Community Scrutiny Panel

Title: Quality of Service Issues – Police

Date: 24 July 2025
Agenda Item No: 09b
Originating Officer: Lisa Hodgson
CC:

Executive Summary:
The OPFCC receives a number of telephone calls, letters and emails from members of the public who wish to raise issues or dissatisfaction about some element of the policing service they have experienced, or concerns they have within the community. These are regarded as Quality of Service Issues (QSI). This report focuses on QSIs received between 01/01/2025 – 30/06/2025, in this period a total of 514 were received, this is a 38% increase based on the same time period in 2024.

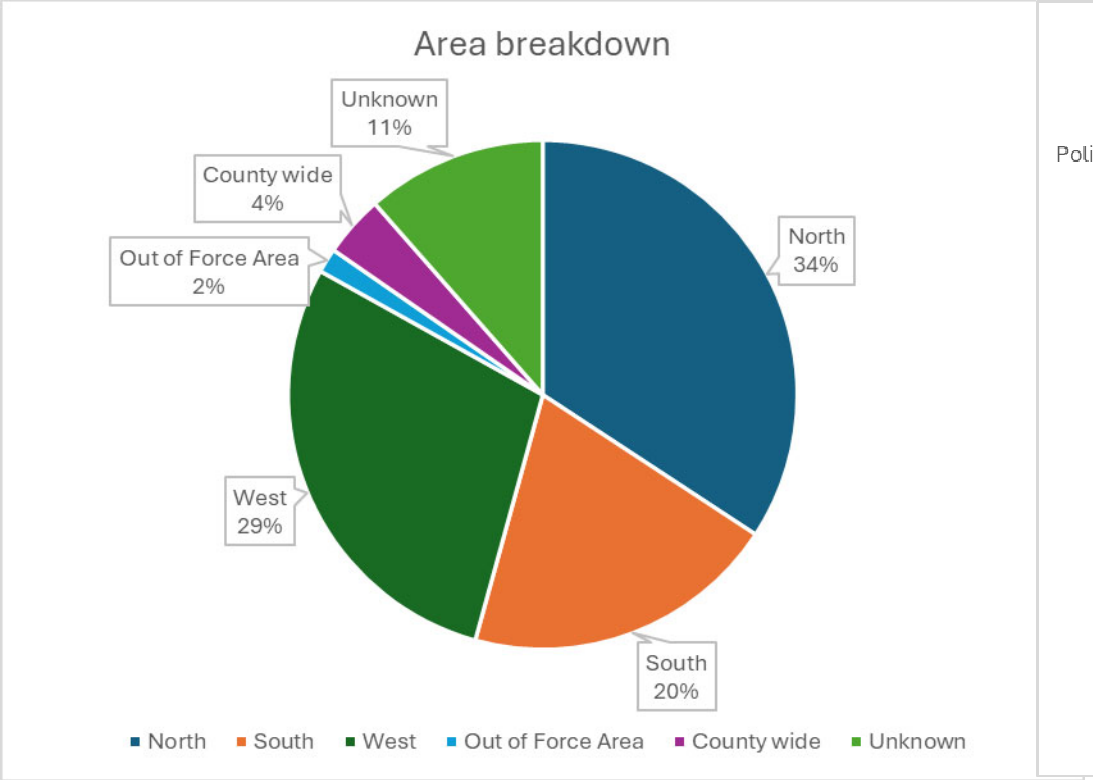
Recommendation:
That the members of the panel note the report.

