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Police and Crime
Commissioner
for Warwickshire

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

2016-2021



A SAFER, MORE SECURE WARWICKSHIRE

Updated March 2018

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1. Foreword

My role as the Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire is to work with other services to ensure the safety of the community and deliver effective criminal justice. This involves listening to people and taking their views on the issues that affect them in their community, as well as hearing the good practice and ideas for improvement which residents often tell me about.

I must also ensure that my Police and Crime Plan meets their needs and expectations, ensuring that the public has a strong voice in how their community is policed.



Consultation and engagement form a fundamental part of how I will achieve this and this strategy sets out how I will give the public and stakeholders that strong voice.

My approach will be to:-

- consult with the public and stakeholders on a range of specified topics to understand and listen to their views and ensure due consideration is given to them when policy and decisions are made;
- engage widely providing residents and stakeholders with the opportunity to discuss issues that impact and affect them.

As a result of these activities I aim to have a better understanding of:-

- the public's and stakeholders' needs and expectations of the police and local partners;
- how effectively Warwickshire Police and partners currently meet those needs;
- what needs to change in order to meet these needs in the future.

This will give me an informed position to hold the Chief Constable and local partners to account to ensure that the services they deliver to the public continue to improve.

Philip Secombe TD

Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire

2. Introduction

Good communications and effective engagement are essential to ensuring that the public and other stakeholders understand the challenges of modern policing and can have an effective say in how their communities are policed. As such, they underpin all of the work undertaken by the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and of the police and partner agencies more widely.

A well-informed community is much more likely to have increased trust and confidence in the police and to be supportive of measures and initiatives which seek to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. Equally, by giving the public and stakeholders a genuine opportunity to shape and influence policing and community safety priorities, service delivery can only improve.

This strategy sets out how Warwickshire Police and Commissioner Philip Secombe and his office (OPCC) intend to communicate and engage with communities and key stakeholders across the county, regionally and on a national level. It will demonstrate how effective communications can:

- help us achieve our overall organisational objectives;
- engage effectively with members of the public, including the vulnerable and victims of crime, community groups, police and other strategic partners;
- raise the profile of the Commissioner and demonstrate the success of his work;
- enable people to understand what we do and have a say in how we do it;
- assist the Commissioner in holding the Chief Constable to account.

It outlines the key objectives for communications and engagement to be delivered over the coming years, as well as outlining a programme of activity to achieve these ambitions.

The strategy is interdependent on a range of other plans, strategies and activity which include:-

- Warwickshire's Police and Crime Plan;
- Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police Consultation and Engagement Strategy (in development) ;
- Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police Contact Management Strategy (in development) ;
- The national Code of Ethics for policing which defines how all officers and staff should interact with the public and one another.

Progress towards achieving the objectives in this plan will be monitored within the delivery plan for the main Police and Crime Plan for Warwickshire.

Legal framework

Communication and engagement have a key role in ensuring that the Commissioner can carry out his duty to inform people about policies and activities which have an impact on them and, crucially, involve them in the decision-making process. He must engage as broadly as possible with all relevant individuals and organisations to ensure he understands the key challenges for Warwickshire and can set the right policing objectives to deal with them.

The law sets out a number of specific duties and responsibilities in relation to consultation and engagement. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, together with other legislation, places statutory duties on the PCC to:-

- Obtain the views of local people on policing and have regard to those views¹;
- Make arrangements for engaging with local people in setting police and crime objectives²;
- Obtain the views of local people and ratepayers prior to setting the precept (the charge for policing services paid by the tax payers) and the police budget;
- Obtain the views of victims of crime about matters concerning local policing and where appropriate feedback to them on actions taken to address them.

The Commissioner is also responsible for overseeing the extent to which the Chief Constable has fulfilled their statutory duties³ to:-

- Obtain the views of local communities on crime and disorder in their neighbourhood;
- Provide local communities with information about policing in their neighbourhood;
- Hold regular police and community meetings in local neighbourhoods.

This strategy complies with all the current legislation and also seeks to incorporate best practice found elsewhere.

