



**REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR MALCOLM DOHERTY
 CHAIR OF LANCASHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY**

POLICING IN BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN

Councillor Malcolm Doherty, Chairman of Lancashire Police Authority is pleased to provide a report for Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council with regard to Police performance in the Borough. The partnership approach in Blackburn with Darwen to tackling community safety issues is very strong and there are effective working relationships between the Local Authority and the Police. These are seen both at neighbourhood level in individual areas and in the relationships between the Divisional Commander and Senior officers within the Council. The Authority is delighted to congratulate the Council on its recent award as Council of the Year. It notes with pleasure that the Audit Commission concluded that crime was reducing and that the Council were making the area safer. This is clearly supported by the confidence shown by communities

CRIME

Blackburn with Darwen lies within the Lancashire Constabulary Eastern Division. Reduction and detection of crime is the foremost priority for the division and detailed performance information is available for an aggregated total of all crimes as well as individual crime categories such as criminal damage.

Crime in the borough has reduced consistently in recent years and the size of the reduction together with the number of detected crimes puts the town in a very strong position when comparisons are made with crime performance in other areas both within Lancashire and nationally.

For the most recent reporting period of quarter 4 (January March 2011) Blackburn with Darwen has continued to demonstrate strong performance with key achievements as follows:

- All Crime has reduced by 12.7%. This equates to 382 less victims of crime.
- Serious Acquisitive Crime (SAC) has reduced by 18.5%. This equates to 79 less victims of crime. (Serious Acquisitive Crime is a combined measure of burglary, vehicle crime, and robbery)
- Violent Crime has reduced by 3%. This equates to 20 less victims of crime.
- Criminal Damage has reduced by 21.9%. This equates to 138 less victims of crime.

In addition a key measure of how effective the police are in tackling crime is how many offences are detected – in other words what proportion of crimes result in an offender being brought to justice. In Blackburn with Darwen the detection rate for all crime in quarter 4 is 33.3% – which is well above average for police areas. Table 1 below summarises the above highlights:

Crime Type	Jan – March 2010	Jan – March 2011	Change
All Crime	3003	2621	-12.7%
SAC	427	348	-18.5%

Violent Crime	659	639	-3%
Damage	630	492	-21.9%

Table 1: Summary of BwD Crime Performance – Quarter 4

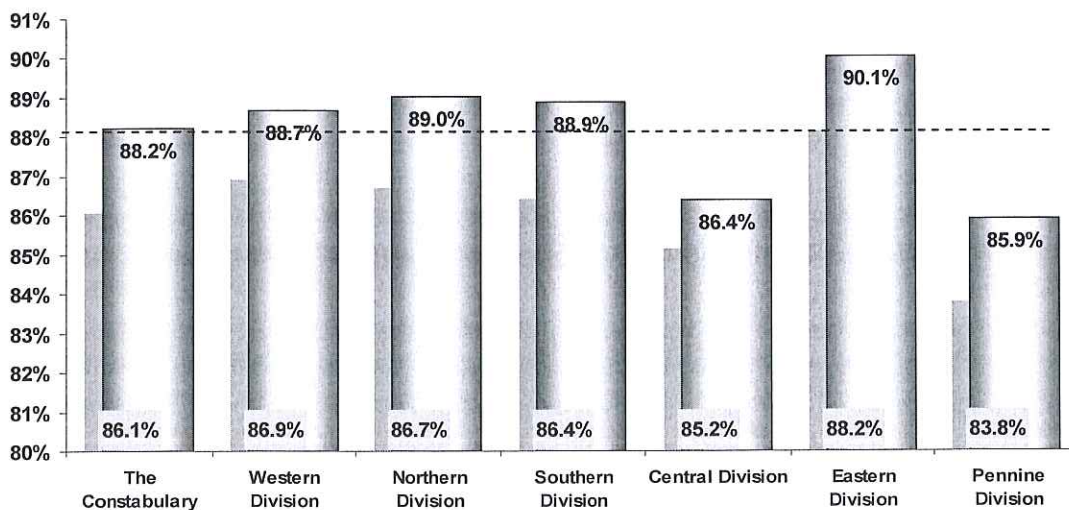
These reductions for quarter 4 are reflected in most categories for the whole reporting year (April 2010 – March 2011). The main highlights for the year are:

- All Crime reduced by 4.7%. This equates to 567 less victims of crime.
- Violent Crime reduced by 5.4%. This equates to 147 less victims of crime.
- Criminal Damage reduced by 22.8%. This equates to 665 less victims of crime.

Over the year main performance challenge has been in relation to acquisitive crime – something often found in challenging economic circumstances. Serious Acquisitive Crime increased over the year by 9.1% mainly due to a challenging quarter 3 but impressive performance in quarter 4 (an 18.5% reduction as shown above) served to mitigate the overall increase across the year and put the division in a favourable position moving further ahead into 2011.

