



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE  
**POLICE**  
PROUD TO SERVE

## **Engaging with the people we serve**

**An overarching strategy  
2016/17**

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## **2. Purpose of this strategy**

- 2.1. This strategy is holistic in its approach, reflective of the fact that every interaction between the public and force amounts to an 'engagement'; an opportunity to build positive perceptions of policing and to enhance the relationship between the public and police.
- 2.2. It explains why positive engagement is fundamental to everything we do and sets out principles which should be used to support and shape bespoke engagement plans, customer-centric business processes and all public interaction.
- 2.3. Although it is holistic, the strategy does set out a checklist to ensure that any member of the public can easily access information and find out how to engage with the force. This checklist is not exhaustive and forms a foundation on which tailored individual or local communication and engagement activities can be built.
- 2.4. The strategy does not capture the duties or intentions of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to engage with the public, but is designed to complement their own Engagement and Community Involvement Strategy.

### **3. Background and context**

- 3.1. Nottinghamshire Police, like most forces across the country, is in a period of ongoing change driven, in part, by a very challenging financial climate. The force is working increasingly collaboratively, designing a three-force Strategic Alliance with Leicestershire and Northamptonshire forces, and is changing its operating model to enable a more fluid deployment of resources.
- 3.2. This level of change brings with it communications and engagement challenges, with some messaging becoming increasingly politicised.
- 3.3. In a national context, full emergency service collaboration and devolution remain high on the agenda, and a series of high profile incidents such as the Hillsborough inquests and the treatment of historical sexual abuse cases have given rise to questions over police legitimacy.
- 3.4. Although the subsequent media coverage of such issues will have an impact upon people's perceptions of policing in general, we know from research that it is a person's direct or indirect experiences of policing that forms the basis of their confidence. In Nottinghamshire, public confidence has been on an upward trajectory since 2010. The Crime Survey for England and Wales indicates that it is in line with the England and Wales average at around 70%.
- 3.5. However, the proportion of residents feeling that the police treat people fairly has consistently remained below the national average (61% compared to 66%), along with the proportion believing that the police are doing a good/excellent job (55% against a national average of 62%). There is still much work to do.
- 3.6. The force's current Public Engagement Strategy was published in January 2014. It advocated increased consistency in messaging across the force, more frequent and local updates to the public, and the rollout of the use of social media across all geographical communities in the county.
- 3.7. Since then, officers and staff in the force have had access to a range of communications tools via the 'Communications Cloud' and digital engagement has grown exponentially.
- 3.8. The ongoing need to deliver value for money has also shaped engagement practices, with some activities in the 2014 strategy becoming difficult to justify in the context of significant budget pressures and increasingly stretched resources. For example, with many officers reporting very few attendees at community meetings, there is a need for flexibility and to think differently in order to be both effective and efficient.

## 4. Why do we engage?

- 4.1. It is recognised that, without the co-operation of the public, policing as we know it would cease to exist. Policing by consent in a developed democracy hinges on the support of our communities.
- 4.2. Where there is effective engagement there is public confidence in policing. This confidence helps the public to feel that we are doing our job legitimately. If the public do not feel this, they are less likely to support what we do. Thus, engaging with our communities, including those that have historically been seldom heard, is fundamental to maintain and enhance legitimacy.
- 4.3. Engaging positively with the public encourages respect for the law, fosters social responsibility and makes people more likely to help the police. Engagement therefore plays a preventative role that can not only make communities safer but also save the force time and money.
- 4.4. Thus, effective engagement supports the force priorities and Police and Crime Commissioner's objectives<sup>1</sup> to deliver:
  - safer communities
  - improved trust and confidence in policing
  - value for money policing services.
- 4.5. Evidence also shows that effective community engagement leads to an improvement in police officers' job satisfaction.
- 4.6. There are also statutory obligations to engage:
  - 4.6.1. Chief Constables have a duty to engage with their local communities. They must make arrangements for obtaining the views of people in each neighbourhood about crime and disorder, and provide such people with information about policing in that neighbourhood.<sup>2</sup>
  - 4.6.2. This requires police officers within each neighbourhood to hold regular meetings with local people, during which the public can hold the police to account on matters relating to policing in their neighbourhoods. These meetings should be supported with information about crime and antisocial behaviour in the local area and the action that the police and partners are taking to tackle it. Although this seems quite prescriptive, there are many ways in which such 'meetings' can be held.
  - 4.6.3. The equality duties<sup>3</sup> for public bodies also mean we have a responsibility to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. We also need to ensure we have an adequate evidence base for our decisions. Effective consultation with a broad representative group can assist with that.

