

The Highland Council
Communities and Partnerships Committee
9 February 2017

Agenda Item	18
Report No	CP 11/17

Public Performance Survey 2016: Responses to questions on Community Safety

Report by Acting Head of Policy

Summary

This report provides a summary of the responses from the Citizens' Panel on questions about attitudes to community safety in the 2016 Public Performance and Attitudes Survey.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Highland Council's 2016 Public Performance and Attitudes Survey was carried out in spring 2016. The findings of the survey were reported to the Highland Council on 27 October 2016, where it was agreed that further analysis would be reported to strategic committees and working group meetings.
- 1.2 There was 1084 responses received from the Citizens' Panel of just over 2340, providing a 46.3% response rate.
- 1.3 Results from the Public Performance and Attitudes Survey are weighted by age and gender. Weighting compensates for an under-representation in responses particularly from the 18-44 age group.
- 1.4 The number of responses along with the sampling method used provides validity in the results; a 95% confidence level is achieved with a confidence interval of + or – 3.0%. In other words where this level of responses was received, we can be 95% confidence that the responses we would get if we surveyed all adults in Highland would be within + or – 3.0% of the results from the survey
- 1.5 The annual survey is comprised of a set of questions, the core of which have been sustained over a ten year period. This year the survey was condensed to focus on key performance indicators. This was due to a consistent trend in the responses to questions in some areas. These questions will feature in future performance surveys to ensure past trends are maintained but will not recur every year. The 2016 Public Performance and Attitudes Survey did not ask a question about "precaution against crime" as it has in previous years, but will feature in future years when the full set of questions will be asked.
- 1.6 The survey included a number of attitudinal questions to gather views on:
 - Perception of safety in the local area
 - Community safety concerns;
 - Fear of crime;
- 1.7 The responses from these questions help support the Council's Programme "Highland First" and the Single Outcome Agreement.

2. Perception of safety in the local area

2.1 In response to the question, “How do you rate the safety of your area within 15 minutes’ walk of your home?” 96.7 % rated their local area as either “very” or “fairly safe”. This is comparable with the 2015 figure of 96.8% and is consistent with previous year’s results as highlighted in Table 1 below.

2.2 Table 1: Safety of your area within 15 minutes’ walk

Response	2016 %	2015 %	2014 %	2013 %	2012 %
A very safe area	60.0	60.4	61.7	58.5	53.3
A fairly safe area	36.7	36.4	35.0	39.3	42.8
Total safe	96.7	96.8	96.7	97.8	96.1
Rather unsafe area	2.6	2.2	2.0	1.7	2.9
A very unsafe area	0.6	0.4	1.2	0.1	0.7
Total unsafe	3.2	2.6	3.2	1.8	3.6

2.3 Looking at the different categories of respondents the only category where fewer than 50% rate their immediate area as “very safe” are people who are: council tenants (43%) and respondents who indicated that they are unemployed (44%).

