

<b>CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL</b>	<b>Agenda Item 10</b>
<b>6 September 2017</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## **Report of the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner**

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### **POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER’S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

#### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The report is being presented to the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel (the “Panel”) to show how the Police and Crime Commissioner (the “Commissioner”) engages with communities within the county ensuring that the all communities are engaged with, and that both their voices and the Commissioner’s are heard.
- 1.2 This report responds to the Panel’s request to display how the Commissioner approaches community engagement with examples of activities that have taken place. Communities having confidence in how we respond to their needs is a key outcome within the Commissioner’s Police and Crime Plan (the “Plan”), with the report looking at these priorities going forward

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Panel is asked to note the report. The Commissioner would welcome the Panel’s suggestions on strategic engagement activities to deliver the Plan going forward.

#### **3. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- 3.1 Item 8 – To support the effective exercise of the functions of the Commissioner.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Policing Protocol Order 2011 includes a duty to “provide the local link between the police and communities, working to translate the legitimate desires and aspirations of the public into action”.
- 4.2 Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 sets out the roles and responsibilities of Police and Crime Commissioners and states: “Arrangements shall be made for each police area for obtaining ... the views of people in that area about matters concerning the policing of the area, their co-operation with the police in preventing crime in that area and for obtaining the views of victims of crime in that area about matters concerning the policing of the area.
- 4.3 Through the Plan the Commissioner has set out his policing priorities. The Plan has been informed following extensive engagement with the public, the police and a range of stakeholders. The Commissioner sees effective engagement with the public as crucial to the success of the role and improving further trust in the police.

4.4 The Plan is built around the four themes of Victims, Offenders, Communities and Transformation.

Of particular note to this report is the Communities section (as given at Appendix A) which has the specific objectives of:

- Joining up service provision to listen and respond to day to day community safety issues;
- Increase public involvement to improve community understanding and resilience;
- Inspire all public servants to maintain the highest levels of ethical behaviour to ensure public confidence and trust.

4.5 The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) is a separate organisation to Cambridgeshire Constabulary (the “Constabulary”) but the two work closely together to inform and reassure the public that the Constabulary are working effectively. To this end the OPCC and the Constabulary have produced a Joint Engagement Strategy. This Strategy sets out the principles of how both will engage, who the engagement will be with, and the expected outcomes.

4.6 Following on from the Joint Engagement Strategy, the OPCC has a Communications and Engagement Strategy. This Strategy is currently being reviewed following the launch of the Commissioner’s Plan. Part of the Strategy is a matrix of engagement which is given at Appendix B.

4.7 With the current challenges faced by all service providers effective engagement is more important than ever. All public services have seen a reduction in budgets. Pressure on public services can result in increased calls to the police as the service of last resort. Often the police are working with the same individuals as the health service and local authorities; it makes sense that all plan together as all shrink together.

4.8 Despite these pressures, for most people their biggest concern is around police visibility. Although Cambridgeshire is a relatively safe place to live people want the reassurance of a highly visible police service. People’s fears and expectations need be managed and effective communication is vital to this.

## **5. KEY ISSUES**

5.1 In his first year in office the Commissioner has set aside 1-2 days per week to proactively engage with police staff and officers, stakeholders, community groups and individual members of the public. This engagement has helped inform the creation of the Plan which was launched in March 2017. It is vital that the Commissioner hears the voice of the people.

5.2 Now in his second year in office, the Commissioner continues to proactively engage with all parts of the community and increasingly his time is specifically focussed on taking forward the priorities identified with the Plan.

- 5.3 Delivery of the Plan requires engagement at many different levels locally, regionally and nationally, the inter-action and inter-relationship of which is illustrated in the following diagram:



- 5.4 The purpose of engagement activity is to ensure a two way flow of information where the Commissioner hears and understands the voice of the public, and the public hears and understands the voice of the Commissioner. The overarching outcome, as set out in the Plan, is for communities to have confidence in how the police respond to their needs.
- 5.5 The Commissioner continues to represent the county on the national stage, representing the views of the people of Cambridgeshire and the needs of the county at the highest levels of government. There have been regular meetings with ministers including the Policing and Fire Service Minister and also works with the region's MPs to ensure the county's voice is heard and receives a fair deal.
- 5.6 Many of the issues faced in the county around crime and disorder cannot be solved by the Constabulary alone. It is only through taking a whole system approach and working ever closer with partner agencies that complex issues can be addressed. This includes coordinated communication with communities and having a shared approach. Work is under way through a county wide multi-agency leadership group to join up how agencies work together, including joining up communications and engagement.
- 5.7 There is always a need to maintain a level of flexibility in looking ahead and planning activity to align with important decisions and announcements while also maintaining the ability to respond to short term engagement opportunities that arise. The Commissioner and the OPCC look ahead to what is coming up both nationally, regionally and locally and pre-plan engagement activity.
- 5.8 Appropriate engagement is planned where a decision needs to be made that may affect the public or partners. An example of this is where a police building is proposed to be disposed of or have a change of use. In these cases the Commissioner will engage with partners on a 1-2-1 basis to brief them on the proposals, for example the disposal of Whittlesey Police Station. The Commissioner will also engage locally through the media, his newsletter, local groups, and local street surgeries. Another example is the precept component of council tax where the Commissioner engages with the public to take into account their views on whether the precept stays the same or changes.
- 5.9 Where there is a particular issue that is becoming prominent, the Commissioner will arrange visits to relevant community groups to get a first-hand view from those at the heart of it. An example of this is increasing instances of hate crime where the Commissioner has visited community leaders in Peterborough, organised through a local mosque, in order to talk directly to those who have the best understanding of the issues.

- 5.10 The Commissioner meets with representative organisations to discuss issues relevant to businesses or industry groups. An example of this is the agricultural sectors concerns over rural policing. The Commissioner meets regularly with representatives of the National Farmers Union, Countryside Watch, individual farmers and the Constabulary's Rural Crime Action Team (RCAT). This engagement has contributed to improved satisfaction with the rural community and reassured them that the Constabulary are taking appropriate action.
- 5.11 The Commissioner also meets with business organisations such as Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce, the Federation of Small Business, Huntingdonshire Businesses Against Crime and Cambridge Businesses Against Crime in order to understand concerns from the business community.
- 5.12 The Commissioner and the OPCC are represented on a number of community partnership groups, most notably Community Safety Partnerships. These groups review crime trends and community needs at a district level which are shared through all represented partners. The Commissioner is able to get a county wide view of resident's concerns from these Partnerships which are fed into the Countywide Community Safety Strategic Board Group (which the Commissioner Chairs). There are also a number of other partnership groups that cover specialist areas that the OPCC is represented on, for example Domestic Abuse.
- 5.13 The Constabulary and Local Authorities have thematic leads in most areas of business and have well established connections with minority groups and the communities affected. OPCC staff work closely with these leads to engage with community groups. Examples of joint engagement work includes working with the Cyber and Fraud Team (cyber conference), Traveller Liaison (meeting with traveller leaders), Modern Day Slavery (event), ex-offenders (Prison visit and offenders conference), Hate Crime (events, National Hate Crime Week), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) (LGBT month events, work with the Encompass Network), RCAT (community visits), victims and witnesses of crime (various meetings and events), and Restorative Justice (event).
- 5.14 The Commissioner has an ongoing programme of surgeries, public contact points, community meetings and digital communications. This, combined with correspondence received, enables the Commissioner to gain a good understanding for the general issues that are of most concern to people, and the response to these.
- 5.15 An example of this is the clear message that people are highly concerned about road safety, particularly with speeding cars and inconsiderate cyclists. As a result of this the Commissioner has funded a Casualty Reduction Officer with a focus on education, particularly of young drivers. The Commissioner has also funded a Watch Coordinator whose role is to support and develop the counties volunteer watch schemes. This includes Community Speedwatch. Funding has also been provided through the casualty reduction support fund for DriveIQ, an app to educate young motorists and help them become better drivers.
- 5.16 The Commissioner also meets with district and parish councillors to discuss local areas of concern. All parish councils have been invited to a series of conferences as part of the community engagement activity.
- 5.17 The Commissioner has appointed an Engagement Officer. The focus of this role is to ensure the Commissioner is able to engage with children and young people, under-represented groups and vulnerable communities. Much of this engagement is done through third sector organisations and partners who have well established networks that can be tapped into, ensuring a much better reach than if all were contacted directly. The Commissioner plans to build on this to achieve greater reach into these communities.

