



College of
Policing

Does neighbourhood policing have a future?

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Community policing

- Community policing – an elastic concept
- Emerged in late 1970s – Alderson, Scarman
- Focus?
 - Police-community relations
 - Police legitimacy
 - Community capacity building
- Less about crime and disorder reduction?
- Implementation not sustained
 - Emphasis on reactive vehicle patrol
 - Considered a 'bolt-on'
 - Culturally marginalised

From community policing to reassurance policing

- The reassurance gap
- HMIC – Open All Hours
- The success of the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy
- Martin Innes – signal crimes perspective
 - Some crimes and disorders act as a 'warning signal' to people about risks to their security, changing the way they feel, think and act
 - Signals vary and some are more important than others in shaping risk perceptions
 - Intervention by the police and others can shape people's perception of risk and act as a 'control signal', though its effect can be positive or negative

The National Reassurance Policing Programme

- Developed from an early pilot in Surrey
- Implementation in 16 wards from January 2004
- Police activity structured around a seven stage model
- Delivery mechanisms
 - **Visibility** – the presence of visible, accessible and locally known authority figures in neighbourhoods
 - **Community engagement** – community involvement in the process of identifying priorities and taking action to tackle them
 - **Problem-solving** – targeted policing activity and problem-solving to tackle crimes and disorders which matter most to the public in neighbourhoods

The NRPP evaluation

- Quasi-experiment involving 6 trial wards
- Non-random selection
- Each pair-matched to a comparison ward
- Matching – population density, ethnic composition, employment levels and crime rates
- Change before / after implementation in trial wards relative to the comparison sites:
 - Telephone survey – panel of c200 residents per ward
 - Police statistics
- Process data

NRPP main results

	Change before / after (%)		Difference	Sig
	Trial	Comparison		
Self-reported victimisation	-10	-5	-5	*
Perceptions of ASB (teenagers)	-5	1	-7	**
Perception of the crime rate (less crime)	15	4	11	***
Feelings of safety after dark	1	-3	5	*
Public confidence	15	3	12	***
Police effort to find out what people think	12	1	11	***
Police willingness to listen	6	-2	8	***
Police working with the community	10	0	9	***
Awareness of police plans	14	5	9	***
Awareness of ways to get views across	14	7	7	***
Police visibility	15	4	10	***
Police familiarity	12	2	10	***
Cohesion	0	-2	1	
Trust	3	-2	1	*
Collective efficacy (tell off)	-1	-3	2	
Collective efficacy (help)	0	1	-1	
Involvement in community activity	0	2	-2	

From reassurance policing to neighbourhood policing

- Three year National Neighbourhood Policing Programme
- Scaled-up implementation in all neighbourhoods
- Support to 43 pathfinder BCUs in 2005/06
- Same delivery mechanisms
- Subtle and symbolic differences?
 - Resource focus
 - Delivery of local policing services
 - Reassurance and signal crimes
 - Seven stage model
 - Crime reduction focus
 - Implementation less controlled

Pathfinder BCU evaluation

- Similar design to NRPP – 5 trial BCUs
- No consistent pattern of change
- Low dosage, weak implementation, and contamination?
- Visibility necessary but not sufficient?
- Neighbourhood policing's role in maintaining confidence

Associated with **higher** confidence

- Being confident at the baseline
- Improved perceptions of foot patrol

Associated with **lower** confidence

- Being a victim of crime
- Deteriorated perceptions of police:
 - understanding the issues
 - treating everyone fairly
 - willingness to listen
 - working with the community
 - foot patrol

A changing policy context?