2.4 There were no major differences between response by different respondent group.

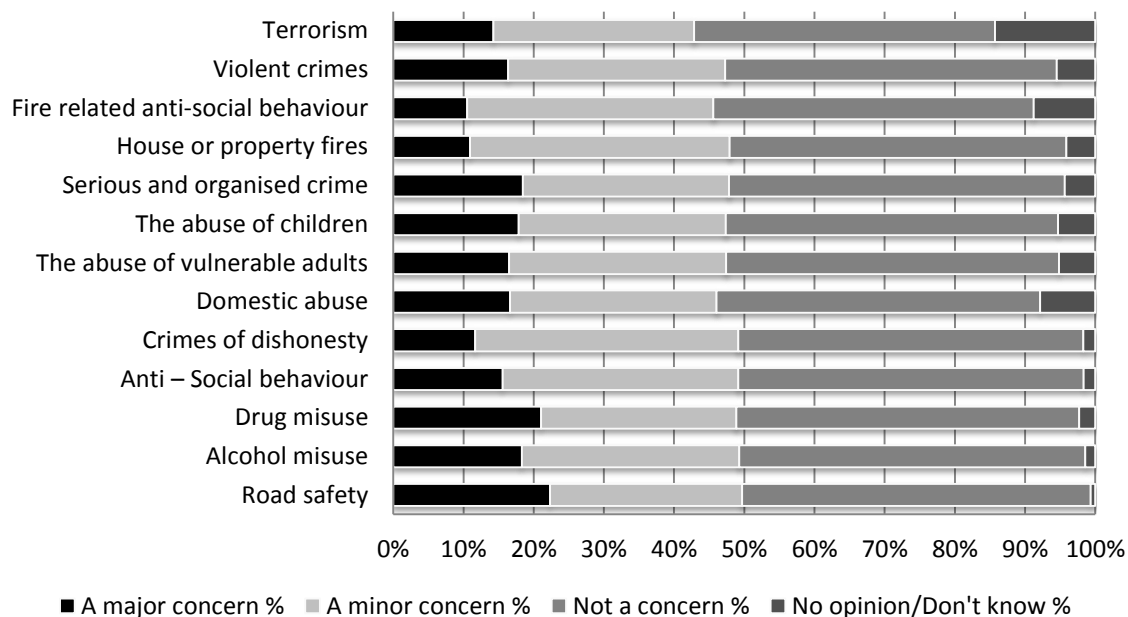
3. Community safety concerns

3.1 The survey asked respondents to indicate “How much of a concern” a number of community safety issues were in the area where they live. **The top three community safety concerns amongst respondents were:**

- Road safety, 36% indicated it was a major concern and 44% reporting a minor concern
- Alcohol abuse, 26% indicated it was a major concern and 44% responding saying it was a minor concern
- Drug misuse, 28% indicated it was a major concern and 37% responding saying it was a minor concern

These three areas are consistent with the top three concerns highlighted in the 2015 Public Performance and Attitudes Survey.

3.2 Figure 1: Community safety concerns



3.3 Figure 1 shows that more than 1 in 2 respondents are concerned about the following five areas: Road safety (80%), alcohol misuse (70%), drug misuse (65%), anti-social behaviour (60%) and crimes of dishonesty (59%).

3.4 Table 2: Community safety concerns

Response	A major concern %	A minor concern %	Not a concern %	No opinion/Don't know %
Road safety	36	44	19	1
Alcohol misuse	26	44	28	2
Drug misuse	28	37	32	3
Anti–Social behaviour	19	41	38	2
Crimes of dishonesty	14	45	39	2
Domestic abuse	17	30	45	8
The abuse of vulnerable adults	16	30	49	5
The abuse of children	17	28	50	5
Serious and organised crime	17	27	52	4
House or property fires	8	27	62	3
Fire related anti-social behaviour	6	20	69	5
Violent crimes	9	17	71	3
Terrorism	6	12	76	6

3.5 Table 3.5 above shows 1 in 3 people are concerned about a further five areas including: domestic abuse (47%); the abuse of vulnerable adults (46%); the abuse of children (45%); serious and organised crime (44%) and house or property fires (35%).

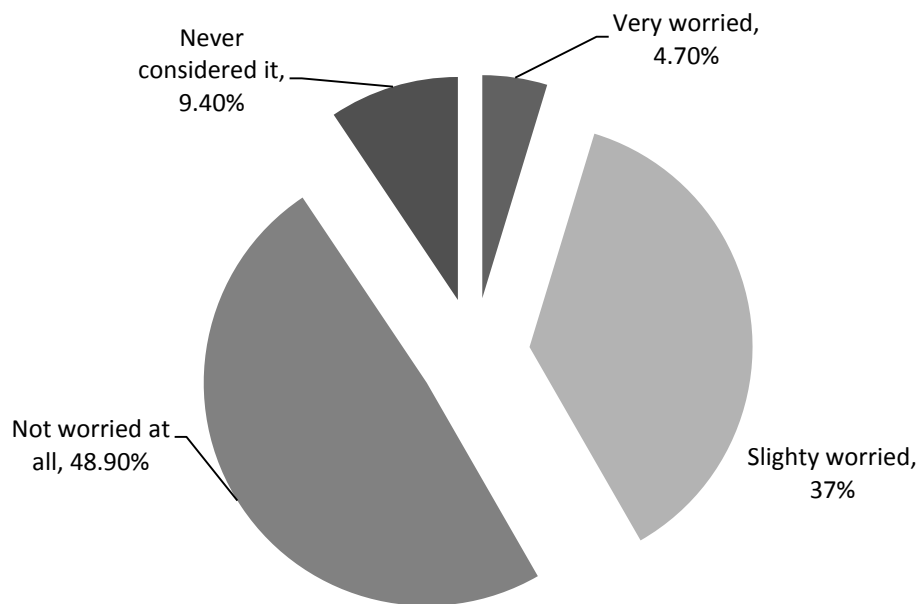
3.6 Different levels of concern were expressed by different respondent groups. Notably:

