

FOI response public engagement

We've included a copy of the comms and engagement report from 19/20 and pulled out some key things you may be interested in. The 20/21 report is currently being finalised, but we have included examples of engagement that took place during 2020 below.

Academic research

- In November 2019, the Police Foundation released its research into understanding public attitudes towards police priorities. Gwent was one of seven OPCCs to take part in the research earlier that year. The project moved beyond standard surveys that ask people what they think the police should prioritise, without providing information about the realities of modern policing. Instead, it brought together focus groups of local residents to discuss policing in their area, introduced information about the breadth and intensity of police demand and assessed the extent to which, once they understood these competing issues more fully, their views on priorities changed. This is referred to as Q methodology. Our OPCC has used this in the past and is currently trying to make a digitalised version of it for wider use with our communities. A copy of the report is available on the Police Foundation's website.

Black, Asian and minority ethnic specific engagement

- In 2020, we started 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. Although the remit of these sessions is broader than just victim engagement, it does give participants an opportunity to raise concerns if they have been a victim of crime, or on other's behalf. As a direct result of these sessions Gwent Police has allocated more resources to target key areas, and the intelligence they have provided has helped to support our recent successful bid to the Home Office's Safer Streets fund, which will allow Gwent Police to run targeted crime prevention initiatives in key areas.
- In March 2020 the Commissioner visited mosques in Blaenau Gwent and Newport, two very different communities. The relationships made during these visits subsequently help to inform targeted Covid communications during the pandemic. Perceptions of crime and relationships with police were discussed at each visit.

Budget setting

- Every year, we survey the people of Gwent on the force budget. The Commissioner has to engage with people on the precept, as it is his responsibility to set the level for Gwent every year. The reports are published on our website at <https://gwent.pcc.police.uk/en/have-your-say/have-your-say/previous-consultations/> They asked additional questions focusing on perceptions. For example, as part of its surveying, the OPCC recently asked: *"Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, Gwent Police adopted an approach of education and encouragement, with enforcement only used as a last resort. Do you agree this has been the right approach?"* A total of 1,259 residents responded to the latest survey, with 55 per cent agreeing that this has been

the right approach. Twenty-nine per cent disagreed, while 15 per cent were unsure. We have also asked about domestic abuse and people to feed back opinions if they have been a victim of crime. This information was used to inform the Commissioner's decisions when setting the budget and for when he holds the Chief Constable to account.

Community Covid questions

- As our external engagements in 2020 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, as well as feed back on their experiences. 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. This information was fed to the Commissioner and the Chief Constable who met frequently to discuss the force's response to Covid-19 to ensure it was proportionate. It also informed the messaging we pushed out on our channels.

Community dial-ins

- Throughout 2020, the OPCC 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 proved beneficial for all parties and are currently set to continue. Local policing and community issues are discussed. Information or opinions expressed from this work are fed to the Commissioner to help inform strategic and commissioning decisions, as well as help facilitate conversations when holding the Chief Constable to account

Community events

- The OPCC, Gwent Police and Connect Gwent worked together on an extensive summer engagement programme in 2019. The OPCC attended more than 20 community events across Gwent in the summer of 2019, engaging with more than 7,500 people. More than 200 people completed the budget survey at events and this information was factored into the budget setting reports (see above). While discussing policing and community safety issues with residents, we provided people with crime prevention advice and crime prevention items, including anti-skimming card holders, crime prevention booklets and purse bells. Any significant issues were raised with the Commissioner, while also signposting people to other services (eg Connect Gwent, our victims' hub). All information gathered or opinions

expressed from this work was fed to the Commissioner to help inform strategic and commissioning decisions, as well as help facilitate conversations when holding the Chief Constable to account. Where people expressed that they had been victims of crime and wanted an update/further information on their case, we put them in touch with the appropriate department within Gwent Police. All summer events were cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic.

Children and young people

- We launched a joint campaign with Gwent Police around child sexual exploitation called 'Stop. Talk. Protect.' in 2020. As part of this we arranged workshops with local children and young people to help co-produce the key messaging, branding and approach. This was key in ensuring that the key messages resonated with the target audiences. Perceptions of policing and crime were part of this process.
- Following engagement with children and young people, we created a peer-led joint communications campaign on social media during the first lockdown. This used short clips of pledges from young people to reinforce the national social distancing messaging and encourage people not to break lockdown rules. 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. Discussions around the perception of policing the pandemic formed a crucial part of its development.
- We worked with Gwent Police in 2019 and 2020 on a child-centred policing strategy that will aim 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. Children and young people were surveyed as part of this work in 2020. This work is ongoing and is set to be agreed with Gwent Police in quarter two of 2021/22. The feedback from children and young people is setting the agenda for what will form the early content (eg stop and search), and ongoing feedback will set future agendas/content.
- In 2019, we attended Blaenau Gwent Children's Grand Council to deliver a workshop on safety in the community. The children were asked to put stickers on maps of their area to indicate where they felt safe or unsafe. The results were collated, fed back to local policing teams, and used to evidence the need for possible diversionary activities and other services in the future.

Domestic abuse

- In 2019, 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. In total, 30 survivors of VAWDASV informed its content and some of them took part in the actual campaign. As part of this process there were in-depth discussions about their criminal justice journeys. We also attended the male survivors support group (MARS) to hear about

their experiences and feed into the campaign, as well as part of research about victims' experiences.