Accountability and transparency

One of the main aims of the introduction of PCCs was to bring democratic accountability to the determination of local policing priorities. They were to be “elected, visible, well-known in their communities and accountable to the electorate”.⁴ It is therefore of key importance that the public has an understanding of the role of PCCs, who they are and what effect their local elected officials are having.

¹ Statutory duties to consult with local people and have regard to their views about policing in their area:- the Police Act 1996, Policing and Crime Act 2009 and Community Engagement and Membership Regulations 2010.

² Make arrangements for obtaining, before a police and crime plan is issued, the views of the people in that police area, and the views of the victims of crime in that area, on the plan:- Section 34 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act & Section 96 of the Police Act 1996 as amended.

³ Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/police-and-crime-commissioners-one-year-on-warts-and-all>

There is evidence that, while an improving picture⁵, the public nevertheless has relatively low awareness and understanding of the role and responsibilities of PCCs. The role has existed for only a relatively short time period and is the first directly-elected position with responsibility for policing – a totally new concept for the electorate. By continuing to communicate effectively and build up true two-way engagement methods, this strategy seeks to broaden understanding and strengthen reputation, confidence and trust in the role and the work of the OPCC. It will also be complemented in this regard by the work of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) to further explain the work of PCCs on a national basis.

An important principle underpinning public accountability is transparency, with a requirement that PCCs should act in a way which provides the public with a wide range of information to help them make informed choices. This is underpinned by various pieces of legislation, including the Freedom of Information Act 2000, The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011.

The Commissioner is committed to making available information to the public to enable them to hold him to account during his term of office. The OPCC will also endeavour to be as open and transparent as possible in publishing information in compliance with its legal duties, with the aim of being acknowledged as leading national good practice.

Key audiences

The Commissioner and the OPCC will seek to engage with all sections of society, including those from different diversity strands and hard-to-reach groups. Key stakeholders include but are not limited to:-

- The general public, especially people who live, work or visit Warwickshire;
- Victims of crime and service users of Warwickshire Police and related agencies involved with criminal justice and community safety
- Officers, staff and volunteers within Warwickshire Police and the wider Alliance with West Mercia Police;
- The Police and Crime Panel;
- Partner agencies, such as local authorities, the NHS, community safety partnerships and those involved in the criminal justice system;
- County Members of Parliament and elected members (county/district and borough/parish councillors);
- Advisory groups, such as custody visitors; Trust, Integrity and Ethics Committee;
- Groups/organisations funded by the PCC grants;
- The third/voluntary sector, including Neighbourhood Watch, CAVA and WREP;
- Faith and non-faith groups;
- Under-represented groups and the seldom heard, such as young people, the elderly and people with disabilities.

⁵ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-24930039>

3. Principles for effective consultation and engagement

This strategy is guided by a number of core principles which aim to ensure that, wherever possible, local consultation, engagement and involvement activity is:-

- **Representative and inclusive:**
Activities should be fair and representative in terms of geography, demography, identity. The OPCC will continue to be proactive in giving a louder voice to those that may be under-represented, seldom heard or disengaged – including those with direct experience of the criminal justice system. Efforts will be taken to ensure engagement opportunities are open to all and include a commitment to fulfilling duties under the Equality Act 2010 and actively engaging diverse groups and communities that do not normally participate.
- **Collaborative and joined up:**
The OPCC will work collaboratively with Warwickshire Police and partner agencies to minimise duplication and share skills, resources and results of consultation and engagement activity across partner agencies. This will help to deliver efficiencies, identify benchmarking opportunities, share best practice and reduce ‘consultation fatigue’.
- **Cost effective and provides value for money:**
The OPCC is committed to fulfilling the PCC’s statutory duties for engaging and consulting communities, victims of crime and other stakeholders in an effective, meaningful and cost-effective way and will aim to ensure a proportionate balance between cost, quality and benefit in discharging these functions.
- **Planned and purposeful:**
The OPCC will aim to ensure that consultation and engagement activities are properly planned and appropriate for their target audience, clearly articulated to the public and are afforded sufficient time to be effective and inclusive. Time will also be appropriately allocated to collate, analyse and communicate findings as part of the strategic decision-making process. The OPCC will also endeavour to ensure that activity is informed by evidence of best practice and learning from what works.
- **Receptive to change:**
The way individuals engage and communicate has undergone unprecedented change over recent years, particularly with the growth of social media and online communication. The OPCC will work to use both new and traditional means of communicating and engaging with communities to maximum effect, seek innovate new ways of working and embrace new technology and techniques.