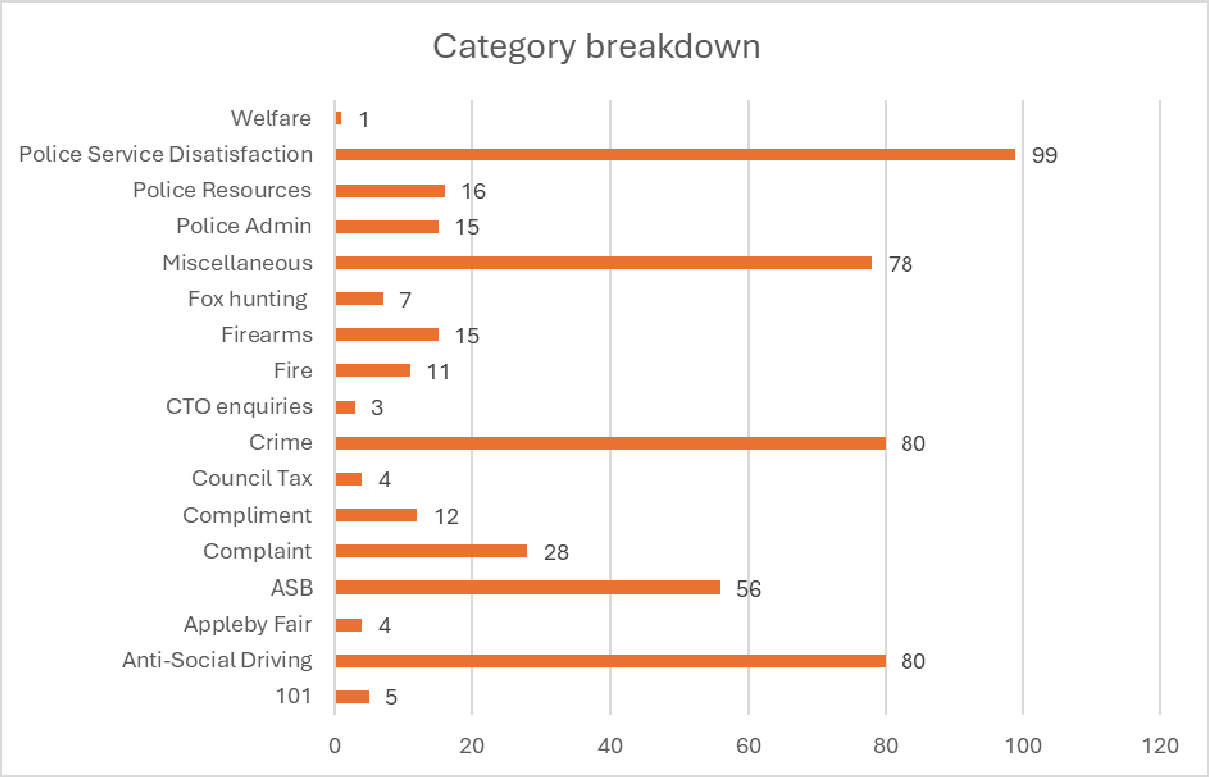
1. **Introduction & Background**

1.1 Members of the public will contact the OPFCC regarding a broad range of issues. The Governance Officer has weekly meetings with the Staff Officers within the Chief Constable's Office to discuss the correspondence received and determine the most appropriate action. Following further information received (from OIC's/ subject matter experts etc.) the Commissioner will write to each individual using information provided by the Constabulary, within the OPFCC or other partner organisations. Shown here is a breakdown of the issues raised, as can be seen from this chart, the top 4 issues raised were:

1. Police Service Dissatisfaction – 99 QSIs were received
2. Anti-Social Driving – 80 QSIs were received
3. Crime – 80 QSIs were received
4. Miscellaneous – 78 QSIs were received

Complaints - *When members of the public write to the OPFCC to make a formal complaint about the police service received/ conduct of police officers/staff, these are recorded by the OPFCC in the same way. The OPFCC write back to all complainants advising that their complaint must be dealt with by the Professional Standards Department, and if we receive consent, we will forward this to PSD on their behalf. Further information specifically in relation to complaints is detailed in the complaints report.*





2. Issues for Consideration/ Identified Issues

2.1 Police Service Dissatisfaction

During the reporting period, 99 concerns were raised in relation to the level or standard of policing service received. The concerns logged within this category indicate that the individual is unhappy with the level of policing service they have received and/or the outcome of the investigation. A number of these concerns are triggered by the lack of communication or updates received from the Police during an investigation. When a response is provided to these cases, we include details of what has happened during the investigation and why. If appropriate we also include contact details for the officer in the case (OIC) to enable the individual to make direct contact, should they require any further updates. In some cases, we arrange for an appropriate officer to visit or telephone the individual to provide clarity regarding the investigation and advise of any other action that can be taken by the individual.

