CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY
August 2017 - May 2021
INTRODUCTION

On taking office in May 2016, the Commissioner laid out a new vision for the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to engage with the public. The Humberside Police Force area covers a large geographical area, with four Local Authorities serving their local communities, either side of the River Humber.

In his Police and Crime Plan, the Commissioner has set the following aim:

“To build public confidence in the agencies involved in creating safer communities.”

One of the key deliverables of this aim is:

“Effective communication and engagement with communities and the public”

During 2016/17 the Commissioner and his Chief Executive restructured the office to deal more effectively with strategic work, and create a new Communities and Engagement Team to work alongside local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in the four Local Authority areas.

The Commissioner has made clear his intention to reinvigorate the four CSPs and the OPCC Communities and Engagement Team will work closely with each Partnership at a local level to strengthen relationships with the OPCC, seek joint methods of public consultation and provide assurance on projects financed through OPCC funding. This strategy sets out how we will work in delivering this.
CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

1. PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY

1.1 Effective engagement with communities, partners and the public in the Humberside Police Force area is a core part of the business of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). The intent behind the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners was founded on an increased focus on democratic engagement by listening to and serving the public of the Commissioners’ area.

1.2 The Police and Crime Plan aims to deliver effective communication and engagement with communities and the public. The purpose of this strategy is therefore to provide clarity and distinction between different community engagement approaches thereby ensuring the Commissioner and OPCC provide the greatest opportunity for communities to understand the role of the PCC and to become actively involved in influencing decisions that affect or interest them.

1.3 The Police and Crime Plan 2017-21 sets out the Commissioner’s aims for Community Safety. In his introduction to the plan Keith Hunter highlights a key challenge; “To maintain the confidence and support of the public during a period of significant change….. We want to secure and maintain public confidence whilst working to deliver services and promote long-term improvements that meet the public’s needs.”

2. ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

2.1 To ensure effective community engagement is achieved, the following objectives have been identified;

- Establish a dedicated OPCC Engagement Team to be the Commissioners’ representatives in each Local Authority Area.
- Ensure engagement reflects the aims of the Police and Crime Plan and the results of engagement activities are used to influence and deliver those aims:
  1) To deliver increasingly self-sustaining and safe communities in the Humber area.
  2) To build public confidence in the agencies involved in creating safer communities.
  3) To provide services to victims and the most vulnerable that meet their needs.
- Ensure engagement is carried out to a consistently high, professional and ethical standard;
- Ensure that communities have sufficient access to, and understanding of, information regarding the work of the Commissioner, the delivery of local policing and the decision making processes that support them;
- Where possible and practicable undertake engagement with statutory and non-statutory partners and ensure the Commissioner’s Police and Crime Plan aims are aligned with those of partners so as to prevent duplication of effort and cost;
- All approaches to engage and consult with communities will take into account the differing needs of diverse communities and hard-to-reach groups, demonstrating a commitment to equality and ensuring respect for diversity;
- Provide the Commissioner with accurate and timely information on community views and expectations of policing, community safety and the criminal justice system in order to facilitate meaningful and informed debate with the Chief Constable and partners, make better informed decisions, reduce risk of failure, promote conditions for success and work towards Police and Crime Plan outcomes;
- Ensure the outcomes of community engagement are used to plan and inform the continuous improvement of services, ensuring they meet the needs of victims and service users;
- Ensure a strengthened partnership approach at a local level and activity to better understand the needs of the public;
- To monitor the extent to which changes in policing services, community safety and the criminal justice system are impacting, positively or negatively, on communities and community safety concerns;
- To measure the appropriateness of the Police and Crime Plan and associated priorities.
- Appendix 2 is a seven-step ‘Guide to Effective Consultation’ which sets out good practice for OPCC Consultation.
3. OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