4. Strategic vision

Warwickshire’s Police and Crime Commissioner, Philip Seccombe, gave a commitment as part of his Police and Crime Plan to ensure that Warwickshire communities have a strong voice on policing. In doing so, the Commissioner aims not only to develop safer communities but to also further improve public trust and confidence in policing.

This will be achieved through delivering improvements in the way communities and key stakeholders are informed, consulted, involved and empowered. This will require activity by the OPCC, Warwickshire Police and partners. The strategic vision is divided into three parts, with each feeding into the other to deliver continuous improvement:-



4.1. Keeping communities and key stakeholders informed

The Commissioner is committed to ensuring that communities and victims are kept informed and updated on the crime and community safety matters that affect them. Ensuring that the Commissioner's role and the work carried out by the OPCC are understood and disseminated widely to the public and other key stakeholders is a key aim.

Providing information is a largely one-way process which helps to establish the Commissioner's status as an authoritative voice for the public on policing. It is also the primary mechanism for alerting people to what is available and happening in their area, as well as allowing the Commissioner to comment on the progress of delivery of the Police and Crime plan, give opinion on policing policy and comment on other relevant topics of public interest.

The value of providing information should not be underestimated. When asked, people regularly identify a need for more information about services in their area. It is also important for the democratic process that there is broader knowledge of the work of PCCs, in order for the public to be in a position to hold them to account.

Primary mechanisms for achieving this include:-

- **Websites** – e.g. OPCC website; business, rural and cybercrime micro-sites, force and partner websites; Warwickshire Police intranet;
- **Social media** – e.g. OPCC You Tube, Facebook and Twitter accounts; targeted advertising on social networks;
- **Media relations** – e.g. media releases, press briefings and radio and television interviews;
- **Newsletters** – e.g. monthly PCC email newsletter; quarterly partner updates;
- **Community messaging** – e.g. email alerts about key activity using the force Community Messaging Service (CMS);
- **Formal publications** – e.g. Annual Report; Council Tax leaflet, Statement of Accounts;
- **Reports** – e.g. to the Police and Crime Panel or responses to inspections from external bodies; publishing minutes of the 'Holding to Account' weekly meetings with the Chief Constable, Delivery Plan quarterly reports;
- **Crime prevention and awareness campaigns** – e.g. supporting force and partner initiatives;
- **Freedom of Information** – e.g. maintaining an FOI Publication Scheme; responding to requests for information and publishing a disclosure log.

While predominately a one-way process, the OPCC will ensure that its communications encourage feedback and promote opportunities for the public to engage wherever possible.

As a result of these activities, the Commissioner aims to:-

- Always communicate in an open, transparent and accountable manner which is clear, accurate, informative and timely;
- Have a diverse range of communication tools and methods in use, which are tailored to the needs and preferences of local communities;
- Broaden knowledge of his role and the work of the OPCC;
- Grow the audience of the OPCC website and ensure it provides an easy-to-use and accessible 'one-stop-shop' to showcase his work and that of the OPCC;
- Enjoy positive and productive working relationships with our local, regional, national and specialist media, in recognition of the important role they play in shaping public perception;
- Ensure the public and partners are given frequent updates on the progress of the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan;
- Make best use of existing and emerging partnership communications networks;
- Have a platform to provide commentary on important issues and provide his perspective on policing policy;
- Ensure feedback from consultation and engagement activity is pro-actively published and communicated in a timely manner, along with the details of what will be done as a result.

The Commissioner will hold the Chief Constable to account in ensuring Warwickshire Police:-

- Provides local communities with information about policing in their neighbourhood;
- Makes improvements to the force website to ensure it is easy-to-use and accessible, providing the public with a self-service approach to a range of services;
- Continues to develop the community messaging service ensuring residents are informed of current issues, provided with crime prevention advice and good news stories;
- Maintains a programme of crime prevention campaigns and ensures their effectiveness at reaching target groups.

