



Cambridgeshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner

To: Business Coordination Board

From: Chief Executive

Date: 20 January 2015

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To update the Business Coordination Board (“the Board”) on the Police and Crime Commissioner’s (“the Commissioner”) public engagement and communication activities.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Board note the report.

3. Background

- 3.1 Police and Crime Commissioners have a statutory duty to regularly engage with the public to get their views on policing. One of the Commissioner’s pledges in the Police and Crime Plan (“the Plan”) is to be the “voice of the people”. The ‘Commissioner’s approach to engagement’ summarises the Commissioner’s broad aspirations for engaging with the public.

4. Public engagement activity – August 2014 – January 2015

4.1 Outreach Work

- 4.1.1 Nicola Fenton, the Commissioner’s Outreach Worker for Peterborough and Fenland, has continued to engage extensively across her patch and has been very popular with those she deals with. Nicola has built strong working relationships with stakeholders across Fenland and Peterborough, enabling the identification of public engagement opportunities and also the issues and concerns of local communities.

- 4.1.2 Nicola has been involved in a range of the engagement work covered in this document, particularly with young people, the Volunteer Police Cadets Scheme, public surgeries and correspondence.
- 4.1.3 Because of the success of the North (Peterborough and Fenland) Outreach worker we have now recruited a second Outreach Worker to cover the rest of the county. Beka Avery started on 12 January 2015 as Outreach Worker for Huntingdonshire, Cambridge City, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire.

4.2 Young People

Youth Fund

- 4.2.1 A number of projects have been awarded funding from the Commissioner's Youth Fund. The Fund has the aim of engaging young people in positive activities in their community, in line with the Commissioner's pledge to support work with young people to divert them away from a life of crime. One example, visited by the Commissioner, is the Peterborough Boxing Club which was awarded £1,500 to purchase new equipment for the youngsters aged 10 to 18 that attend twice weekly.

School Forums

- 4.2.2 Since September Nicola has focused her work on engaging with young people and has held a series of discussion groups and forums with young people from Year 7, Year 10 and Year 11. The views of these 12, 16 and 17 year olds provide an interesting insight into the views of young people of the police and crime.

The groups focussed on the following topics:

- Having your say
- Your Priorities
- Understanding / perceptions of sexual violence (delivered with Peterborough Rape Crisis)
- Reporting crime
- Hate crime
- Relationships between young people and the police

A report is being finalised so the results can be shared.

- 4.2.3 In addition to the focussed events above Nicola has run a number of school forums to enable the students to feed directly into the local Safer Stronger Neighbourhood meetings in Peterborough, and forum meetings in Fenland to ensure that young people's priorities and concerns are taken in to account when setting the People's Priorities. She is supported by local PCSOs and safer schools officers where appropriate.

Volunteer Police Cadets

- 4.2.4 The first Volunteer Police Cadet Scheme intake at The Thomas Deacon Academy in Peterborough was fully subscribed with 30 young people aged between 14 and 16 signed up. Equally impressive was the number of volunteer cadet leaders who have given their time to help run the scheme. The first group will complete their initial induction and participate in a passing out ceremony on 21 January 2015.
- 4.2.5 Further funding has been secured and plans are currently being developed to roll out another three full schemes; one in Wisbech, one in East Cambridgeshire and another in East Cambridge. There are also plans to set up a satellite scheme to the main one in Wisbech at another school within the town.
- 4.2.6 The Cadets also took part in Take Over Day where 12 of them were invited to become key decision makers for the day as they took over the helm of the Constabulary and the Commissioner's office, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), in support of the Children's Commissioner "Take Over" Day 2014.

4.3 Police Contact Points

- 4.3.1 Four Police Contact Points are now open to the public. The Contact Points are high visibility 'drop in' points to allow the public to raise any issues with local police and the Commissioner's Outreach Workers. The four locations, all within large supermarkets, are at Peterborough, Cambridge, St Neots and Wisbech. The level of activity is determined by the local policing team with support from the Commissioner's Outreach Workers. The supermarkets (Sainsbury's and Tesco) have also offered use of their community facilities for local engagement activities.

4.4 Public surveys

- 4.4.1 The 101 survey remains in place inviting feedback on the public's views of the 101 service. All responses are forwarded to the Police Service Centre to enable them to pinpoint where any problems are occurring. To date there have been 50 responses.
- 4.4.2 The snap survey on the home page of the Commissioner's website has recently been changed to ask "Do you think the current drink drive alcohol limit should be reduced?". The current response is Yes 82%, No 18%.

4.5 Street Surgeries and 1-2-1 surgeries

- 4.5.1 A series of street surgeries were held over the summer allowing the public to meet the Commissioner in town and city centres and discuss any issues of concern they had. A street surgery was held in each of the local command areas at Peterborough, Cambridge, Sawston, March, St Neots and Ely. The Commissioner was accompanied by local Officers and other members of his office.
- 4.5.2 The Commissioner also offers individual surgery appointments to any member of the public or elected representative who wishes to raise any concerns. Twelve surgeries were organised in 2014 across the county.
- 4.5.3 A wide range of issues were discussed with the Commissioner, usually concerning specific concerns in a local area with requests of support to get the Constabulary to take further action.