3.1 This strategy takes account of a range of best practice from which the following overarching principles have been drawn;

i. Engagement will always be open and honest about what can and cannot be achieved and what constraints and boundaries are in place, establishing realistic expectations with communities and partners;

ii. The approaches adopted will always be proportionate and appropriate to the audience with the goal of achieving real engagement and feedback as opposed to following a bureaucratic process or seeking to ‘tick boxes’;

iii. It will engage and involve participants at the earliest stages of discussions rather than simply consulting them about pre-determined options or decisions that have been made;

iv. The process and outcomes will always be inclusive and avoid discrimination;

v. Timeframes for consultation will be proportionate and realistic;

vi. The views of groups of specific interest will be proactively sought using appropriate means of communication and engagement;

vii. All engagement will protect the privacy of participants and the personal information of participants in any engagement will be safeguarded in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

4. WHAT WE MEAN BY COMMUNITY

4.1 Communities can be defined in different ways. The broadly accepted definitions that will be used in this strategy are;

- **Communities of Place** - The community is defined by an area such as a parish, town, city or Neighbourhood/Council ward.

- **Communities of Interest and Belonging** - People who share a particular experience, interest or characteristic, such as young people, faith groups, older people, disabled people, ethnic groups or lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people (LGBT+).

4.2 People often belong to more than one community and communities therefore, by their nature, are composed of many different groups and interests. Members of communities of interest and belonging may not necessarily regard themselves as such and some may be more difficult to engage. A considerate and sensitive approach will therefore be adopted when engaging with these communities.
5. WHAT WE MEAN BY ENGAGEMENT

5.1 Community engagement provides people with opportunities to have an influence in how services are provided to them. It allows individuals an opportunity to become actively involved in decision making relating to local service provision.

5.2 For the OPCC, community engagement is about involving the community in the decisions that are made in relation to crime reduction, community safety and the police services provided for them.

5.3 In order to ensure effective community engagement the OPCC has established a Communities and Engagement Team including four Engagement Officers who will embed themselves into a Local Authority area and Community Safety Partnership to engage with residents, police and partner agencies to ascertain the local position for crime reduction and community safety.

5.4 The Engagement Officers will concentrate on geographically located groups in our four Local Authority areas (The East Riding of Yorkshire, North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire and the City of Hull) or groups that extend across local authority boundaries, and together with the Diverse Communities Manager have responsibility for identifying and engaging with those more self-defining groups of interest, ethnicity etc.

5.5 The OPCC will respond to its duty to ensure effective communication and engagement, and show a strong commitment to adhering to current equalities legislation. The OPCC is committed to provide specialised community engagement for minority groups through the Diversity Panel to ensure their opinions are taken into consideration.

5.6 The community engagement plan will be shared with partner agencies with the aim of reducing resources and cutting down on duplication. Our aim is to ensure the community’s views are fully considered and understood during the planning process, to inform the Commissioner’s strategic priorities, and to ensure the OPCC is meeting its statutory requirements.

5.7 Engagement can mean different things to different people and sometimes various terms are used, often interchangeably and confusingly, to describe different activities. In order to ensure clarity of purpose the OPCC strategy uses the terms set out in the so-called, ‘Ladder of Engagement’ below that is used by many other public bodies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of engagement</th>
<th>What does this mean?</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Impact on the Public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Level</td>
<td>Informing</td>
<td>Providing information to assist the public’s understanding of issues.</td>
<td>Brochures, Newsletters, Letters, Social Media Website</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consulting</td>
<td>Consulting</td>
<td>Obtaining public feedback to inform decision-making.</td>
<td>Surveys, Citizens Panels, Focus Groups, Public Events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Involving</td>
<td>Involving</td>
<td>Working directly with the public to ensure issues and concerns are addressed. Involving service users in service design and delivery.</td>
<td>Engagement Officers, Diversity Panel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborating</td>
<td>Collaborating</td>
<td>Working in partnership with the public in decision-making.</td>
<td>Community Needs Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empowering</td>
<td>Empowering</td>
<td>Placing final decision-making in the hands of the public.</td>
<td>Precept referendum.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Maximum Level</td>
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6. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Humberside Police

6.1 Humberside Police delivers a significant amount of community engagement and it is beyond the resources and capacity of the OPCC to provide a presence at most of these. In addition these meetings are an opportunity for officers and staff from the force to meet with and discuss specific operational policing issues with the communities they serve and routine attendance at these meetings by the Commissioner or their staff may conflict with achieving this purpose.