**“Neighbourhood policing delivers what people want”
Home Office 2010**

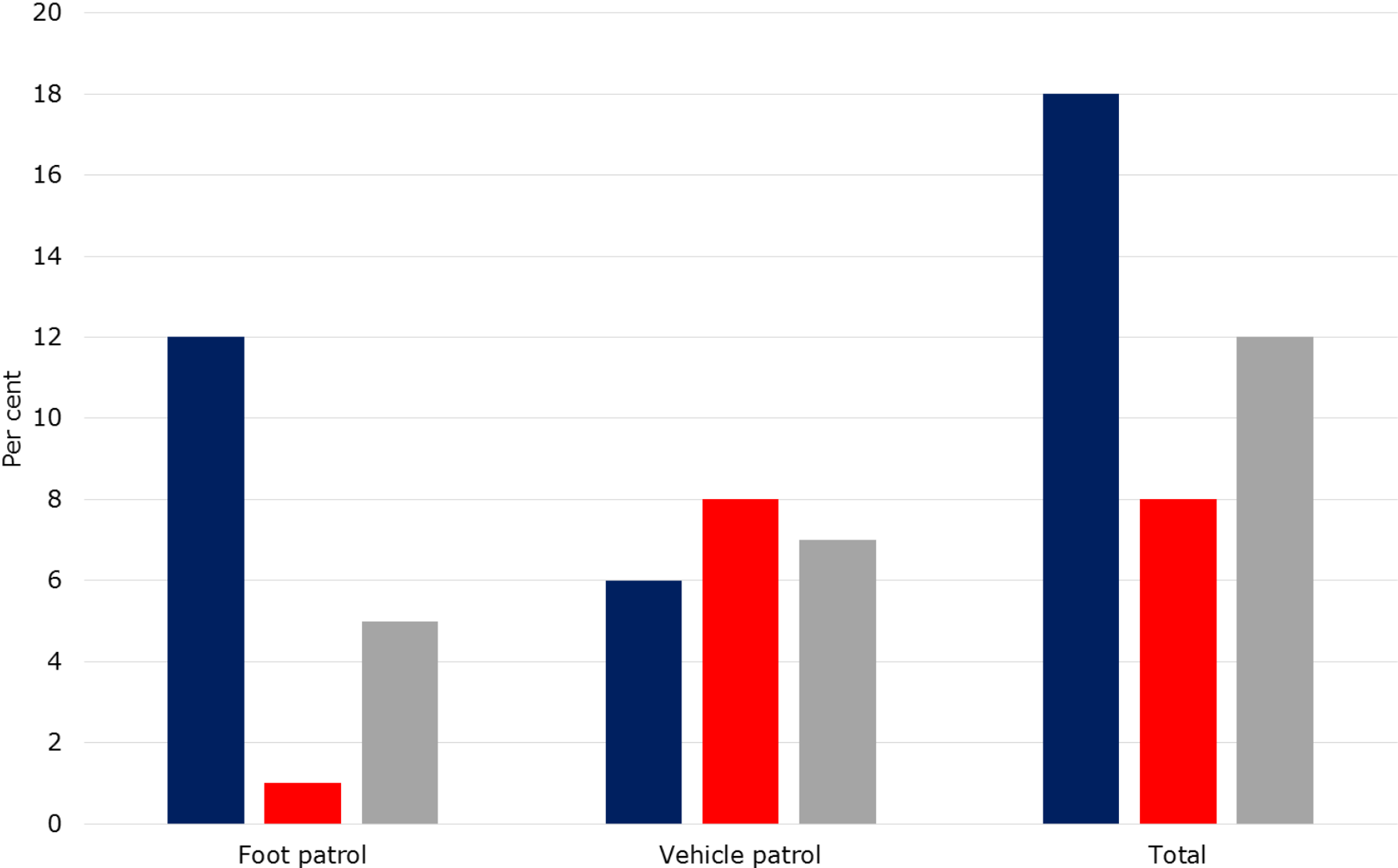
- Responsiveness and answerability to citizens
- Accessibility
- Service standards and consistency
- Earned autonomy
- Democratic accountability
- Citizen responsibility
- Neighbourhood management
- Threat, risk and harm

How did neighbourhood officers spend their time?

	Neighbourhood	Response
Public facing activities	46%	43%
• Community work	32%	13%
• Dealing with incidents	10%	23%
• Post incident work	4%	7%
Support activities	52%	54%
• Administration	26%	27%
• Travel	9%	9%
• Other activities	11%	8%
• Briefing / meetings	4%	6%
• Custody	2%	4%
Total time (mins)	41,479	68,610

Time spent on patrol

■ Neighbourhood ■ Response ■ Both



Neighbourhood policing practice stocktake

- Changing policy context
 - Reductions in police budgets
 - Force organisational change programmes
 - Election of Police & Crime Commissioners (2012)
 - End of ring-fenced PCSO funding (2013)
- Aimed to help understand impact of policy context on police practice
- Method
 - Survey of force leads (32 forces)
 - Review of force plans / strategies (6 forces)
 - Site visits (15 forces)