4.5.4 The Commissioner also held additional private meetings with members of the public who had specific cases or concerns.

4.6 Correspondence

4.6.1 The Commissioner and the OPCC continue to deal with a large number of telephone calls, e-mails and written correspondence. Since November 2012 there have been in excess of 3,300 pieces of correspondence, averaging more than 120 per month. The correspondence is followed up and the individuals responded to. Topics are extremely varied and come from individual citizens as well as partners, government departments and other stakeholders.

4.7 Neighbourhood Watch and Neighbourhood Alert

4.7.1 Neighbourhood Alert was launched in September 2013 and continues to grow. The system allows fast and specific communications between the Constabulary and Neighbourhood Watch. E-cops, which uses the Alert platform now has over 12,500 subscribers who receive tailored updates on crime in their area. The OPCC has access to the E-cops system allowing enabling direct communication with those who have signed up to receive updates from the Commissioner.

4.8 Police and Crime Panel

4.8.1 The Commissioner responds to questions submitted to the Police and Crime Panel where they have a relevance to him or the OPCC.

4.9 Traditional media

4.9.1 A new monthly newsletter was launched in January 2015 which contains a snap-shot of some of the activity undertaken by the Commissioner, the OPCC and the Constabulary. The newsletter is intended for the general public but is also shared with partners and other stakeholders. Forwarded by partners and shared via E-cops it is estimated the first edition reached around 15,000 people.

4.9.2 Press releases informing the public about the work of the Constabulary and the Commissioner have covered a wide range of subjects included safer cycling, the Council Tax Precept, Contact Points, child sexual exploitation, alcohol misuse, support for victims of crime, youth work, HMIC reports, hate crime, mental health and anti-social behaviour.

4.9.3 A feature piece reviewing The Commissioner's first two years in office and a look forward to the challenges ahead was also produced and received coverage in the press and on the radio. It also formed the basis of a speech given to the University of The Third Age.

4.9.4 The Commissioner has undertaken a number of radio interviews in the last six months with Huntingdon Community Radio, Heart, Star FM and, in particular, BBC Radio Cambridgeshire.

4.9.5 This proactive media activity will continue. Interviews are increasing providing opportunities to talk to the public about the long term challenges facing the police, the choices that have to be made to achieve budget reductions and the action the Constabulary is taking to maintain effective policing in the face of these challenges. All press releases can be viewed on the Commissioner's website.

4.10 Online

- 4.10.1 The number of followers on Twitter continues to grow and now stands at 1,300. A wide range of topics are covered and commented on including road safety, alcohol misuse, budget, innovation fund, public engagement, victims, cadets, police resources and mental health.
- 4.10.2 The website continues to evolve with a particular focus in recent months on ensure we are fully transparent and compliant with Information Commissioner's Office guidelines. Further changes to the structure of the site are planned to make the site easier to navigate and allow people to find what they need.

4.11 Partnership working

- 4.11.1 The Commissioner and his team continue to bring together partners to align services and to share information.
- 4.11.2 A colleague from Cambridgeshire County Council is working with the Commissioner's office on engaging with a range of service providers to further understand the needs of the victims of crime.
- 4.11.3 The launch of the Victims' Hub on 1 October 2014 was a milestone in the move to a locally commissioned victim support services for Cambridgeshire. The work 'Supporting Victims in Cambridgeshire' was officially launched at an event on 16 December 2014. Hosted by the Commissioner the event brought together local organisations involved in supporting victims of crime. The event was also attended by senior staff from other Police and Crime Commissioner offices. The Victims' Hub has also attracted national attention as Cambridgeshire is one of only two areas who have opted out of the national Victim Support contract. The Hub staff have hosted fact-finding visits from colleagues across the country.
- 4.11.4 November saw the signing of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat Declaration. Led by the Commissioner, organisations came together to sign a local declaration setting out how they will work together to support people experiencing mental health crisis. This was the culmination of several months of stakeholder engagement and partnership working.

4.12 Collaborative working

- 4.12.1 The OPCC Communications and Engagement Team continue to work with the Constabulary Corporate Communications Team to promote the various campaigns and initiatives that inform and educate the public. The two teams also co-ordinate responses to media enquires where appropriate.
- 4.12.2 The OPCC Communications and Engagement Team are also working with the Constabulary, Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary (BCH) Strategic Alliance team, their respective OPCCs and communication teams, supporting communications and engagement activity where there is a potential impact on all three forces.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1. That the Board note the report and planned future activity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Document	'Commissioner's approach to engagement' April 2013 BCB http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/business-coordination-board/april-2013-bcb/
Contact Officers	Charles Kitchin, Director of Public Engagement & Communications, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner