



CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

ANNUAL REPORT

2023 | 2024



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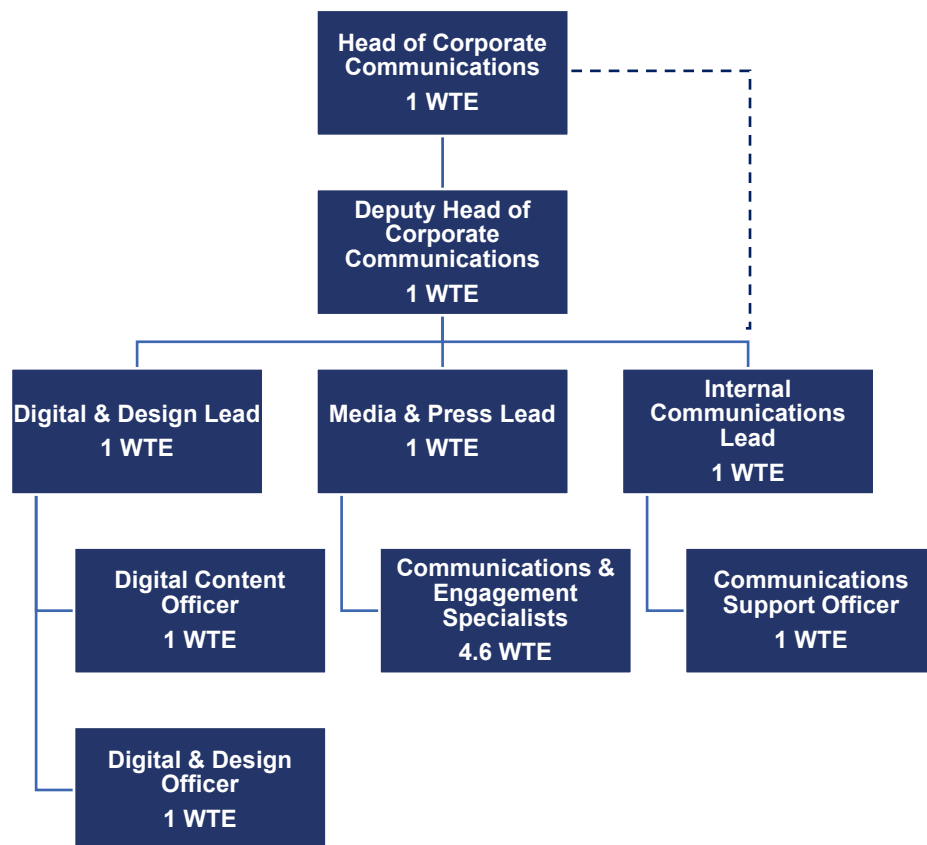
INTRODUCTION

This year's Annual Report takes a different format and focuses on the priorities identified as part of the corporate communications strategy for 2024 – 2026.

Our efforts remain focussed on supporting the business objectives of Gwent Police and ultimately increasing confidence in our ability to protect and reassure. The report captures key themes and highlights for the year.

TEAM STRUCTURE

The team delivers a 24/7 news service, internal communications, strategic campaigns (internal and external), digital communications, graphic design, multi-media, and events.



This structure has developed to enable specialist skills to grow within the team to offer a greater level of expert support, and to create development opportunities within the team to aid retention and recruitment.

For the final six months of the year the team was at near full capacity for the first time since 2019 and we have used this resource to focus on developing our proactive media approach. In November 2023, the team won the Chartered Institute of PR – Wales Silver award for 'In-house team of the year'.

HOW WE SUPPORT CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

- help our people to feel safe and valued in their work environment and support the development of effective, trusted leadership
- help our colleagues build the skills to tell our story positively to different audiences
- support a culture that positively impacts on public confidence in our service.

IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

- ensure our communications reach the right people, with the right message, at the right time to ensure we create effective and impactful communications
- develop our measurement strategies in order to evaluate our outcomes as we build our communications approach
- take a learning approach to adapt and refine our approaches to communications.

RAISING STANDARDS

- help build public confidence by increasing our people's awareness of organisational priorities and goals and their role in delivering them
- ensure a consistent and transparent approach to external communications to build confidence in our voice
- identify a wide range of channels internally and externally to meet audiences where they want to be
- build our brand in a creative way to grow engagement and support for the service.



REACHING OUR AUDIENCES EXTERNALLY

During 2023/24 our media coverage generated 2.63 billion opportunities to be seen by viewers/readers/listeners. This is one of the key measures offered by our media analysis platforms which looks at how many individuals have the opportunity to see the output of each media outlet.