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<sup>1</sup> As detailed in the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Plan (refreshed) 2016-18

<sup>2</sup>Section 34 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

<sup>3</sup> Equality Act 2010

4.6.4. Specifically, the force has set out equality objectives that will be supported through effective external engagement:

- *We will ensure that policing powers are used proportionately; our services are accessible to all, and crimes that disproportionately impact on protected groups are dealt with proactively.*  
Some of the ways we are doing this include engaging with the public to increase reporting of hate crime and increasing stop and search transparency.
- *We will regularly and meaningfully engage with our local and diverse communities to ensure that what we do focuses on their needs and reflects their concerns and experiences.*  
This includes maintaining strong, active Independent Advisory Groups.
- *We will increase the extent that our workforce is representative of the communities of Nottinghamshire and ensure that all staff have the opportunity to progress and develop so that this representation is reflected at all levels within our organisation.*  
This includes positive action recruitment campaigning.

## **5. The many levels of engagement**

- 5.1. Engagement takes many forms; from a conversation with an officer in the street to a force-wide crime reduction campaign. You could say that every time a member of the public sees and interacts with the force, this is engagement. Therefore, visibility issues such as branding, the appearance of officers and the layout of buildings are also very important.
- 5.2. The more traditional concept of engagement is about getting the public involved in policing through consultation. In this context, the College of Policing sets out three levels of engagement:
  - 5.2.1. Democratic mandate – this is about giving the public the opportunity to question and better understand the legitimacy of police actions, and hold the police to account for the effectiveness and quality of their services. The PCC is largely concerned with this level of engagement.
  - 5.2.2. Intermediate strategic – the public help us to shape policy, planning and critical incidents, and we gain a greater understanding of how policing may affect individuals and communities. The PCC is largely involved in this through annual consultation around the Police and Crime Plan, and through the discussion of policy at Police and Crime Panels. However, there are many things that the force itself can do to put the public at the heart of its business.
  - 5.2.3. Neighbourhood policing – this is about involving the public in the policing of their local area by seeking to understand their concerns and then shaping problem-solving activity accordingly.

## 6. What we will do

6.1. We will endeavour to put the public at the heart of our policy, planning and processes.<sup>4</sup>

How?	Frequency	Monitoring and evaluating	Ownership, support and tools
We will maintain and wherever possible develop active Independent Advisory Groups who are regularly consulted to inform service improvements	Ongoing	Equality, Diversity and Human Rights (EDHR) board	Citizens in Policing department and HR
Through positive action recruitment campaigning and the citizens in policing scheme the force will become representative of the communities it serves	Ongoing	EDHR board	Citizens in Policing department and HR
We will promote the <a href="#">Pegasus system</a> and use it to provide a tailored service for people who are vulnerable, or have a disability or impairment	Ongoing	Contact Management monitors registration levels	Corporate Communication and Contact Management
The public will have the opportunity to have their say through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram	Users engaged on a daily basis	Regular KPI reports by Corporate Communication's digital team	Corporate Communication
A community insight report will be published internally, built from various sources including social media feedback, online compliments/feedback and PCC consultation. This will be used to support public-centric decision-making	Quarterly	Feedback on the report gathered by Corporate Communication's engagement team	Corporate Communication's engagement team, with support from across the force
The public will have the opportunity to shape our digital engagement (e.g. the type/level of information published on social media) through an annual digital engagement survey	Annual	Success of survey evaluated through response levels	Corporate Communication's digital team

<sup>4</sup> This is over and above the PCC's consultation around organisational change and the Police and Crime Plan priorities.