Neighbourhood policing practice stocktake

- Clarity of role
- Demand and resource allocation
- Reduction in officer numbers
- Development of different models
- Greater integrated working within forces
- Extended responsibilities – investigations and response
- Expanded role of PCSOs
- Community engagement
- Problem-solving?
- Performance management

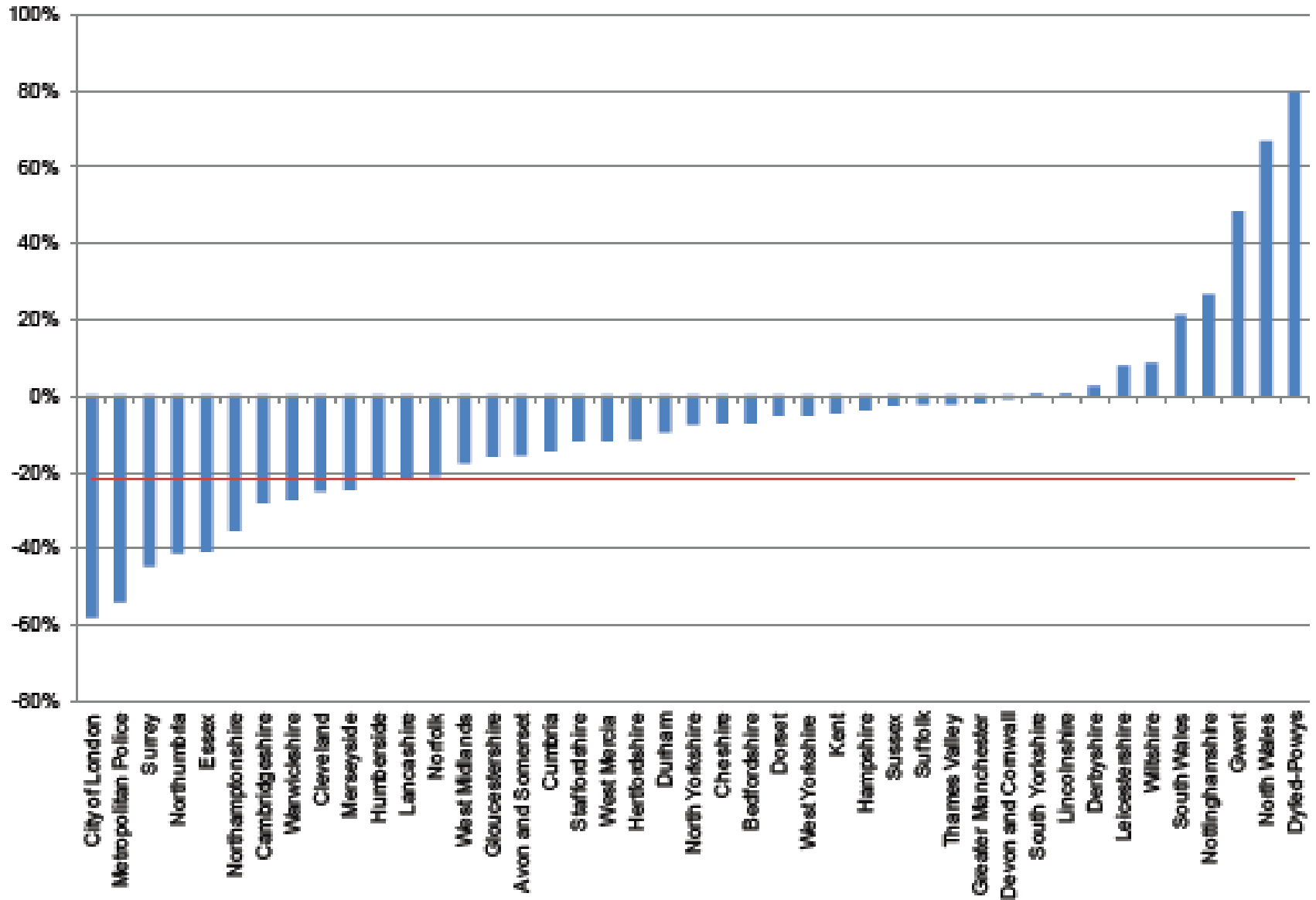
Policing in austerity

“Last year we raised concerns that the broadening remit of neighbourhood policing teams risked damaging the level of service provided to the public. This year’s further planned reduction of PCSOs nationally adds to our concerns about the erosion of neighbourhood policing...