- 5.18 It can be difficult to engage with children and young people as many are unwilling or not interested in engaging. However, the Commissioner has demonstrated a number of ways to do this, such as meetings with Youth Forums, including the East Cambridgeshire Youth Forum, to discuss a variety of issues and get their input into his work. When preparing the Plan they helped by running sessions that reviewed each section, asking what various bits meant, helping make the final version clearer. The Commissioner has also attended school events to explain his role and seek their views. This autumn will see Youth Jam, which will include an interactive Q&A where young people can ask questions and make comments anonymously through electronic tablets. The Commissioner's Engagement Officer has a specific role of engaging with young people and works through the Safer Schools Partnership and directly with individual schools, Universities and Colleges. Recent engagement includes Cambridge University Students Union, Anglia Ruskin University, Long Road Sixth Form College and North Cambridge Academy.
- 5.19 Cambridgeshire has diverse mix of faiths and cultures, particularly in Cambridge City, Peterborough and parts of Fenland. Community leaders are engaged through a wide range representative groups. The Commissioner has met with representatives of many faith groups such as the West Norfolk Fenland Muslim Association, mosque leaders in Peterborough, and community cohesion leads in Peterborough. The multi-faith conference held at Constabulary HQ was very well attended with representatives from a wide range of faiths including Sikh, Buddhist, Christian, Muslim and Jewish communities.
- 5.20 There are strong Eastern European communities throughout the county and the Commissioner engages with individuals and groups on a regular basis. This has been done through the Rosmini Centre in Wisbech, street surgeries and community events, such as Polish Day in Peterborough.
- 5.21 The Commissioner has sought to understand the issues faced by the travelling community by meeting with community leaders (particularly at the permanent sites in Peterborough) and through groups such as One Voice4 Travellers, the Cottenham Traveller Hub and via Local Authority Liaison Officers.
- 5.22 The OPCC engages with organisations representing the less abled communities to make sure there is a channel open to the Commissioner. Examples include work with VoiceAbility (a group supporting those who face disadvantage or discrimination) who advise on materials that the OPCC produce and also cascade our information to their members. The OPCC has also worked with organisations such as Mencap, MIND and Pos'ability. A specific example of a recent engagement opportunity was meeting with the Guidedog Forum at Cambridge Fire Station to discuss issues, good or bad, that they encounter in day-to-day living such as pavement parking, street furniture, dangerous dogs, verbal abuse, etc.
- 5.23 Although this report focusses on community engagement, the police are part of the community and act as ambassadors for the Constabulary and for the Commissioner. The Commissioner has spent a lot of time going out and about with front line officers and meeting support staff to get their honest views on what the issues are and what could be done better. Often the Commissioner attends local meetings with officers to address community concerns and is happy to help officers when his support is requested.
- 5.24 In addition the Commissioner supports the work of the Constabulary in attracting volunteers to join the policing family in roles such as Police Support Volunteers and Special Constables.

## **6. PRIORITIES FOR ACTION**

- 6.1 The Plan sets out the priorities for action for supporting safer and stronger communities. These include
- Jointly engaging with all communities to understand and respond to local concerns – the OPCC is working with partners through the Senior Officers Community Network, a group made up of senior decision makers from across the public sector, looking at a shared approach to community engagement
  - Ensure the public have easy and effective ways to contact the appropriate service provider to get the information they need – a new Constabulary website is due to be launched in October 2017. It will provide much improved functionality from the current website including the ability to report crime online.
  - Reassure the public of the Constabulary's commitment to local policing to maintain public confidence and deal with issues of local concern such as road safety, anti-social behaviour and hate crime – the Local Policing Review, currently under way, will ensure that the Constabulary can continue to offer the best policing service to local communities and respond effectively to increases in demand.
  - Promote public involvement through active participation and support initiatives aimed at building community understanding and resilience – the Constabulary are implementing a new Citizens in Policing strategy to encourage active participation and the Commissioner will be supporting this drive.
  - Ensure there are recruitment, retention and progression policies that result in a police force that is representative of the communities we serve – the Commissioner will continue to support the Constabulary in the current drive to recruit officers that are representative of the communities in Cambridgeshire.
  - Work with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority to explore opportunities for police and fire to work together – consultation currently under way for new governance options. These will have implications for communication and engagement activity.

## **7. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

- 7.1 Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan 2017-20

<http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/police-crime-plan/police-crime-plan-2017-2020/>

Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/13/contents/enacted>

Joint Engagement Strategy, Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

<http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/joint-engagement-strategy/>

OPCC Communications and Engagement Strategy

<http://www.cambridgeshire-pcc.gov.uk/police-crime-plan/victims-witnesses/communications-and-engagement/>

**8. APPENDIX**

8.1 Appendix A – Police and Crime Plan – Communities section

Appendix B – Engagement Grid

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