Areas of focus for OPCC during 2018/19:-

1. Continued development of fresh content on the OPCC website, including ensuring compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations;
2. Introduce a quarterly newsletter for partners to explain progress in delivering the Police and Crime Plan;
3. Enhance the content for social media channels, with increased input from all OPCC staff and better use of video and photography.

4.2. Consulting with communities and key stakeholders

The Commissioner will ensure local communities are consulted on and have an influence over the services they receive and the strategic decisions that affect them.

Consultation can be explained simply as a: “process of dialogue that leads to a decision”⁶. It is a primary way of ensuring that the work of the OPCC responds to and reflects the needs of local people. Consultation can be statutory (e.g. the Commissioner is required by law to consult prior to publishing his Police and Crime Plan or setting the precept) or non-statutory (e.g. the Commissioner actively chooses to seek views on relevant topics, such as focus groups on older people’s needs).

Consultation can take many forms, depending on its purpose. It can be a one-off exercise or repeated over a long period of time. It can be formal or informal, focused on a specific issue or incident, a neighbourhood, on service delivery, or more broadly, on policing strategy.

The OPCC recognises the value of consulting, as it allows the Commissioner to gain views from local people or service users about proposed changes, priorities or new initiatives. In order for feedback to be representative and meaningful, the OPCC will ensure that consultations provide enough information to ensure that those consulted understand the issues and can give informed responses. Adequate time for responses will be provided and consultations will be undertaken in a manner which best suits the purpose and target audience, with targeted work where appropriate to capture underrepresented voices.

Primary mechanisms for achieving this include:-

- **Public surveys** examining their views on policing and community safety issues. A range of these already take place, such as the Crime Survey of England and Wales, alongside bespoke surveys that could be carried out by the OPCC or the force. These will inform the development and continuous review of the Police and Crime Plan. The OPCC will work with Warwickshire Police and local partners to ensure public consultation is appropriate, timely and wide reaching;
- **An annual precept consultation** seeking the views of the public and engaging stakeholders on setting the precept and police budget;
- **Working with our partner organisations** to consult on specific issues or themes as appropriate and maximise our reach by utilising partner’s existing networks as appropriate;
- **Influencing Warwickshire Police’s consultations** to ensure they assist in informing and delivering the Police and Crime Plan for Warwickshire;
- **Relevant national and regional surveys.** Where possible and practical we will seek to extract Warwickshire data sets and appropriately use them to inform the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan.

⁶ Audit Commission (1999) *Listen Up: Effective Community Consultation*

As a result of these activities, the Commissioner aims to:-

- Be better informed of the issues that affect Warwickshire residents and businesses;
- Measure how well or not the police and partners are addressing the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan;
- Understand the public's views on the level of the police precept (the portion of local council tax which pays for policing services) prior to setting the budget for Warwickshire Police each year;
- Evidence the need for service continuation, redesign or new service provision;
- Publish the outcomes and impact of consultations.

The Commissioner will hold the Chief Constable to account in ensuring Warwickshire Police:-

- Is appropriately contacting victims of crime and using their feedback to deliver improvements to service delivery;
- Continues to deliver the survey for victims of domestic abuse and rape;
- Takes into account public confidence in policing
- Continues to consult local residents on the issues that affect their community and uses this feedback to inform strategies for policing local areas;

Areas of focus for OPCC during 2018/19:-

1. Delivery of consultations on the Police Precept for 2019/20 and business crime;
2. Analyse the results of the business crime survey and use the data to drive local work around the identified issues and to tackle business crime.

4.3. Involving and empowering communities and key stakeholders

The Commissioner is committed to involving communities and service users in shaping local services and putting their voices at the heart of delivery. By empowering and enabling citizens to take action, together we can make our streets, homes and businesses safer.