- In July 2020, we worked with the VAWDASV regional team to provide information to Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team's (EYST) older people's forum about the many aspects of abuse that affects all communities. This will help VAWSDAV and the OPCC to convey the most appropriate messages to our Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. This work is ongoing. Information from this session was fed back to the Commissioner.

Hate crime

- As part of Hate Crime Awareness Week in 2020, 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. We can only tackle hate crime if we listen to what victims are telling us about their experiences.

Mini Police

- In 2019 and 2020, we visited a selection of the Mini Police schemes and helped publicise the initiatives. The Commissioner also sat on the interview panels for Fochriw and Phillipstown primary schools. Whenever we meet with them, we discuss their experiences of policing and community safety. We have also been developing a child safety survey with local schools, but this has been delayed due to the pandemic.

Performance management

- Engagement with victims over their experiences with the policing services received is undertaken by Gwent Police and shared with the OPCC to inform performance management and scrutiny. Internal governance is provided by the Victims Board with continuous improvement delivered through the Victims Working Group. The OPCC is a member of both meetings. Service user and victim satisfaction data is provided by Gwent Police to these meetings to enable monitoring and scrutiny by both organisations. Gwent Police also reports on victim performance at the Commissioner's Strategy and Performance Board.

Rape review

- Through 2020, 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. In addition to the surveys, Gwent Police hosted virtual focus groups to engage with survivors of sexual and domestic abuse. Once the surveys closed, the information was collated and helped form a review paper that went to Gwent Police in June 2021.

Refugee engagement:

- The OPCC funded a Hate Crime Awareness Programme delivered by the Welsh Refugee Council in partnership with the Sanctuary Project, British Red

Cross women's groups and SEWREC groups in 2019. The aim was to help raise awareness about hate crime and incidents amongst asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants in the Gwent area. The programme delivered 12 hate crime awareness sessions and workshops to refugees and asylum seekers to share any recorded incidents with Gwent Police and Victim Support when given permission to do so by participants; explore scenarios for hate crime and how to identify and report it; understand how the police respond to reports of hate crime; and encourage participants to report any incidents. As part of the project, 86 asylum seekers, refugees and migrants were engaged with, discussing power and equality during their day to day life in Wales. Overall, participants believed that the police could help, but was not always able to do so, either because they did not want to, or, because they did not have the right amount of evidence to do so. In 2020, the Commissioner met with representatives of the Bahá'í Faith to learn more about the plight of refugees and asylum seekers. The OPCC also funds the Sanctuary project in Newport, which works with refugees and asylum seekers in the area.

Roads

- During Project EDWARD in 2020, we promoted 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.
- In 2019, we took part in A 'Surround the Town' event in Cwmbran discussing a range of road safety issues to residents, including speeding, drink and drug driving, and problem parking. Information fed back to help hold the Chief Constable to account and eventually lead to a roads review written by our office being submitted to Gwent Police with a series of recommendations.

Rural:

- In 2019, we held surgeries and visits with the Rural Crime Team at Gwent's only livestock market to engage with hard to reach communities such as farmers and rural workers, communicating its good work and visiting rural crime hotspots. The Commissioner has used the information gathered at these to hold the chief to account at their regular meetings.

Static surgeries

- The office runs general engagement, area specific when relevant, throughout the year. This can be general engagement, helping to fulfil the Commissioner's role as voice of people, and to promote seasonal campaigns, eg scams at Christmas, or surveying for the annual budget setting. The purpose is to increase opportunities for the public to engage with the OPCC in a community setting, discussing PCC priorities and specific campaigns. We use neighbourhood policing team intelligence ahead of visits to have answers to known issues within the area. Information or opinions expressed from this work is fed to the Commissioner (if he's not in attendance) to help inform strategic and commissioning decisions, as well as help facilitate conversations when holding the Chief Constable to account.

Strategic equality plan:

- We engaged with residents across Gwent in 2020 to help shape the Strategic Equality Plan. 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, 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 responses were analysed to influence the final document that was published in October.

Survivor Engagement Co-ordinator:

- A new Survivor Engagement Coordinator started work at Gwent Police in 2019. The post, the first of its kind in Wales, was created following recommendations from the OPCC. The co-ordinator is acting as a vital link between survivors of abuse and strategic partners, providing them with the opportunities to influence positive change within policies and procedures.

Walkabouts

- Walkabouts allow active visible engagement by the Commissioner in community settings, engaging with people who wouldn't attend traditional surgeries, while continuing the philosophy of surgeries. These replaced the traditional surgeries that were previously held but had low attendance. Walkabouts allow the Commissioner to hear from a wide range of voices within communities on the issues that matter to them. They offer a better dip-sample of public opinion and ensures we are not engaging with the same people in any given area. They have allowed the Commissioner to hear a wide range of people's views, which has helped him fulfil his role as voice of the people, providing greater understanding when scrutinising policing performance in any given area. Issues raised during these visits are regularly fed back to the local policing team and Chief Constable.

Youth Question Time:

- We held two Youth Question Time events in 2019 and 2020. The Commissioner and a senior representative from Gwent Police were joined on the panel by people who could speak about the issues that are important to young people in Gwent. These issues were informed by the work of the regional youth forum. Each event had frank discussions between attendees and the panel members (80+ and 140+). Many policing and community safety issues were discussed at both.