

Precept Consultation Results 2024/2025

Background

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act states that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) must make arrangements for obtaining the views of the people in that police area, and the relevant ratepayers' representatives, on their proposals for expenditure in that financial year.

Cleveland OPCC undertook a public consultation exercise from 15 November 2023 to 22 January 2024, focusing on a number of themes in relation to police funding:

- How much additional funding people would be prepared to pay towards their police precept
- How they would like an increased investment in policing used.

The consultation included an online survey, which was open from which was promoted through a number of channels including:

- OPCC social media
- Elected members across all four local authorities
- Voluntary Development Agencies
- Engagement with partner organisations, including:
 - Youth services
 - Groups working with ethnically diverse communities
 - Organisations for disabled people/people with learning difficulties

OPCC staff also held a number of face to face engagement stalls in community locations using a counter based methodology where members of the public could place a counter to indicate what, if any, level of increased precept they would be willing to support. Stalls took place at the following locations:

- Middlesbrough – Hill Street Centre
- Middlesbrough – Town Hall
- Hartlepool – Middleton Grange Shopping Centre
- Stockton – Wellington Square
- Middlesbrough – Parkway Centre, Coulby Newham
- Redcar and Cleveland – ASDA, Skelton
- Stockton – Teesside Park

Demographics

In total 861 people gave their views in the consultation. The OPCC team engaged with 207 people in face-to-face engagements, with 654 people completing the online survey.

The level of response varied across the four local policing areas, with considerably fewer respondents from the Hartlepool area, as follows:

- Hartlepool responses – 12.8%
- Middlesbrough responses – 27.9%
- Redcar and Cleveland responses – 29.8%

- Stockton-on-Tees responses – 29.2%


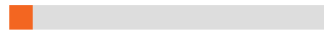
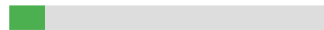





The only demographic information collected from the counter consultation was Local Policing Area. The online/paper survey collected additional demographics around gender, disability, age and race.

Of those who completed the online survey 58.64% identified as male and 35.49% identified as female. 5.71% (37 participants) chose not to disclose their gender and one participant identified as non-binary.

14.59% of participants considered themselves to have a disability.

The largest age group within respondents was 55-64 (28%), with the lowest number of responses from the 18-24 age group (2%).

A full age breakdown of respondents is as below:

Answer Choices	Responses		
18-24		2.00%	13
25-34		7.23%	47
35-44		11.38%	74
45-54		14.77%	96
55-64		28.00%	182
65-74		21.08%	137
75+		8.15%	53
Prefer not to say		7.38%	48

The majority of respondents (89.3%) identified as White British. There were a very small number of responses from people who identified as Asian, Black, Mixed Heritage or Other Ethnic Group, but the majority of respondents who did not identify as White British chose not to disclose their race.

Views on Funding

How much more would you be willing to pay towards local policing?

Across the whole consultation, covering both the survey and the counter exercise, **54.3% of respondents indicated that they would be willing to pay more Council Tax towards the cost of local policing.**

However, the results differed between the face to face counter consultation and the online surveys. 49.4% of respondents to the survey indicated that they would be willing to pay more towards their local policing, whereas 72.9% of those who took part in the counter consultation stated that they would be willing to increase police precept levels.

Respondents were asked how much more they would be willing to pay every month towards their local policing. To help inform communities about the impact of a proposed precept increase on police officer numbers, these were provided alongside the options below:

- No more than I pay now.
- An increase of £1 per month (4.1% increase). This would raise around £1.9 million, which would be invested in 40 additional police officers.
- An increase of £1.50 per month (6.2% increase). This would raise around £2.9 million, which would be invested in 60 additional police officers.
- An increase of £2 per month (8.3% increase). This would raise around £3.9 million, which would be invested in 80 additional police officers.
- An increase of £2.50 per month (10.3% increase). This would raise around £4.9 million, which would be invested in 100 additional police officers.

Across the whole consultation, one in five respondents (20%) chose the highest option of paying an additional £2.50 extra per month, however this differed depending on whether this was online (17.8%) or face-to-face (28.5%).