Community engagement is a two-way process which involves residents in making decisions that can lead to improvements in the quality of their life and allow them to take part in shaping the places they live in. They are able to gain greater knowledge of the relevant issues, discuss different options and contribute ideas. Residents can also suggest some solutions for tackling problems faced by the community, such as crime, or developing responsive services.

The Commissioner's approach will be to engage widely with all sections of the community across Warwickshire. He will attend a wide variety of community events, meetings and partnership days where he will be accessible to the group and individuals. The OPCC will also develop dedicated public engagement opportunities which will be published through the website and social media.

The Commissioner aims to work with an existing established group/s to gather feedback from the public. The group/s will have representation from a wide variety of communities, including under-represented groups and those whose voices are seldom heard. Group members will help the commissioner to examine a range of different topic areas to formulate feedback and input into the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan.

Through a programme of police base visits, the Commissioner will also engage with officers, staff and volunteers at all levels and ranks. The promoted visits allow questions and issues to be raised with the Commissioner and ensure he is a familiar face within the force. Where appropriate, the staff and officer feedback will be discussed with the Chief Constable at his weekly meeting with the Commissioner and the outcome published and fed back to officers and staff.

The Commissioner will use his grants scheme to encourage partnership working with the third and voluntary sector. The aim will be to deliver programmes which support the aims and ambitions of the Police and Crime Plan, delivering improvements to policing, community safety, support services for victims or to the wider criminal justice system.

He will also continue to encourage direct community participation through his funded rural, business and cyber-crime co-ordinators and support for Warwickshire Police's delivery of the Citizens' Academy programme, Police Support Volunteers and the Special Constabulary.

Primary mechanisms for achieving this include:-

- **independent scrutiny roles:** Independent Custody Visitor Scheme, Independent Trust, Integrity and Ethics Committee, Hate Incident Partnerships;
- **resident and service user reference groups:** Citizens' Panel, Citizens' Academies, Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs), Mystery Shoppers;
- **grants:** Commissioner's Grants Scheme, Victim's Support Grant, Ministry of Justice funding;
- **volunteering roles:** Police Cadets, Police Support Volunteers, Special Constabulary;
- **youth inclusion:** Youth Parliament, Children in Care Council, police youth inclusion teams;
- **direct engagement:** monthly engagement opportunities for the public, attending community events, meetings, police and partnership days;
- **partnership working:** e.g. blue lights services, local authorities, community safety partnerships, criminal justice agencies;
- **events, seminars and conferences:** working with key partners to deliver targeted events, seminars and conferences aimed at raising awareness, discussing current issues and developing action plans to address them.

As a result of these activities, the Commissioner aims to:-

- raise public awareness and understanding of volunteering roles and continue to increase the take up of Cadets, Special Constables and apprentice opportunities within the police;
- explore new ways of involving under-represented groups and those seldom heard;
- continue to support and engage with the Youth Parliament and Children in Care Council;
- through provision of grant funding and commissioned services, promote community action in delivering the ambitions of the Police and Crime Plan;
- promote and support improvements in the sustainability of schemes such as Neighbourhood Watch and Street Pastors;
- develop a Mystery Shopper programme to explore new ways of involving local people in scrutinising policing;
- continue to build on partnership working with the third and voluntary sector and other stakeholders;
- attend a wide variety of community events, meetings and partnership days where he will be accessible to the group and individuals⁷;

⁷ The Commissioner wants to engage with the public in a wide variety of forums. If you would like Mr Secombe to speak about his role or specific local issues relating to policing at your group or organisation, please email the office at opcc@warwickshire.gov.uk. While we cannot guarantee he will be able to attend every event due to his many work commitments, we will make every effort to see if it is possible. If not, we will work with you to answer any specific questions your group or organisation may have.

- Ensuring communities have access to the information and advice they need to be safe and feel safe;

The Commissioner will hold the Chief Constable to account in ensuring Warwickshire Police:-

- Is accessible to the public through a range of mechanisms including 101, email, surgeries and online reporting;
- Empowers communities to tackle neighbourhood problems through local meetings and surgeries.
- Promotes and delivers the Police Cadets and Citizens' Academy schemes to all sectors of the community;
- Promotes and encourages opportunities for Police Support Volunteers across all appropriate areas of policing;
- Develops effective engagement with targeted groups within our community;
- Makes use of IAGs, feedback from communities and key stakeholders to drive forward improvements in service delivery.

