



## Annex A

### **Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) annual report on communication and engagement (1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021)**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Engaging and communicating with the public is vital in ensuring the successful delivery of OPCC statutory duties and helping to deliver the Police and Crime Plan.

The Police and Crime Commissioner is required to conduct communication and engagement activities, as specified within the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act (PRSRA) 2011, Section 14 (PRSRA). These are an integral part of building confidence and legitimacy relating to the role of the Commissioner and that of his office. The Commissioner and Chief Constable approved a joint communications and engagement strategy in summer 2018 that runs until 2022. This provides a joint approach for the OPCC and Gwent Police in how they communicate and engage with the public.

Communications and engagement work for 2020/21 was significantly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, meaning much planned content was changed, postponed or cancelled. Despite this, key achievements for this year, all of which are highlighted in this report, include:

- A greater focus on the quality of the digital engagement work resulting in improved processes and partnership working;
- Expanding and improving work with partners and seldom heard residents, particularly the VAWDASV regional team, local youth organisations and Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities;
- Comprehensive precept engagement that implemented a new approach that will complement existing processes in a post-pandemic world; and
- Increased delivery of digital work around children and young people with partners and through initiatives like Youth Question Time and #StayInForGwent.

#### **CRIME PREVENTION**

##### **Businesses:**

Through the year, we encouraged businesses to stay safe online, warning of specific threats such as mandate fraud, and promoted the Police Cyber Alarm. This is a government-funded scheme that monitors cyber-threats and provides businesses with regular reports that highlight any vulnerabilities within their organisations. It is an extremely useful tool in the battle against cyber-crime, helping the police to identifying national trends in cyber-crime.

##### **Cyber:**

The increase in the use of online technology since schools closed at the start of the pandemic raised the importance of keeping children and young people safe online. Throughout the year, but particularly around lockdowns and the 'firebreak', we shared safety information with our key partners working with young people. As part of this, we launched a joint campaign with Gwent Police around child sexual exploitation called 'Stop. Talk. Protect.' We provided insight and support to the planning of this, arranging workshops with local children and young people to help

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co-produce the key messaging, branding and approach. This was key in ensuring that the key messages resonated with the target audiences. The campaign worked with strategic partners and local education authorities, warning parents about the dangers that lurk online. It was featured by BBC, ITV, Wales Online and South Wales Argus. Immediately after launch, it had a reach of more than 180,000 and 209,000 impressions on Twitter.

We also worked with Gwent Police's Cyber Crime team as it rolled out online safety training to more than 70 police cadets. The young people were taught how to recognise online threats and modify their behaviour to avoid online scams. Many of the crimes recorded by Gwent Police have an online element, so it is crucial that we start education around online safety as early as possible. We complemented this throughout the year by continuing to speak with residents about these issues and promoting advice to groups at risk.

### **Modern day slavery:**

We supported an eight-week CrimeStoppers digital campaign that encouraged the public to look out for signs of trafficking along the coastline, and sexual exploitation of vulnerable people in towns and cities. The campaign resulted in more than 5,200 views of the campaign page, while Facebook adverts reached about 378,000 people.

### **Police Community Fund:**

Communications continued throughout the year highlighting some of the good work delivered by Police Community Fund partners. The fund ensures that money recovered from criminals goes back to benefit communities. Communications and engagement support was offered to all projects, with case studies and visits to groups such as Cwmbran Centre for Young People taking place while restrictions were relaxed. A few examples of these projects are included later in this report. There were more than 1,000 page views on the Police Community Fund information on the OPCC in September following a promotion.

### **Road safety:**

During Project EDWARD we used the increased awareness of road safety issues to promote an APCC survey on roads policing. A total of 66,266 people across the UK took part in the survey. The key findings were that most people want drivers who speed to face higher penalties and for more of the money raised from speeding fines to be invested in enforcement. The results of the survey will be used by the APCC to inform its work with the UK Government's roads policing review.

### **Rural:**

The issue of off-road biking in rural communities during the pandemic was raised by residents, both via email and our 'have your say on policing' survey. We worked with Gwent Police to highlight successful operations to tackle illegal off-roading and to encourage residents to report issues. We also arranged for the Commissioner to speak with the Chief Constable and Gwent MPs to discuss the issue.

### **Serious and organised crime:**

The work to tackle serious and organised crime is supported by projects that the OPCC funds, including those run by Positive Futures and St Giles Trust. These are on the ground in communities offering diversionary activities to identified young people. Some of this work had to change due to the pandemic, but services adapted. For example, CrimeStoppers' Fearless project ran online learning sessions to raise

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awareness of county lines. We encouraged youth organisations in Gwent and young people to take part in them. The Fearless outreach worker filmed a short 'true or false' knife crime awareness video, which reached 7,284 people, was viewed 1,643 times and received 331 engagements. We supported these and other Fearless projects throughout the year, cascading information and aiming content at the target audience throughout Gwent.

### **Scam awareness:**

Throughout the pandemic, we promoted scam awareness information from Gwent Police, Scam Aware and Action Fraud to help keep people safe. Gwent Police led a national proactive scam awareness campaign, and this was supported internally and externally. We also targeted specific scam awareness information to specific demographics; for example, we worked with Age Concern to ensure information targeting older people was cascaded to service users.

During the first national lockdown, we worked with Gwent Police's cyber protect officer to arrange for scam information to be delivered through local authority food parcels as a way of reaching off-line communities.

We sent advice to businesses encouraging them to ensure their own cyber resilience and took part in Scam Awareness Fortnight. Crime prevention information was shared with more than 58,000 residents via email, while we also arranged for the Commissioner to be featured on BBC Radio Wales Breakfast about Covid-19 scams. As criminals preyed on vulnerable and isolated people during the pandemic, we highlighted romance fraud and how to stay safe on and around Valentine's Day.

### **Support services for women and young people:**

The Women's Pathfinder Whole System Approach and 18–25 Early Intervention Service are jointly commissioned by Gwent and South Wales OPCCs. To highlight the work being undertaken across the region, we organised a virtual visit in November to mark the first year of the Women's Pathfinder Whole System Approach. During the event, Deputy First Minister Jane Hutt praised the service which helps offenders break cycles of criminality and improve their lives. During the online event, the Deputy First Minister enjoyed a virtual tour of Ystrad Mynach custody suite and heard testimonials of women who have been supported by the Women's Pathfinder Whole System Approach.

This was complemented in January with a virtual conference that was also attended by the Deputy First Minister Jane Hutt and Victims' Commissioner Dame Vera Baird. We helped coordinate this event which saw more than 100 delegates from a range of organisations hearing from support workers and people who have been helped by the services. The Victims' Commissioner praised the work and highlighted important lessons that could be considered more widely across the UK.