<p>The public will be able to provide compliments and complaints online, via email, face-to-face, via letter or by phone. We will resolve complaints in a timely and proportionate way, and this will be used to drive service improvements</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Complaints are monitored by the Professional Standards Department (PSD) for proportionality and any signs of bias. Governance is through the PCC, with reports presented by PSD</p>	<p>Corporate Communication (website), Market Research (reviewing feedback), PSD (complaint management)</p>
<p>We will ensure that stop and search is lawful, necessary and proportionate and delivered with dignity and respect, with members of the public invited to scrutinise. Section 60s will be proactively publicised in advance</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>EDHR board</p>	<p>All officers, Contact Management, Corporate Communication</p>
<p>We will work with the OPCC's Consultation Forum to co-ordinate with partners and maximise consultation opportunities</p>	<p>Quarterly</p>		<p>Corporate Communication's engagement team</p>

6.2. We will provide information to the public to demonstrate transparency, so that they feel well informed and can have their say if they wish

How?	Frequency	Monitoring and evaluating	Ownership, support and tools
We will continually increase the level of information routinely published as part of our <a href="#">publication scheme</a> on the force website and via <a href="http://www.police.uk">www.police.uk</a>	Ongoing	Corporate Communication's digital team monitors web hits and trends, including the number of Freedom of Information requests which should reduce as the publication scheme expands	Corporate Communication's digital team
We will ensure the force website is accessible and compliant with W3C standards, achieving the 'AAA' standard by April 2017. This includes the increased use of <a href="#">British Sign Language videos</a> and translations	Ongoing	Independent accessibility assessments including user acceptance testing	Corporate Communication's digital team
We will routinely publish complaints data and formal findings, and public hearings will be publicised <sup>5</sup> to enable the public to attend	Ongoing		Corporate Communication and PSD
We will encourage the public to sign up to Nottinghamshire Alert, via which we will inform them about crime and policing for their area or demographic group	At least one crime update per week per neighbourhood area	Regular KPI reports by Corporate Communication's digital team	Neighbourhood officers will be supported, with templates and guidance, by Corporate Communication
The latest news and information about the force will be published in a timely manner through the force website, social media and traditional media	Daily	Regular KPI reports by Corporate Communication's digital team	Corporate Communication's news and channel management team
Communities where a critical incident has occurred are proactively offered information, reassurance, advice and encouraged to provide information (where relevant) <sup>6</sup>	As agreed by Gold command	Neighbourhood officers monitor community tensions	Corporate Communication provides templates to officers

<sup>5</sup> At the discretion of the hearing's Chair

<sup>6</sup> Such communications must be approved by Gold command (taking into consideration the community impact assessment, emergency planning procedures and community tension monitoring) and must utilise specialist/targeted engagement techniques

6.3. We will build our understanding of our neighbourhoods, capture and share this understanding, and give the public a voice in how their neighbourhood is policed

How?	Frequency	Monitoring and evaluating	Ownership, support and tools
A neighbourhood profile for every neighbourhood area will be published internally, capturing a variety of data including demographic profiling and local knowledge	Updated on an ad hoc basis but formally reviewed every 6 months	Reviewed every 6 months by a scrutiny panel involving a Chief Inspector or Superintendent, Corporate Communication and, wherever possible, community members	Neighbourhood Policing Inspectors will be given access to demographic data.  Corporate Communication will also be developing a new mobile tool to provide officers with access to this data while out and about. This will enable them to input new insight while out and about, thus keeping their community profile up-to-date
Using the neighbourhood profile, a bespoke neighbourhood engagement plan for every neighbourhood will be compiled, published on the force website and publicised appropriately. These plans will include measures for breaking down engagement barriers (such as social exclusion, accessibility issues and concerns over privacy) and for engaging with young people	Reviewed every 6 months	Reviewed every 6 months as part of scrutiny panel detailed above	Neighbourhood Policing Inspectors will be supported through the scrutiny panels, where Corporate Communication will provide guidance and tools, including best practice for specific groups such as young people <sup>7</sup>
As a minimum, neighbourhood officers will regularly engage with the public through a social media platform – usually in the form of a Twitter account and Facebook page per neighbourhood area – and Nottinghamshire Alert	Daily.  Messages received via Nottinghamshire Alert or social media should receive a response within 48 hours	Reviewed every 6 months as part of scrutiny panel detailed above. These are informed by regular KPI reports by Corporate Communication's digital team	Neighbourhood officers will be provided with policy and guidance by Corporate Communication's digital team