- There is no difference in the returns from female and male respondents when looking at domestic abuse concerns
- Amongst the categories of respondents with school aged children some 50% say they are concerned with the abuse of children
- Of respondents who are disabled some 49% say the abuse of vulnerable adults is a concern

4. Fear of Crime

Respondents were asked “How worried are you about becoming a victim of crime?” Figure 2 below shows the extent of their concern.

4.1 Figure 2: Extent to which respondents are worried about being a victim of crime



4.2 Results show that just over 4 in 10 respondents have some worries about being a victim of crime. Table 2 below shows that this compares with results over the last four years.

4.3 Table 2: Extent of worry about being a victim of crime (in general)

Response	2016 %	2015 %	2014 %	2013 %	2012 %
Very worried	4.7	3.9	3.1	2.5	3.5
Slightly worried	37.0	34.8	36.8	35.1	39.0
Not worried at all	48.9	47.8	48.3	49.8	45.6
Never considered it	9.4	13.5	11.8	12.7	11.9

- 4.4 The majority of the panel, 58%, indicated they have never considered being a victim of crime or were not worried at all (down from 61.3% in 2015 and 60.1). This compares to 37% that say they have some degree of worry (down from 38.7% in 2015), 4.7% responded saying they are very worried (up from 3.9% in 2015).
- 4.5 Different levels of concern were expressed by different respondent groups. Notably:
- 9% of respondents who highlighted that they had a disability indicated that they were very worried about being a victim of crime.

5. Reducing drug and alcohol related harm in communities

- 5.1 Respondents were asked “What do you think would help most to reduce drug and alcohol related harm in your community”. Respondents were asked to “tick all that apply” from a list of four proposals.

- 5.2 Table 3: Reducing drug and alcohol related harm in communities

Response	2016 %	2015 %
People with problems receiving more help	61	63
More support for families affected by drug and alcohol problems	60	59
Opportunities and activities to encourage people to make healthier choices	57	62
Drug and alcohol are less available	41	43

- 5.3 The most commonly selected option (61%) was for “people with problems receiving more help” This was consistent with 2015 (63%). The second most commonly selected option was (60%) “More support for families affected by drug and alcohol problems. “Less people in 2016 (57%) thought that “Opportunities and activities to encourage people to make healthier choices” was important to reduce drug and alcohol related harm in communities that they did in 2015 (62%).
- 5.4 There were no major differences in responses by different respondent groups.

6. Implications

- 6.1 **Resource:** There are no new financial implications as a result of this report.
- 6.2 **Legal, Equalities and Risk:** This report identifies equalities issues that highlight the requirement to consider the needs of different groups when targeting crime prevention activities.
- 6.3 **Climate Change/Carbon Clever:** There are no climate change/Carbon Clever implications as a result of this report.
- 6.4 **Gaelic:** There are no Gaelic implications.
- 6.5 **Rural:** Work is being conducted to look into the feasibility of conducting further analysis of the Public Performance and Attitudes Survey to consider differences between respondents from rural and urban areas.

7. Recommendation

Members are asked to note that:

- The survey shows 96.7% of respondents rated areas within 15 minutes' walk of their home as either "very" or "fairly safe".
- The top concerns amongst respondents are road safety, alcohol abuse, drug misuse and antisocial behaviour.
- This feedback from the public is one source of evidence in agreeing and reviewing our community safety priorities with partners.

Designation: Acting Head of Policy

Date: 25/01/2017

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Background Papers: [Results from the Citizens' Panel 2016 Performance and Attitudes Survey, Highland Council, 27/10/16](#)