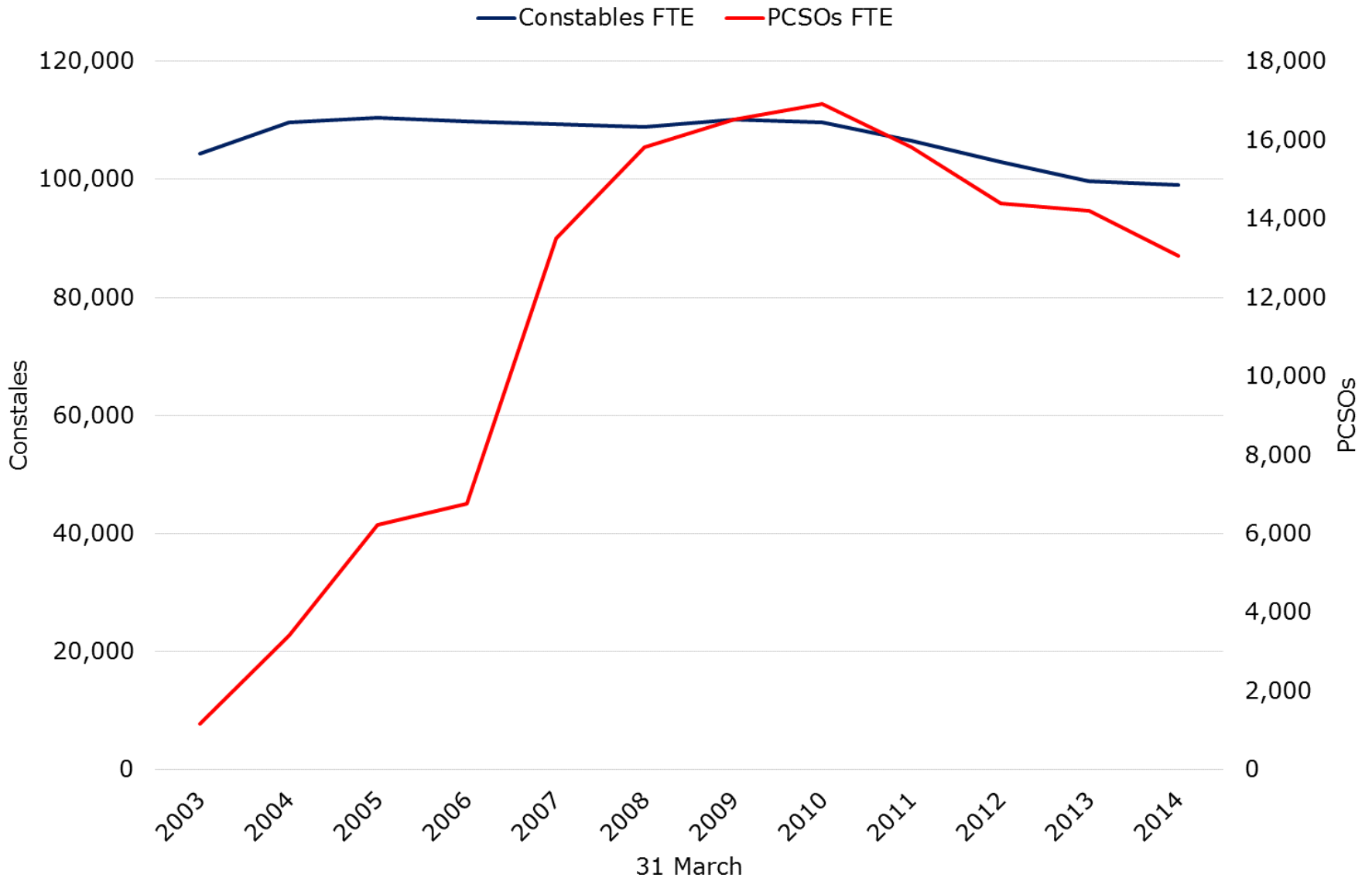
The risk is that continuing austerity may put neighbourhood-based proactive and preventive policing in jeopardy. If that happens, the hard-won prize of community confidence could be lost.”