Weekly meetings continue to take place with the Governance Officer and the Chief Constable's Staff officers to discuss each case received. Cases such like this are fed to either the appropriate officers to engage with the author, or to supervisors (depending on the matter raised). Where potential conduct issues are raised, the author is provided with details of how to make a complaint to PSD.

Further to this, should it be identified as a matter that has or requires input by the Neighbourhood Policing Team, direct contact is made for this to be progressed.

2.2 Anti-Social Driving

During the reporting period, 80 concerns were raised in relation to anti-social driving. Correspondence is shared where appropriate with the local Neighbourhood and/or Roads Policing Teams for action/attention and each one is responded to with an update of what will happen, or work that is ongoing.

Using funding secured by the Partnerships and Commissioning Team from the Home Office Safer Streets Fund 5, collaborative working and coordination took place between partner blue light services as well as restorative justice and outreach programmes set up within the county. The project provided funding to Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service for a dedicated Watch Manager to lead on this road safety work and to plan for when the funding ended. Part of this project was to engage with educational establishments, with specific groups like Young Farmers as well as attending relevant partner meetings held within the area (eg Cumbria Road Safety Partnership, Local Focus Hubs), to tackle the issues identified in hotspot areas.

Anti-social and safe driving educational resources were developed containing a highly impactive range of training packages fit for all audience types, but with specific focus on educating young people either at the locations of anti-social driving, within educational

settings, within groups, at events or any other location as appropriate. The use of interactive VR technology was designed to encourage engagement and inclusivity, eg for neurodiverse. Content included use of crashed vehicles, vehicle safety checks and legal compliance, adverse weather, drink/drug/fatigue/distraction impact on driving, under 17s, agricultural work, novice driver, awareness of impact of behaviour on other road users and pedestrians.

DELIVERED BETWEEN 1st OCTOBER 2023 AND 31ST MARCH 2025:
Development of educational materials suitable for Cumbria.
30 x VR Headsets
Delivery to beneficiaries below set out in the chart below:

BENEFICIARIES	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Road Awareness Training	2053
Events	775
Junior Citizens	731
Young Fire Fighters	15
CFRS training	52
Police L&D	45
TOTAL	3671

OPFCC funding for the Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service Watch Manager role ceased as planned on 31st March 2025 with the assets from this project being used by the CRSP members. VR technology is not only used in relation to road safety, but additional content is available to educate on other relevant topics, for example Junior Citizens learned about water safety and the VR helped them to practice throwing a line to someone struggling in water.

2.3 Crime

The OPFCC received 80 QSIs in relation to ongoing crimes. With assistance from the Chief Constable's office, each individual case was looked into to determine the best course of action. In some instances, the author may not have reported the issue to the police, therefore this would be sent to CCR for a log to be created and allocated to an officer. The author would be updated with this information and advised that they would be contacted directly by an officer to progress. The OPFCC will look to direct individuals to the correct avenue to help progress the matters they are reporting.

2.4 Miscellaneous

The OPFCC has received 78 QSIs recorded as 'Miscellaneous'. Alone, the QSIs recorded as 'Miscellaneous' would not be statistically significant however these do need to be captured in some way. Further categories have been created to reduce the number that are logged as miscellaneous. QSIs in this category include cases such as: Safeguarding concerns, information required to be logged with intelligence, matters concerning the local authorities, civil matter and matters not relating to Cumbria, . These QSIs are dealt with in exactly the same way, being provided with a detailed response/assistance where appropriate to the query/concern raised.