Our approach is increasingly prioritising outlets that have the greatest reach with our target audience. Our priority is Gwent residents, followed by those who may not be residents but regularly visit the area and stakeholders who are influential to public confidence in our service.

WHERE DO PEOPLE IN WALES GET THEIR NEWS?

(Source: OFCOM 2023)

TV remains the most-used platform for news nowadays by adults in Wales (71%), followed by social media at 52% and other websites/apps at 43%.

- *55% of adults in Wales use BBC One for news, 40% use ITV1/ITV Wales and 37% use Facebook. However, the reach of BBC Wales key evening news is just 265k.*
- *The BBC website/app is used for news by 26% of adults in Wales, an increase in reach compared to 2022.*
- *The Daily Mail/Mail on Sunday (15%) is the most popular newspaper for news in Wales when looking at the print/website/app figures combined, followed by Western Mail/Wales on Sunday/Wales Online (14%).*
- *BBC Radio Wales is used by 7% of adults in Wales, the third most popular radio source after BBC Radio 2 (14%), BBC Radio 4 (10%). The BBC Radio Wales morning programme has an average audience of 62k and drive time programme just 17k.*
- *BBC One Wales remains the most-used source for accessing news about Wales by people in Wales.*
- *86% of people in Wales who follow news are interested in news about Wales.*
- *4% aren't interested in news about Wales.*

Local news TV remains the most popular platform for accessing local news and people are still highly satisfied with the quality of this news. 42% of online UK adults who follow news say they watch regional/local broadcasts on BBC TV and 23% watch them on ITV/ITV WALES/UTV/STV (a decrease from 32% in 2020). Four in five of these viewers are satisfied with the quality of news that these channels provide.

CURRENT DEMAND

We dealt with 2,927 media enquiries in 2023/24 which is a rise of slightly more than four per cent compared to the previous year. This follows two years when we experienced an increase in demand both years over 20%. Our demand is largely driven by the South Wales Argus which has limited reach and the coverage is largely balanced.

TONE

An analysis of media coverage between November 2023 and March 2024, a period which included some significant negative media stories, provides the following understanding of our coverage:

- **Positive coverage: 33%**
 - (articles which portray the organisation in an encouraging way or when we've achieved a good criminal justice outcome or developed a new approach with good outcomes).
- **Balanced coverage: 57%**
 - (factual or neutral coverage which forms the majority of our day-to-day work).
- **Negative coverage: 10%**
 - (coverage critical of the organisation such as disciplinary proceedings, or failure to deliver our expected standards).

REACH

While the volume of stories on an issue is one indicator of the level of interest in a story, the reach is of far more value as it represents the number of individuals who have had the opportunity to see each item of content.

While the number of published articles on any given subject might be higher for a negative story, one well-placed positive piece can have far greater reach. Our challenge is therefore to ensure that we maintain our focus on placing positive content in outlets key to reaching our audiences.



THE IMPORTANCE OF REACH

During March 2024 we had two major stories run which were detrimental to building confidence in Gwent Police – Op Rhone relating to the deaths of three individuals following a crash on the A48 and the WhatsApp group messages which featured largely in The Sunday Times. A positive feature on our investigation into a cryptocurrency gang (Op Solana) appeared on Crimewatch Live.

The negative stories combined created a total of over 14.3 million opportunities to see, while the Crimewatch Live coverage of our work on one serious and organised crime case created over 16.8 million opportunities to see.

In addition to responding to nearly 3,000 media enquiries the team also issued nearly 400 press releases (in addition to statements in response to queries) sharing positive news or developments within Gwent Police.

We also saw the broadcast of season four of Crash Detectives. For the first time the series was broadcast on national BBC2 alongside BBC Wales. Each episode had in the region of 1m views on BBC2, a further 200k on BBC Wales and where a news story was linked to the series it attracted in the region of 1m views through the BBC website in addition to any radio coverage reach. This places the series at the top of the content produced for BBC Wales. Within two weeks the first three episodes had 500k views on I Player. Series five is currently in production.