### **Violence in pharmacies and retail:**

Early in the pandemic, we responded to concerns from pharmacy workers about the abuse they were experiencing from the public. We raised this nationally with statements from the Commissioner condemning this behaviour. This was reinforced through conversations with the Chief Constable about ensuring that neighbourhood policing teams were checking in with local pharmacies in their area. We were praised by the Pharmacists' Defence Association for this work.

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We joined the Commissioner and Gwent Police to listen to the voices of retail workers from across Wales as part of National Respect for Shopworkers Week. The discussion, hosted by the shopworkers' trade union USDAW and Co-op, focused on incidents during lockdown. A USDAW survey showed that 75 per cent of retail staff saw an increase in abuse during the pandemic.

### **SUPPORTING VICTIMS**

#### **Connect Gwent:**

The OPCC continued to support Connect Gwent throughout the year, regularly pushing out key messaging to let residents know that its services were still open. The Commissioner also highlighted the services available to victims in several newspaper columns during this time. Leaflets and promotional materials were given out to partners to distribute, while Connect Gwent helped us arrange a hate crime seminar in October.

#### **Piece-by-Piece project:**

We supported the virtual launch of a new project for LGBTQ+ Black, Asian and minority ethnic children, young people and their families, who have experienced or are experiencing trauma. The project is a partnership between Newport Mind, Maindee Community House and Literature Wales, and is funded by Comic Relief. In 2021/22, we will look at how we can support this service further and increase our engagement with service users.

#### **Rape review:**

Gwent Police and the OPCC asked people to tell them about their experiences of the services they received after they reported a rape to Gwent Police. The feedback was to be used anonymously to help improve criminal justice agencies' responses to victims of rape. It was also to be used to inform a review on the handling of reported rape cases by Gwent Police. Following a lengthy engagement process to refine the content of the survey, we built three different surveys and published them in March 2020. They ran for nine months and were promoted to survivors repeatedly. In addition to the surveys, Gwent Police hosted virtual focus groups to engage with survivors of sexual and domestic abuse, and we helped promote these too. Articles appeared in Western Mail, South Wales Echo, South Wales Argus, Wales Online, Monmouthshire Beacon, Monmouthshire and Pontypool Free Press. Once the surveys closed, the information was collated and helped form a review paper went to Gwent Police in June 2021.

#### **Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV):**

We teamed up with Gwent VAWDASV regional team and Gwent Police to run a joint campaign to highlight VAWDASV and encourage people experiencing it to seek help. The 'Don't Suffer In Silence' campaign encouraged people to report via the Live Fear Free helpline and signposted people to Gwent Safeguarding's website for information. In total, 30 survivors of VAWDASV informed its content and some of them took part in the actual campaign. The campaign began a soft roll-out at the end of February 2020 to tie-in with Sexual Violence Awareness Week and the promotion of the new Survivor Engagement Co-ordinator post. Full rollout happened over the end of March and start of April.

As part of the campaign:

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- We distributed approximately 1,200 posters and 9,500 leaflets to more than 280 locations in Gwent;
- Generated more than £21,000 worth of media coverage;
- Had more than 200k impressions on social media; and
- Sent the information to 58,00 residents via email.

In order to ensure this messaging reached as wide an audience as possible, a series of paid-for promoted posts also ran on Instagram and Facebook. Critically, this was reaching people who didn't follow our channels, so we were communicating with people who don't normally see our messages. The Instagram posts were tailored to target people aged 35 and under in Gwent, while the Facebook posts targeted people aged 45+. This was done following a data analysis with VAWDASV partners.

In addition to £21,000 worth of media coverage and approximately 200,000 impressions already achieved on social media organically, the boosted posts cost £700 and:

- Reached an additional 95,120 people;
- Resulting in 3,015 people engaging with the content; and
- 99 people visiting the advice pages through the link.

Paid-for content was also utilised over the Christmas period to safeguard residents and encourage people to seek help and support on a variety of issues including domestic abuse and sexual violence. The Don't Suffer in Silence campaign was again shared, and posts boosted via paid advertising on all @GwentPCC channels. The posts were shared from 23 December – 4 January and reached a total of 86,546 people. They cost £256.95. On Twitter, the posts gained 69,376 impressions, 545 people interacted with the content, 228 viewed the details in the tweet and 56 clicked onto our profile. The audience was mainly women. The combined organic and paid-for Facebook post reached 9,182. The Instagram post was seen by 9,760 people, 54 per cent women and 46 per cent men, with 1,447 people actively engaging with the content. It featured on 6,772 mobile app news feeds, 2,044 news feeds, appeared in 504 Instagram Explore feeds and 298 mobile web news feeds. Overall, 50 per cent of views were by 18-24-year olds and 16.5 per cent were 25-34-year olds. This was positive, as previous promotions appeared on Facebook and Twitter where the audience is mainly older.

Due to the pandemic, Gwent Police also brought forward its 'Read Between the Lines' campaign on domestic abuse. We also supported this, repeatedly shared key messaging and encouraged our partners to do likewise. This complemented our existing work within the wider VAWDASV agenda.

Monday 15 June was World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, which aims to focus global attention on the problem of physical, emotional, and financial abuse of older people. We urged older people and their families to learn how to spot the signs of financial abuse and elder exploitation. We know that older people are particularly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, and feared that opportunities had risen due to the increased isolation caused by Covid-19. To help tackle this, a press release and supporting materials were issued to the media, 58,000 residents via email, councillors and councils, registered social landlords and sheltered housing schemes, care agencies, Age Cymru, 50+ and senior citizens forums, Age Connects Torfaen, pharmacies, community connectors, voluntary organisations, and council staff organising Covid-19 volunteers. Local transport companies shared information with staff to look out for signs of elder abuse, as did some of the housing associations.

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Information was also shared on our social media platforms and those of partners. GAVO, Gwent Citizens Panel and One Newport featured the information in their newsletters. It was promoted on three council websites and the South Wales Argus, reaching more than 34,000. Gwent Police shared information on its Instagram, reaching 14,600. In addition, we generated almost 2,000 impressions on the OPCC Twitter feed.

In June, we were awarded more than £200,000 to support victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence in Gwent. The article on the Argus website and in the paper reached 79,437 people, totaling £1,441.36 of coverage. It was also covered on Sunshine Radio. The combined Twitter stats saw a reach of 3,427, plus 92 engagements and 22 likes.

In July, we worked with the VAWDASV regional team to provide information to Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team's older people's forum about the many aspects of abuse that affect all communities. The group welcomed the information and were able to feedback valuable insights. This will help VAWDASV and the OPCC to convey the most appropriate messages to our Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.