Areas of focus for OPCC during 2018/19:-

1. Explore and develop opportunities with existing group/s to provide the PCC with feedback and input on a range of relevant topic areas, while ensuring the views of under-represented groups and the seldom heard groups are included;
2. Establishing and promoting dedicated engagement opportunities for the Commissioner;
3. Continuing to organise regular engagement days at police stations and bases, enabling the Commissioner to meet officers, staff and partners;
4. Monitor the Commissioner's Grants Scheme for 2018/19 and develop, engage and build a market place for commissioned support services addressing the needs of:
 - victims,
 - drug and alcohol criminal justice clients,
 - sexual violence,
 - child sexual exploitation.

5. Measures of success

A range of measures have been identified which provide an indication of the extent to which activity to inform, consult and involve local communities is helping to deliver the Commissioner's vision of safer communities and improved trust and confidence in policing. These include:-

- **OPCC consultations and surveys**

The baseline data from the consultation on the Police and Crime Plan provide a range of measures relating to policing activity, while additional survey work can be undertaken to chart public confidence in key areas of work. As an example, the regional cyber-crime survey provides additional data on this specific topic area. Ensuring statistically relevant numbers of respondents from Warwickshire will be key in all consultations and surveys.

- **Warwickshire Police consultations**

The force surveys victims of crime – and in particular victims of rape and domestic abuse - as well as an annual health and well-being survey of its workforce. Again, ensuring that statistically relevant numbers of respondents are achieved will be key.

- **Other consultation data**

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) provides data at a national level on attitudes towards policing and community safety, as well as general awareness of the role and work of PCCs. Data on whether the police and local authorities, broken down by force area, are also available from the CSEW. Partner consultations and the work of the Warwickshire Observatory will also need to be taken into consideration.

- **Media coverage**

The amount and tone of the media coverage achieved for the OPCC and the Commissioner's work is measured, with the aim of increasing the number of proactive media releases which achieve positive coverage on radio, television and in print. Measures will be developed to examine the subsequent impact of coverage on social media.

- **Social media growth**

As well as measuring the growth of the OPCC social media channels, data is available to show the impact of each posting. Increasing the numbers of views, shares, likes and the overall reach of our content on social media must be the ambition. Equally, increasing the amount of engagement achieved through our social media channels is a priority.

- **Website growth**

The OPCC website is a 'shop window' for the work of the Commissioner and a range of metrics is available to track progress. Increasing the number of visitors and the numbers of pages each user visits will be a priority, as well ensuring that the site's design takes account of the increasing number of users who only ever access via a mobile device.

- **Direct engagement**

Levels of direct engagement with the OPCC and the public in terms of correspondence to the office and monitoring of the monthly engagement opportunities, including data such as the number of meetings/ events, their locations, the types of communities present, the questions / issues raised and subsequent action taken. Similar data can be gathered from engagements with police officers and staff.

- **Reference groups**

The success of the Citizens' Panels could be measured by the numbers of volunteers who are active on the group, the topic areas discussed and how their feedback influences policies or practices.

- **Grants scheme**

The Commissioner's grants scheme enables a wide range of services to be delivered by statutory, third and volunteer sector providers. The number of grant recipients, the outcomes of the individual grants and the impact the services have for the users will be monitored quarterly to ensure the delivery of key outcomes.

Performance against these measures will be monitored through the main delivery plan for the Warwickshire Police and Crime Plan.

This strategy will also be reviewed annually in order to take in new developments and to ensure that it continues to be fit-for-purpose.

6. Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner's *Consultation, Engagement and Community Involvement Strategy 2016-2020*, Chelmsford City Council's *Consultation and Engagement Strategy 2014*, the Durham Police and Crime Commissioner's *Communications & Community Engagement Strategy 2012-16* and the College of Policing's *Authorised Professional Practice for Engagement and Communication*, which have all proved useful references in developing this strategy.