We also facilitated filming for several documentary series including Code Blue: One Punch Killer for ITV network, Jack Lis programme featuring interviews with T/DCC Mark Hobrough for a Sky production, Special Ops: Crime Squad UK for two separate cases – Op Solana and a robbery from 2018 which featured on Dave (UKTV). We also facilitated Expert Witness which aired on BBC1 on 29 August 2023 on our investigation into the murder of Vietnamese national Tran Nguyen which had an opportunity to see of 4.9m and it was repeated on BBC2 on 10 October 2023 which had a smaller reach of 2.7m. Contracts were negotiated for a series of Rookie Cops and filming concluded by year end. The series will be aired Autumn 2024 on BBC Wales.

In November, we introduced a new role to the team who would lead on proactive comms to enhance our provision in this space. One of the positive pieces carried out by the proactive communications officer was the Op Forester cannabis factory enforcement. Coverage in the media of warrants and sentencings for cases within Op Forester in a fourth-month period had potential opportunities to see of more than 1.6million people. This included inviting the South Wales Argus on a warrant to a cannabis factory in Newport and facilitating an interview with a senior officer which resulted in a front-page story, double page spread in the paper and an online piece with a video. The Argus coverage generated a potential of more than 78,000 opportunities to see for this warrant. A social media video on our channels had a reach of more than 35,000 people including almost 1,500 likes on TikTok.

A BBC network piece on the impact of organised criminals taking over disused buildings featuring footage from a warrant and an interview with a senior officer about the work of Op Forester was filmed during this period and is due to air in the coming months.



Over the year the team has worked to manage several high-profile negative media stories linked to professional standards of behaviours or operational issues. These are extremely time intensive pieces of work with a great deal of preparation, and work with our colleagues in Legal Services and PSD. We also work closely with the Independent Office of Police Conduct to ensure accurate details are shared publicly and that we are well positioned to respond or support their public announcements. The team has worked hard to ensure accurate and balanced reporting wherever possible including providing a presence for the duration of a high-profile inquest not only to work with the media but to support our officers. Single cases can span a two-to-three-year period and require close management of any developments over this period.

Over the past few years, we have worked hard to build a narrative with media that positions our robust stance on misconduct as us leading the way in setting out our expectations, supporting victims, investigating reports and taking decisive action where required. During the year we maintained this position both in our high-profile cases, media and stakeholder briefings and throughout high-profile scrutiny.

CAMPAIGNS

The team develop creative and effective campaigns to support our policing objectives throughout the year. We also support nationally-led policing campaigns such as Op Sceptre on knife crime, roads policing, county lines intensification weeks and male violence against women and girls. In order to land these locally, we created additional content for example interviews with families of victims to show the impact on communities.

Over Christmas 2023 our campaign focussed on the key areas of demand for our operational teams such as drink/drug driving and parcel theft. A total of 86 social media



posts over December had a reach of 579.5k, with 668.7k impressions (the number of times the content was displayed).

The Step in, Step Up, Set the tone campaign, which offers upstander techniques for intervention, which was delivered in 2022/23, won a Chartered Institute of PR – Wales Silver award in November 2023. Part two of the campaign will be delivered alongside the College of Policing's upstander training in early autumn.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL

The team has focussed on developing more engaging content that attracts and holds followers. Our TikTok content has grown with successful engagement rates, but our presence on the channel is closely monitored in line with government guidance given the ownership concerns. We currently have 11.8k followers.

Content tailored to different platforms is delivering greater engagement. The two key topics that drive the level of interest are dogs and cars and the team is using content around these topics in ways which also deliver underlying messages around tackling crime.

The table below shows the metrics that we are able to gather for each of our corporate social media channels.

We have started the process on moving our presence for neighbourhood teams from X (formerly Twitter) to Facebook and this will continue through 2024. The aim is to ensure we are in spaces used more frequently by our communities.







































While our followers on X have grown, in line with the national trend post change in ownership, engagement levels have dropped. The changing tone of the channel is another driver for our move to Facebook.

Our Facebook presence continues to attract more followers with increasing reach. Our Welsh language account continues this trend.


Instagram shows the same growth in followers but also offers a much higher rate of engagement. What our engagement analysis shows us through the detail is that business as usual posts – road closures or crime prevention advice - has little engagement, but more dynamic footage involving warrants, dogs and cars drives engagement. The team is therefore focussed on creating strong content in these areas to deliver key messages. Individual posts can have an engagement value of up to 5% which is significantly above the industry standard goal of 1%.

We are unable to collect metrics on TikTok in the same way as other channels, but we currently have 11.8k followers and use the channel to post non-time sensitive content as videos are not presented in a timeline but may be shown in a feed at any point.



