



Increasing Public Confidence: The Role of the Police Support Volunteer (PSV)

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Incorporating research conducted by Mr Simon Merry, Dorset Police, with the Universities of Liverpool and Birmingham



Public Confidence

- From 5th March 2009 - one single measure:

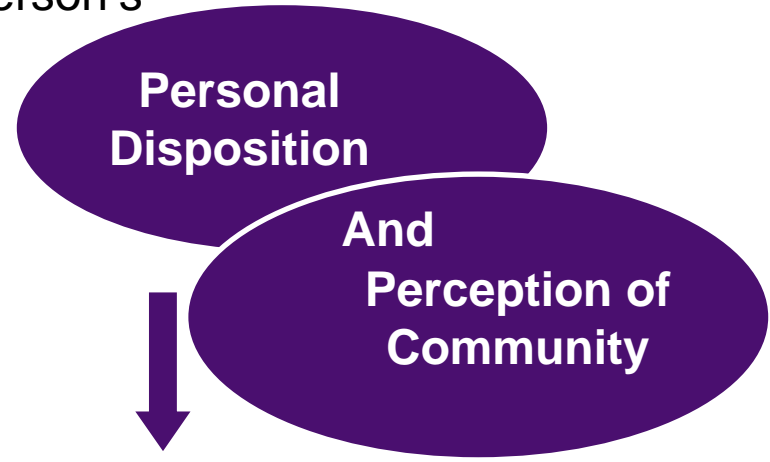
The percentage of people who agree that the police and local council are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in their area



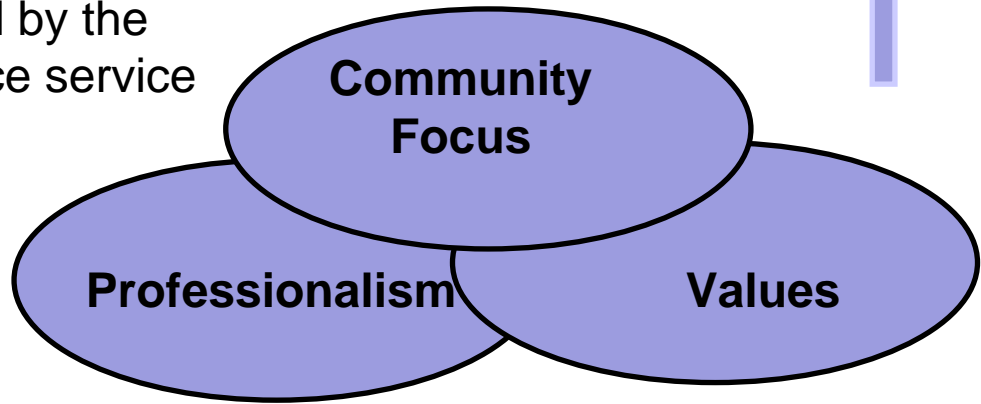
What determines Confidence?

Trust and Confidence in the service is determined by a person's

And these attributes are influenced by the extent of internal



it is influenced by the quality of police service



Personal disposition

- Personal characteristics and backgrounds are associated with common attitudes
- Age and gender differences
 - Women more likely to be more confident
 - Confidence rises with age
 - Young are least confident

BUT

- Traits, moods & emotions make people think and act as individuals, so
 - Focusing on the individual is the most reliable way of meeting needs and expectations



Personal disposition

- PSVs can help:
 - Empathize with individual concerns
 - Link with the community
 - Capable of becoming an advocate of the police service
 - More representative of the community



●●● Perceptions of community

- Trust and confidence is associated with feeling safe, perception of low disorder and falling crime
 - across gender and age differences

●●● Perceptions of community

- Influenced by what is seen, read and heard

➤ direct and indirect experiences



●●● Perceptions of community

- Evidence suggests volunteering helps create cohesive communities
- PSVs are from and work within their local communities
- PSVs can provide a valuable perspective on community feelings



Quality of Police Service

- Both trust and confidence are influenced by

The quality of police service

- Community focus
- Professionalism
- Values



Quality of Police Service

- Community Focus:
 - Community focus and community relations are the most significant contributors to confidence
 - Police should represent, reflect and be part of the community



Quality of Police Service

- PSVs are visible evidence of community engagement
- PSVs are more representative of the community
- PSVs provide direct feedback from communities

***“Volunteers have improved our links with the local community, expanded the skills of the workforce and increased diversity of our force.”
(Norfolk Constabulary)***



Quality of Police Service

- Professionalism:
 - Quality of Service
 - Values driven
 - Effective response

***“We use volunteers in support of problem solving initiatives where, without their extra capacity, we could not deliver the service we aspire to.”
(Leicestershire Constabulary)***



Quality of Police Service

- PSVs can help improve quality by:
 - Commitment
 - Skill levels
 - Roles they perform
 - Demonstrating our values

“Volunteers are being used to provide a simple front counter service, allowing police stations and offices normally closed to the public to be open, and those which are not 24 hours to have extended opening hours.”

(Essex Police)



Quality of Police Service

- Values:
 - Shared values enable the community to have confidence in how the Service will behave in specific circumstances:
 - Integrity
 - Professionalism
 - Fairness
 - Respect
 - Accountability
 - Procedural fairness



Quality of Police Service

- PSVs are part of, can influence and can give evidence of values driven policing

“Volunteers have provided a different perspective to service delivery, new and different links with the community, improved resilience with core services.”

(Wiltshire Constabulary)

●●● Staff Confidence



The quality of delivery is, in turn, influenced by the extent of internal staff and volunteer confidence



Staff Confidence

- When staff have trust and confidence in their organisation, they are willing to exert effort on behalf of that organisation
- Research suggests this is linked to better performance
- Subsequently more likely to reinforce confidence in the organisation
 - ‘virtuous circle’



Staff Confidence

Impacting factors:

- *Happy to come to work
- *Treated with dignity
- *Kept informed
- *Skills suited to role
- *Respected

- *Feel safe when not at work
- *Confidence in appraisal system
- *Line Manager is open
- *Right uniform/clothing
- *Professional physical environment



This develops from

CULTURE

LEADERSHIP





Culture

- Role of volunteer in changing culture:
 - Advocates for the Community in the Police Service
 - Advocates for the Police Service in the Community
 - Challenges the Police Service
 - Symbol of community engagement
 - Demonstrate efficacy of different ways of thinking

***“Volunteers have brought greater community involvement in policing, more integration with communities and development of a greater understanding of the challenges faced.”
(Merseyside Police)***

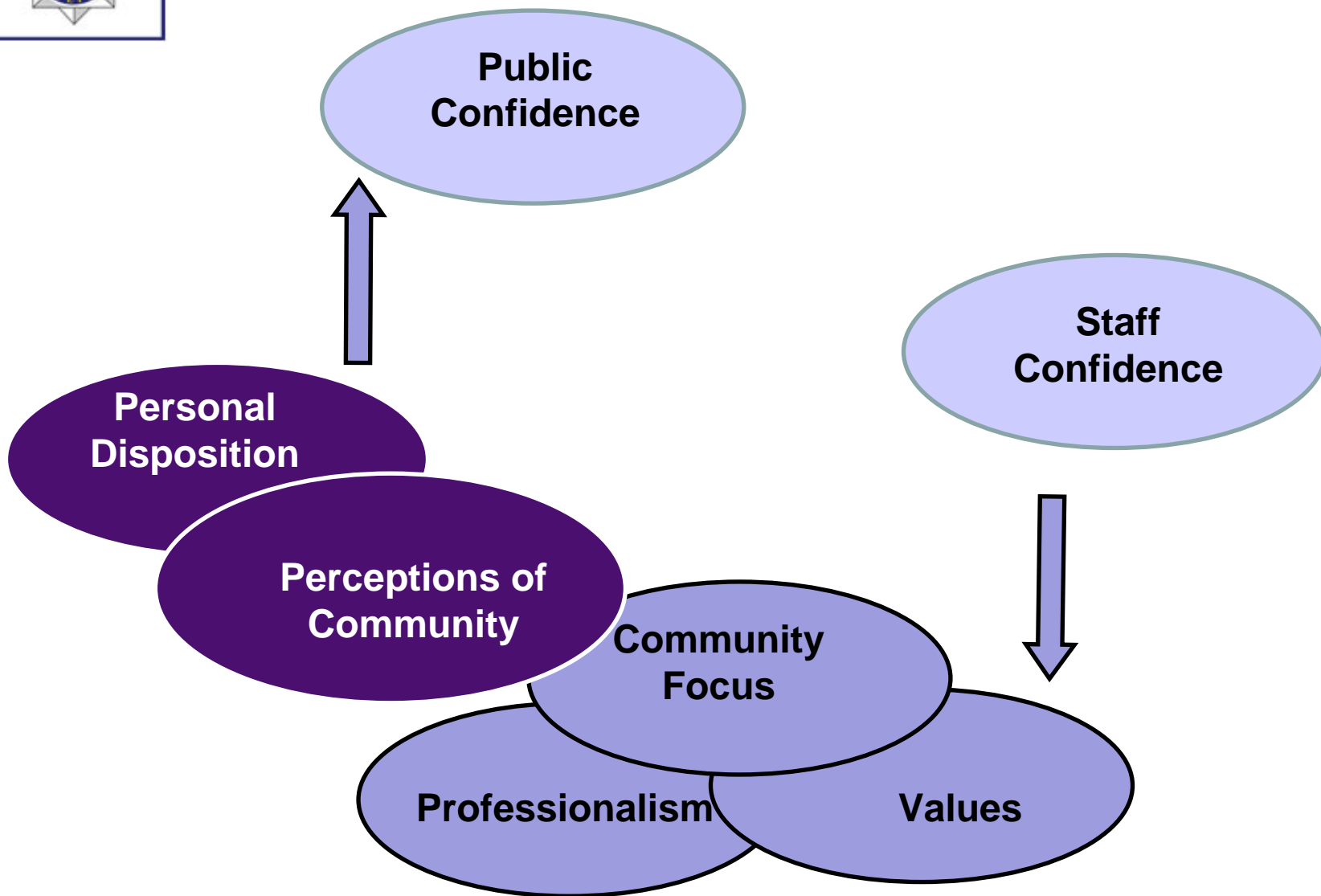


Leadership

- Chief Officer support
- National Volunteer Programme
- Shared and non-negotiable values
- Involvement of PSVs at all levels



So...





How are we taking this forward?

- ACPO Lead and Programme Board, Chief Officer teams, Volunteer Coordinators
- PSV Business Plan



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