The annual White Ribbon Day took place on Thursday 25 November. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the annual community walk held in Gwent for the last several years was unable to take place, so instead a virtual challenge was launched based around the number 149. At the time, the latest Femicide Census report showed that 149 women were killed by men in the UK in 2018. More than half were killed by a former spouse or partner, and almost all of them were committed by a man known to the victim. To help tackle this, residents, schools, organisations, sports teams and community groups across Gwent were encouraged to complete the #149Challenge. This could be anything from walking or running for 149 minutes, baking 149 cakes, or undertaking a task 149 times. We created and coordinated this year's event, working in partnership with Gwent VAWDASV regional team, Llamau, housing associations and all five local authorities to raise awareness of the day with communities across Gwent.

Social media channels and our website provided platforms to share information about the challenge. An activity pack was developed in English, Welsh and five of the other most commonly used languages in Gwent to encourage as many people as possible to take part. The language packs were welcomed by community cohesion officers in Newport, who shared the information via their trusted channels.

The #149Challenge was well received by sports organisations and clubs, including Newport County whose players and manager wore White Ribbon t-shirts and badges during pre-match warm-ups against Walsall FC. Newport County also had White Ribbon banners on display at the ground and worked with young people in Newport who participate in the Premier League Kicks initiative to raise awareness of domestic abuse on the day. Gwent Dragons supported the challenge on its social media channels, while Caerphilly council's sports development team worked hard to engage local sports clubs, council staff and schools across the county to get 149 children to dedicate their 'daily mile' to the challenge. Positive Futures ambassadors Leon Brown and Sean McGoldrick also took part in a series of challenges.

The challenges were not all based around sport. The activity pack suggested various ideas and resources to raise awareness, from encouraging people to create their

own white ribbon to display in windows to hunting for one of 149 rocks painted with a white ribbon that were hidden across Gwent.

The awareness campaign was successful in its aims, particularly on Twitter (the primary channel), with 3.2million potential impressions and a potential reach of 489,500. In total, it generated 990 tweets from 240 contributors. There were 1,347 engagements with Twitter content on the OPCC account, including 101 retweets and 280 likes.

On secondary channels, almost 50,000 were reached by the OPCC Facebook page, while 12,000 people were engaged via Instagram. White Ribbon Day was covered on ITV Wales at Six, with an interview with the Deputy Chief Constable Amanda Blakeman, who also undertook her own #149Challenge, as did the Chief Constable. Gwent Police shared information about White Ribbon Day on 25 November via all channels and reached an additional 344,916 people.

A key aim of the campaign was to utilise partner channels. Key partner statistics include Gwent Dragons Rugby (250k potential impressions), Caerphilly County Borough Council (549k potential impressions) and Newport County (68k potential impressions). Information was also published in the local media, four local authority websites and Gwent Dragons website. Sport Caerphilly also encouraged clubs across Caerphilly to take part in daily #149Challenges during the 16 days of action.

### **COMMUNITY COHESION**

#### **Black, Asian and minority ethnic engagement:**

We worked with Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team (EYST) to increase opportunities to engage with Black, Asian and minority ethnic residents throughout 2020/21. In addition to this, we developed a comprehensive engagement plan as part of the OPCC business plan. Although this was planned work, the response to the Black Lives Matter campaign in 2020/21 reinforced its importance.

We made clear statements of support for the Black Lives Matter campaign's goal of tackling racism, but urged people not to gather in numbers because of the risk of spreading Covid-19.

We helped facilitate a series of online engagement sessions with members of Gwent's minority ethnic communities and the Commissioner and Chief Constable. This was to help ensure that our doors are always open to listen to the concerns of the community. We had open and honest conversations about the communities' relationships with the police.

Throughout the year, we shared information on a range of topics, including Live Fear Free and the 'have your say on policing' survey, in a range of languages including Arabic, Bengali, Polish, Slovak, Punjabi Indian and Urdu. We significantly increased our partnership working with the community cohesion officers in Gwent, using these relationships to cascade information to local groups via WhatsApp and Facebook. We have started to use unique links to allow us to see how successful these are.

Although the majority of the people who completed the annual budget setting survey classified themselves as White British, 70 people (5.6%) stated another ethnicity. At the time of writing, 4.53 per cent of people in Gwent identified themselves as Black, Asian or minority ethnic.

#### **Community concerns about Covid-19:**

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To help the Commissioner hold the police to account on behalf of the public, it is important that we listen to, and understand, the issues communities and people are facing. The impact of Covid-19 reinforced this essential need. We continued to respond to correspondence, complaints and complements received. We also identified themes within questions, comments and issues, and used these to shape communication with the public and partners.

As our external engagements were almost all cancelled due to Covid-19, we ran a Q&A initiative on social media. This took place during the first lockdown and offered residents the opportunity to ask any questions they had about Covid-19 and local policing. The request for questions was published on all our channels, as well as in Abergavenny Chronicle, Monmouthshire Beacon and South Wales Argus reaching more than 20,000 people in print, plus thousands more online. The initial posts also reached more than 17,000 people via our social media channels.

In total, more than 50 questions were submitted. Many of these focused on similar themes, the responses to which were posted on social media. Where people had emailed questions, we responded to them personally via email to reassure them, as well as posting general information more widely on social media. Some common themes were:

- Availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) for police officers and staff;
- Reporting instances where social distancing was not being adhered to; and
- The lack of clarity from UK government around what constituted an essential journey.

In addition to this, we continued to provide a proactive and reactive service to the national, regional and local media to ensure awareness of the Commissioner's responsibilities and decisions. We worked closely with Gwent Police throughout the year to ensure public messages were co-ordinated and properly contextualised.

Throughout 2020/21, we took part in the weekly community dial-in meetings run by Gwent Police. The meetings enabled us to hear from a wide range of organisations, including members of Independent Advisory Group, faith organisations, Sanctuary refugee group, Travelling Ahead representing Gypsy Traveller communities, and Mencap Cymru. The meetings helped foster relations and strengthen engagement between the communities, the force and the OPCC. Although these meetings were originally set up to improve community cohesion during Covid-19, the meetings have proved beneficial for all parties and are currently set to continue.

### **Hate crime:**

As part of Hate Crime Awareness Week, we organised an online session with residents who have first-hand experience of this appalling crime. The Commissioner was joined by the Chief Constable and we heard from victims about the hatred they have been subjected to as they go about their daily lives. The OPCC is committed, through the Police and Crime Plan for Gwent, to tackling hate crime and improving the support offered to victims. However, we can only do that if we listen to what victims are telling us about their experiences. We know it can be difficult for victims to share their stories, so this was a valuable opportunity to learn from people who have first-hand of experiences. We complemented this online session throughout Hate Crime Awareness Week with information encouraging people to report hate crime and highlighting the support services available locally.

