

Engagement Assurance Report – September 2022

Indicate below which IPQR Key Performance Questions this assurance report covers:				
1. Are the public becoming more confident in the Constabulary?	✓	2. How well are we preventing crime, ASB and demand?	3. How well are we responding to the public when they need us?	4. How well are we supporting victims of crime?
5. How well are we protecting vulnerable people?		6. How well are we investigating crime?	7. How well are we managing reoffending?	8. How well are we managing serious and organised crime?
9. How well are we meeting the requirements of the Strategic Policing Requirement?		10. How well are we engaging with the people we serve and treating them fairly, appropriately and respectfully?	✓	11. Are we becoming a more inclusive and diverse organisation?
13. Are we creating a more digital and data literate workforce?		14. How effective is workforce planning across the organisation?	15. How well are we managing data quality and information governance?	16. Does our workforce have the right tools and working environment to do their best?

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report demonstrates the decline over time in the OPCC survey results of two questions which are used to measure engagement. Possible causes of this decline are **a genuine drop in satisfaction levels amongst the public** of how well-informed they feel about what the police are doing to tackle crime and ASB, and **the impact of COVID-19**.

Key findings following internal research, conducted in Q1/Q2 2022, indicate that **there does not appear to be a strategic organisational approach to engagement**.

There are measures in place that begin to address this issue, such as the Corporate Communications Business Case, the new ACC role and the Director of Communications and Engagement role, however these **do not offer a comprehensive solution**.

The organisation demonstrates examples of **excellent tactical engagement and best practice**, but this appears to exist in individual areas of the business, such as Neighbourhood and Partnerships, Fraud and Cyber Protect and Corporate Communications and **appears to not be aligned strategically**.

The report highlights the opportunity to unify engagement through organisation-wide strategic oversight. This would **improve visibility and alignment across the entire organisation**, including, but not limited to;

- Recruitment
- Organisational Development, including Outreach
- Staff associations
- Staff office

Measures to check and test approaches to engagement exist in some areas of the organisation, for example in Neighbourhood and Partnerships through measures such as KPIs, the school engagement Qlik app, and through IPRs.

Additionally, Corporate Communications has measures in place to check and test for social media engagement, **however, there do not appear to be mechanisms in place for sharing insights across the entire organisation**. This report demonstrates that the organisation appears to have **limited ratified or centrally held insight on both formal and informal engagement activity**.

One centralised source collecting outcomes from engagement could not be identified through the research conducted for this report. **A corporately held source of engagement information would reduce duplication, improve efficiencies and provide a source for enhanced measurements of engagement**.

Due to the organisation not appearing to have one strategic approach to engagement, **it is not possible to identify a consistent and unified method of checking and testing engagement activity**. Furthermore, the existing tools for measurement, planning and evaluation seem limited.

Additional research to fully understand the efficiency and effectiveness of the measures used to check and test engagement activity would provide useful insights. Additionally, an improved understanding around the suitability of the two questions currently used to measure engagement within the OPCC survey would be beneficial.

Furthermore, as a result of the organisation not appearing to have an existing organisation-wide approach to engagement, **opportunities to identify how this translates to the frontline are limited.**

In order to provide greater assurance, **an agreed strategic, organisational approach to engagement is required to develop organisational engagement, which influences the public's confidence in the Constabulary.**

Subsequently, **improvements to the measures in place to check and test the approach would provide further assurance and greater confidence in how this translates to the frontline and more broadly across the entire organisation.**



2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This paper seeks to inform and assure both the OPCC and the Constabulary Management Board of the organisational approach to engagement. The Police and Crime Plan Priority 2 is: *'Engaging, supporting and working with communities, victims and partner organisations.'* This priority outlines the importance of engagement in building legitimacy and the vital role it plays for communities to have trust and confidence in the police.

The OPCC have identified two questions within the OPCC survey currently used to measure public engagement:

- How well informed do you feel about what the police are doing to tackle crime and ASB?
- Are you aware of opportunities to have your say about policing issues in your local area?