2.5 The OPFCC regularly advises the Constabulary about the types of QSI's it receives to enable them to utilise this valuable information to inform its policing across the county. This is done on a monthly basis via Executive Board (Police), further information about the work of this board is detailed below.

3 Compliments

The OPFCC has received 12 forms of correspondence thanking the Commissioner and/or individual Police Officers for the service provided, these are always shared with the individual officers, and the Chief Constable. These are continually increasing over the reporting periods.

4 Making a difference

The PFCC is focused upon ensuring that communities, victims and witnesses of crime receive the best possible police service, correspondence received highlights to the PFCC issues that are concerning local communities. The OPFCC acts as a point of contact for the public to allow them to make contact regarding any concerns relating to policing in Cumbria. In addition to individuals receiving a response with an update and/or explanation, the information gathered is used to look at how assistance or changes can be provided throughout Cumbria.

The OPFCC also links in with PSD when correspondence is received from members of the public regarding delays in updates and responses. The OPFCC provides updates to those complainants to ensure they understand that there is a delay, but they will be contacted by PSD regarding their complaint.

4.1 Executive Board – Police

On a monthly basis a report is submitted to the executive board – police to advise the Constabulary about the types of QSI's it receives. This also allows for trends or matters of concern to be flagged appropriately. During this reporting period, matters raised in this forum have covered individual cases raised with the PFCC where the service provided by the Constabulary has been poor and specially covered the Quality of Service provided by the Constabulary, and in relation to the service provided by 101. This has resulted in a Call Handling Quality Improvement Plan being implemented earlier this year. At these meetings, formal recommendations are made and are monitored on a monthly basis. These meetings enable the PFCC to hold the Chief Constable to account for the provision of policing services in Cumbria.

Further to this, any identified learning from any QSI received is raised by the Blue Light Collaboration Manager via the Constabulary's Organisational Learning Board.

4.2 Driving Issues

Anti-social driving is a priority for the residents of Cumbria, highlighted via the Police, Fire and Crime Plan public consultation in Autumn 2024, and is therefore a priority for the Commissioner. The OPFCC raises awareness on how members of the public can stay safe on the road. In 2025, the OPFCC promoted and supported campaigns focusing on:

- Drink/Drug Driving
- Not wearing a seatbelt
- Careless driving
- Using a mobile whilst driving
- Speeding
- Anti-social driving
- Use of appropriate car seats for children

We work with partners, specifically Cumbria Police, to promote these campaigns and to produce media opportunities. Cumbria Police and Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service work together to deter dangerous driving, sending those who have been caught to Road Awareness Training instead of prosecution, where appropriate.

4.3 Safer Streets Fund 5

The Home Office provided funding to the OPFCC for Safer Streets Fund Round 5 which commenced on 1st October 2023 and ran to 31st March 2025 to increase feelings of safety and reduce ASB in local communities. A reduced total funding amount of £820k was allocated to Cumbria and has been split over 3 project areas delivering the following:

Carlisle, Hammonds Pond	
Public realm lighting scheme	17 lighting columns installed and operational in Hammonds Pond. Positive response received from members of the public.
Restorative Hope (RH) Youth outreach/ASB victim workers	The OPFCC have extended this work providing funding until 30th September 2025. Work is now focusing on areas of greater need which is mainly the city centre but includes some work in Raffles. From 1st January – 30th June 2025 Restorative Hope have been working in the referred areas for 286 hours, interacted with 484 young people and 118 adults (including business managers, security guards or police). Engagement has continued via LFH meetings as well as through active participation in local multi-agency forums focused on addressing youth-related issues in the area. These partnerships have continued to strengthen inter-agency relationships and have provided valuable intelligence to inform our work. RH took part in Upperby Gala at Hammonds Pond, which offered a valuable opportunity to connect with the wider community and collaborate with other organisations in a more informal, community-led setting. These partners are now proactively directing RH to areas where youth-related concerns are emerging, enabling a more effective response and in real time.
Training of NPT officers to be drone pilots to primarily tackle ASB, off road bikes and VAWG	Training completed and 4 pilots operational
Target hardening measures in homes in the area	Work completed in 7 homes of victims of crime/ASB.
Update and integration of CCTV system in Hammonds Pond into Cumbria Constabulary system	Work completed – 4 CCTV cameras now incorporated into Cumbria Constabulary CCTV system.