HMIC 2014

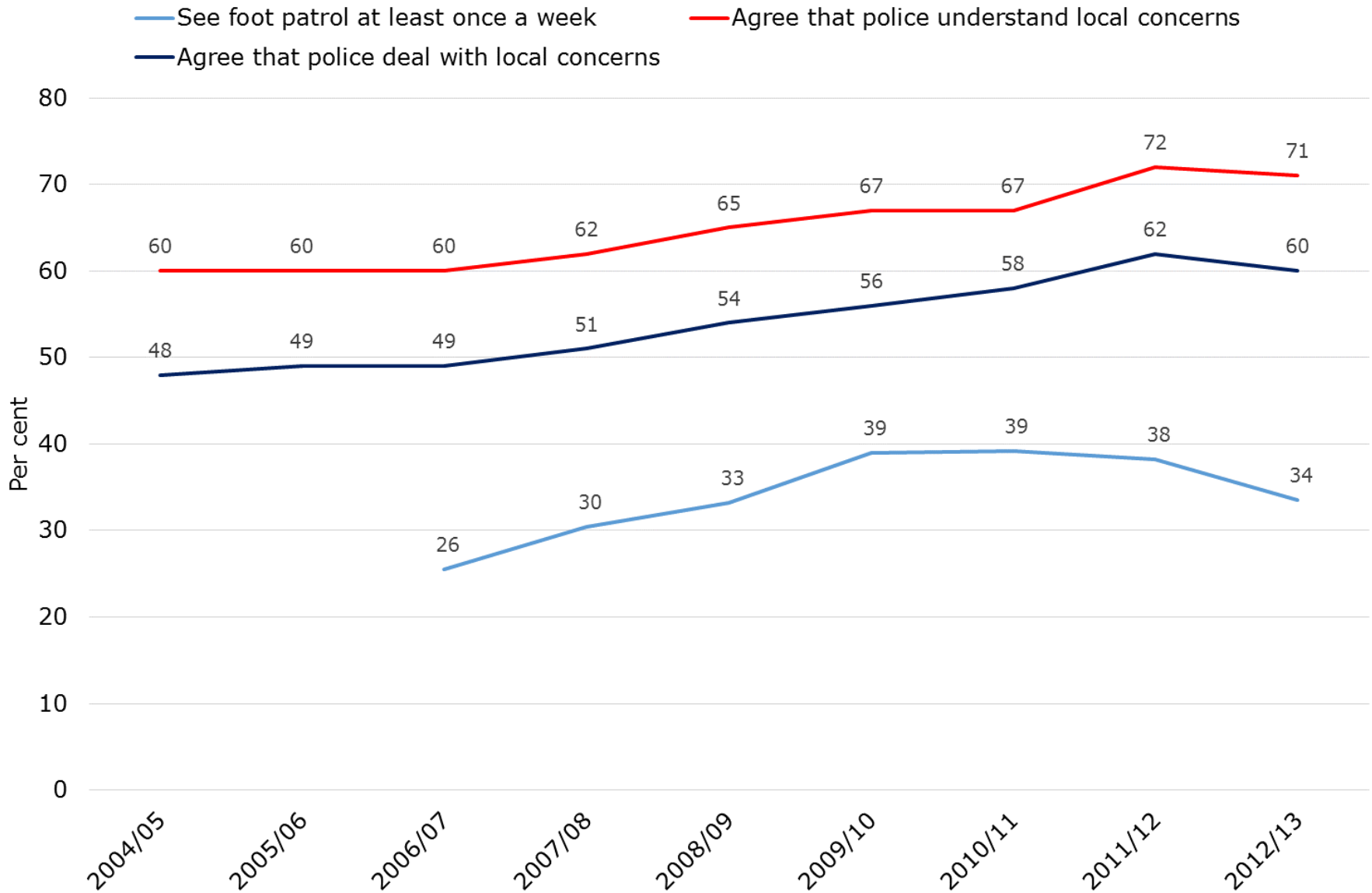
Planned PCSO changes (2010-15)



