

Key Themes from Consultations and Engagement 2016/17

The key themes from the consultations carried out were:

- **101**

People highlighted a poor service which had unacceptable waiting times which caused them to abandon calls or call 999 instead.

The length of time it takes to contact Gwent Police using 101 was a regular complaint made to me. The Chief Constable and I acknowledge there is an ongoing issue with the 101 system in Gwent as well as across England and Wales.

We have recently introduced a new IT system for 101 and are currently recruiting new call handlers which will improve the service. In December 2016 the average wait time for calls had decreased to less than 2 minutes, but we will continue to work to further improve this system and I will monitor until the matter is resolved.

- **Gwent NOW**

People commented that Gwent NOW doesn't provide sufficient information and could be more locally focussed for users. They also stated that the language used relied on too much jargon.

Gwent NOW is a free community messaging system for the Gwent area that allows people to register to receive the latest crime notifications and community news happening in their local neighbourhood.

Gwent NOW is a relatively new system which provides a valuable source of information for the community. I am continuing to review the system with the Chief Constable and have been feeding back community comments on the use of it which will ensure it meets the needs of Gwent residents in the future.

- **Anti-Social Behaviour**

ASB was a strong theme resulting from my engagement. People commented that patrolling had a positive effect on reducing incidents and, to support this, communities should be more involved in coming up with ways to address local matters.

ASB blights many communities in Gwent, but, it is not just the responsibility of the Police. I understand that this is important to individuals and communities and have therefore made it the focus of one of the priorities for this Plan. I will proactively encourage partners to share the responsibility for addressing these matters.

- **Police Funding and Number of Officers and Staff**

People were understanding of the impact of recent police funding cuts but pointed out that there needs to be more officers carrying out high profile patrolling.

The police service is facing some tough financial challenges and we have seen officer numbers reduced in Gwent over the last six years as a result of Government cuts. Despite the issue of a reduced policing budget from Central Government, I am committed to maintaining front-line policing in Gwent as much as possible.

Unfortunately, a reduction in funding has previously meant a reduction in officers and staff. However, we have now created an affordable policing model that is capable of changing to meet local demands based upon sensible financial planning. As a result, we are well placed to meet future challenges, a part of which is a continuous recruitment program for new officers and staff. Gwent Police has recently completed the recruitment and training of 100 new police officers.

With the growing threat of cyber-crime and with the very nature of policing rapidly changing, I want to ensure that the citizens of Gwent have a police service that provides public re-assurance and crime solving capacity fit for the 21st Century. I also want to ensure that the public can access the police service when they need them whilst recognising that this does not always require a visible presence.

PCSOs are on patrol and are in constant daily contact with the local community, providing valuable intelligence for the police and playing an important role in engaging with our communities.

You can rest assured that I will certainly be making the case to retain the PCSOs that the Welsh Government fund to ensure community engagement continues and to provide reassurance to our communities.

- **Police Engagement with the Community and Councils**

People welcomed the opportunity to speak directly to me about policing and wanted to ensure it continued in a meaningful way.

Engagement with the public will remain a key focus for the Chief Constable and me. It is our intention that all community and town council meetings will have representation by at least their local PCSO every month. As this does not appear to be happening in a number of wards, I will work with the Chief Constable to ensure that the agreed attendance at local level is met.

I will be actively engaging with Local Authorities and their scrutiny committees, as well as the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.