### **LGBTQ+:**



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Our partners at Umbrella Cymru worked with national charities to distribute Comic Relief funding to LGBTQ+ organisations that were supporting people during the pandemic. We helped publicise this, signposted partners and used it as an opportunity to discuss the potential for doing specific engagement with the LGBTQ+ community in 2021/22.

In January, the director of Umbrella Cymru, Nick Lewis, featured in a guest blog to raise awareness of the organisation and shared his motivation for establishing the service that has been a lifeline for many people in Gwent. Umbrella Cymru receives funding from the OPCC and helped facilitate our hate crime event in October. In previous years, we have worked together at community events and at the end of the year we began planning how we will do this when Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.

In February, we attended a special Gwent Police community dial-in as part of LGBTQ+ History Month. The LGBTQ+ session enabled a range of local organisations to share details of what they are doing to support the LGBTQ+ community and highlight any challenges they face. A lot of work is being done by Gwent Police to support this, with its NXT Gen team training cadets to become hate crime ambassadors. We promoted this on our website and social media channels.

### **Partnership working:**

We took part in a series of engagement events set up by Newport City Council to look at the impact of Covid-19 on communities in Newport. The themed meetings provided an insight into the lives of refugees, migrants, asylum seekers, people with disabilities, carers, children, young people, Black, Asian and ethnic minorities, and LGBTQ+ communities. We listened and provided feedback on several community safety issues that arose during the pandemic, which was helpful and insightful for the Commissioner's meetings with the Chief Constable.

We shared information supporting Welsh Blood's appeals for donations during the pandemic. We had a bespoke URL provided to us from Welsh Blood, which had more than 500 click throughs. Welsh Blood emailed the following after the sessions: "Without your support I am sure that as a service we would not have been able to fill the 776 appointments with 653 blood donations and amazing 179 first time donors." One of the main community donation venues is next to Gwent Police HQ, so we have since promoted another series of giving blood opportunities, due to our ethos of sharing good quality public information.

We supported the launch of a new family engagement centre at Pillgwenlly Primary School. #VIBE is working with parents of pupils at the school and needed additional resources to enable a wider public-sector offer to people who visited. We provided more than 100 crime prevention items to support this, as well as substantial amounts of crime prevention, victim support and police recruitment information for visitors to access. Much of this was in multiple languages to reflect the diversity of this community.

### **Race Equality First:**

Race Equality First launched a competition for young people to help raise awareness of its 2020 anti-racism competition. We liaised with schools, local youth groups and organisations working with children to encourage them to take part. We also organised racism awareness training for all OPCC staff, as well as unconscious bias training.

### **Refugee engagement:**

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We arranged for the Commissioner to meet Rafi Abbas and Marilyn Gwet, of the Bahá'í Faith. Rafi and Marilyn shared their desire to educate communities on the plight of refugees and asylum seekers. Communities need to hear these voices to really understand why people and families need to flee terrifying circumstances such as genocide and war. We also promoted information about the range of organisations available in Gwent that help and support asylum seekers and refugees, including the OPCC-funded Sanctuary project in Newport.

### **Strategic equality plan:**

We engaged with residents across Gwent to help shape the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP). We helped develop objectives and an action plan to ensure the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded into everything we do. A comprehensive series of face-to-face engagement sessions had been planned for the end of March and April 2020, but these were largely cancelled due to Covid-19. Therefore, the engagement was undertaken predominately via social media and partnerships. Despite this:

- 771 responses were received (almost double the previous SEP survey response);
- The views of more than 100 children and young people were captured at the Youth Question Time event in March; and
- A number of responses were generated from a Talk Blaenau Gwent event and an EYST meeting, helping us reach some seldom heard groups.

The responses were analysed to influence the final document that was published in October.

### **Welsh language:**

Our commitment to the Welsh language was further evidenced throughout the year. All planned social media content continued to be published bilingually, with the Welsh text used first in single posts. Every issue of the weekly ebulletin to residents continues to be published in Welsh, although the number of subscribers remains very low. The website is bilingual.

A separate Welsh language Facebook account for the OPCC was launched in June to ensure that followers see the content in the language of their choice. This is in-line with the approach undertaken by Welsh Government, Gwent Police and councils. Take-up of the channel remains very low, but we will continue to promote it when engaging with people.

When undertaking the precept engagement, most responses were in English, with 17 received through the medium of Welsh. We encouraged people to complete the survey in Welsh through existing Welsh language networks in Gwent.

## **TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

### **Peer-led youth campaign**

The approach by Gwent Police throughout the pandemic was to engage, explain and encourage compliance with the guidance about staying home to save lives. We therefore created a peer-led unbranded joint communications campaign on social media during the first lockdown, using short clips of pledges from young people to reinforce the national social distancing messaging.

Linking in with the participation leads at the five Gwent councils, as well as project leaders from some local youth diversionary projects funded by the OPCC, we crowd-

sourced content. This meant we were capturing authentic voices and views from within our communities. This approach also meant it was not police-driven but focused on young people reinforcing safety messages. The campaign wasn't locked to Gwent, so it could be replicated wider, and we deliberately didn't brand the content with anything to do with Gwent Police or the OPCC.

The aim of the peer-led campaign was to encourage young people not to go out during lockdown. It began on Friday 2 April and in total:

- 32 organisations endorsed the campaign;
- More than 160 tweets mentioned #StayInForGwent;
- 120 posts on Instagram mentioned #StayInForGwent; and
- There was a combined reach of more than 600,000 using #StayInForGwent

Throughout April and May, #StayInForGwent was included in tweets from a range of youth organisations and forums, residents, local authorities, Gwent Police, members of the Welsh Youth Parliament, sports development teams and Newport County Youth team. #StayInForGwent was pushed at key dates such as Easter, VE Day and bank holidays.

Caerphilly Youth Forum launched weekly competitions to ensure young people were connected, healthy and staying at home whenever possible. One of the challenges was to post #StayInForGwent clips. The winning clip reached 3,014 people, with 1.2k people watching it, 28 shares, 31 likes and nine comments.

Welsh Government's Youth Work Bulletin highlighted #StayInForGwent as best practice: "There have been some great examples via the Gwent Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) where young people have created #StayInForGwent messages to share with their peers. This youth-led action provides a powerful message to others. The increase in online youth engagement has also offered significant opportunities to engage with wider groups of young people."