6.2 However, on occasions, the presence of the Commissioner or an officer from the OPCC may be appropriate or desirable at these events. When this is the case, staff from the OPCC will work with the force to arrange attendance and ensure that the event is properly coordinated. It is particularly important to ensure when attending any events that the statutory role of the Commissioner to ‘obtain the views of people, and the victims of crime, about matters concerning the policing of the area’ does not conflict or be confused with the operational role and responsibilities of the Chief Constable, their officers and staff.

Shared Approaches to Engagement with other Public Bodies

6.3 Many bodies including the four Local Authorities, Humberside Fire and Rescue, Health Services and others undertake a range of community engagement activities. The OPCC will work with these bodies to identify, whenever possible, shared opportunities for community engagement. Sharing engagement opportunities is cost effective and also ensures that communities do not suffer from engagement fatigue which may lead to disengagement.

WE WILL...

take into account the differing needs of diverse communities and hard-to-reach groups, demonstrating a commitment to equality and ensuring respect for diversity

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Selecting Community Engagement Activities

7.1 As outlined earlier, the purpose of this strategy is to ensure the Commissioner selects the appropriate engagement activity which provides the greatest opportunity for communities to become actively involved in influencing decisions that impact them. It is not therefore possible to be prescriptive about which activity to use, when or where. Appendix 1 is a toolkit of engagement activity which sets out the advantages, costs and effectiveness of different types of engagement activity.

Processes

7.2 All proactive communications and community engagement activity will be supported by a rolling 12-month activity plan published on the OPCC website. Every pre-planned piece of community engagement will be entered onto the activity plan and assigned to the appropriate engagement officer(s).

7.3 Using this method will allow, not just the Engagement Team, but also partners and the public to view and understand the activity plan. Each activity will be coordinated with partners where appropriate, maximising effectiveness.

Responsibilities

7.4 The Communities and Engagement Manager will have overall responsibility for the coordination and management of this strategy and its updating from time to time, supported by the Communications and Engagement Manager, Diverse Communities Manager and Humberside Criminal Justice Board Business Manager. Delivery of individual pieces of engagement activity will be the responsibility of the OPCC Engagement Officers, supported by managers where appropriate.

Contact from members of the public

7.5 When a person or community group raises a specific issue or wider concern with the Commissioner, the OPCC will ensure the matter is logged, researched and an appropriate response provided. Contact from members of the public can occur in a number of ways:

- Correspondence by email or letter
- Telephone call into the OPCC or visiting the office
- Personal contact at public meetings or events
- Contact via OPCC social media channels
8. CONSULTING AND INFORMING

8.1 The Commissioner has a statutory duty to consult with the public when setting the annual Policing Precept portion of the Council Tax, and when issuing a new Police and Crime Plan.

8.2 Various methods of consultation are listed in the Toolkit in Appendix 1. The OPCC will utilise the appropriate methods for each consultation to ensure a valid sample of the population is consulted and a wide spread of demographic groups are included.

8.3 The OPCC will develop surveys with partners to measure movement towards the Police and Crime Plan outcomes and they will form a vital part of our engagement.

8.4 The Engagement team will build stronger relationships with partners and map the methods of consultation already being undertaken. The OPCC will seek to work together with partners on joint consultations wherever practicable and to influence changes where it is felt necessary.