<sup>7</sup> See guidance on youth engagement at Appendix C

<p>Up-to-date information about work underway to tackle community concerns will be published through social media (and automatically fed through to the relevant neighbourhood page on the force website). The public will have the opportunity to feed back or provide a personal perspective</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Reviewed every 6 months as part of scrutiny panel detailed above</p>	<p>Neighbourhood officers will be provided with policy and guidance by Corporate Communication's digital team</p>
<p>Forthcoming opportunities for engagement (e.g. meetings/events) will be publicised widely in the neighbourhood, including on social media (automatically fed through to the relevant neighbourhood page of the force website) and offline where appropriate</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Publicity of engagement opportunities will be reviewed every 6 months, as part of the scrutiny panel detailed above</p>	<p>Neighbourhood Policing Inspectors will be supported through the scrutiny panels, where Corporate Communication will provide guidance</p>

6.4. We will maximise every opportunity to engage with victims of crime and other service users

How?	Frequency	Monitoring and evaluating	Ownership, support and tools
We will provide intuitive digital services, designed around the user, so that people who report crime online can also feed back, gain crime prevention advice and track their crime seamlessly	Ongoing	User satisfaction monitored through police.uk.  Online advice centre's effectiveness is measured through regular KPI reports of web hits and trends, and the annual digital engagement survey.	Corporate Communication, Information Services and Contact Management
People who ring 101 for advice will be advised to receive further information via email, such as advice on legal requirements, process and crime prevention	Ongoing	Regular KPI reports of web hits and trends	Corporate Communication and Contact Management
We will continue to work to gain the trust and confidence of victims of hate crime, and encourage them to come forward through awareness-raising work	Ongoing	Reporting rates monitored	Corporate Communication's engagement team
When victims of crime are surveyed for satisfaction, they will be offered further information/advice via email and encouraged to stay in touch through Nottinghamshire Alert	Ongoing	Corporate Communication's digital team monitors use of the website email link and Nottinghamshire Alert sign-ups	Corporate Communication and Market Research
Victims of crime will, at initial contact, be provided with advice and information about what they can expect – either online or face to face	Ongoing	Corporate Communication's digital team monitors use of the website email link  Corporate Communication's engagement team monitors number of leaflets used	Corporate Communication, Contact Management and attending officers  Officers provided with A5 victim information booklets (available to order on the Communications Cloud)  Contact Management to use email link from <a href="#">victim information on website</a>

Witnesses or victims who have shown great bravery, and others who have supported the work of the force, will be recognised and engaged with face-to-face through the force's awards scheme	Annual event	Corporate Communication's engagement team gathers feedback following the event	Corporate Communication's engagement team
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6.5. We will ensure our brand values and PROUD values are upheld at every interaction

How?	Frequency	Monitoring and evaluating	Ownership, support and tools
We will ensure our brand is reflected positively at all times internally, externally, with partners and with sponsors, and that our physical branding is accessible	Ongoing	Corporate Communication are responsible for ongoing brand guardianship	<p>Corporate Communication will refresh, publicise internally and rigorously apply our brand guidelines.</p> <p>Quick-reference brand guidelines, templates and guidance are provided by Corporate Communication's engagement team and the <a href="#">Communications Cloud</a></p> <p>It is every member of the force's responsibility to protect the reputation of the force</p>
We will reinvigorate our PROUD values internally, ensuring they and the national Code of Ethics are fully understood and embedded into everyday behaviour	Ongoing	Mystery shopper activity	Every member of the force

## 7. How we will do it – our overarching principles

7.1. Effective engagement is about getting it right at every interaction with the public. This is why the force has set overarching principles that can inform engagement at every level. These principles should be used to support and shape bespoke engagement plans, customer-centric business processes and all public interaction. They are in line with the PCC's engagement principles.

- PROUD<sup>8</sup> at every interaction
- Proactive and responsive – we will always seek to engage *and* respond
- Tailored to the individual's need, avoiding assumptions about individuals or groups
- Open and honest
- Clear, concise and easily understood
- Value for money
- Innovative – where required, embracing new technologies
- Collaborative and joined up

## 8. Measuring the success of this strategy

8.1. Successful engagement looks different in different circumstances – each commitment in our checklist has its own aims and evaluation method. Keeping a victim informed and being clear about the service that can be expected, for example, will increase customer satisfaction. A behaviour change campaign, if it engages the community effectively, may increase reporting or reduce a certain type of crime.