When comparing results between the different Local Policing Areas, Hartlepool had the highest appetite for higher funding levels, with 29.7% of respondents choosing the £30 per year option. However it is worth noting that Hartlepool also had the highest level of support for no increase (50.4%). Middlesbrough had the lowest support for higher funding levels with only 17.4% choosing the £30 option. Middlesbrough also had significantly more responses in the lowest level of increased funding (£1) than other areas (30.7%).

The table below shows the full range of answers:

	£0	£1	£1.50	£2	£2.50
All	45.7%	19.6%	7%	7%	20.40%
Survey only	51.6%	16.8%	6.2%	7.3%	17.8%
Counters only	27.0%	28.5%	9.66%	6.2%	28.5%
Hartlepool	50.4%	7.2%	5.4%	7.2%	29.7%
Middlesbrough	36.9%	30.7%	7.4%	7.4%	17.4%
Redcar & Cleveland	47.8%	14.7%	8.9%	6.6%	21.7%
Stockton	50%	19.4%	5.5%	7.14%	17.8%

Views on how additional funding should be spent

Residents were then asked how they would like any additional investment – resulting in additional police officers – to be utilised in tackling crime and community safety issues in Cleveland.

They were asked to select **one** of the below concerns as the **primary issue** they want to see addressed.

828 people completed this element of the consultation, a smaller number than the overall response of 861.

It is likely that this can be attributed to that fact that some people who engaged with OPCC staff face-to-face did not wish to take part in this element of the consultation – after giving their initial view on the proposed increase. Almost all of the online survey respondents completed this element of the consultation.

With 43.2% of the overall vote, **antisocial behaviour** was clearly identified as the key concern affecting residents in Cleveland – a largely consistent result across each of Cleveland’s local authority areas.

The next most common response was in relation to drug-related crime, which accounted for a 14.6% of all responses and then followed by residential burglary (10.9%).

Concern	All responses	Hartlepool	Middlesbrough	Redcar and Cleveland	Stockton
Violence	6.1%	9.6%	7.5%	1.93%	7.9%
Antisocial behaviour	43.2%	47.3%	44.6%	40.6%	43%
Drug-related crime	14.6%	16.1%	12.8%	16.2%	13.9%
Road-related crime)	4.7%	3.2%	3.09%	3.8%	7.5%
Residential burglary	10.9%	4.3%	10.1%	12.7%	12.3%
Shoplifting	3.14%	2.1%	3.5%	3.8%	2.3%
Better support for victims of crime	1.9%	2.1%	2.6%	2.3%	0.7%
Domestic abuse	2.17%	2.1%	3.5%	1.5%	1.5%
Sexual abuse	1.9%	1.07%	2.2%	2.3%	1.5%
Vehicle theft/damage	1.8%	1.07%	1.3%	3.8%	0.3%
Hate crime	0.48%	1.07%	0%	0.7%	0.3%
Other	8.81%	9.6%	8.4%	9.6%	7.9%

Hate crime was the least common answer from respondents with just four people across the 828 respondents (0.48%) selecting this as their primary concern.

Some residents felt that there were other issues not offered as an option that wanted to see addressed by police officers. These were collected and are shown in the table below:

Hartlepool	Middlesbrough	Redcar and Cleveland	Stockton
Better responses to crime	Modern day slavery	More visible policing in East Cleveland	Corruption in the police
More resources – equally split between all four boroughs	Police visibility	Road safety	Improved productivity
Tackling prolific offenders	Violence	Motorbike theft	More visible policing
Stalking	Crime gangs/organised crime	Inconsiderate parking	Low-level crime
All options (respondent could not select just one)	Inconsiderate parking	Proactive, community policing	Remove PCC role
	Begging	Better police response to crime	Violence against women and girls (VAWG)
	Better police response to crime	Commercial property theft/damage	Better efficiency with current resource level
	All options (respondent could not select just one)	Shoplifting	Better anti-corruption measures
		Reduce cost of OPCC	Each ward to have one dedicated police officer
		All options (respondent could not select just one)	All options (respondent could not select just one)