



Devon & Cornwall Police Authority

Community Engagement Plan

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document provides the detailed plan of the Devon and Cornwall Police Authority's community engagement work, sitting beneath the "Joint [with Devon and Cornwall Police] Public Consultation and Community Engagement Strategy".
- 1.2 All Police Authorities have a legal obligation to consult with their communities. This is vital to ensure Devon and Cornwall Police Authority (herein referred to as 'the Authority') is able to ensure Devon and Cornwall Police delivers an efficient and effective police service.
- 1.3 There is much work already being undertaken by the Authority and this will provide a foundation for the development of further activities. This plan will illustrate those activities (although it should not be considered an exhaustive list). All activities undertaken will link into the aims and objectives of the plan and it comments on the different elements of community engagement ("The Why and What?" – section 3). It will also comment on the Authority's role in relation to overseeing the community engagement work of Devon and Cornwall Police (paragraph 3.12). The plan covers who will be engaged with and how this will be done ("The Who and How?" – section 4). Finally the plan offers some links to useful documents that have contributed to the design of this plan (section 5) and a section of appendices (section 6) which includes sub plans (such as the website redesign).
- 1.4 The design of this plan is to provide information to the Members of the Authority, structure to the Officers of the Authority and an indication of intent to community members. There are electronic links within the document to make reading it easier online. In cases where the link is to an external site a note of this is made in the footnote (for when the document is read in a paper format).

2 THE ROLE OF THE POLICE AUTHORITY IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 2.1 There are a number of requirements in law for police authorities to engage with members of the community and to produce certain documents. These are listed below for information.

Topic	Law / Recommendation
Council tax precept: How much of the council tax should be spent on policing?	Local Government Finance Act 1992
Arrangements for obtaining the views of the community on policing	Police Act 1996 section 96 and Police and Justice Act 2006 para 30
Local policing objectives	Police Act 1996 section 7
Stop and search – Know your rights	The Lawrence Report – recommendation 63

Document	Law
Local Policing Summary	Police Act 1996 section 8A
Policing Plan	Police Act 1996 section 8
Annual Report	Police and Justice Act 2006

3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – THE ‘WHY AND WHAT?’

- 3.1 This section discusses the different elements of community engagement, how they link together and what will be the key messages of the Authority.
- 3.2 Evidence suggests that there are mutual benefits from increasing all elements of community engagement. More information giving and involvement of community members in the work of the Authority can increase public confidence and rebalance the fear of crime levels.
- 3.3 A commonly used pictorial demonstration of the variety of community engagement elements is the ‘Ladder of community involvement’. This shows how different levels of engagement result in different outcomes for communities.

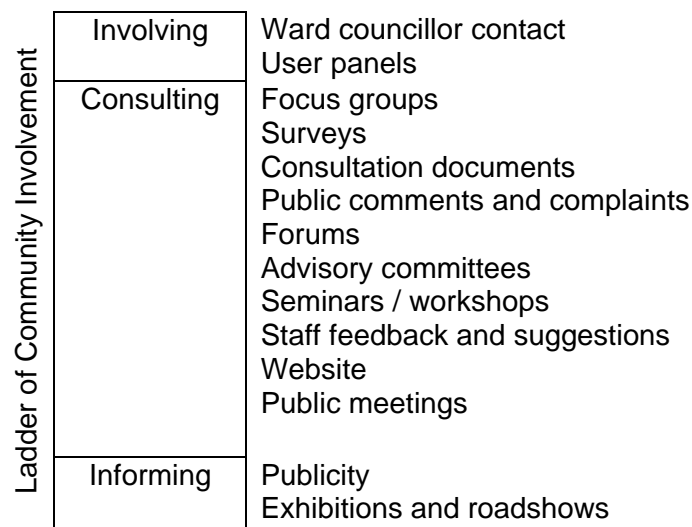


Figure 1: The ‘ladder of community involvement’

- 3.4 Initially communities can be informed as publicity displays key messages. Building on that information communities can be consulted by which the Authority would gain feedback and ideas for development. Additionally communities can be involved and this means they have a more direct impact on delivery. There are also two levels above those shown. These are collaborating and empowering. The Authority does not currently have the mechanisms to allow this engagement directly. However community members can apply to be independent members of the Authority.
- 3.5 A slightly more sophisticated diagram that has been developed is the contact circle.