Account	Followers	Acc. Reach	Post Reach	Acc. Impressions	Post Impressions	Link Clicks	Published Posts	Post Engagement
 Gwent Police	167,191	92k	59m	65.3m	63.7m	270.2k	1.6k	0.81%
	 10,283	 14.8k	 8.1m	 6.9m	 9.4m	5.5k 	 154	0.16% 
 Heddlu Gwent	567	210k	111.2k	116.3k	113.7k	364	1.4k	0.56%
	 98	 40k	 33.9k	 35.2k	 35.1k	259 	 178	0.49% 
 Gwent Police	88,118	N/A	N/A	N/A	5.7m	39.6k	1.3k	0.96%
	 2,503	N/A	N/A	N/A	 319k	 1.3k	 53	0.10% 
 Heddlu Gwent	589	N/A	N/A	N/A	57.8k	602	1k	1.75%
	 32	N/A	N/A	N/A	26.4k 	1k 	 56	1.17% 
 Gwent Police	20,916	3.9k	1.6m	2.4m	1.6m	N/A	319	3.09%
	 1,341	 1k	 308.7k	 322k	 227.5k	N/A	2 	 0.36%

Key

	Increase on previous period		Decrease on previous period
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EXAMPLE

This example demonstrates how one item of content that resonates with the audience can land across different platforms:

Using dashcam footage of a pursuit of a dangerous driver who was jailed for ten years for drug and drink driving offences the team demonstrated the skills and tenacity of our officers:

TikTok stats

- *Video views – 256.1k*
- *Likes – 4,076*
- *Comments – 140*
- *Saves – 362*
- *Shares – 642*

Facebook stats

- *Post reach – 381.1k*
- *Post impressions – 400.2k*
- *Post engagement – 1.8k*
- *Reactions – 1.3k*
- *Clicks – 19*
- *Shares – 304*

Instagram stats

- *Video views – 28.2k*
- *Reach – 14.4k*
- *Likes – 599*
- *Saves – 49*



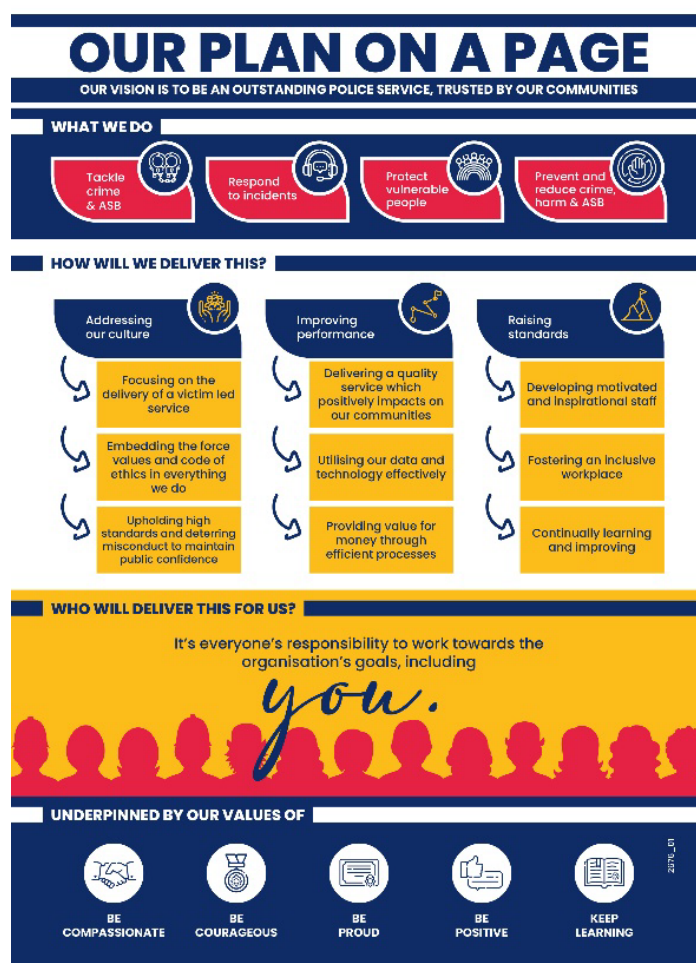
INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

At the centre of our internal communications is a main objective to connect colleagues to our mission, vision, strategy and values. We aim to build the belief that those elements are the right ones for success and engage colleagues with how they play a part in delivering them.

This year was a period of transformation for Gwent Police. When HMICFRS put in place a cause for concern following their PEEL inspection, we worked with senior leaders to develop a narrative to explain to colleagues how we would refocus our strategy around our new **Plan on a Page** to address HMICFRS recommendations and become an outstanding service, trusted by our communities.