Figures in relation to these two questions show a decline over time, since 2014 when the survey data started being collected in Qlik. This report will examine these trends, seeking to understand the possible causes and provide insights on how engagement could be measured more efficiently. The paper will therefore focus on the following:

- The organisational approach being taken by ASP to engagement (including the definition of engagement);
- The measures in place to check and test this approach; and
- How this translates to the frontline.

A brief update will be provided on the scope of engagement work to be covered within the approved Corporate Communications business case, along with an overview of any other organisational factors likely to influence engagement.

It has been agreed that the following areas are out of scope for this paper:

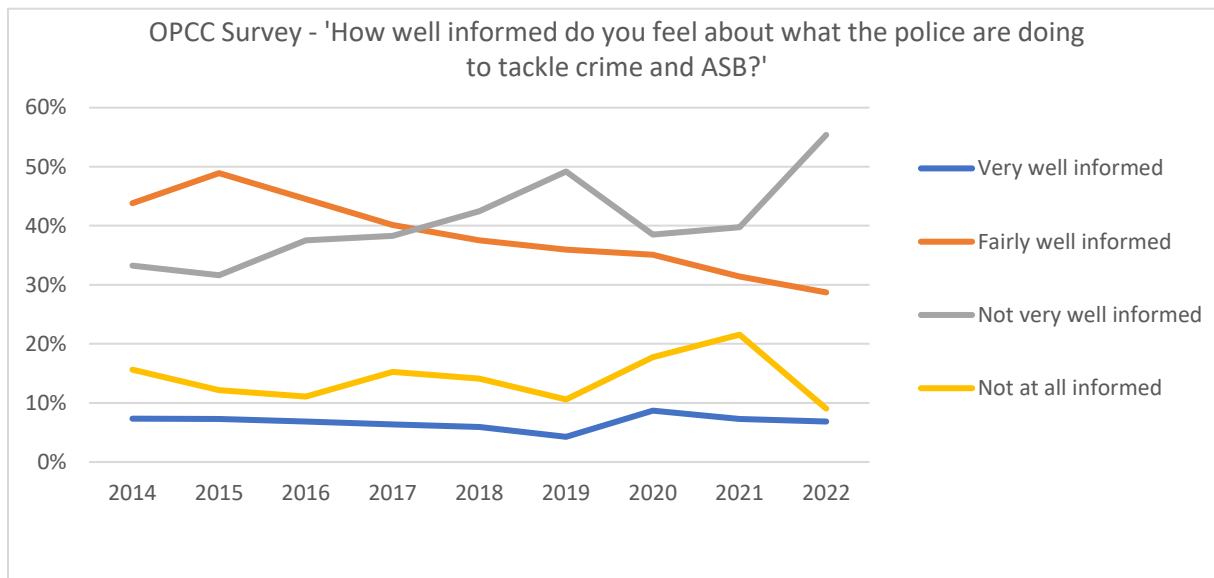
- Reporting on engagement with under-represented groups (this was covered in the Disproportionality Assurance Paper in June).
- Engagement through use of Police Powers (i.e. Stop Search).
- A detailed view of prevention work, although this may be touched upon when reviewing opportunities for engagement.
- Interaction between the police and communities when responding to calls for service.