Figure 2: from [Cheshire Police Authority Contact Plan](http://www.cheshirepa.police.uk/files/Contact Plan 2009-12.pdf)¹

¹ <http://www.cheshirepa.police.uk/files/Contact Plan 2009-12.pdf>

- 3.6 This acknowledges the four main elements of engagement (Informing, Asking, Giving Feedback and Influencing) but places them in a circle demonstrating that all elements can be taking place simultaneously and combining to provide a well balanced community engagement approach.
- 3.7 The Authority plan will contain three elements. One will be general community engagement (informing, giving feedback and influencing), another will be consultation (asking) and additionally there will be a media strategy (informing).
- 3.8 **Key messages**
- To ensure that the community's expectations for an excellent standard of policing in Devon and Cornwall is delivered [Devon and Cornwall Police Authority's vision]

The following are taken from the "[Ten Things You Need To Know About Your Police Authority](http://www.dcpa.police.uk/PDFstore/TenThingsYouNeedToKnow.pdf)"²

1. Your police authority is a group of 19 local people who hold the police to account on behalf of communities.
 2. Your police authority consults with local communities to find out what you want from your local police.
 3. Your police authority's job is to make sure that the Chief Constable delivers a police service which balances both national strategic priorities and the concerns of local people.
 4. Your police authority works with the Home Office to appoint the chief constable and senior police officers - and also checks on complaints against the police.
 5. Your police authority publishes an annual plan, based on consultation with local people, setting out the services your police force should deliver in the year ahead, and the targets it should achieve.
 6. Your police authority has a legal duty to promote equalities and good relations between different groups of people. As part of this, it ensures people know their rights if they are stopped or searched by police.
 7. Your police authority aims to have a membership that best reflects the diversity of the communities it represents.
 8. Your police authority holds the police budget. It consults with local people before it sets police council tax to ensure you get value for money.
 9. Your police authority sets the strategic direction of local policing to ensure that everyone benefits from a better police service.
 10. Your police authority makes sure the police service does everything it can to keep improving policing for your community.
- 3.9 The image of the Authority is also important and by maintaining a public profile trust and confidence can be built and maintained. To this end there is a clear role for informing to play. Raising awareness of the function of the Authority and how people can contact/feed into the processes of the Authority is important. Within this there is a clear need to celebrate the good work of the Authority and disseminate good news stories. This work will form part of the media strategy (appendix A).
- 3.10 **Budget consultation**
- 3.11 The Authority has a statutory obligation to consult the business community on the budget, specifically in relation to the council tax precept. In addition there will be future consideration

² <http://www.dcpa.police.uk/PDFstore/TenThingsYouNeedToKnow.pdf>

given to increasing the engagement of the Authority with the community in relation to budget setting.

3.12 **Overseeing the Police**

3.13 In addition to undertaking its own engagement the Authority has a role to play in overseeing the engagement of the Police, primarily the Policing Pledge and Partners and Communities Together (PACT). The Authority's Community Engagement Committee undertakes this function.

4 THE 'WHO' AND THE 'HOW?'

4.1 There are three groups of community engagement activities. These relate to the audience: internal (staff); external; and, hard to reach/hard to hear groups. For each of these groups the plan details some of the methods that will be utilised to engage with the audience. Some of the listed methods will reach more than one group. These should not be seen as exhaustive lists.

4.2 Internal stakeholders

4.3 The Policing family (officers, support staff, PCSOs, specials and contracted staff) is an important recipient of messages about the Police Authority, its work and aims. In turn this will improve the messages about policing.

4.4 Research³ shows that only 10% of the policing family would speak highly of the criminal justice system and 49% would be critical. This is in the context of 69% of the public trusting the information the Police give them⁴. It is important to improve the confidence of the internal stakeholders. Effective information giving is a key function in achieving this.

4.5 **Billboard** The monthly internal staff magazine which is available on the staff intranet, external website and some hard copies. There could be the possibility of negotiating a double page spread about the Authority and the work it does.

4.6 **Intranet** An increasingly used media for engaging with police officers and staff. All information is displayed in a corporate format but individual departments or teams own the content. The Police Authority has been allocated some space. This will contain sufficient information to aid understanding of the Authority and signposts to further information.

4.7 **Screensaver** All Force computers are subject to have a monthly schedule of screensavers. When no action is taken on a computer for approximately 5 minutes the screensavers are displayed. Each month a set of 6-8 full screen images is displayed raising awareness of key issues and providing signposts to further information.

4.8 **Lunchtime lectures** This not an established engagement mechanism but has been used previously. Space above the canteen at police HQ, or at other stations can be booked for a 30-minute slot. During this time a short presentation can be given about the work of the Authority and then provide a forum for questions and answers from the policing family to Members.

³ Ipsos MORI 2006.

⁴ Ipsos MORI 2003 – 'Closing The Gap'

4.9 Members newsletter/briefing There are two methods of providing updates to members. The Members Services section of the support team edits the newsletter. It provides an overview of forthcoming meetings and current issues. In addition Members' Briefings are produced on an ad hoc basis. This provide a slightly more in depth overview of a particular topic (such as the new Equality Bill).

4.10 External stakeholders

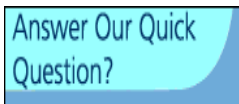
4.11 Website The Authority's website provides a constantly accessible and easy to update method of information giving. News and current issues can be uploaded in addition to key documents. A redesign is currently underway.



4.12 Facebook In January 2009 research found Facebook to be the most used (based on monthly figures) social networking site. By having a profile the Authority is accessible by a large audience, predominantly of those less likely to attend face to face community meetings or consultation activities. It also allows information to be pushed to the user, rather than a website that requires the user to go looking for information.