Workington, The Line	
Physical improvements along The Line	Work completed and an opening event held on 23rd May 2024
Restorative Hope (RH) Youth outreach/ASB victim workers	The OPFCC have extended this work providing funding until 30th September 2025. Primary location is Workington, with additional work being undertaken in Whitehaven, Egremont, Cleator Moor and Frizington. From 1st January – 30th June 2025 RH have been in the referred areas for 216 hours, interacted with 574 young people, 108 adults (including business managers, security guards or police). Youth ASB has continued to shift from Workington town centre to surrounding areas, though overall incidents have decreased. The team attended Party in the Park and Cumberland Council's Social Prescribing Day, strengthening local visibility and partnerships. Two youth development sessions were held with providers in Workington, and collaboration with HMV supported the showcasing of local youth talent. Engagement with the PCSO in Seaton has led to early plans for establishing a new youth group. Work continues to focus on supporting youth-led initiatives and redirecting activity into positive spaces, with ASB now being monitored more closely in areas just outside the town centre.
Training of NPT officers to be drone pilots to primarily tackle ASB and VAWG	Training completed and 4 pilots operational. Case studies below for information if useful.
Target hardening measures in homes in the area	Work completed in 44 homes of victims of crime/ASB.
Integration of the entire Constabulary drone fleet footage into Cumbria Constabulary's system	Work completed

Penrith	
Restorative Hope (RH) Youth outreach/ASB victim workers	The OPFCC have extended this work providing funding until 30th September 2025 in Penrith town centre, with additional work taking place in Kendal, Barrow, Ulverston and Windermere. From 1st January – 30th June 2025 RH have been in the referred areas for 287 hours, interacted with 255 young people, 170 adults (including business managers, security guards or police). RH participated in the Raiselands Croft community event in Penrith. This provided a valuable opportunity to support local visibility, foster community trust, and reinforce our commitment to early intervention and preventative engagement, even in areas not currently flagged for deployment.
Anti-social driving initiatives to primarily tackle ASB and anti-social driving	Work ongoing until 31st March 2025. Further detail is in the "Driving Issues" section.
Target hardening measures in homes in the area	Work completed in 14 homes of victims of crime/ASB.
Additional 360° CCTV cameras	3 cameras installed and operational feeding footage to Cumbria Constabulary

4.4 DRONES

The drones continue to be used to good effect, with 16 NPT officers across the whole of Cumbria trained as drone pilots thanks to Safer Streets Funding. NPT officers are enthusiastic about the drones, how they can be dynamically deployed, and the variety of jobs that they can be used for to offer support to other police tactics. They are especially useful to tackle off road bikes, and for searches due to their high-quality visual cameras and their thermal camera capability. Below are some examples:

Drug dealing
Police received reports of drug dealing in Silloth and took proactive action. Officers carried out patrols and utilised drones to identify and trace suspected drug dealing activity. This resulted in two drivers being stopped and arrested for drug driving offences. Two individuals were also located and arrested for drug supply offences and a quantity of drugs and cash seized.

Off road bikes
The drone captured footage in Flimby on 9 May of a bike which was later seized. Initially the bikes were on private land, however, then decided to go into the village, on the wrong side of the road, on footpaths etc and were not equipped for the road. The riders had no driving licence or insurance and clearly no understanding of the roads. NPTs will continue to seize these bikes if used illegally and the drones allow this to be done safely.