#StayInForGwent was also featured in communications by the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners. It was endorsed by local sports stars, including Commonwealth Games Medallist and professional boxer Sean McGoldrick, and Gwent Dragons player Leon Brown.

### **EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY**

#### **Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC):**

We supported the APCC throughout the year, with the Women's Pathfinder Whole Service Approach and 18-25 Early Intervention services appearing in its 'Reducing Reoffending In Focus' publication. In June we promoted the APCC's national road safety survey, and we also adapted APCC infographics to make them bilingual for sharing with other Welsh forces. Our content featured in 29 daily briefings, including coverage of the #149Challenge, topping out ceremony for the new headquarters, and the office's Children's Charter success.

#### **Award winners:**

We sponsored three Police and Crime Commissioner's partnership awards at the Gwent Police Force Awards 2020. These went to Urban Circle, the Adverse Childhood Experiences team, and the Newport Serious and Organised Crime team. Since 2018, the OPCC has contributed funding to Urban Circle's U-Turn project, which uses the creative arts to tackle social problems affecting young people. It has supported hundreds of young people in Newport to learn, build their confidence and

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make friends, while crucially setting them up with the skills they need to get jobs in the future. The Adverse Childhood Experiences team has been working to improve the response from the police and partners to stressful and traumatic childhood experiences. Since the project was established in 2018, the team has trained about 1,300 police officers and 400 staff from partner agencies to recognise the signs of adverse childhood experiences. Almost 900 children and 500 families have been supported since the start of the project. Meanwhile, Newport Serious and Organising Crime team has been delivering sterling work in tackling the significant harm caused by these types of criminality.

We jointly sponsored the Community Hero Award at South Wales Argus' Pride of Gwent Awards. The winner was Bernard Dawson from Caerwent in Monmouthshire, who created a community initiative to support local people who were shielding or vulnerable during the pandemic, offering support such as shopping, collecting medication and dog walking. The stories behind all the above award winners were publicised on OPCC and Gwent Police internal and external channels.

### **Behind the Badge:**

This year's Behind the Badge open day was cancelled due to Covid-19. For the last couple of years, it has given residents a chance to look behind the scenes of policing. It is one of the largest community events in Gwent and is a fun, engaging way in which to highlight the work of a modern police force and other emergency services to a wide, diverse audience. Gwent Police ran a virtual open day on social media instead this year. This proved incredibly popular, with more than 51,000 people viewing content. We complemented this throughout the day by posting a range of clips to give residents a greater insight into the work of the OPCC.

### **Business plan:**

The OPCC business plan had a number of objectives for the communications and engagement team, specifically:

- Develop a stakeholder and implementation plan to enable a public affairs-approach to building and developing relationships with Welsh and UK government and other partners through strategic, planned engagement and communication.
- Ensure that the OPCC website is statutorily compliant in its provision of information and its accessibility, easily navigable, provides current content of interest.
- Establish a two-way public engagement methodology that influences strategic decision-making and ensuring that consultation processes are legally compliant, deliver valuable outcomes and include protected groups and diverse communities.
- Develop an internal communication and engagement plan that will assist with raising awareness of all areas of the OPCC and allow staff to be regularly updated and feel informed.

All four tasks objectives were completed and approved within the year.

We also rolled out a new professional development plan (PDR) process. The purpose is to ensure managers review work, set objectives, check on well-being and identify areas for development. Quarterly reviews took place throughout the year. In May, we introduced monthly communications and engagement summaries for the executive team.

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The office is creating a new digital media apprentice post in September 2021, so work began on planning and facilitating this. This will be reported on in next year's annual report.

### **Cadets:**

We promoted Cadet recruitment via social media and worked with children and young people organisations to encourage people to sign up. This included groups who attended the Youth Question Time event, town and community councils, all secondary schools in Gwent and GAVO. The recruitment drive was successful, with 104 applications being received from young people across Gwent. The Cadets were also an integral part of the #StayInForGwent campaign, with the Cadets setting a positive example for others to follow.

### **Children and young people engagement:**

In 2020/21, we became the first OPCC in Wales to be awarded the Children and Young People's Participation Standards Charter. The standards aim to help organisations put children and young people at the centre of their work when shaping processes, plans and projects. The signing of the charter is the first step in achieving the National Participation Standards Kitemark award, which will assess how well the office engages, listens and feeds back information. We are aiming to achieve Kitemark status in the next two years.

We have been working with Gwent Police on a child-centred policing strategy that aims to build better relationships between police and children and young people. A priority of the strategy will be to improve positive criminal justice outcomes for children and young people and divert them away from it. There will also be work to enhance services for child victims of crime, particularly those exposed to domestic abuse. We are in the process of finalising the strategy, surveying key stakeholders, and developing a work plan. This is set to be agreed with Gwent Police in quarter two of 2021/22.

### **Community engagement:**

Engagement activities were planned throughout the year to provide as diverse a range of opportunities as possible, so that a wide selection of residents from across Gwent had an opportunity to participate. The aim was to support community inclusion and involvement by providing opportunities for people and organisations to link in with the OPCC, with a view to influencing their policing service, accessing support services, and accessing grants for community projects.

Examples of engagement are contained throughout this report. We changed the way in which we recorded engagement with communities and partners in November. In the five months since then to April 2021, we attended 79 engagement opportunities, the majority of which were online. During the year, we also attended 50 community dial-ins, information from which was fed back to the Commissioner.

### **E-bulletins**

Despite the cancellation of all face-to-face activity, which is where the majority of ebulletin subscribers are signed up, the e-bulletin continued to grow. There are now 1,775 subscribers, which is a 48 per cent increase from 1,202 in the previous year. Overall, 62 per cent of the audience is categorised by Mailchimp as 'highly engaged'. Although it hasn't happened yet, as the number of subscribers increases, it is

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expected that this figure will decrease. This would be in-line with the open rates of other public sector ebulletins.

### **Estates:**

Construction on Gwent Police's new headquarters in Llantarnam continued throughout the year. A joint communications plan with Gwent Police continues to be rolled out and this is scrutinised by a new gold HQ comms meeting, which features a member of the Independent Advisory Group. Significant aspects of the planned work about the new HQ had to be changed throughout the year, due to the on-going distribution caused by Covid-19. However, these were not time-critical and there were no major issues. In addition to standard media and social media coverage, two articles on Cwmbran Life had a reach of more than 60,000. This reinforced the importance of utilising multiple channels in addition to traditional media.

### **Media coverage:**

There were 403 media articles in 2020/21, down from 431 media articles. The total monetary value captured equated to more than £1,140,000 (compared to £571,000 last year), with a reach totalling more than 12 million. Independent media monitoring service Kantar provides these statistics.