4.13 Online polls and surveys 'Snap polls' will be accessible through the Authority's website asking users to answer quick questions such as "Is this your first visit to the DCPA site? Yes/No".



In addition online surveys will be developed asking more detailed questions on a variety of subjects. This is more cost effective than the previous paper based survey (although this remains an option).

4.14 Stakeholder newsletter Producing an e-newsletter can provide regular updates to interested individuals (internal and external) and organisations about the current work of the Authority. This enables readers to feel engaged and in some circumstances identify opportunities for partnership work. A Police Authority Liaison Meetings (PALM) newsletter is currently produced. The ability to merge both documents will be considered.

4.15 Events There are a number of community events available for engagement across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly such as events for geographic communities (local shows, county shows) and communities of interest (Pride events, Respect festivals). The Authority will consider attendance at these in line with cost, intended audience and key messages. The aim of attendance is to provide information and undertake face to face consultation.

4.16 Police Authority Liaison Meetings PALMS provide an opportunity for effective and constructive two way face-to-face communication between the Police Authority and the public. Attendees are able to raise issues of concern, particularly in relation to strategic policing.

4.17 Police Authority Panels Two panels in Cornwall and one in Devon have been formed to inform the Police Authority on issues/topics that will help to secure and maintain an effective police service. The panel will act as a body of consultants that will steer future consultation/engagement work.

4.18 MP engagement Members of Parliament are key individuals in relation to promoting the work of the Authority. Improved relationships with these individuals, through meetings every six months, may support the key messages of the Authority. Invitations to a lunch hosted at Endeavour House with the opportunity for presentations and an informal discussion could be followed by the distribution of a briefing pack.

4.19 Utilising public space Increasingly engagement is necessary in spaces where individuals are already active and via methods they are already using. The opportunity of consultation through touch-screens in Post Offices is one example. A small stand could also be hosted in community supermarkets allowing shoppers to obtain information about the Authority.

4.20 Bluetooth/SMS The Police have the capability to send SMS messages to a directory of numbers (via a marketing company). This could be used for SMS poll. In addition the Police have Bluetooth transmitters which can send a message to all mobile phone users in a specified area (that have their Bluetooth enabled).



4.21 Community Messaging Community messaging is a targeted messaging service that allows the Police to contact subscribers with a message (email, phone, and fax) to help prevent or solve a crime. It can also be utilised to send messages about community meetings.

4.22 **Hard to reach/hard to hear groups**

4.23 Youth



All young people engagement will be organised and planned in consultation with the Authority's Children and Young People Policy Officer. The Authority is currently involved in schools projects through which young people learn about the work of the Authority and then present a piece of work to the Members and their school. In addition this year the Authority is involved in 11 Million Days, through which a small group of young people is developing a stop and search video.

Other options involve engagement with organisations such as Equal Voices Routeways (example of photomontage provided); who provide a forum for young people to engage with organisations.

4.24 School gates Providing information at primary/infant school gates can target two groups (parents/guardians and young people. Information at locations such as this needs to be appealing and quickly accessible. Some neighbourhood policing teams are already engaging in this way.

4.25 Events/meetings Hard to reach/hear groups can be targeted via attendance at existing meetings hosted specifically for groups. These may include carers events, return to work fairs, citizen advice days, mother and baby groups.

4.26 Strategies

4.27 The media strategy (appendix A) and joint consultation strategy with the Police (available separately) are linked to this plan. The media strategy guides the Authority's engagement with the media and the messages that will be utilised.

4.28 Who will be doing the engagement?

4.29 Officers of the Authority can largely undertake information giving and face to face consultation. The outcomes of consultation can then be analysed and provided to the Members. The impact of Members attended community engagement activity cannot be underestimated. Communities who have an opportunity to speak to and be heard by individuals directly responsible for making change in Devon and Cornwall.

4.30 Members chair some activity (such as PALMs). Where an Officer does engagement a plan of events will be provided to Members who will be able to attend should it be appropriate/possible.

5 USEFUL DOCUMENTS

- APA – “A snapshot of community engagement methods: Examples of community engagement by police authorities”.

<http://www.apa.police.uk/NR/rdonlyres/D1025384-63D0-403E-BA14-2BD93A74DD68/0/CommunityEngagementMethodsJan09.pdf>

- APA – “Engaging, consulting and informing communities: How to review and develop police authority strategies”.

<http://www.apa.police.uk/NR/rdonlyres/6A5FD7D3-9705-40EA-90A3-F72F6AADDDEE/0/EngagingConsultingandInformingCommunities.pdf>

- Cheshire Police Authority – “Contact plan 2009/12

<http://www.cheshirepa.police.uk/files/Contact%20Plan%202009-12.pdf>

- Devon and Cornwall Police Authority – “Ten things you need to know about your police authority”

<http://www.dcpa.police.uk/PDFstore/TenThingsYouNeedToKnow.pdf>

6 APPENDICES

Not included.