



Crime and Disorder Select Committee

Scrutiny Review of Police Communications in Stockton-on-Tees (Task & Finish)

**Final Report
December 2021**

Crime and Disorder Select Committee
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Municipal Buildings
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Contents

Task and Finish Group - Membership	4
Acknowledgements	4
Contact Officer	4
Foreword	5
Original Brief	6
1.0 Executive Summary	7
2.0 Introduction	11
3.0 Background	12
4.0 Findings	15
➤ Frontline Police Officers	15
➤ Corporate Communications Unit	17
➤ Ward Councillors	22
➤ Public Consultations	26
5.0 Conclusion & Recommendations	30
Appendix 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)	34
Appendix 2: Ward Councillor Survey – Responses v Crime / ASB Prevalence ...	51
Appendix 3: Cleveland Police – Communities Survey (Summary: Stockton-on-Tees)	52
Appendix 4: Cleveland Police – Community Engagement Ward Pledge	54

Task and Finish Group - Membership

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Acknowledgements

The Committee would like to thank the following people for contributing to its work:

- Marc Stephenson (Community Protection & Resilience Service Manager) – Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC)
- Chris Smiles (Chief Inspector, Stockton Neighbourhood Team) – Cleveland Police
- Matthew Reeves (Inspector) – Cleveland Police
- Ian Brown (Sergeant) – Cleveland Police
- Dave Leen (PC) – Cleveland Police
- Martin Bennett (PCSO) – Cleveland Police
- Kimberley Walker (Acting Head of Corporate Communications) – Cleveland Police
- All Elected Members who responded to the Ward Councillor Survey undertaken as part of this review

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Foreword

On behalf of the Crime and Disorder Select Committee's Task and Finish Group, I am pleased to present the final report and recommendations following our review of Police Communications in Stockton-on-Tees.

Ensuring high-quality communication and engagement with the public is a critical feature for any police force, and this can play a significant role in identifying and addressing crime and anti-social behaviour within the community. Historically, this has been a challenge for Cleveland Police (as highlighted in the findings of its 2019 HMICFRS inspection), an endeavour further complicated by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic which has impacted upon the ability of many organisations to engage with the local population. This review, therefore, offered a timely opportunity to think about how communications arrangements should be strengthened for the benefit of both the Force and the wider public.

A key link between the police and residents is the involvement of, and engagement with, local Ward Councillors, something the Group were keen to explore. Elected Members can act as a highly effective conduit between the Force and residents in their locality regarding intelligence and good news stories, and many of the review's recommendations seek to enhance this Cleveland Police-SBC Ward Councillor relationship.

I would like to thank all those who contributed to this review, in particular the Cleveland Police representatives who provided information during what continues to be very demanding times for the Force. The Group were encouraged by the Force's commitment to improving communications with Ward Councillors / the public, and hope that this work will contribute towards a more effective and consistent approach to engagement that will benefit everyone, regardless of where they live across the Borough.



Cllr Paul Weston

Chair

Crime and Disorder Select Committee – Task and Finish Group

Original Brief

Which of our strategic corporate objectives does this topic address?

The review will contribute to the following Council Plan 2021-2024 key objectives:

A place where people are healthy, safe and protected from harm

- People live in cohesive and safe communities
- People are supported and protected from harm

What are the main issues and overall aim of this review?

'Effective communication shapes service delivery towards the needs of the public. Communication is broader than face-to-face interactions. It includes making information available about what the police do and how they do it. Communication involves interacting with communities, listening to their views and ideas and acting upon them in a way that improves police performance and service delivery.' (College of Policing APP)

Cleveland Police and Crime Panel has previously established a Task and Finish Group to examine the existing communication methods of Cleveland Police with / between the public and other local stakeholders. The main aims are to:

- Establish the communication priorities of the Force and how these are being actioned.
- Understand the interplay between the OPCC and the Force in relation to communication.
- Examine the ability for the public and key partners to engage with the Force, and how the Force then acts on this (i.e. providing feedback).
- Identify the ways and means in which the positive work of the Force can be communicated more widely and efficiently, which could aid both a future increase in the reporting of crimes and a reduced fear of crime.

As a way of informing the Cleveland-wide work around the Police Communications Strategy, this local area-based Task and Finish review will focus on information-sharing and communications in Stockton-on-Tees between neighbourhood policing, local Ward Councillors, local residents and other key stakeholders.

The review will seek to ensure that appropriate information-sharing mechanisms are in place with a view to strengthening effective partnership-working within the Borough.

The Committee will undertake the following key lines of enquiry:

What mechanisms are there for communication and information-sharing between the Police, local Ward Councillors, the public and key stakeholders?

What is the current make-up and role of joint-agency meetings?

How effective are communications between key stakeholders?

What is the experience of local Ward Councillors?

What is the experience of neighbourhood policing? Who decides what information to communicate and which platforms to use?

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the findings and recommendations following the Crime and Disorder Select Committee's task and finish review of Police Communications in Stockton-on-Tees.
- 1.2 Authorised by the College of Policing, *Authorised Professional Practice* (APP) is the official source of professional practice on policing and can be accessed online (<https://www.app.college.police.uk/>). Police officers and staff are expected to have regard to APP in discharging their responsibilities, and included within the APP content is a detailed section on 'Engagement and Communication' which reinforces the importance, and benefits, of effective working with local communities.
- 1.3 Specific APP guidance around the subject of [communication](#) notes the multiple mechanisms available to Forces, including face-to-face interaction (surgeries, street meetings, beat meetings), working with community groups (including formal and informal voluntary organisations), engaging with under-represented groups and Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs), and, crucially, partnership-working to allow a holistic approach to improving safety / wellbeing and raise confidence in local service delivery as a whole. Use and monitoring of social media is considered, as is digitally-enabled meetings, an approach which has seen increasing appeal as a result of social restrictions association with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.4 At a local level, the 2019 inspection of Cleveland Police by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) identified six causes for concern, one of which was about engaging with the public and external scrutiny of the Force. HMICFRS found that the Force did not encourage a culture that valued engagement with the public and did not use its communication channels effectively. It had an engagement strategy that the workforce did not widely understand or apply, and this meant it was not giving local people the opportunity to voice their needs, concerns and preferences.
- 1.5 Cleveland Police and Crime Panel had previously established a Task and Finish Group to examine the existing communication methods of Cleveland Police with / between the public and other local stakeholders. As a way of informing the Cleveland-wide work around the Police Communications Strategy, the Committee's local area-based task and finish review would focus on information-sharing and communications in Stockton-on-Tees between neighbourhood policing, local Ward Councillors, local residents and other key stakeholders. The review would seek to ensure that appropriate information-sharing mechanisms were in place with a view to strengthening effective partnership-working within the Borough.
- 1.6 The Committee's Task and Finish Group found that numerous engagement mechanisms are used by Cleveland Police, both internally and externally, in order to carry out and communicate its core functions. Central to this is the small, yet proactive, Corporate Communications Unit whose overarching remit is to raise awareness and promote the Force's activity across the Cleveland area. From a wider organisational perspective, a *Communications and Engagement Strategy 2020-2025* provides a five-year vision for effective internal and external engagement, a key aspect of which is to support positive stakeholder relationships.

- 1.7 Whilst this review principally focused on communications between Cleveland Police and Councillors / the public, the Task and Finish Group were made aware of the large reach of internal Force communications – this therefore provides an opportunity to reinforce the need for regular engagement with Ward Councillors who can act as a conduit between the Force and residents in their locality regarding intelligence and good news stories.
- 1.8 All Officers within Cleveland Police must recognise the critical role of Councillors as a partnership-tool with which to address policing issues, particularly as it is acknowledged that some people may be more comfortable reporting concerns to Elected Members than the Force itself. Consideration could therefore be given to the further use of external communications to strengthen Force-Councillor partnership-working (highlighting examples of positive engagement leading to direct action and good outcomes).
- 1.9 The use and reach of social media is much valued by the Force, though such platforms also create challenges around perceptions / false stories which contribute to negativity about the Borough (requiring further work to address). Although there are benefits in using technology as a means of seeking intelligence, promoting services and celebrating successes, such platforms continue to bring less desirable effects, an understandable source of frustration for those trying to present what is actually happening across the Borough regarding the prevalence of crime.
- 1.10 The Group was keen to reinforce the crucial communications feedback-loop which, if effective, enables confidence to be built between the Force and Councillors / the public. Whilst acknowledging resource limitations, a focus on ensuring robust mechanisms are in place to update those who report or experience crime / ASB (as regularly as agreed), even when there has been no significant developments around a case, is encouraged.
- 1.11 The Force's Corporate Communications Unit continues to face a real challenge in light of well-publicised recent, and historic, issues concerning Cleveland Police which has impacted upon its reputation and standing amongst local residents. For some time now, the Force has seemed to be in a constant state of change, with Officers across all ranks arriving and departing at a concerning rate which inevitably impacts upon the ability to forge relationships within communities. Ensuring Councillors are kept up-to-date with any changes of Force personnel / oversight (including all relevant contact details, as well as escalation points) within their Ward's should be a high priority in order to maintain open communications lines that will assist in tackling crime and ASB across the Borough.
- 1.12 As with many other organisations, the COVID-19 pandemic has both adversely impacted existing processes and accelerated new ways of working, particularly through the increased prevalence of remote contact. Whilst the offer of alternative methods of communicating are to be embraced, being as physically visible within Wards as possible will continue to be important for Councillors (as evidenced with the Ward Councillor survey) and their residents (as reflected in the desire for more Police visibility via recent consultations) as the Force looks to deliver strong engagement as part of its service plans.

- 1.13 Central to any engagement with the local population, PCSOs have been, and will continue to be, key players in providing robust communications with Councillors and their residents as part of the Force's neighbourhood policing model. That said, the public continue to raise concerns around the limited powers PCSOs have, a perception which is amplified in light of a lack of PCs to cover each separate Ward. As efforts continue to raise Police numbers, providing greater awareness of the role of PCSOs within communities may assist in managing public expectation and also raise their profile as a crucial part of the police function, particularly around their status as a vital initial contact within a neighbourhood.
- 1.14 The results of the Ward Councillor survey, undertaken as part of this task and finish work, demonstrate a varying degree of satisfaction with past and current communications arrangements. Whilst some good examples of positive engagement with the Force were received, familiar concerns around a lack of Officer visibility and turnover alongside limited information-sharing and feedback on cases was also shared. Worryingly, closer analysis of responses when compared to Ward crime / ASB prevalence showed that those areas with the highest (and, curiously, the lowest) number of reported incidents had the most concerns in relation to Force communications.
- 1.15 As the public continues to adapt to living with COVID-19, the Group welcomed the Force's positive intent around increasing purposeful engagement, including the resumption of regular attendance at Councillors' Ward Surgeries and Community Safety Partnership meetings, making its bi-monthly newsletters more Ward-specific, and the potential introduction of out-of-area reporting clinics (for those who fear reprisals from individuals committing crimes and ASB within their neighbourhoods). The Group, however, remains mindful that such endeavours are undertaken against an ongoing backdrop of stretched resources that must be directed towards areas of greatest impact – this will inevitably leave some Councillors and members of the public with the, somewhat unfair, impression that the Force does not take concerns seriously (as seen within both consultation and Ward Councillor survey responses).
- 1.16 The reported strengthening of relationships between Cleveland Police and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council during the pandemic is hugely encouraging and is a helpful starting point with which to build firmer links with all Elected Members across the Borough. Survey responses demonstrate a conflicting range of experiences when it comes to Force-Councillor relationships, therefore much work clearly remains to ensure a consistent approach that will benefit both the Force and the public in identifying, addressing and, crucially, communicating crime and ASB concerns for the betterment of all residents within Stockton-on-Tees.

Recommendations

The Committee recommend that:

- 1) **Any scheduled reviews of Cleveland Police's 'Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025' document factors in the key findings and recommendations from this review.**
- 2) **As part of the future communications protocol / agreement between Cleveland Police and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Ward Councillors:**
 - a) **Cleveland Police promotes the need for regular and Ward-specific engagement with SBC Ward Councillors amongst its internal workforce (including the provision of information to Elected Members which is relevant to their particular Ward);**
 - b) **Cleveland Police and SBC use their various public-facing communication platforms to raise the profile of Force-Councillor partnership-working (highlighting examples of positive engagement leading to direct action and good outcomes);**
 - c) **Expectations around the physical visibility of police officers (i.e. Ward Surgeries, partnership-meetings, resident meetings) be re-established between Cleveland Police and all SBC Ward Councillors;**
 - d) **PCSO contacts for each Ward be reinforced to all SBC Ward Councillors, along with relevant escalation points if a PCSO is unavailable for any reason;**
 - e) **Consideration be given to using available platforms to raise the profile of PCSOs and their crucial part in the policing function (providing clarity on what they can and cannot do, including their use of social media as a communication tool);**
 - f) **Cleveland Police provides a response to concerns raised within the SBC Ward Councillor survey (undertaken as part of this review), with specific reference to what it is doing to promote better engagement in those Wards where Councillors have expressed dissatisfaction with existing communications arrangements.**
- 3) **Cleveland Police ensures robust mechanisms are in place for victims of crime / ASB which:**
 - a) **provides clarity on the expected communication process between Force and victim;**
 - b) **ensures updates are provided (as regularly as agreed with each individual victim) regarding the progression of investigations, even when there have been no developments.**
- 4) **The SBC Ward Councillor survey is repeated in approximately 12 months to gauge developments around Cleveland Police-SBC Ward Councillor communications arrangements.**

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 This report outlines the findings and recommendations following the Crime and Disorder Select Committee's task and finish review of Police Communications in Stockton-on-Tees.
- 2.2 Cleveland Police and Crime Panel had previously established a Task and Finish Group to examine the existing communication methods of Cleveland Police with / between the public and other local stakeholders. The main aims of that review were to:
- Establish the communication priorities of the Force and how these are being actioned.
 - Understand the interplay between the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Cleveland and the Force in relation to communication.
 - Examine the ability for the public and key partners to engage with the Force, and how the Force then acts on this (i.e. providing feedback).
 - Identify the ways and means in which the positive work of the Force can be communicated more widely and efficiently, which could aid both a future increase in the reporting of crimes and a reduced fear of crime.
- 2.3 As a way of informing the Cleveland-wide work around the Police Communications Strategy, the Crime and Disorder Select Committee's local area-based task and finish review would focus on information-sharing and communications in Stockton-on-Tees between neighbourhood policing, local Ward Councillors, local residents and other key stakeholders. The review would seek to ensure that appropriate information-sharing mechanisms were in place with a view to strengthening effective partnership-working within the Borough.
- 2.4 In undertaking the evidence-gathering for this review, the Committee's appointed Task and Finish Group met with a number of Cleveland Police staff – both frontline police officers as well as representatives from the Force's Corporate Communications Unit. To obtain views on police communications from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Elected Members, the Group issued a survey to all 56 Ward Councillors. Finally, consideration was given to several consultation examples which not only demonstrated the ways in which the public could engage with the Force and its partners, but also highlighted further opinions on the issue of crime-related communications.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The College of Policing is the professional body for everyone who works for the police service in England and Wales. Its purpose is to provide those working in policing with the skills and knowledge necessary to prevent crime, protect the public and secure public trust.
- 3.2 Authorised by the College of Policing, *Authorised Professional Practice* (APP) is the official source of professional practice on policing and can be accessed online (<https://www.app.college.police.uk/>). Police officers and staff are expected to have regard to APP in discharging their responsibilities, and included within the APP content is a detailed section on 'Engagement and Communication' which reinforces the importance, and benefits, of effective working with local communities:

'Successful policing depends on engaging and communicating effectively with the communities each force serves. Developing and maintaining positive relationships is an essential part of this and should form part of everyday policing. It is not a passive process but a proactive collaboration between all the parties involved.'

Successful police engagement and communication with communities can help:

- ***prevent crime and anti-social behaviour***
- ***reduce crime and the fear of crime***
- ***bring offenders to justice***
- ***deliver a service that the police service and those it serves can be proud of and which keeps communities safe.'***

- 3.3 Specific APP guidance around the subject of [communication](#) notes the multiple mechanisms available to Forces, including face-to-face interaction (surgeries, street meetings, beat meetings), working with community groups (including formal and informal voluntary organisations), engaging with under-represented groups and Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs), and, crucially, partnership-working to allow a holistic approach to improving safety / wellbeing and raise confidence in local service delivery as a whole. Use and monitoring of social media is considered, as is digitally-enabled meetings, an approach which has seen increasing appeal as a result of social restrictions association with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3.4 Building upon the ever-growing realm of digital communications, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) acknowledge that:

'Public expectations of how they interact with policing are changing. The public now expect us to have a significant online presence, with a similar level of functionality and ease of use to other services they access on a daily basis.'

While many advances in technology have huge benefits on how people communicate and transact, digital or ‘cyber’ crimes have increased significantly in recent years. In addition, the volume of digital evidence will only continue to increase.

‘Policing has to adapt and respond to the digital environment, to ensure it can relentlessly pursue criminals, protect the vulnerable, and reduce crime, wherever that occurs.’

3.5 To this end, the [National Policing Digital Strategy: Digital, Data and Technology Strategy 2020-2030](#) was launched at the Police Digital Summit 2020. This strategy considers the internal and external pressures facing the Police Digital Service and presents five key digital ambitions, each with a set of digital priorities to guide focus and investment. The first of these, ‘Seamless Citizen Experience’, aims to ensure the public will have more choice in how they engage, using channels, media or devices most relevant to them. The Police Digital Service will be able to connect citizen interactions, information and data across departments, and across forces, to build a more credible and richer intelligence picture, all whilst maintaining public trust by ethically acquiring, exploiting and sharing their data.



3.6 Specific to this review, concerns in relation to police communications have been raised by Councillors across the UK for some years now. Examples include:

- [West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel: Councillor's plea to police bosses to improve communication with local communities \(Jun 2020\)](#)
- [Councillors criticise police as they cannot call PCSO \(Jul 2017\)](#)
- [Llay Councillors demand better communication from North Wales Police \(Feb 2019\)](#)
- [Worried Councillors issue plea to Andy Burnham after summer of crime in Stockport \(Sep 2021\)](#)

3.7 Attempts to improve communications between the police and Councillors are also evident, an innovative example of which was established by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall. This involved a [Councillor Advocate Scheme](#) which aimed to improve communication between local Councillors, Devon and Cornwall Police, and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

3.8 At a local level, the 2019 inspection of Cleveland Police by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) identified six causes for concern, one of which was about engaging with the

public and external scrutiny of the Force. HMICFRS found that the Force did not encourage a culture that valued engagement with the public and did not use its communication channels effectively. It had an engagement strategy that the workforce did not widely understand or apply, and this meant it was not giving local people the opportunity to voice their needs, concerns and preferences.

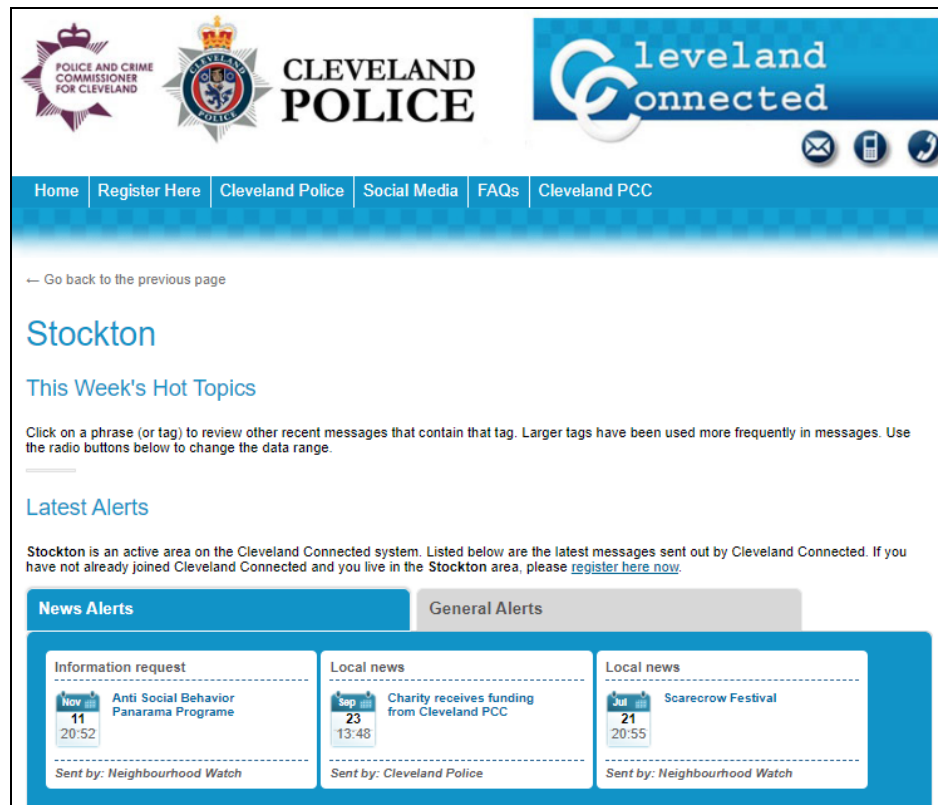
During a subsequent revisit in June and July 2021, HMICFRS identified a number of areas of positive progress in relation to the Force's need to improve communication and engagement with the public of Cleveland, including:

- *The force has improved the way it communicates with the public. It communicates more frequently and openly, and uses a variety of methods such as local media, blogs, online video-chat and newsletters.*
- *The force is more willing to listen to the public and wants to engage in dialogue to understand the needs of local communities. It is using different ways to encourage local communities to engage, but some have been more successful than others.*
- *Its new engagement strategy sets out what is expected of officers and staff. The force has a number of officers and staff whose role is to engage with the public. But they still need the skills, information and prioritisation of work to carry out the engagement required.*
- *Some engagement is happening through dialogue to understand the needs of local communities. But, often, neighbourhood officers are being extracted from their roles to attend to more urgent work. This means that, at the last minute, they can't attend the engagement meetings they have organised. They understand the importance of these meetings and feel that they are letting the public down.*

4.0 Findings

Frontline Police Officers

- 4.1 The Task and Finish Group first met with a number of frontline police officers who, whilst acknowledging the Force's duty and responsibility to keep Councillors informed, cautioned that there could of course be some limitations around what information can be shared depending on the nature of a particular case / incident. Further restrictions regarding GDPR requirements, the need to respect human rights, and ensuring future operations were not compromised were also noted.
- 4.2 In terms of the content of engagement with Councillors and the wider public, this is, within reason, limitless. However, the Force is mindful that it does not want to incite the community, nor inflame what can, in some circumstances, be a sensitive situation.
- 4.3 It was accepted that the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic had possibly led to a deterioration in existing communications arrangements. Resources had been stretched over the last 18 months, and all Police Constables (PCs) had been removed from neighbourhood policing, with Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) effectively 'holding the fort' without the usual access to those in more senior positions.
- 4.4 *Cleveland Connected* (<https://www.clevelandconnected.co.uk/>: a free service for those who want to hear directly from the police and others in the public sector about issues and actions in their community – it is part of, and complements, the Neighbourhood Alert system) remains available for information-sharing, and PCSOs are always available via email.



- 4.5 Officers are trying to be more visible now, particularly with regards attendance at Ward Surgeries and local Community Safety Partnership meetings.
- 4.6 PCSOs do not have access to their own Force laptop (PCs / Sergeants do), though meetings with a PC can be arranged if requested by the PCSO.
- 4.7 A number of challenges around communications were noted, including:
- The Force can sometimes have internal meetings regarding communications plans but then not sufficiently inform key partners – this can result in an understandable reaction from partners who feel ‘out-of-the-loop’.
 - There are not enough resources to align a PC to each separate Ward within the Borough (a single PC therefore covers multiple Wards) – as such, PCSOs are the first point of contact.
 - Officers recognise that some people feel more comfortable going to Councillors than they do the police. It is therefore crucial that relationships between the Force and Elected Members are strong.
 - Regarding the bi-monthly Ward newsletters, officers accepted that these had been somewhat generic (as opposed to Ward-specific) thus far. However, now PCSOs were aligned to each Ward and links were being re-forged following restrictions created by the pandemic, future editions should be more focused on issues affecting a particular part of the Borough and will include the email address of the relevant PCSO (though not PCs who are covering a much wider range).
- 4.8 With reference to the latter bullet-point above, the Group suggested that a generic email contact be provided for a specific patch (allowing PCs / Sergeants to see correspondence) in case the PCSO was off work for any reason (sickness / holiday) – this would ensure issues could still be picked-up and responded to in a timely fashion. Members were informed that this had been tried in the past, but unless queries are directed to a specific individual, those copied-in can assume that someone else is picking it up (leading to the possibility that no-one responds). Furthermore, it was noted that PCSOs should activate their out-of-office automatic email responses if they go on leave, and that if an issue was urgent, other communication channels should be used anyway.
- 4.9 A query was subsequently raised around whether an easy-read shortlist of key communication routes could be provided to Councillors (in addition to the obvious national telephone numbers), though it was felt a simple guide may be difficult to produce given the multiple reasons why someone may want to contact the Force.
- 4.10 The Group expressed concern that Force action seemed to be driven by reports / complaints when there are residents who, despite experiencing crime / anti-social behaviour, refuse to contact the Police for a number of reasons (e.g. reprisals / feel it is pointless as nothing will be done). Officers agreed that individuals can fear potential repercussions if they report an incident, but also pointed-out that the Force get criticised for not responding when they have not always been made aware of an issue. Even if the Force is informed, limited resources must be put where they will have the greatest

impact. Assurance was given that word-of-mouth from Councillors carries a lot of weight (not just police statistics), and that, moving forward, better interaction with Elected Members will enable more issues to be identified and addressed. That said, direct intelligence from an individual (as opposed a third-party) tended to be stronger, and the Force needed to foster trust within communities to encourage safe and timely reporting of concerns (e.g. out-of-area reporting clinics).

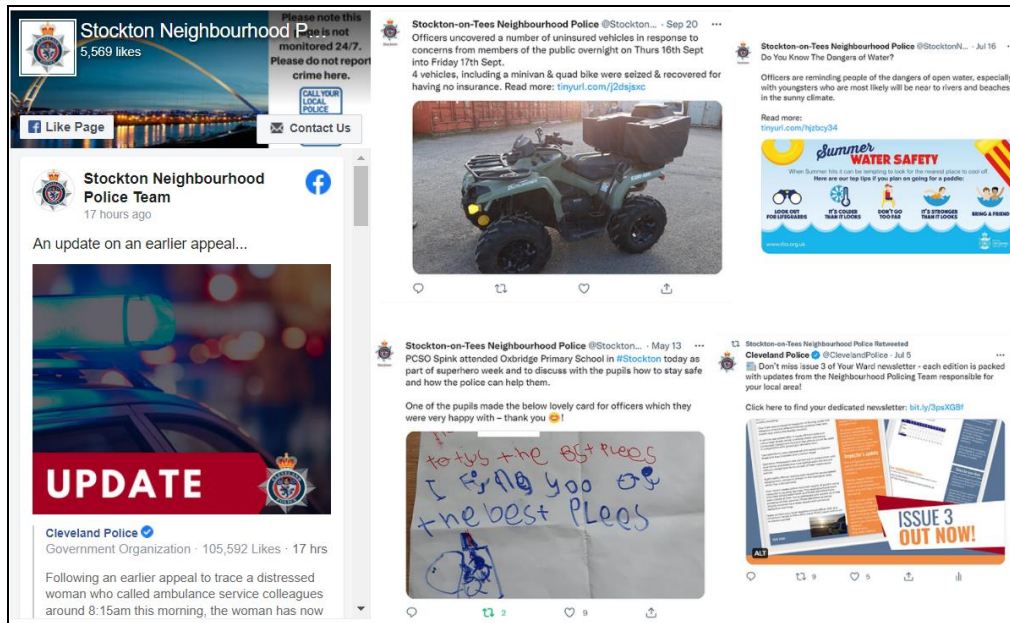
- 4.11 Members reflected on the importance of feeding-back to Councillors / the public regarding action taken in a specific case which had been raised with the Force (regardless of whether there had been a successful outcome). Officers acknowledged that the public do not always understand the investigative process which can take time, and that managing expectations was a continual challenge.
- 4.12 Returning to the theme of officer contact points, the Group understood the reasons for a specific named person who Councillors could go to in the first instance. However, it was suggested that having a clear alternative contact (other than just ringing the 101 service) if an issue needed to be escalated / re-directed would be useful. Members stated that PCSOs were very helpful when approached, but the information-flow in the opposite direction was not always apparent. Officers proposed the possibility of providing the relevant Sergeants' email details (three of whom cover 'inner' Stockton-on-Tees, and three 'outer') as an escalation point.
- 4.13 Finally, assurance was given to the Group that inter-agency communications between the Council and the Force had never been better, despite the challenges posed by COVID-19 (this had also been noted during the evidence-gathering for the Crime and Disorder Select Committee's ongoing review of Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs)). From Cleveland Police's perspective, the desire to fully re-engage with Councillors, local partners and the public was emphasised.

Corporate Communications Unit

- 4.14 In a separate, subsequent evidence-gathering session, representatives from the Cleveland Police Corporate Communications Unit addressed the Group following a request for information on:
- Work undertaken by the Force around communications.
 - Existing communications strategy – who decides what information to communicate and which platforms to use?
 - Resourcing and methods of engagement with Councillors / partners / public (e.g. joint-agency meetings).
 - Future communication priorities / plans.
- 4.15 The Group heard that the overarching remit of the Corporate Communications Unit is to communicate the Force's activity across Cleveland. The work of the team is driven by operational need and involves a wide scope of work including media relations, digital communications, internal communications, a

warn and inform duty, media training and guidance, tactical and strategic advice during major and critical operations, crisis communications, and reputation management to improve public confidence.

- 4.16 A vast range of specific elements delivered by the team was outlined including:
- Issuing appeals for witnesses as part of criminal investigations and providing relevant updates in terms of arrests / charges.
 - Maintaining relationships with newsrooms, stakeholders and other partners.
 - Providing professional advice and guidance to officers in relation to media law issues and general media issues.
 - Creation, development and management of Cleveland Police social media accounts including content advice, construction and development (a significant growth area).
 - Managing media policy, including on call standard operating procedures, the media and communications emergency plan and digital plans.
 - Issuing of daily messages to the workforce.
 - Communications responsibility for the change work around the HMICFRS inspection reports.
- 4.17 In terms of external communications, the team receives on average 200-250 individual media requests per month from local and national journalists, and releases around 100-150 individual news and content releases to the media and the public each month. The team works on a news-desk rota each day, allowing them to concentrate on proactive good news and awareness-raising stories on theme areas including violent crime, domestic abuse, county lines, and child sexual exploitation.
- 4.18 With regards internal communications, officers and other staff can request work through service request forms. Communications strategies and project plans (as well as changes in legislation / practice) direct the resource of the team in terms of internal content, channel development and campaign material. The team brief, developed by internal communications, averages around 3,200 views per month from the workforce, with operational news channels and Force notices gaining around 5,000+ views per month. Intranet visits for August 2021 totalled 350,000.
- 4.19 From a digital communications perspective, Cleveland Police corporate accounts are active on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn, and have over 200,000 followers with an average reach of 1 million per month for the whole Force area (90,000 for Stockton alone).



Corporate accounts are supported by local ‘grassroots’ accounts that are managed by neighbourhood teams with support from Corporate Communications. More work is being carried out in this area, including virtual community meetings and strategy development in line with the Police Digital Service standards Police Digital Service (<https://pds.police.uk/>).

- 4.20 Importantly, the Unit’s activity is not just communications for communications sake – there is a need to understand who content is targeting at, how it might be received, and how ‘reach’ can be maximised. A decision was made to concentrate on streamlining content to ensure high-quality output which is not spread over too many pages – this helps to keep things in one place and allows the reader to see the ‘thread’ of developments. Another key function of the Unit is the support it provides to victims of crime and their families.
- 4.21 COVID-specific developments were noted – the Unit led the communications response for the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) following the emergence of COVID-19 (good to have frequent visibility of Cleveland Police, not just Durham or North Yorkshire Police), and Ward meetings were hosted virtually through social media as part of adapting to the pandemic (hoping to give officers further guidance on setting these up themselves).
- 4.22 Further information on the work of the team, prepared for the Police and Crime Panel in winter 2020, was highlighted:
 - Service Plans: Sets out the strategic aims for improving and developing effective communication and engagement across the organisation and with communities. The department is underpinned by a set of objectives and principles which are currently shaping the organisational five-year communications and engagement strategy. Strong engagement is vital in supporting the delivery of effective policing through promotion of the Force Vision, Priorities and Values and through support for operational activity.



CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC SERVICE PLAN

OVERVIEW

Strong engagement is vital in supporting the delivery of effective policing through promotion of the Force Vision, Priorities and Values and through support for operational activity.

This document sets out the strategic aims for improving and developing effective communication and engagement. The basic aims form part of the associated strategies. This is important for everyone in Cleveland Police not just the staff within the Corporate Communications Department who are the facilitators of activity.

It highlights the importance of intelligently deployed and innovatively created messaging in delivering maximum impact in support of Force Priorities.

The plan outlines activities in communication to support corporate plans to deliver the Force's Vision and Priorities.

Cleveland Police has a strong brand identity which is centred on the communities we serve and all engagement activity will support this.

STRATEGIC SERVICE PLAN

The Corporate Communications Department consists of three teams: media and communications; internal engagement, and; digital engagement and design.

The Media and Communications Team provides 24/7 media and social media support and plays a lead role in supporting external stakeholder relationships. Key to success is that the team supports operational and neighbourhood policing, maintains trust and confidence and leads on warn and inform activities.

The Internal Communications and Engagement Team is responsible for communicating internal campaigns, supporting staff engagement and enabling an engaged and enabled workforce.

The Digital Engagement and Design Team leads on social media development, graphic design, photography, videography and the management of the Force intranet and external digital channels including the website.

OBJECTIVES

1. To build trust and confidence through effective communication and engagement.
2. To take a strategic approach to staff, public and partner engagement.
3. To positively influence internal and external perception and behaviour.
4. To deliver communication and engagement activity that supports Force priorities and values.
5. To raise the profile of Cleveland Police through local, regional and national influence.
6. To support positive stakeholder relationships with local authorities, community leaders and other key partners.
7. To take a tailored approach to engagement and communication to meet specific needs.
8. To measure and evaluate communication and engagement activities.

PRINCIPLES

Cleveland Police's communications must adhere to the following principles:

- ✓ Be aligned with the Vision and Values of Cleveland Police.
- ✓ Be open, honest, transparent and proactive.
- ✓ Be accurate and timely.
- ✓ Be engaging and relevant.
- ✓ Be clear, accessible and understandable.
- ✓ Be professional.
- ✓ Be part of a continued conversation.
- ✓ Be compliant with legal issues.
- ✓ Be cognisant of stakeholders and partner agencies.
- ✓ Be responsive through listening.



The team has developed five strategies (Media, Internal, Brand, Community, and Digital) which will come together for the Cleveland Police Corporate Communications Strategy 2020-2025.



- **How we work with others:** Graphic outlining the input of information via multiple engagement mechanisms (e.g. neighbourhood teams, internal comms, media / social media) and involvement in meetings / Boards, the use of this information by the Corporate Communications, Engagement, and EDI (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion) teams, and the feedback-loop to the aforementioned engagement mechanisms, meetings and Boards.
- **Snapshot for Stockton – September 2021:** Examples shown of media postings by the Force using multiple communication platforms (corporate, social media accounts) and via Teesside Live content. Facebook 'likes' on the Stockton Neighbourhood Police Team page noted (risen from around 4,000 in December 2020 to over 5,000 in September 2021) as well as data estimating that, on the 15th July 2021, nearly 54,000 people had seen any of the Force's Facebook posts at least once. On Cleveland Police's main Facebook account (which has over 103,000 'likes'), the second most popular area of the Force patch that its followers live in is Stockton-on-Tees (after Middlesbrough).



Over a Hundred of People Arrested, Drugs Recovered & Vehicles Seized in Lockdown in Stockton

Officers from the Stockton Neighbourhood Team have arrested almost 110 people, conducted many drugs warrants and stopped and searched over 236 people whilst out on patrol since March.

 police.uk



Update on arrests as two men remain in hospital after armed incident

The two men are in a 'stable condition' in hospital and four men have been released on bail

 TeessideLive / Jade McElwee / 15 Sept

- 4.23 The Group asked about the size and accountability of the Unit. There were 10 staff (8 FTE) employed in the team (which does not include a marketing function), and the Unit sits within Corporate Services which is overseen by the Deputy Chief Constable.
- 4.24 Members queried if the Force kept track of local 'alert' pages. Whilst these sites are not monitored for intelligence, the Force would issue a response to correct false stories being circulated, and responsibility for relaying what was really happening lies with PCSOs / PCs. Issues being raised via the 'alert' functions tend to get picked-up by the media. It was noted that the public's increasing use of social media can give the impression that more crime is happening than previously seen.
- 4.25 The Group emphasised the importance of communicating back to victims of crime, and that although victims may receive some initial information, further updates do not always follow (possibly due to investigative procedures) which can leave vulnerable individuals feeling as if no-one cares. Officers observed that legislation is in place (victims code of practice (VCOP) – see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime/code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime-in-england-and-wales-victims-code>) regarding how the Police should be communicating with victims, and that once someone is charged with an offence, the Force's Victim Care Unit would be expected to provide a timely update. A 'contact contract' is established with the victim – if they are considered vulnerable, engagement takes place almost daily; if not, communication frequency is agreed depending on the victims' preference.
- 4.26 Continuing this theme, it was acknowledged that communication can be influenced by the prioritisation of cases (i.e. new cases may emerge that are considered more serious and therefore divert available resources), and that this was not a localised issue (e.g. forensics are sent to a place that a number of other Force's use, results of which can take time thereby delaying potential feedback to victims). Members felt it was still important for the Force to ensure periodic updates were provided to victims, even if to confirm there had been no new developments (it was noted that this was already done in the majority of cases, and that senior officers conduct scheduled checks).
- 4.27 In terms of keeping Members aware of local policing developments, it was stated that a monthly key message document sent to Councillors includes links to the Force's social media accounts, though the Corporate

Communications Unit could look to provide specific links for Councillors via existing distribution lists.

4.28 In conclusion, officers reflected on the process of re-learning the Neighbourhood Policing model and then having to deal with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, two elements which had created significant change around communications. People can think that the police are not out there when they are (there are many officers working behind-the-scenes in addition to those more visible), though managing demand / expectation from the public remains (e.g. impact of the COVID-19 'pingdemic' on availability of officers to respond to concerns). Moving forward, the Force is encouraging engagement with and from both Ward Councillors and the wider public.