### **Newspaper columns:**

The Commissioner's regular newspaper columns have continued in South Wales Argus (10,000 copies) and Caerphilly Observer (10,000 copies in Caerphilly). Despite an overall trend of people moving to online news, print media still plays an important role in helping public confidence due to the added level of scrutiny compared to broadcast communications channels such as Twitter.

In 2021/22, it is hoped to establish further columns with other media outlets. These articles are generally reused online, so are multi-purpose. They are also bespoke to the communities served, allowing greater focus on local issues than would sometimes appear on other channels.

### **Precept**

The Commissioner has to engage with people on the precept, as it is his responsibility to set the level for Gwent every year. The OPCC launched its 'have your say on policing' survey on Monday 11 November 2020, which included a question on the precept. It closed on Sunday 10 January 2021 having run for a total of nine weeks. For comparison, the previous year's survey ran for 13 weeks, of which six were within the pre-election period which limited communications, and the previous year it also ran for nine weeks. Prior to these years, it ran for approximately four weeks.

The two previous years saw a dual approach for engagement, with a series of face-to-face engagement events across all council areas being complemented with an online survey. This allowed the OPCC to increase visibility and opportunities for members of the public to engage with the OPCC in large-scale community settings, highlighting the core functions and purposes of the OPCC. This was a significantly more efficient, effective and holistic approach to engagement than in previous years, allowing the office to capture the views of a large number of people in the communities that they live and work.

The original aim was to replicate this approach for the 2021/22 survey, building upon previous successes and continuing to evolve the face-to-face offer of the OPCC.

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Ultimately, however, this was not viable due to the continued impact of Covid-19. Therefore, the OPCC had to think differently as to how it would reach as wide a selection of residents as possible, while continuing the evolution of the way in which the office engages.

A new approach was introduced that allowed the OPCC to pulse-test a variety of opinions on policing issues. This focused primarily on promoting the survey online, coupled with multiple opportunities for virtual face-to-face engagement and increased targeting of harder to reach communities. An in-person offer was available and promoted to organisations, so the OPCC did not have a broadcast-only approach.

Expanding on last year's survey, although there was a quantified objective of 600 surveys to be completed, there was a focus on the quality of the engagement and the amount of information available to people. To ensure the work was as efficient and holistic as possible, the survey also captured other aspects of public opinion, particularly Gwent Police's response to Covid-19 and what the strategic priorities for the force should be in the future.

This year's survey had an expanded question set and more information about policing in Gwent. Before people could complete the survey, they were provided with information about the PCC, the role of the OPCC, the daily demands on policing in Gwent, police budgets and the medium-term financial plan. This information was more in-depth than in previous years, allowing people to have an even greater informed opinion when voicing their views on policing.

Residents were asked for their views on a number of policing issues in Gwent, as well as the proposed level of increase for the precept in 2021/2, specifically: "Would you support the principle of increasing the police part of council tax by up to £2 a month (based on a band D property) for 2021/22 to maintain policing at current levels?"

The main survey was conducted bilingually and asked 12 questions (depending on answers). This is four more than last year and excludes demographic questions. Easy read versions were available on request from the OPCC. In total, 1,259 people completed the survey.

It was agreed, prior to the launch of the survey, that a representative sample size of 600 would be used. This provided a confidence level of 95%, including a +/- 4 margin of error. This was in line with targets for previous surveys. Prior to two years ago, the OPCC had always struggled to achieve a representative sample for precept surveys. However, this year the OPCC again more than double the representative sample required, with 1,259 people completing the survey. This was despite considerable logistical challenges caused by Covid-19. To achieve this, multiple channels and approaches were utilised over a sustained nine-week period, as set out below.

The survey was the main news item on the OPCC website throughout the nine weeks, meaning it was the first thing visitors would see when visiting the home page. The online survey was proactively and repeatedly publicised via social media and the local press, as well as shared with community groups, partner organisations, the third sector and local authorities to use internally and externally.

Three press releases and Commissioner newspaper columns were issued, with nine articles appearing in print and online on news outlets. This led to an estimated reach of 170,577 people, and advertising value of £4,388.61. There were seven Facebook

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and Instagram posts, 10 Twitter posts (including two fleets to help draw attention to the survey in the final week of it running) and it was emailed twice to residents via Gwent Now. The survey featured prominently in the OPCC weekly ebulletin to residents five times, with a bespoke call to action also emailed to subscribers.

All Gwent councils were provided with bespoke social media content, which they then tweeted and shared on Facebook, while Torfaen council also included information in its ebulletin to 20,000 residents. Key social media influencers were contacted and tagged into social media content to enhance reach, while content was also posted on several local online groups.

Creating ready-to-use bespoke content for partners and organisations significantly increased use and sharing, which played a critical role in doubling the online response to this year's survey. It ensured that the key messages and calls to action were amplified on trusted sources, allowing the OPCC to engage with people outside of its usual core audience.

This custom content wasn't limited to different partners, but also different audiences. In addition to general promotion of the survey, a concerted effort was made to ensure the voices of people with protected characteristics were heard. To do this, an easy read version was produced, while communications were also cascaded to partners working with elderly residents (e.g. Age Cymru Gwent) and LGBT residents (e.g. Umbrella Cymru). Communications were shared with local registered social landlords and organisations working with Gypsy Travellers.

Multi-dialect communications were used to promote the survey for the first time. Posts were translated into Arabic, Bengali, Punjabi Indian, Polish and Urdu and shared with council community cohesion officers. This meant communications went out in seven languages in total. Information was also shared, and participants encouraged to voice their views at the weekly community dial-in calls with representatives from a wide range of organisations that work with people with protected characteristics. Stamped addressed envelopes with paper copies of the survey were also included in information packs distributed to partners.

All town, community and county councillors were sent information on the survey with an offer for the OPCC to attend any forthcoming meetings and discuss the survey virtually, as well asking them to share details locally in their role as community leaders. This approach was part of an ongoing wider drive by the OPCC to establish and grow effective working relationships with partners and stakeholders, complemented by the bespoke content for their channels. Twelve groups and councils took up this offer.

When attending these virtual meetings, the OPCC used a different link to the website to allow it to record how many completed a survey as a result of these virtual meetings. Although a click on the link does not automatically mean a survey was completed, it is reasonable to believe that 121 surveys were completed as a direct result of this virtual engagement, due to the amount of hits via this URL. This replaced the community-based face-to-face engagement of the last two years. Covid-19 permitting, it is expected that next year's surveying will incorporate all three approaches, i.e. community face-to-face engagement, attendance at virtual meetings and online promotion. In addition to the above, every MS and MP who attended the Chief Constable's meeting in December had an update on the financial picture facing Gwent. All Gwent AMs and MPs also received information and a request to share with constituents.