3. OPCC LOCAL SURVEY RESULTS

1. Understanding the OPCC survey results

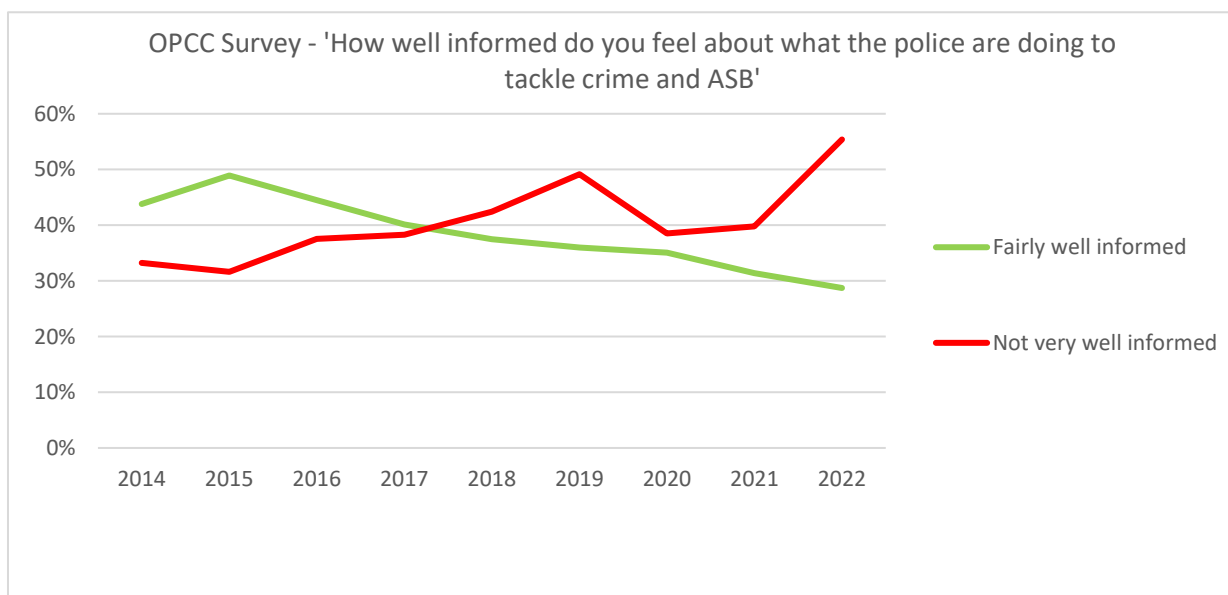
The data from the two OPCC questions used to measure engagement are shown below (data correct as 13th September). An analysis of the trends follows.

'How well informed do you feel about what the police are doing to tackle crime and ASB?'



Responses showing 'very well informed' have been steady since 2014. 'Not at all informed' saw a large increase between 2020-2021, though this can likely be attributed to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, as the figure regresses to the mean in early 2022.

'Fairly well informed' has decreased steadily and significantly since Q3 2016 and 'not very well informed' is slowly increasing. It is possible to draw a correlation between these two answer selections in the survey results, as shown in the graph below:



The decrease in those feeling 'fairly well informed', could be attributed to the increase in those feeling 'not very well informed', which would suggest a drop in satisfaction of how well-informed survey participants feel overall.

During 2014-16 the highest % value recorded by participants was 'fairly well informed', which levelled out between 2017-2018. From 2019 onwards there is an increased trend showing participants selecting 'not very well informed' and in 2022, the highest % value recorded by participants was in this category. The most recent survey results show the highest % value recorded since 2014, sitting at 56% as 'not very well informed'.

'Are you aware of opportunities to have your say about policing issues in your local area?'



As illustrated in the above graph, the % of participants aware of opportunities to have their say about policing issues in their local area has declined over time. Additionally, there was an acute decline in Q1/Q2 2020, followed by a steady increase since Q4 2021, which can likely be attributed to the impact of COVID-19.

4. OVERVIEW OF AVON AND SOMERSET POLICE'S APPROACH TO ENGAGEMENT

4.1 To what extent does ASP have a strategic organisational approach to engagement?

Throughout Q1/Q2 of 2022, a series of interviews were conducted with key internal stakeholders on the subject of engagement. Interviews were conducted with the thematic lead for engagement and other key stakeholders who were identified as undertaking engagement activity, or those who oversee engagement within their area of the business. This work was conducted following a request for service to the Directorate of the Chief of Staff, which was submitted by Zoe Hebden on behalf of the DCC, Nikki Watson. In total, ten interviews were conducted, nine individual and one group interview consisting of three participants, resulting in twelve participants in total.

Definitions of engagement

Following data analysis of these interviews, it is not possible to identify an organisation-wide definition of engagement. The thematic lead for engagement, Chief Inspector Deepak Kenth, uses the following definition: *"providing an ongoing two-way dialogue between the police and the public; for the police to develop a better understanding of their communities and their needs, risks and threats."*

Whilst this offers a stable and consistent approach to engagement within the Neighbourhood and Partnerships Directorate, this is not used elsewhere in the organisation.

Three participants noted that engagement is a highly used word, with a **lack of clarity on the definition, which can cause confusion.**

The most noticeable variance between definitions existed amongst non-operational interviewees, with the word open for multiple interpretations. For the purposes of aligning one organisational approach to engagement, clarity around what constitutes engagement versus interaction and communication is required.

Existing strategic documents

There does not appear to be a strategic, organisational approach to engagement laid out in one strategy. The following strategic and tactical documentation exists within the **Neighbourhood and Partnerships Directorate**:

- '2022-2024 Neighbourhood Community Engagement Strategy', which was refreshed in July 2022, built around the three pillars of informing, consulting and co-operating.
- A 'Local Engagement Plan', produced and implemented by each Neighbourhood Chief Inspector serves as a localised delivery plan for the wider 'Neighbourhood Community Engagement Strategy'.
- Additional portfolios within Neighbourhood and Partnerships, such as Citizens in Policing, include dedicated engagement segments within their strategies, often with tactical plans for implementation.

Four interviewees from directorates outside of Neighbourhood and Partnerships stated that there are multiple plans for workstreams that include engagement, though this is not aligned cross-directorate. Additionally, five interviewees commented that engagement activity was often sporadic or unplanned.

Without additional research, it is **challenging to understand the scope of existing documentation or identify where there is duplication of plans and activity, along with missed opportunities for collaborative working.**

One cohesive strategic, organisational engagement document would be beneficial, with localised plans to support and align the organisational approach, streamline activity and improve efficiency.

Governance and Resourcing

Governance around engagement is limited, with only a thematic lead dedicated to the subject matter, which sits organisationally in Tier 2 priority. Chief Inspector Deepak Kenth reports regularly into Directorate Leadership Meetings, as engagement is one of the six pillars of Neighbourhood and Partnerships.

Additionally, Chief Inspector Deepak Kenth chairs a quarterly Community Engagement Group, which is an opportunity to internally share information, best practice, and organisational learning. This group was paused due to summer demand but is due to be reinstated during Q3 2022.

Outside of this reporting framework within Neighbourhood and Partnerships, there **does not appear to be additional formalised governance on engagement.**

Regarding resourcing, all twelve interviewees commented that **resourcing is a barrier to improving engagement**, with limited internal resource and no dedicated engagement budget.

Furthermore, within Neighbourhood and Partnerships, the Directorate is losing PCSOs due to Uplift and progression onto the PCDA. The impact of the timeframe to backfill and recruit new PCSOs will be managed by the Directorate. The impact will be further mitigated by the opportunities presented by the influx of new PCDA colleagues who fully understand the expectations of engagement from their PCSO experience.

Managing and responding to National issues in the media

The Corporate Communications department is industry recognised as delivering a high-quality service to the force. The department includes a media relations function, and in addition to departmental business as usual across all teams including campaigns, graphic design, digital and internal communications, **managing and responding to National issues in the media is continuous across the department.**

With the introduction of 24/7 news, social media, and greater sharing of digital content, by means of mobile phones, domestic CCTV and dash cams, **the department prioritises resources to ensure the best possible service to protect and enhance the legitimacy of the organisation.**

Corporate Communications Business Case

At the Governance and Scrutiny Board in July 2022, the Corporate Communications department had a business case approved for creating a **Strategic Communications and Engagement department.** As referenced within the business

case, community engagement and communication are umbrella terms that cover active participation of concerned stakeholders, information sharing and consultation at all levels. Whilst the growth seeks to **bring strategic oversight of employee engagement**, with some integrated stakeholder and community engagement support available to the organisation, the **growth within corporate communications will not offer a solution for providing sole accountability of organisation-wide, strategic engagement**.

