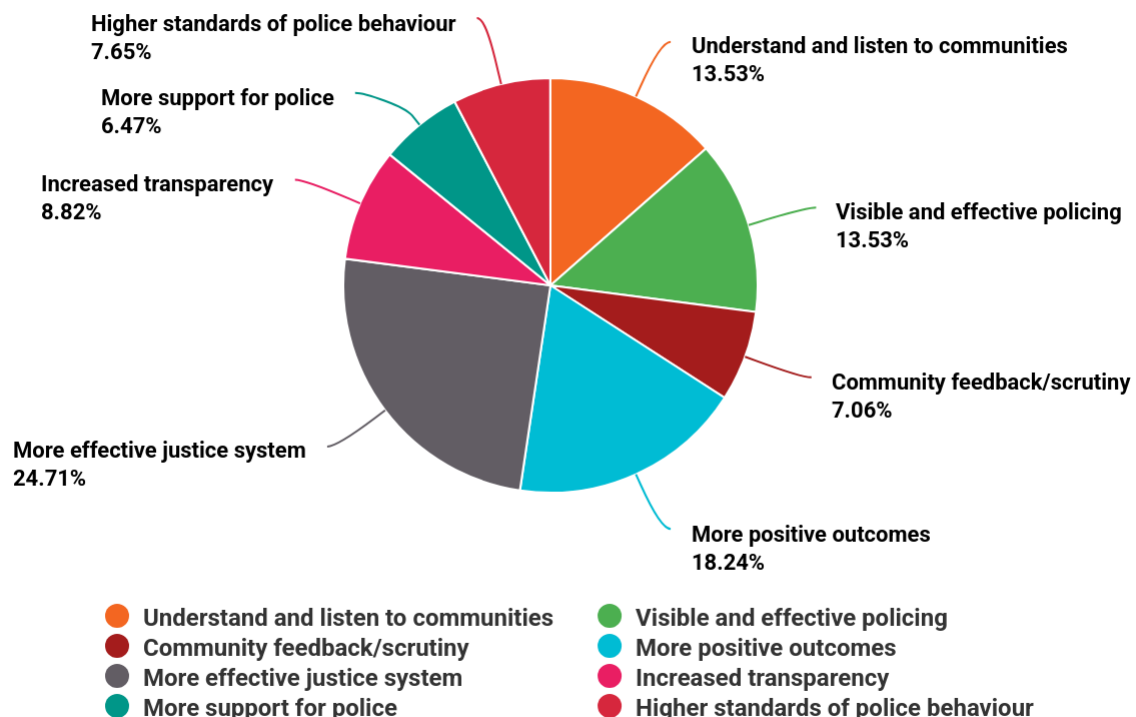
In terms of the criminal justice system – victims/survivors feel let down by poor sentencing by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). They find it upsetting to see tougher sentencing for crimes other than theirs.

Draft Cleveland Police and Crime Plan 2024-2029

Public, Stakeholders, Partners and Organisations Consultation Results

Waiting for court cases to be heard is another issue highlighted by victims/survivors. One person told us they have been waiting for over a year, which has had a huge impact on their mental wellbeing.

The online responses to this priority described the criminal justice system as 'broken', with many people angry about lenient sentencing. People also wanted to see more positive outcomes from police investigations and for agencies to understand and listen to their concerns.



Tackle offending and re-offending

Diverse groups felt that attempts to monitor prolific offenders, such as tagging and rehabilitation do not work. Harsher sentences are required and prisons should be tougher, as it is perceived that offenders treat visits 'like a hotel'.

Young people felt that offenders should be offered meaningful employment, such as work placements with a promise of secure employment if successfully completed. They also liked the idea of restorative justice, but not as a way to reduce a sentence term.

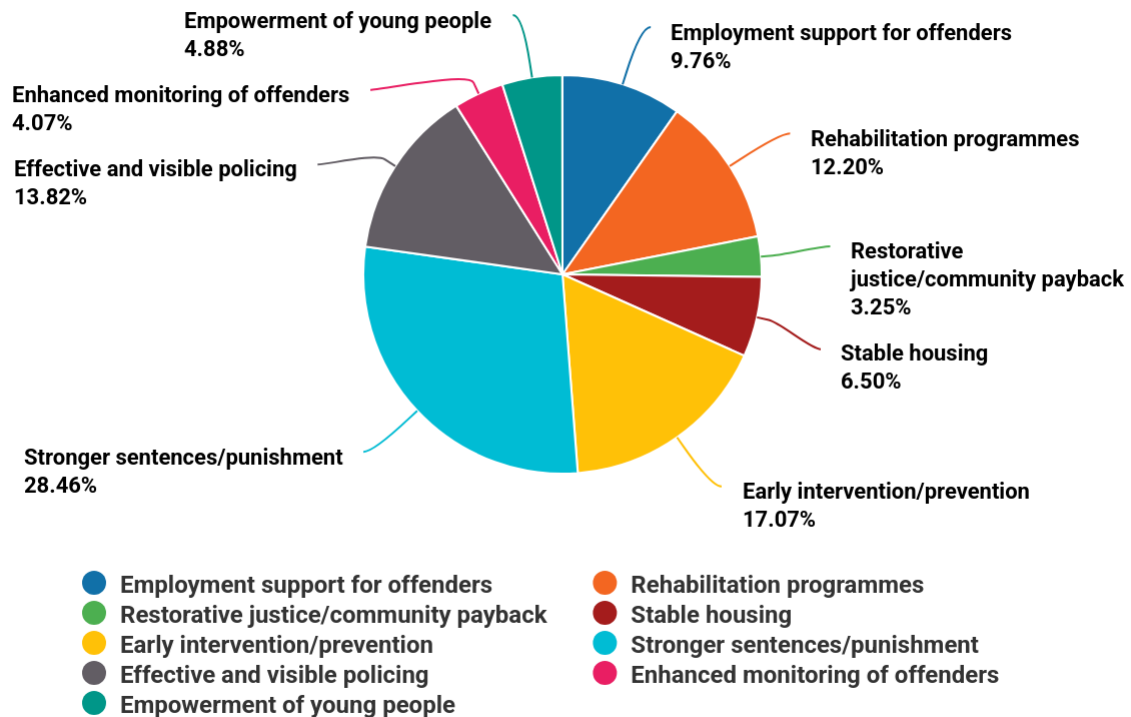
Employment was also highlighted by stakeholders and partners, who recognised that most people exiting prison require benefits and are made homeless. Local organisations said they need more time to put measures in place to support people released from prison.

Draft Cleveland Police and Crime Plan 2024-2029

Public, Stakeholders, Partners and Organisations Consultation Results

It was recognised by agencies that there is a lack of funding available to deal with Cleveland's high rates of re-offending. There was a request for the PCC to bring agencies together to look at solutions.

Online responses focused on a desire to see more punitive efforts for those who consistently re-offend, although this was balanced with a recognition that young people need education to prevent offending in the first place.



Draft Cleveland Police and Crime Plan 2024-2029

Public, Stakeholders, Partners and Organisations Consultation Results

Conclusion

The aim of the consultation was to gather rich, descriptive feedback on the PCC's six draft priorities. As such, greater efforts were made to conduct meaningful discussions involving the PCC, as well as traditional survey and engagement methods.

Several key themes were picked up throughout the consultation, the main one being support for more visible policing, with dedicated neighbourhood teams for each area who were given the time to effectively engage and build relationships with local communities. The common phrase was used in consultation was more 'bobbies on the beat'.

There was also a message that the public expected police to respond quickly to contact methods, investigate crime, tackle issues of public concern and bring perpetrators to justice. Many did not feel Cleveland Police were delivering effectively.

On every priority, respondents called for more police officers. Some respondents recognised the funding challenges and said the PCC should be calling for more funding for Cleveland.

There was support for increased operational policing activity, tougher sentences and justice being delivered in a visible way. Overall, people wanted police to focus on crime and not wider vulnerabilities like mental health, drugs/substance misuse or homelessness.

There is a frustration with the wider criminal justice system and the feeling that sentences are too lenient and not acting as a meaningful deterrent.

On a number of priorities, education and training was highlighted as a need – whether for young people, the wider public, the police or other agencies. This was identified around knife crime, violence against women and girls and in efforts to prevent offending.

Many respondents acknowledged that each priority entwined with others to contribute to overall improved 'community safety'. For example, participants recognised that reducing crime would improve confidence and trust in police.

Some participants did say they found ranking priorities difficult, as they felt all priorities are important. Others felt they needed more detail on the priorities.

The PCC principles were well received during the stakeholder briefings. There is a recognition and willingness to strengthening partnership working amongst the statutory partners and VCS.

In the additional engagement post-disorder, there was an increased request for a strategic group on hate crime to be chaired by the PCC. To look at ways of educating on anti-racism to dispel the misconceptions.