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The survey was conducted bilingually, with 1,242 received through the medium of English and 17 in Welsh. Last year there were 37 Welsh language submissions; however, this was significantly higher than in previous years, with returns typically in single figures. The survey was proactively promoted through the same Welsh language networks in Gwent as the previous two years.

Equality information was also collected and, of the people who chose to complete the equalities questions, the majority of people stated their ethnicity as White British. However, 70 people (5.6%) stated another ethnicity. Furthermore, in total, 11% of all respondents stated that they considered themselves to have a disability.

When completing the survey, residents indicated that they live in the following local authority areas:

- Blaenau Gwent 17.79%
- Caerphilly 19.14%
- Monmouthshire 25.73%
- Newport 19.14%
- Torfaen 18.19%

The response rate was therefore relatively consistent across Gwent, with the higher rate in Monmouthshire likely to be due to the take-up of the virtual face-to-face engagement, the location of where channel users live, and some of the cascading of information by partners based in this area.

As stated above, a total of 1,259 responses were received by the closing date. Due to the high level of response, the survey achieved a 99% confidence level that the answers received would be within +/- 4% margin of error on the actual results.

Of the 1,259 survey respondents:

- 1,128 completed it online;
- 121 completed it as part of virtual face-to-face engagement; and
- 10 completed paper copies of the survey.

When collated, the total responses were:

- 689 (54.7%) of respondents supported the principle of up to a £2 per month increase;
- 411 (32.6%) of respondents did not support the principle of up to a £2 per month increase; and
- 159 (12.6%) of respondents were unsure.

This demonstrates that 55% of respondents supported the principle of up to £2 a month increase. It should be noted that although this is a majority of respondents, this does represent a significant move from yes to no compared to last year, with unsure remaining static.

The response rate across areas and demographics was consistent, with only three areas where support for the principle dropped below 50%. These were in Blaenau Gwent (45.5%), 25-40-year olds (48.6%) and respondents aged 41-55 (48.5%).

Throughout the survey, respondents were given the opportunity to provide extra comments in relation to policing issues. Most of the feedback around policing in Gwent, both verbally and in writing, focused on police visibility and Covid-19 enforcement. The most popular comments received focused on:

- Lack of visibility of police;
- Covid enforcement being too lenient;

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- Affordability; and
- Praise and criticism of individual incidents.

The other questions from the survey will be analysed separately and will inform discussions around the next Police and Crime Plan and how the OPCC continues to support and scrutinise Gwent Police's response to Covid-19.

In addition to the above, this year's survey saw 429 of respondents sign-up to the OPCC weekly ebulletin to residents, including eight in Welsh.

### **Social media:**

The Commissioner's role and OPCC work are communicated with key partners and the public across many media platforms. This includes highlighting daily aspects of work and achievements, as well as highlighting opportunities for residents to engage. The OPCC continued to use social media as a key communication tool throughout 2020/21. The OPCC currently has the most Twitter and Facebook followers of the four OPCCs in Wales. Some of the statistical increases are large and it is not expected that they will be so high in next year's report.

#### *Twitter*

At 31 March 2021, the OPCC had 5,465 followers on Twitter compared to 12 months ago when there were 5,174 (up 6%). In total, 1,034 tweets were posted generating 1,119,500 impressions (number of times a user saw the tweet on Twitter). Last year there were 1,073,308 impressions, so it was slightly higher this year. OPCC tweets have been re-tweeted 1,491 times (up from 1,423 last year) and 2,649 of them have been 'liked', compared with 4,414 last year. In total, there were 17,429 engagements with OPCC content on Twitter, compared to 30,434 last year. Some of the digital engagement stats for the year are down on the previous year; however, this is due to our face-to-face engagements throughout the summer not taking place in 2020/21. These normally significantly boost online engagement.

The OPCC generated tweets that made the most impressions on Twitter included #StayInForGwent posts, the #149Challenge and young people writing messages of support to care home residents and hospital patients during the pandemic.

In addition to the main corporate account, the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, OPCC Chief Executive are also all active users of Twitter. Statistics on these are not collated, as they are not corporate accounts.

#### *Facebook*

Followers of the OPCC Facebook page increased from 1,920 to 2,401 (up 25%). From April 2020 – March 2021, we made 374 direct OPCC posts and/or status updates, reaching 348,506 people organically and an additional 78,475 people through paid-for posts. This means meaning significantly more people are seeing or content and had the ability to engage with content through this channel over the last two years.

#### *Instagram*

At April 2021, the OPCC Instagram account had 642 followers, up from 307 the year before. This is more than a 109 per cent increase. Between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021:

- 311 posts were uploaded (up from 98);
- There were 307 likes (up from 187 likes); and

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- A reach of 11,497 (up from 3,694).

The use of Instagram is becoming more popular within the sector, in particular with younger audiences. It allows for more informal engagement, more suited to this demographic. The OPCC will look to continue to grow this channel during 2021/22.

### *YouTube and video*

In 2020/21, the OPCC YouTube videos attracted:

- 1,276 views (compared to 1,439 views);
- More than 900 minutes watched (compared to 646); and
- 5 new subscribers (compared to an increase of nine last year).

However, this represents just the amount of views on YouTube. As in-line with best practice, the OPCC also simultaneously uploads content to other social media channels, where the videos are embedded content. This generates considerably more views and engagement than via YouTube. For example, the Cwmbran Centre for Young People video was viewed by 27 people on YouTube. However, on Twitter the clip gained 14 retweets and was liked by 31 people it reached 6,493.

### **Special Constables**

Prior to National Specials Weekend in June, we wrote to all 68 Special Constables at Gwent Police thanking them for their service. Their contribution to policing in Gwent is significant and their commitment and dedication must be admired. This has never been more apparent than during the pandemic, where Gwent Police's Special Constables have gone above and beyond the expectations of them as volunteers to boost police resources at a critical time.

### **Understanding The Triggers:**

The OPCC researched and wrote a new report calling on public services in Wales to develop new ways of preventing and reducing child criminality and exploitation. The Understanding The Triggers report identifies a series of improvements that public services in Wales can make to tackle these issues at the earliest opportunity and reduce the risk of children becoming vulnerable to criminal exploitation. The research found recurring triggers in a group of local children identified through offending data, including trauma within the home, such as witnessing or experiencing domestic abuse, and challenges within education, including the struggle to transition between primary and secondary school, and school exclusion.