8.5 The OPCC will seek to inform as well as consult, using communication channels as described in Appendix 1. Again, where existing communication channels are already in use by partners such as newsletters etc. the OPCC will seek to work with partners to achieve the widest possible reach.

9. EVALUATING SUCCESS

9.1 The desired outcome from the delivery of this Engagement Strategy will be communities taking an active part in influencing decisions that affect them, and open and honest communication between service delivery agencies and the public.

9.2 Community engagement activity will be monitored and any consultation will be reviewed to measure public confidence in agencies and increased feelings of safety and security within communities.
10. OUR PLEDGE TO THE PUBLIC

INFORMATION

WE WILL:
• Give you enough information, in a way that meets your needs and enough time to get involved to a level you are comfortable with
• Let you know what difference you can make
• Give you information that is easy to understand
• Take care to keep your details confidential

RESPECT

WE WILL:
• Challenge all forms of discrimination
• Listen to your ideas, views and experience
• Take you seriously and treat you fairly
• Respect your opinions

WHERE THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO INFLUENCE

WE WILL:
• Make the most of what you tell us
• Work to let everyone have a chance to get their voice heard
• Work with you and our partners to recognize and consider the things you tell us are important or the things you feel we are doing well
• Provide a range of opportunities and a welcome environment to get involved
• Make opportunities for you to talk about issues you feel are important on a continuous basis
• Give you the opportunity to be empowered where relevant

FEEDBACK

WE WILL:
• Through our website/newsletters, post information to let you know any changes that have been influenced by public consultation
• Keep you up to date with what is happening
• Give feedback as soon as possible and in ways that are easy to understand for everyone

CONSIDERING YOUR VIEWS

WE WILL:
• Ask you what we can do better and use your views to inform our work
• Work with you to help change things for the better
• Make sure your views are considered in decision-making
• Be honest with you about what can and cannot be changed
• Try to learn and improve the way we work with you

WHAT WE ASK FOR IN RETURN:
• To treat our staff with respect, we will not tolerate aggression or abuse towards our staff.
• You will take the opportunity to engage as fully as you wish
• You will take more control over the decisions you make
## Engagement Activity Ladder of Engagement 'Fit' How we will do it

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement Activity</th>
<th>Ladder of Engagement</th>
<th>How we will do it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OPCC-Arranged Public Meetings</td>
<td>Informing/Consulting</td>
<td>• Give communities/individuals an opportunity to engage directly with the PCC or Engagement team and have a say.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Arranged Public Meetings</td>
<td>Informing</td>
<td>• As above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Civic Meetings (i.e. Town, Parish, Neighbourhood)</td>
<td>Informing/Consulting</td>
<td>• As above. Good opportunity to engage with local decision makers/politicians/service providers who may be able to share resources with the OPCC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Surgeries</td>
<td>Informing/Consulting</td>
<td>• OPCC can engage and consult with communities in high footfall areas such as shopping centres/market places.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Events [i.e. shows]</td>
<td>Informing/Consulting</td>
<td>• As above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity Panel. Citizens' Panels i.e. Senior Citizens</td>
<td>Consulting</td>
<td>• Provides good base of participants. • Ensures OPCC is consulting with diverse and hard-to-reach groups. • Ability to ask specific questions and receive clear responses within a set timescale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>Consulting/Involving</td>
<td>• Good method for ‘drilling down’ into the detail of issues thrown up by citizens’ panels and likely to generate detailed evidence. • Participants likely to be highly candid and honest in views as small and private event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents &amp; Tenants Groups</td>
<td>Informing/Consulting/Involving/ Collaborating</td>
<td>• Good opportunities to address very local issues. • Opportunity for 1:1 discussion in a controlled environment and possibility to work to develop a shared solution for problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On line discussion forum</td>
<td>Consulting/Involving</td>
<td>• Increasingly popular method with younger people/people with access to internet • Hosted on OPCC website • Allows members of the public to talk to the PCC in real time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On line surveys &amp; polls</td>
<td>Consulting</td>
<td>• Hosted on OPCC website or via social media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Watch/Networks</td>
<td>Informing/Consulting/Involving</td>
<td>• Many well established and active groups in Humberside Police force area generally eager and willing to engage and well connected to Community Safety Partnerships. • Many members are active and willing to volunteer—generally good supporters of the ‘law and order’ agenda.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