Officer numbers



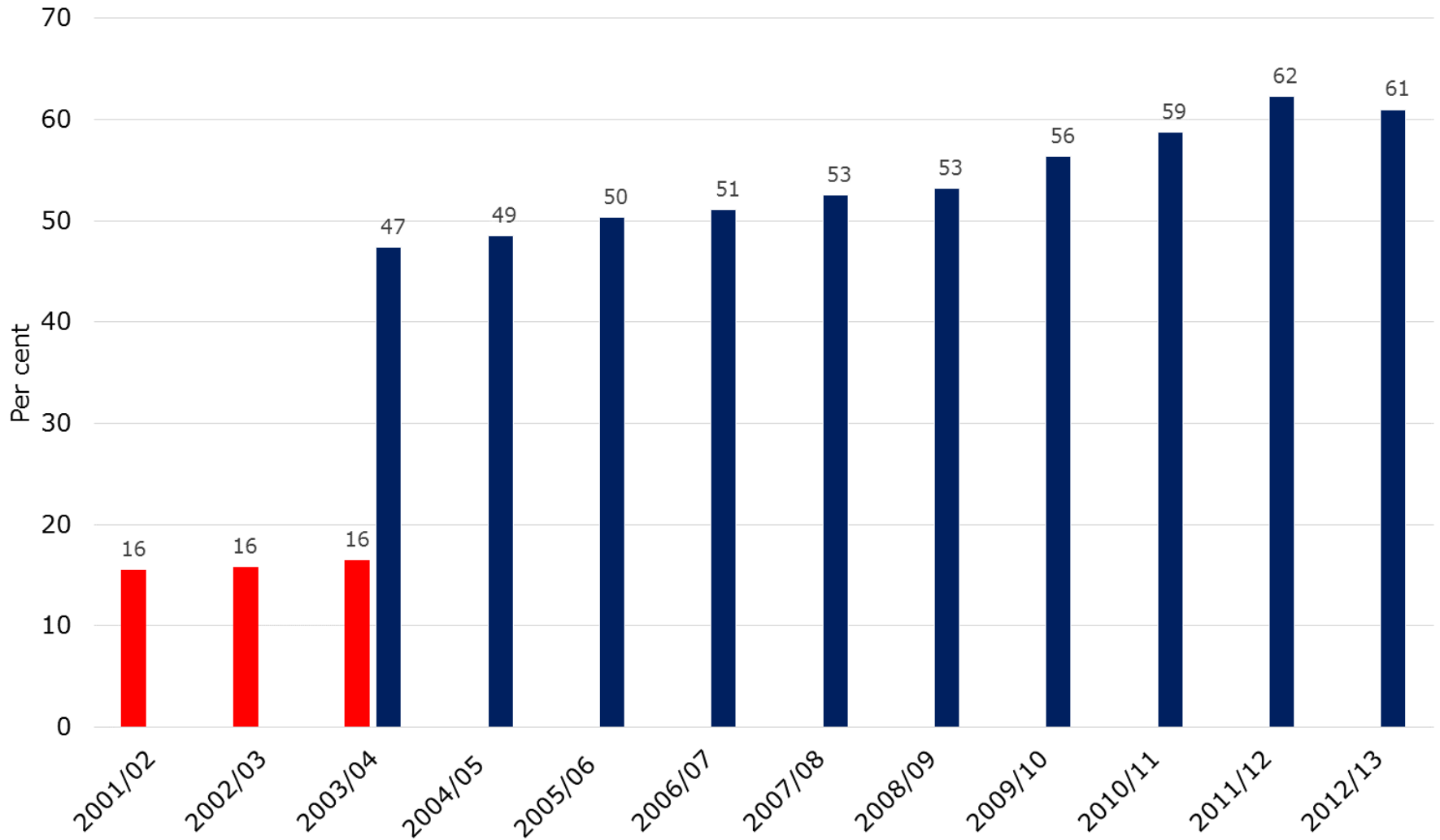
Perceived mechanisms



Public confidence

Taking everything into account, how good a job do you think the police in this area are doing?

■ Very good job ■ Good or excellent job



Key points

- Neighbourhood policing has always been evolving
- Local implementation of neighbourhood policing can have a positive impact on a wider range of outcomes
- Was neighbourhood policing implemented at scale, beyond additional resources and visibility?
- Community engagement and problem-solving has continued to be a challenge
- Budget cuts and organisational changes pose a significant risk to implementation
- Have the core characteristics of neighbourhood policing been lost in some places?
- Will public perceptions continue to deteriorate?

A warning from (recent) history

“In 2003, the city’s major newspaper created a crime scare during a period when the mayor was choosing a new chief of police... The new chief in turn reorganized and refocused the department on guns, gangs, and homicides. Soon commitment to the department’s community policing program withered...

There it lurks, waiting perhaps to be resurrected when a crisis of legitimacy again haunts the police, and they have to rediscover community policing in order to rebuild again their credibility with the community.”

Skogan 2006



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Thank you

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