Understanding the Triggers makes an important contribution to our collective understanding of child criminal and sexual exploitation in Wales by providing an evidence base to steer action and improve outcomes for vulnerable children. The report's findings are stark and demonstrate the devastating impact criminality and exploitation has on children's lives. In Wales we have already made significant strides in tackling these challenges, but we can and must go further.

As this is a major opportunity to reflect on current practices and consider new ways of preventing and reducing child criminality and exploitation, we organised a national launch of the report. In November, we met with the Deputy Minister Jane Hutt, to discuss the report and opportunities to work together to address the issues identified in the report. This was supported with press and social media, including a full-page feature in the Western Mail.

### **Vaccinations:**

We regularly supported communications for residents to have their vaccinations and also published warnings about vaccination scams that began to surface quickly after the vaccination scheme began to roll out.

### **Youth Question Time:**

The third Youth Question Time digital event attracted more than 100 young people and professionals, including youth workers, voluntary organisations and public services from across Gwent. The event had to be entirely digital due to the pandemic. This year, in keeping with previous years, the Commissioner and a senior representative from Gwent Police were panellists. Fellow panellists were selected based on the issues that are important to young people in Gwent and identified via the British Youth Council's 'make your mark' survey. In Gwent, mental health, domestic abuse and homelessness were the top three most important priorities for young people, so panel members reflected these issues:

- Jeff Cuthbert – Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent
- Pam Kelly – Chief Constable, Gwent Police
- Dr Rhiannon Cobner – Consultant Clinical Psychologist and Lead for Gwent Community Psychology
- Nicola Fitzpatrick – Head of Domestic Abuse Services, Llamau
- Anita Dillon – Careers Adviser, Careers Wales

Invitations were sent to a wide variety of youth groups, all secondary schools and OPCC-funded youth projects to encourage as many young people as possible to take part. Short animated clips and posters were also created and shared on social media to entice young people to the event. The short, bright, fun clips were shaped by the Regional Youth Forum and shared by all forums on their channels. The posts reached more than 5,000 people via @GwentPCC and the animated clips were viewed 309 times.

An Eventbrite link was used for the first time, which allowed people to book a place at the event. It was a quick and easy way to identify how many people were coming in advance and was easily shared via social media. In total, 50 people used the link and an additional 50 made contact via email or their youth workers. Nationally, there have been instances of links to events being shared via social media and security risks as a result. To mitigate this, the Youth Question Time link was only provided to those who registered and additional questions were asked of participants to ensure they were a young person or worked with young people.

Last year short pen portraits were provided to everyone attending on the night of the event. Feedback highlighted that it would be better to have the information in advance to help inform questions. Therefore, each panel member provided a short clip that was uploaded to the OPCC YouTube channel. Links were provided to attendees prior to the event.

The event was hosted by five young people from the Regional Youth Forum. This year there was a strong appetite from young people from all five forums to get involved, so several roles were created, including a social media team who created content for Instagram and Twitter.

Prior to the event, we received 33 questions from young people on a range of subjects, including policing during the pandemic, anti-social behaviour, mental health, suicide, homelessness and domestic abuse. We worked with Gwent Police and the other panel members to ensure the panellists were aware of the questions and equipped with information to answer the questions.

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During the 90-minute event, 18 questions were asked, including two that were generated during the event on self-harm and use of force. Due to time restrictions, and the amount of questions that were submitted, several questions were not asked. These questions were answered after the event and responses fed back to young people via short clips on social media and through the youth groups. A webpage detailing these Q&As was also created on the OPCC website. The event was also recorded and published on the OPCC YouTube channel.

Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive:

- 100% were either satisfied or very satisfied with the event.
- 100% found the day and time of the event good or very good.
- 100% found the event content good or very good.
- 100% found the panellists good or very good.
- 100% said they would attend an event like this again.

Areas of positive feedback included:

- Young people liked the fact they were talked to like adults not like children.
- They enjoyed the wide range of questions and hearing detailed answers from the panel.
- Attendees liked that it was chaired by young people.

Panel members' responses also saw 100% of young people who asked a question say they were satisfied with the response that they received.

Young people from Monmouthshire County Council youth forum Engage 2 Change provided social media updates during the event. They created vibrant graphics and informative content that was shared during the event on Twitter. The OPCC retweeted the posts and also composed real time tweets during the event. These enabled those who were not able to attend to gain information about some of the questions being raised. In total, 18 tweets were posted on the Engage 2 Change and OPCC accounts. The OPCC posts gained 9,853 impressions and 354 engagements.

A post-event press release was published and sent to all media contacts, featuring in the South Wales Argus and its website, as well as Monmouthshire Beacon and Pontypool Free Press reaching 85,786 people. The release was also published on the OPCC website and included in the weekly ebulletin and reached 9,531 across all social media channels.

### **Website:**

The website helps ensure that the OPCC continues to remain transparent and that information is easily accessible to the public. In 2020/21, the office was awarded a national award for transparency for the sixth year in a row. The Quality Mark is awarded to OPCCs that provide the public with key information, in accessible formats, on their website. It is awarded by Comparing Police and Crime Commissioners, an independent national body that monitors police governance.

During the year, the OPCC website was completely rebuilt to ensure it complies with new accessibility regulations that came into effect in September. This was a significant piece of work, as the website was rebuilt over two months in an entirely new content management system. Although the website itself appears very similar in appearance, we took this opportunity to refine some of the backend functionality, iron-out some performance issues and added some features.

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However, the impact of the new CMS in terms of recorded views is clearly illustrated in a comparison between the months pre- and post-launch:

Website	Sept 2020	October 2020
Page views	16,463	2,496
Unique page views	12,832	1,690
Average session	1min 4 sec	1min 7 sec
Bounce rate	84.41%	44.99%
Users	7,619	306
New users	7,465	253
Pages per session	1.98	3.97

While this may appear alarming, it is caused by the new CMS making it easier for people to opt-out of Google Analytics. A true reflection of website usage will be hindered by this going forward.

### **Next steps**

We will continue to increase engagement opportunities to ensure those who are seldom heard have an opportunity to engage, particularly our Black, Asian and minority ethnic residents, children and young people in Gwent.

As Covid-19 restrictions are lifted, we will significantly increase face-to-face engagement in 2021/22. We will be looking to roll-out the plans created as part of the OPCC business plan throughout the year, while also increasing the use of current platforms. We will continue to explore new channels and opportunities to increase and improve existing engagement work.

The major work programmes for 2020/21 will be the engagement work for the new police and crime plan, obtaining Kitemark status and creating a new physical publication to share with key partners.

There will be further upskilling of the team throughout 2020/21, with an emphasis on Creative Cloud products, photography and video. This will reduce the need for any freelance and/or external providers creating content resulting in financial savings to the OPCC.