Additional planned resourcing

In addition to the business case, the organisation will recruit a **Director of Communications and Engagement**. This role will likely further bridge the gap of oversight of strategic engagement across the organisation, though this role profile is in the recruitment phase and awaits the appointment of a successful candidate.

Furthermore, a new **Assistant Chief Constable** position has been approved and recruitment has been postponed until the next round of ACC recruitment. It is expected that the new Director of Communications and Engagement will sit under the ACC, and **their portfolio will include engagement**.

These combined additional resources will **likely contribute to a more strategic organisational approach to engagement**, though workstreams across the organisation are not currently aligned, which hinders delivering a truly consistent organisational approach.

National research

Insights provided Nationally around what the public want from police engagement remains limited. Authorised Professional Practice ([APP](#)) guidance on engagement was published and last updated online in 2013. Organisational approaches will likely differ across the UK until National research provides further insights on what the public expect from police engagement, and what it means to them.

4.1 Key Findings: There does not appear to be a strategic organisational approach to engagement. There are measures in place that will likely improve strategic oversight, however they do not provide a comprehensive, organisation-wide resolution.

4.2 Effective measures are in place to check and test organisational approach to engagement.

As outlined above, there does not appear to be an organisation-wide approach to engagement, therefore the measures in place to check and test are limited within specific areas of the business.

Neighbourhood and Partnerships

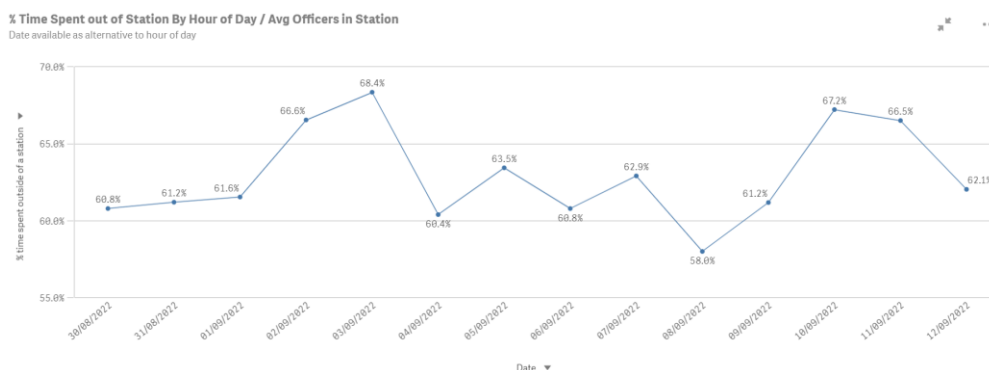
Engagement is one of the six pillars within this Directorate, and as such KPIs have been set for regular performance monitoring. Chief Superintendent Liz Hughes has visibility of these KPIs through monthly reporting at Directorate Leadership Meetings.

Neighbourhood and Partnerships Engagement Key Performance Indicators:

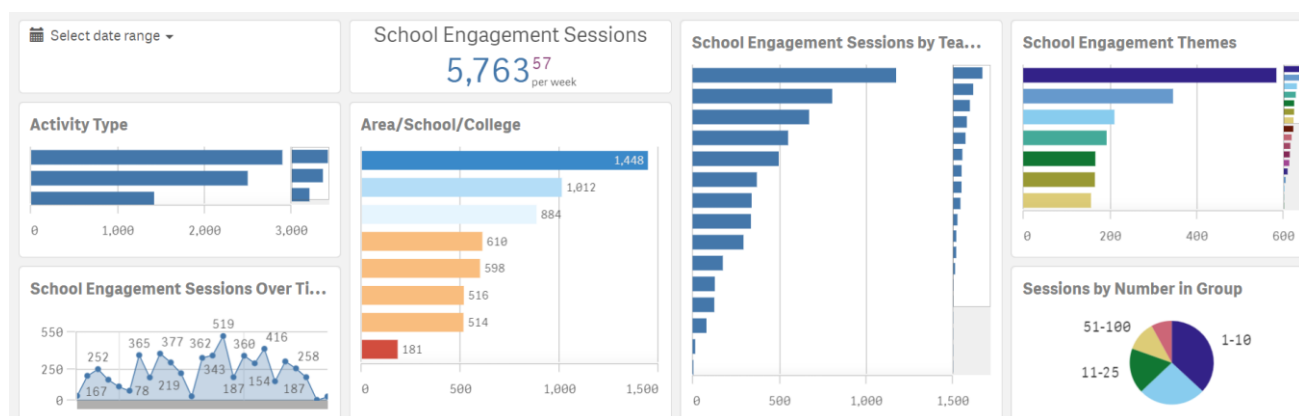
Pillar	Objective (What)	Output (How)	KPI (measurement) - Quantitative	Measurement - Qualitative
Engagement	Ensuring our communities are aware of their local neighbourhood teams and are able to contact them when needed.	To visibly police our communities on a daily/weekly/monthly basis	% visibility Seen a PC/PCSO in the last month/week	Verbatim feedback from public confidence survey
		Beat pages to include all contact details and photos	% beat profiles with photos	
	To have appropriate methods of engagement for all our communities based on their preferences. Making best use of digital opportunities.	Beat pages to be up to date with local priorities	Beat page usage (priorities up to date)	
		Attendance and delivery of engagement within schools	How many school engagements and type of engagement	Delivery against the schools charter
		Using social media groups to share information/good news	Number of hits/likes in response to social media posts 2 minute survey response rate	2 minute survey findings Peer Reviews
	To have a good understanding of our communities needs, risks and threats	Communities are mapped locally - where are our communities, how do we best engage with them	Public confidence rate	Peer review
		Attendance at local parish/PACT/council/IAG meetings	Count of engagements	Check & Test locally
		Local IAG's in place which are representative of local communities	Number of youth engagement panels/forums	Check & Test locally
	Work with our communities to encourage active participation in supporting local policing in their local areas	Make best use of Citizens in Policing: Specials, Mini Cops, cadets, volunteers	Number of hours provided by CIP volunteers	
			Active NHW schemes Active Community Speedwatch schemes	

For reference, the following images illustrate how a selection of the above KPIs are measured.

1. The below chart is NPT only: % time spent out of station by hour of day / average officers in station. [Data source: Qlik, 13th September. Data shows last 14 days]:



The below shows the schools engagement Qlik app dashboard, which provides insights on where engagements are taking place and the focus of the engagements (ASB, knife crime etc). [Data source: Qlik, 13th September]:



Furthermore, engagement is **monitored and performance managed** by the following means:

- IPRs (for Bristol NPT)
- Supervisors – through first and second line managers
- Peer reviews
- 2-minute online survey findings
- NPT pages on social media – Digital SPOCs
- Updated NPT local web page priorities
- OPCC survey results (observation that better understanding of who completes this survey is required to fully utilise the insights)
- Good performance through recognition awards, certificates, commendations. (Insights sourced from the control room and PSD, including positive feedback and comments)
- Quarterly Community Engagement Group
- Incivility complaints

Measures in place to check officers and PCSOs are **able to engage** include:

- Continuous Professional Development
- Training days
- PCSO and PCDA curriculum

There is scope to further improve the ways in which insights from the following sources can drive improvements in a more formalised way. At present this is largely conversational and anecdotal:

- Community feedback from external forums such as; Independent Advisory Groups, Scrutiny groups, community leaders, community groups.
- Likely an opportunity to maximise insights following the expansion of community engagement through new and different community groups as a result of the Disproportionality programme.
- Observation that existing community insights are often from communities where confidence and legitimacy are problematic – there are limited insights from wider communities.
- OPCC survey results: data led insights could be better utilised when planning engagement activity and developing the next Neighbourhood Community Engagement Strategy document.