Anti-social use of motorbikes
The cycle path between Dalston and Denton Holme is a location where many people have expressed their concern over the antisocial riding of motorbikes. The drones are being deploying in locations nearby to help tackle the issue by identifying bikes, riders and routes taken.

4.5 Hotspot Policing – Operation Enhance

In June 2024, the Commissioner's Office secured £1m from the Home Office Hotspot Response Fund to work with the Constabulary to target antisocial behaviour and serious violence in hotspots areas. In July 2024, 18 hotspot areas were identified and extra high visibility officer patrols began to target and reduce antisocial behaviour and serious violence in these areas, under Operation Enhance. The funding was secured until 31st March 2025 and covered overtime hours worked predominantly by police officers, but also working in partnership with Cumberland Council who provided Enforcement Officer resource to increase the visibility across the hot spot areas, working with the police officers.

Between 1st July 2024 and 30th April 2025, Operation Enhance delivered 5,433 hours of highly visible patrols within the targeted areas. Furthermore, the patrols resulted in the below proactive activity from the officers:

- 77 arrests.
- 336 stop and searches.
- 634 intel submissions.
- 8 weapons seized.
- 97 traffic offences reported.

Alongside the highly visible patrols, problem-oriented policing profiles were created to offer long-term solutions to re-occurring issues. For example, the Constabulary facilitated the creation of a pub watch scheme in Maryport, installed anti-climb paint and pigeon spikes on selected buildings in Workington town centre, and provided additional street lighting in Barrow.

Both Basic Command Units have seen similar decreases, Cumberland has seen an overall decrease in antisocial behaviour incidents of 21.1% (554 fewer incidents), Westmorland & Furness has seen an overall decrease of 21.9% (427 fewer incidents).

Following the government's decision to run a Hotspot Policing Programme for a second year, the Commissioner's Office have secured another £1m from the Home Office Hotspot Action Fund. For 2025/2026, the government has widened the category to include a reduction in knife crime as well as antisocial behaviour and serious violence. This is to support the government's priority to halve knife crime over the next 10 years.

The main requirement for the second year is to deliver a minimum of 9,000 hours of visible uniformed patrolling within identified hotspot areas, starting from 1st July 2025. The 9,000 hours will capture patrols from other Operations, such as Operation Festive, as well as business as usual patrolling and dedicated overtime patrols. Cumberland Council are supporting once more, with Enforcement Officer patrols and the Saturday night Welfare Hub in Carlisle town centre.

Applying the new criteria, 15 hotspots have been identified. These hotspots contain 22.7% of all antisocial behaviour in Cumbria, 22.9% of all serious violence and 20.4% of all knife crimes. As in the previous year, there will be further opportunity to apply problem-oriented policing profiles to offer solutions to some of the issues identified within the hotspots. This work will continue to be supported by the Local Focus Hubs using the OSARA model.

4.5 Keep Safe

The Partnerships & Commissioning Team continues to fund, develop and manage "Keep Safe" which is the service available free of charge to all victims of crime and anti-social behaviour across Cumbria delivered by the Constabulary. This service provides crime prevention advice to victims, and where necessary target hardening measures to their homes so they can feel safer in their day to day lives. For the period 1st January – 30th June 2025 422 individuals received support from Keep Safe. Dip samples are conducted quarterly to ensure the victim is satisfied with the service they have received with 100% of those asked providing a positive review of the Keep Safe service.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial - there are no additional financial costs associated with dealing with these complaints, quality of service issues as these tasks form part of staff roles.

5.2 Legal – none identified.

5.3 Risk - None identified, beyond that to the OPFCC's reputation if it does not deal with the issues raised appropriately and proportionately according to the merits of the individual case.

5.4 HR / Equality - none specifically identified.