CONFIDENCE & SATISFACTION

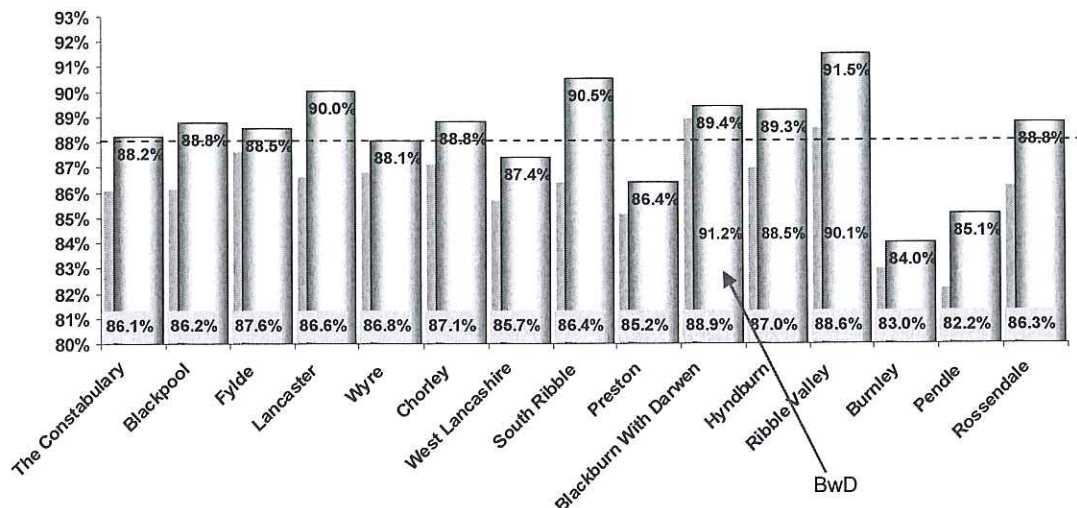
Levels of public confidence in the police and the satisfaction of people who interact with police are important measures of the quality of policing service Lancashire Constabulary provides. Eastern Division has a particularly proud record and public confidence in policing in the division has recently moved from being among the best, to the very best in the county. Table 2 below uses the latest data available to show how confident people are in Lancashire Constabulary as a whole. Blackburn with Darwen is covered by Eastern Division:



(Confidence File - Confidence Measures - Period Comparisons – BCUs Feb11)

Table 2: Public Confidence in Lancashire Constabulary as a whole

The next table (table 3) below shows how confident people are in different boroughs across the county area:



(Confidence File - Confidence Measures - Period Comparisons – CDRPs Feb 11)

Table 3: Public Confidence in Lancashire – breakdown by boroughs

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The borough continues to show strong performance in tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB). Eastern Division recognises the damaging impact ASB can have on neighbourhoods and police have been at the forefront of implanting minimum standards for dealing with reports of ASB. The previous report included a chart showing a reduction in ASB in every month from April to January. The strong performance has continued with more reductions in February and March:

- ASB reduced every single month in Blackburn with Darwen
- Over the whole year, total ASB in BwD reduced by 10.7% - or 1974 less victims of ASB

Table 4 below shows ASB performance for each month of the reporting year April 2010 – March 2011:

MONTH	Blackburn CSP			
	This Year	Last Year	Diff	% Change
April	1,604	1,781	- 177	-9.9%
May	1,666	1,696	- 30	-1.8%
June	1,707	1,710	- 3	-0.2%
July	1,477	1,660	- 183	-11.0%
August	1,618	1,937	- 319	-16.5%
September	1,356	1,582	- 226	-14.3%
October	1,414	1,659	- 245	-14.8%
November	1,201	1,334	- 133	-10.0%
December	1,037	1,371	- 334	-24.4%
January	1,076	1,256	- 180	-14.3%
February	1,049	1,126	- 77	-6.8%
March	1,248	1,315	- 67	-5.1%
YTD	16,453	18,427	- 1,974	-10.7%

Table 4: Anti Social Behaviour – Monthly breakdown for BwD April 2010 – March 2011

OTHER POLICING ISSUES

In addition to the issues above, Blackburn with Darwen also continues to deal with other significant issues such as Premiership football matches and other large events. On the 2nd April the division led the policing response to a nationally supported march and assembly in Blackburn by the English Defence League. This was the largest policing operation ever run by Lancashire

Constabulary, underpinned by a comprehensive Consequence Management operation that began in February.

The Consequence Management approach to the event was based on a strong partnership between the police and the local authority in Blackburn with Darwen together with other key stakeholders. Foremost was the need to protect communities and establish effective tension monitoring and community engagement processes. This approach underpinned the operational plan to deal with the event itself on 2 April – which passed mostly without incident and demonstrated the strength of partnership working and tolerance within communities in the borough.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

There will be challenges to come for policing in Blackburn with Darwen and in common with the main issues presented in the last report probably the most significant being to maintain outstanding performance while dealing with contracting resources and potential reductions in staff.

Crime tends to be closely correlated to wider social factors – particularly recession and economic hardship. Eastern Division will have to manage difficult choices about what areas of work to prioritise and it will do this by using the experience of its staff and by working with partners in the borough to provide a policing service that is responsive and meets the needs of local people.

We are conscious of the difficult financial choices faced by Blackburn with Darwen and other partners and will continue to support the strong emphasis on neighbourhood policing in the Borough.

Cllr Malcolm T Doherty
Chairman
Lancashire Police Authority