Measurable outputs included a briefing through email and a video outlining our strategic approach and recognising where good work was already taking place.

In November, 1,200 colleagues joined Chief Constable Pam Kelly for a series of roadshows to hear how our Plan on a Page was driving improvements to performance, addressing our culture and raising standards. Of those who gave feedback after the session, **100% understood our vision and values** and **95% of colleagues were clear on our Plan on a Page**. Further to this, **80% of colleagues said they felt positive about our future**, with **94% reporting feeling motivated to play their part in improving performance**, addressing our culture and raising standards.



In December, we shared the news that HMICFRS had lifted the cause for concern. This piece was read by 1,150 colleagues – significantly higher engagement than past content on strategy, demonstrating increased engagement and interest with our messaging around our performance. We also spotlighted key performance improvements in our force control centre, celebrating the team topping the national league tables in 999 response times by positioning well done messages from frontline colleagues. This article and video received high engagement (51 article likes), generated over 1,000 views in total, with colleagues leaving further messages of support within the comments section.

Our work to align all colleagues to our Plan on a Page has been supported by our ongoing delivery of a listening strategy. Our approach aims to help demonstrate how our leaders empathise with the challenges colleagues face and build two-way communications, so colleagues know how their views and opinions have shaped decision-making processes.

An example of this is how we've positioned our employee opinion survey (EOS) results to mid-line and senior leadership, encouraging them to shape their own local improvement plans using data from the EOS. In December, we helped design a new EOS toolkit for mid-line and senior leaders, which offers guidance on how to interpret and use colleagues' feedback to drive performance. Promotion to department managers centred on a case study from the FCC, positioning how the department's senior leadership team used the EOS as the basis for its turn-around strategy. In January, department leads were further invited to a webinar session to hear more about this approach and how it can be applied to their own areas. Through this work we aimed to build a 'you said, we did' approach into the way we deliver work locally to improve performance, address our culture and raise standards.

Engagement with our employee survey will need to be built on over time and our focus on this will continue into 2024.

CULTURE AND OUR VALUES

Our activity to promote and connect colleagues to our strategy is underpinned by our work to help develop our culture. Our activity is focused on helping define the culture we want and reinforcing the culture that we don't want. This centres on setting out standards of behaviour, for example when reporting on misconduct hearing outcomes, alongside positioning and celebrating our values in action.

This year also saw the launch of the new Code of Ethics developed by the College of Policing. We were able to offer a preview of the new Code of Ethics to colleagues as part of the Chief Constable's Roadshow in 2023 and explain how they work alongside our own values. This led to 96% of colleagues who were surveyed after the roadshows reporting an awareness of the new Code of Ethics. We also worked with senior leaders to help explain how they can embed the language of the Code of Ethics into everyday conversations with their teams.

This sits alongside the work we have supported around professional standards of behaviour both within the workplace and more widely. We have robustly shared our expectations on reinforced where we have investigated and taken action against those who let us all down.

We were fortunate to secure Baroness Louise Casey and Professor Sarah Charman to speak at two leadership and learning events in 2023-2024. Both delivered impactful inputs

which have developed our conversations around policing culture. We shared a summary of Baroness Casey's input in an article published on The Beat, which generated 690 views.

A culture of recognition builds trust, and we empower colleagues to recognise their peers through our Be Proud nomination system via The Beat. The digital nomination form was redesigned in 2023 to increase the quality of submissions to ensure we recognise and reward the right people for their achievements. We continue to drive awareness of our processes via clear and repeated call to actions across relevant content, and this helps drive a consistent number of monthly submissions.

We also celebrated police staff recognition week for the first time in November. We ran several articles focusing on long service staff, our police staff member of the year nominees, and held an in-person afternoon tea event with the chief constable, paid for by Unison. We published a special police staff recognition digital magazine to all colleagues, which included a video message from Chief Constable Pam Kelly and a series of 'thank you' video messages from police officer colleagues.

Force awards are held annually, and our 2023 award ceremony was attended by over 90 recipients. Attendance was managed via direct invitations through our internal email communications platform. The night was captured and shared on social media externally and shared internally via a Beat article and a bespoke email communications to all colleagues which received very high engagement with over 750 clicks.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION

With uplift complete, our service is now focused on retention. We supported the introduction of the Stay@Gwent intervention, targeting comms to colleagues in our most 'at risk' groups leaving our service. This led to increased retention rates when colleagues took part in a Stay@Gwent interview.

