



Update on the work of the National
Rural Crime Network, and future of
police funding

SPARSE Rural Assembly, 16th Nov 2015

NRCN Members

- 30 Police and Crime Commissioners
- Countryside Alliance
- NFU Mutual
- Historic England
- CLA
- Crimestoppers
- Farmers Union of Wales
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Farmers Weekly Magazine
- National Community Safety Network
- Facewatch
- *Supported by SPARSE*

Rural Crime Survey 2015

- Launched in May 2015
 - Rural crime/ASB in the UK is very under researched
 - Withdrawal of police presence in many rural communities is causing concern
 - ***How does rural crime/ASB affect communities - financially and emotionally***
- Over 17,200 responses received from England, Wales and Northern Ireland
 - 12,369 from bona fide rural residents or businesses - identified for detailed analysis

Topline Findings

- At £800m, the cost dwarfs previous estimates
- Fear of crime is disproportionate to actual crime levels and is increasing
- Rural communities are strong – they are putting up and making do as best they can
- Confidence in the police is *significantly* lower (24%) in rural areas than the national average
- Businesses, hard-pressed families and people close to urban areas are particularly at risk
- The emotional and monetary cost of crime is high
- There is chronic under-reporting and people do not often claim on their insurance

The cost of crime...

- **Financial impact of crime on rural economy is significant**
 - True cost is £800 million
 - equivalent to £200 for every household in the countryside
 - The average cost to rural households who are victims of crime is £2,500 and £4,100 for rural businesses
- **There is also an emotional cost**
 - Anger, frustration
 - A 'viscious' circle leading to under reporting and increasing lack of confidence, perceived poor levels of response and under reporting...
 - One in four victims did not report further crimes

Fear of crime is increasing

- **Despite lower 'threat, risk and harm' in comparison to urban areas, people in rural areas are more afraid of crime**
 - 39% of rural people are very or fairly worried about becoming a victim of crime, compared to 19% nationally
 - Rural businesses are the most fearful of becoming victims of crime, with 51% very or fairly fearful,
 - Closely followed by younger families
 - This contrasts with 'convention' which often has older people as the most worried

Low satisfaction with policing

- 39% of rural people rate the police as good or excellent
- This figure is 63% nationally
- Among rural businesses the figure was just 32%

But rural communities are resilient

- **Rural communities are resilient**
 - Clear community spirit, and getting stronger
 - Good base for engagement
- **Local Authorities need to pay heed**
 - Two issues of great concern not ‘crimes’
 - 63% of rural people concerned about road safety
 - 61% of rural people concerned about fly-tipping

Implications

The NRCN is are calling for...

1. Fair funding for rural policing
2. Encourage reporting of all incidents
3. Police, government and other partners must work better together
4. Improved targeting of resources
5. Greater focus on 'what works' and best practice
6. Improved local engagement and working
7. A better service for rural businesses

Police Funding

- CSR announcements on 25th November
 - Policing expecting between 25% and 40% funding reductions
 - On top of reductions in the last CSR
 - Full impact not known until late 2015, early 2016

Funding formula

- Government had been consulting on this
 - Commissioners agreed this needed to be done. Current formula doesn't work/too complicated
- Nov 9th - Minister announces the process is being halted, and delayed one financial year
 - This followed 'mistakes' in the process
- Many Commissioners felt this consultation flawed from the outset
 - Unfair, unsustainable and not transparent

As was proposed

- Population volume – 30%
 - Does not account for visitor numbers. Approx overnight visitors to North Yorkshire are 18 million
- Households with no adults employed and dependent children – 31%
 - Much more relevant to urban forces than rural
- Urban Adversity – 31%
 - Clear focus on urban
 - No acknowledgement of rural adversity, or rural vulnerabilities e.g. isolation (this is also a wider problem)
- Volume and density of bars – 8%
 - Clearly favours small forces which in turn increases ‘volume and density’.
 - Presumes far too much about the impact of licensed premises on policing

CLEAR FOCUS ON URBAN ‘DEMAND’

Funding formula concerns

- As it stood, before being halted:
 - Top 8 financial losers ALL rural forces/ NRCN members (aside from North Wales!)
 - Of the £132 million redistributed away from forces, 80% taken from rural forces
 - Average loss for rural force = £6.2m
 - Average loss for urban force = £5.2m
 - Rural forces do gain too, but to a lesser extent

Funding formula (continued...)

■ Proposals

- Set up an independent Panel to look at police funding
- Needs to be seen in the round
 - National, regional, local
 - Local powers to raise money
 - Future demand
 - Collaboration, both force/force AND blue light