8.2. However, there are some specific aims:

- public confidence should continue on an upward trajectory (remaining in line with the England and Wales average at around 70%)
- the proportion of residents feeling that the police treat people fairly should move towards the national average (from 61% to 66%)
- the proportion believing that the police are doing a good/excellent job should move towards the national average (from 55% to 62%)
- victim satisfaction should exceed 90%

8.3. Within the force's equality objectives there are also specific measures of success, including a 90% minimum satisfaction rating from protected characteristic groups.

8.4. More broadly, the success of the force's whole approach to engaging with the public will be measured against the force/PCC objectives:

- safer communities
- improved trust and confidence in policing
- value for money policing services

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<sup>8</sup> The force's PROUD values are Professional, Respect for all, One team, Utmost integrity and Doing it differently.

## 9. Governance

- 9.1. Because of the holistic nature of the strategy, performance is monitored through a number of routes. For example, specific engagement activity with minority groups is governed through the Equality, Diversity and Human Rights board. This strategy itself is governed by the Force Executive Board.
- 9.2. The Head of Digital, Marketing and Engagement is responsible for reviewing this strategy on an annual basis.

## 10. Appendices

### A. Interdependent strategies

- Neighbourhood policing engagement strategy
- Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner's Consultation, engagement and Community Involvement Strategy 2016-2020

### B. Some of the tools available for neighbourhood engagement

#### Face-to-face:

- Taking part in local events – promotional materials and equipment such as a marquee are available by emailing the 'public engagement' mailbox
- Meetings – these are best when hosted by community volunteers or are existing meetings (such as Tenants and Residents Associations). Guidance and materials are available by emailing 'public engagement'
- Coffee mornings – why not partner with your local coffee house? Speak to the engagement team to find out more about potential sponsorship arrangements
- Communications Cloud templates are available for promoting where and when

#### Digital channels:

- Facebook – the Nottinghamshire Police page has a following of predominantly women aged 25-34
- Twitter – the Nottinghamshire Police account has a more balanced male/female following, but the majority of those we engage here are men
- Instagram – a younger demographic
- Nottinghamshire Alert – a slightly older demographic, with very few followers using social media as well
- Online forums – run by the community, often on a voluntary basis
- Local news websites – many have comments sections

#### Capturing insight:

- Mobile community insight platform is in development with a commercial partner, which will enable 'over the fence' engagement to be captured and accessed in real time

### C. Best practice tips for engaging with young people online

Agencies must be open and honest	There must be a two-way professional dialogue	Feedback should be encouraged	Communication should be relevant and interesting	Feedback comments should be answered swiftly	Do not assume equality of digital access; traditional methods of engagement should be retained
Common sense & professional judgement should be used by agencies	Citizen run websites can enhance 'neighbourliness', efficacy, cohesion, participation and positive attitude toward policing	Young people like to be informed	The use of pictures and imagery is important	Content should be timely and focused on the 'here & now' and on local relevant issues	Engagement should not be formal, it should be flexible and bespoke
Content must be interesting	Accredited community Reporting should be used to promote police related information	Social media is a good way to engage the engaged but traditional methods should be retained for the dis-engaged	Engagement must be well publicized	Engagement must be easily accessible	Engagement must be entertaining
News feed algorithms are a good way to ensure young people get the right information at the right time	Policing must strive to generate a 'dynamic and pleasurable state' in their users in order to facilitate full engagement	Engagement must be meaningful and therefore young people should be involved in the design of online engagement	Policing must seek to 'inform, educate or/and entertain'	Online perception of information quality, enjoyment and interactivity influence user engagement	Long-term commitment to providing quality user content.
Information should promote personal safety	Information should be linked to the local community	The provision of crime related information is a good way to secure curiosity / interest	Information should explain the consequences of behaviour	Information should promote police contact information-how/why/where to report	Information should facilitate social control through procedural justice
Usability and ease of access are important considerations for young people when accessing digital and social media	Messaging must be bespoke and age relevant- try to avoid treating young people as one homogenous group	Ensure messages do not raise fear of crime	Make full use of colours that maximize impact but doesn't detract from the message	Convenience and speed of contact are important engagement criteria	Quid Pro Quo engagement is key encouraging participation in young people
Face to face direct contact is best for passing information to the police	Highlight group benefits to enhance community participation.	The school environment is a good place to engage young people	Digital and social media is a good way to pass information to the young people	Where relevant, anonymity and confidentiality in reporting to the police is essential	

Compiled in 2016 through best practice research and feedback from young people in Nottinghamshire