Aligned to this retention work has been ongoing the promotion of our wider employee value proposition, including professional development opportunities – most notably our new Leadership Academi. Our digital and design team developed a look and feel for the Leadership Academi and a supporting creative identity that focuses on embedding our expected leadership behaviours which are aligned to the College of Policing leadership framework – 'leaders at every level' / 'you're looking at a leader.' The new creative identity was launched as part of an internal event held at our headquarters. The event was oversubscribed and received positive feedback. This helped ensure that our first mid-line leaders programme has seen a full cohort on launch. We have further promoted our ongoing professional development and leadership training offer through a new learning and development brochure, colleague vlogs and our internal podcast series, Blue Light Talks.





Several health and wellbeing initiatives were offered to colleagues in 2023 and internal communications has played a key role in supporting their delivery. These include delivering an increase in flu jab uptake and launching a brand-new private health offer.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We've continued to work in partnership with our staff networks and ED&I team to help facilitate conversations around equality, diversity and inclusion. This includes a calendar of key events and awareness days throughout the year.

Building upon priorities set out in our Strategic Equality Plan, at the start of 2024 we supported a survey that asked for views from female colleagues working in operational roles, which successfully engaged 51 colleagues. In March we collaborated with the GEN Network to deliver an event for International Women's Day (IWD). We used issues raised in the survey to help design the format of the event and set the topics of the day. Fifty people attended the event, including partners from South Wales Fire and Rescue Service. From those who provided feedback, 100% said they felt Gwent Police is committed to female colleague career progression, with colleagues remarking that they felt 'truly inspired' and 'proud' and 'more determined' following the day.

OPERATIONAL POLICING

Our internal communications activity has continued to build colleague engagement around changes to ways of working, or larger programmes of change, including the introduction of a new evidential property system, and compliance with an updated public personal protection training format.

We've also focused on delivering key programmes of work that build engagement with operational policing priorities, including serious organised crime. This included the development of a new internal brand positioning and creative identity for our work in this area. 'Serious organised crime – it's all of us against them' seeks to galvanise all colleagues around our mission to make Gwent a hostile place for serious organised crime and emulates the stance we take operationally on people to commit crimes that cause the most harm to our communities.

This new creative approach was developed in collaboration with our SOC teams and has been applied to a new briefing pack they now use to brief neighbourhood teams and explain how they can work collaboratively to address local issues. The branding has also been applied to operational templates and reporting dashboards, further supporting awareness of the campaign approach and messaging internally.



We also continue to support vital awareness and support for our work to tackle violence against women and girls. For example, we highlighted an event held at headquarters encouraging colleagues to pledge their commitment to White Ribbon in November. Colleagues from the domestic abuse safeguarding team and HeForShe ambassadors were in attendance to provide support and guidance, which saw good engagement from colleagues.

We also held an in-person event to launch the DA Matters champions, with domestic abuse survivors in attendance. An open forum was held where attendees could question the DCC on how we're tackling domestic abuse. DA Matters champions are a key element to highlighting changes in tackling DA and we signposted colleagues to the current cohort and encouraged further take-ups in training. Efforts were further recognised when we shared the award given to the new survivor engagement co-ordinator in the first national recognition event for colleagues tackling VAWG.

CHANNEL DEVELOPMENT

We are committed to continuously reviewing and improving our channels and content to help ensure our internal communications reach the right people, with the right message, at the right time.

In 2023-2024 we have enhanced colleague voice across our content pieces, and updated our existing channels to better signpost operational colleagues to must know information that will support them in doing their jobs more effectively.

We introduced 'Know and Act' which sits under a My Job area of the intranet and is pushed in our weekly Bulletin. This moved job specific information from the news centred area of the intranet to an easy to find, date ordered section that remains longer term, enabling busy officers to catch up in good time.

The 'Chief's vlog' developed in to 'Your vlog' after it was recognised that colleagues enjoyed hearing from their peers and subject matter experts. This enabled a mix of senior leader

messaging, combined with peers, on an ad hoc basis. Colleague vlogs consistently receive viewing figures of around 600-700, above the engagement rates for chief officer vlogs.

Our email communications consistently deliver engagement levels above industry benchmarks, and colleagues report high satisfaction with key publications such as The Bulletin.

Our focus for 2024-2025 will be to develop and improve our channels to reflect our digital first approach and support agile working, in ways that are future proofed. This includes work to restructure and improve user experience on our intranet platform – The Beat.