## APPENDIX 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement Activity</th>
<th>Ladder of Engagement</th>
<th>How we will do it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>Informing/Consulting/Involving</td>
<td>• Various techniques, such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube now well embedded across many public sector organisations as primary means of engagement. • OPCC Twitter account has over 4,500 followers so an excellent message reach. • Highly cost effective means of rapid engagement with individuals/communities. • Informality and speed encourages involvement from users. • Highly effective as a means of rapid crisis management. • Hugely popular with young people/key opinion formers/politicians/media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed Media</td>
<td>Informing</td>
<td>• PCC will contribute comments and articles to local newspapers • Most newspapers have websites and social media as well as printed content, increasing population reach. Newspapers tend to have an older readership of their printed editions which will allow messages to reach groups not connected online.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV/Radio</td>
<td>Informing</td>
<td>• Highly effective means of engaging public at most socio economic levels. • Now increasingly at a very local level (i.e. community radio stations). • TV/Radio appearances by the PCC will be agreed where subject is relevant to PCC’s role and in the public interest. • OPCC has capability to conduct ‘down the line’ interviews with radio stations which reduce the need and cost of travel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPCC Website</td>
<td>Informing/Consulting/Involving/ Collaborating</td>
<td>• The ‘shop window’ for the OPCC which will be maintained with up to date news as well as all statutory information for transparency. • Allows users to navigate their way through the organisation and to important information. • Will be used to provide online consultations/surveys as described above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletters</td>
<td>Informing</td>
<td>OPC will seek to ‘piggyback’ with partners’ publications (i.e. parish newsletters) wherever possible to give information to widest possible reach of residents.</td>
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*APPENDIX 1*
APPENDIX 2

SEVEN STEP GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE CONSULTATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consultation Step</th>
<th>Suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Step 1-Why are you consulting?         | • Define aims and objectives  
• What is it you want to achieve?     |
| Step 2-Who are you consulting?         | • How are you going to help people make informed choices?  
• Who are key customers, non service users, and others? |
| Step 3-Is it inclusive, if not why not? | • Ensure full consideration to who needs to be consulted.  
• Ensure target audience fully representative.  
• A sound evidence of needs and community views. |
| Step 4-How will you consult?           | • Consider the most suitable method.  
• Make it easy to use.  
• How does your target audience engage?  
• How can you enable everyone to participate?  
• What resources are available (time and money)? |
| Step 5-What should you ask?            | • What do they want to tell you about?  
• Why are you consulting?  
• What decisions will it influence?  
• Do the questions need to be constructed?  
• Avoid asking questions that are just ‘interesting’ to know-focus on what issues can be changed. |
| Step 6-How will you use the results and provide feedback? | • Who will collate and analyse?  
• Don’t underestimate skills and effort required to process data and write reports.  
• Look at the broad picture-where is the consensus and conflict?  
• Adopt process for making quality improvements based on what found and keep evidence of ‘why’?  
• Consider further consultation to test ideas on how to respond to consultation. |
| Step 7-How will you evaluate the consultation? | • Has it achieved purpose?  
• Did it meet principles of PCC engagement strategy?  
• Were timescales realistic?  
• Did you obtain range of views required?  
• Have you identified different views from different communities?  
• How did engagement shape key decisions?  
• Did participants feel input mattered and were empowered?  
• What methods worked/didn’t?  
• How would you do it differently?  
• What lessons have been learned? |

Adapted from Middlesbrough Partnership Community Engagement & Consultation Toolkit