Further insight opportunities:

- Intel reports: when submitting a report, the source of intelligence is categorised on Niche, however 'community engagement' is not an existing category. To align intelligence with community engagement, this information would be required to be added as free text in Source. The addition of 'community engagement' as a drop-down category could offer further insights on engagement activity, though an exploration of the effectiveness of this measure is required.

There is continuous learning about the **impact of COVID-19** by the organisation. Within Neighbourhood and Partnerships, **of particular concern is the impact on those young in service and who were recruited during the pandemic, specifically in relation to engagement skills and confidence.** This issue is explored further in 4.3 of the report.

Furthermore, resourcing essential services and responses to service are prioritised during **summer demand** and proactive engagement within the Directorate can **suffer from the consequences of reduced prioritisation.**

Fraud and Cyber Protect

Fraud and Cyber Protect officers are required to track some elements of their engagement work. Due to funding structures, Cyber Protect officers have additional KPIs for engagement and activity is logged through the Agency and Partner Management Information System (APMIS). As a result of this, **line managers can provide some assurance that their staff are able to engage, and are effectively engaging with the public.**

Wider organisation

Due to having engagement touchpoints with the public, additional areas of the business were included in the interview research conducted in Q1/Q2 of 2022, including:

- Recruitment
- Organisational Development
- Staff associations
- Staff office

Data analysis of the interviews found **limited existing measures in place to check and test local approaches to engagement more broadly across the organisation.** Measures to review engagement activity and its effectiveness appear to be often limited to event debriefs by line managers and sharing anecdotal verbal feedback within teams. There does not appear to be one organisational approach to check and test local engagement offers across the organisation.

Identified opportunities for engagement

Whilst tactical, operational community engagement activity appears to be predominantly undertaken within the Neighbourhood and Partnerships Directorate, the below illustrates further identified opportunities from Corporate Communications:

- Online webchats and forums
- Joint face-to-face community meetings with the PCC and Chief Constable
- Co-creation and collaboration with communities on strategic issues, such as the Race and Action Plan.

Social media opportunities:

- Corporate Facebook page:
 - An additional 14 dedicated NPT Facebook pages and a Rural Affairs Facebook page
 - The NPT Facebook pages have trialled innovative online engagement tactics, especially during the height of the pandemic, including Facebook live beat surgeries and 'you said we did' posts. Example: "you told us ASB was an issue in this park... Here's a video of us patrolling the park. Please come and say hello if you see us."
- Corporate Twitter account, supported by 22 specialist and local Twitter accounts
- Corporate Instagram account;
 - This account is mostly for 'behind the scenes' content. A #999Day on Instagram Stories was planned in response to a public survey which provided insights that audiences mostly wanted 'behind the scenes' content. Short-form videos highlighting the roles of staff, officers and volunteers across the force was planned. The day was cancelled due to the recent passing of the Queen but is being rescheduled.
- Corporate LinkedIn page - occasionally shares relevant and insightful posts from the profiles of members of our organisation
- Corporate YouTube account

Monitoring effectiveness

Quantitative opportunities for monitoring the effectiveness of face-to-face engagement appears to be fairly limited, however digital engagement offers more tangible and quantifiable metrics. The following monitoring opportunities have been identified:

- Use of Hootsuite (social media content management system), to monitor social media contact from MoP both in and out of office hours;
 - the latter is monitored by the contact centre on corporate social media accounts.
- Analytics reports from Hootsuite, alongside data directly from organic platforms provides insights into effective engagement rates.
- A monthly/quarterly report will be reintroduced for the use of Corporate Communications, which can also be shared with and utilised by NPT social media SPOCs.
- NPCC national social media survey was issued across all social channels at regular intervals;
 - Insights are drawn from survey participants which shape social media content and the strategic direction of social media channels. The NPCC survey was paused by the pandemic. The digital communications team hope to issue their own in the new year.
- An Employer Brand survey and a two-minute local policing social media survey are issued occasionally, on relevant channels (not the same channels to avoid survey fatigue), which provide useful insights.
- The increased growth in the digital communications team, (filling a vacancy and the uplift from the business case), will increase capacity for gathering and applying digital insights across social media channels.

4.2 Key Findings

It appears that measures to check and test organisational approaches to engagement are in place in areas of the business where engagement has KPIs, where there is an external requirement to report/performance manage, and where digital tools facilitate this.

It is challenging to demonstrate additional check and test measures which exist outside of these areas of the business.

Further research could be undertaken to better understand what measures are in place to assure that staff are able to engage with the public.

Likely limited share of voice in existing community feedback from the 'silent majority of the public'; a recommendation to better understand the demographics of who actively participates in engagement with the organisation, in order to improve our organisational engagement offer to all communities.

Measuring and monitoring engagement is challenging, particularly when trying to quantify successful engagement. This can put significant pressure on the ability to prioritise engagement activity and demonstrate efficiency, effectiveness and true value to the public.

4.3 To what extent is the approach to organisational engagement implemented on the frontline?

As previously illustrated, there does not currently appear to be an organisation-wide approach to engagement, therefore the extent to which the approach is implemented on the frontline is limited.

Neighbourhood and Partnerships

Within the Directorate, a strategic group was stood up in July 2022 to review development areas; from this, one sub-group is **reviewing training**. Areas for discussion and focus are:

- PCSO 8-week induction training / new supervisor roles
- Accreditation for PCSO in line with national developments
- Internal moves for PCs and PCDA's and induction/refresher training
- Local training and CPD (first line managers) capacity and capability
- Recommended training by role/rank
- Mandatory training
- Training for personal development

As a result of the development of this training, it is expected that some will be mandatory for all Neighbourhood and Partnerships staff. This will include 'active engagement' vs visibility and having difficult conversations.

In relation to **existing engagement training and upskilling**;

- PCSO training includes De-Escalation training, presenting and communication skills, and other crime types such as ASB, crime prevention and hate crime.
- Upskilling; the leadership academy offers courses such as personal effectiveness, introduction to emotional intelligence and inclusive policing with confidence.
- Through staff surveys and assurance activity, and particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact this will likely have had on engagement skills, a need to provide bespoke and induction training for operational neighbourhood staff has been recognised.
- This training and skills assessment/upskilling is in the Directorate SDP to ensure it is appropriately supporting the six pillars.

Activity to improve awareness of CPD within the Leadership Academy and the utilisation of IPRs is ongoing. There is recognition that **the culture around CPD requires improvement**, along with better utilisation of the four weekly training days that operational staff have rostered.

Assurance around understanding the confidence levels of engagement skills amongst frontline staff within the Directorate is limited to feedback from the annual staff survey.

4.3 Key Findings

Due to Neighbourhood and Partnerships having a 'Community Engagement Strategy' document, implementation of engagement on the frontline appears to be limited to this Directorate. Without further research, it is unclear whether this can be assessed in other operational areas, though for the purposes of this paper, responding to calls for service was excluded. It is recommended that implementation on the frontline of an organisational approach to engagement, once one has been established, does not fall solely to the Neighbourhood and Partnerships Directorate.

5. NEXT STEPS

Key findings have been drawn out throughout this report, however the following next steps are advised;

1. An organisational definition of engagement to be included in a new strategic, organisation-wide engagement strategy and plan, with clearly integrated RACI diagram outlining roles and responsibilities, ensuring there is appointed organisational accountability for engagement.

Following the development of a strategic, organisation-wide approach to engagement;

2. Additional review of the organisation-wide metrics in place to measure engagement activity, including a review of the OPCC survey questions as suitable measures for engagement.
3. Further analysis of available tools and data sets to monitor engagement, with suggestion to improve data collection and quality.
4. Corporately held and centralised source/hub for organisational learning from engagement activity, including but not limited to, stakeholder analysis and insights, community feedback and event de-brief information.