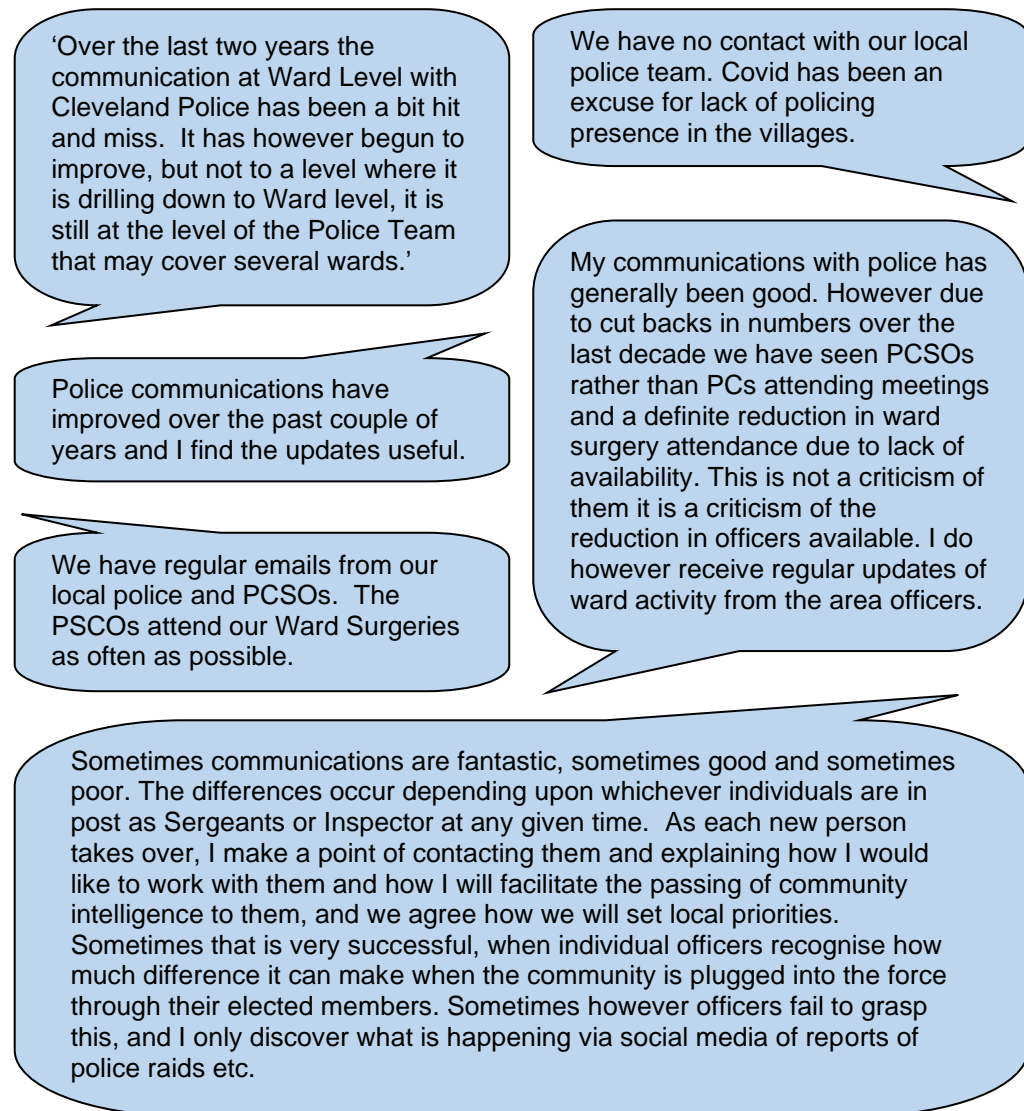
Ward Councillors

4.29 In August 2021, a survey was issued to all 56 of the SBC Ward Councillors which asked for responses to the following:

1	<i>From a Ward Councillor perspective, what is your general experience of communications with Cleveland Police? Has this changed over time (including impact of COVID / lockdown on communication channels)?</i>
2	<i>Describe your relationship with your local Neighbourhood Police Officer.</i>
3	<i>What communication mechanisms exist between you and Cleveland Police? Do you feel these facilitate robust and timely information-sharing?</i>
4	<i>In your capacity as a Ward Councillor, do you have any personal examples where communications with the Force were particularly <u>positive and / or constructive</u>?</i>
5	<i>In your capacity as a Ward Councillor, do you have any personal examples where communications with the Force were particularly <u>negative and / or lacking</u>?</i>
6	<i>Do you feel able to adequately reflect the views / issues / concerns expressed by your residents to the Force? Do you feel these are acted upon?</i>
7	<i>Do you receive any feedback regarding views / issues / concerns raised so that you can forward information back to those who raised them?</i>
8	<i>Are there any ways in which you feel communications between you and the Force could be enhanced / improved?</i>

4.30 A total of 22 surveys were completed and returned (including separate Councillors representing the same Ward) – encouragingly, these covered a large spread of the Borough's main geographic areas. Anonymised

responses were subsequently presented to the Group for review, and an initial attempt to identify themes for each of the survey questions had been made (see Appendix 1). Comments indicated a very mixed picture in terms of general experiences of engagement with the Force:



4.31 Looking at the survey questions as a whole, several themes were identified:

- Shift patterns and a change in police officers on the ground was impacting communications.
- COVID-19 pandemic impacting services – most contact is virtual / telephone.
- Email is the most successful and used contact form.
- Main relationship (if there is one) is with a PCSO as opposed to a PC.
- Positive feedback regarding responses for individual complaints of crime or ASB.
- Concerns expressed regarding the amount of contact received from police officers or changes in contact levels with no prior warning or explanation.
- Instances of police already being aware (and taking action) of a situation before a Councillor is aware / informed – feeling of being 'out-the-loop'.

- Isolated concerns raised around prioritisation of crime, officer visibility and information-sharing.
- Potential for improvements in engagement by ensuring multiple communication lines are open and responded to so information can be exchanged on a regular basis. Importance of visibility as well as virtual contact highlighted, though stretched resources and limited powers of PCSOs noted.

4.32 Reflecting further on the last bullet-point above, survey respondents offered a range of views on how communications between them (as Councillors) and the Force could be enhanced / improved:

Where appropriate and where it does not contravene data protection or impact on operational activities, I think ward councillors could be given more information about planned activity in the ward.

Regular circulations of numbers / departments / names numbers of Officers in each ward. The reason for this is certain residents in different wards make contact with Cllrs not in their wards. This would save time and get a quicker response.

Encourage the Force to sell their news, good and bad. The force is doing an outstanding job with limited resources. Quite often picking up non-police matters, mental health, neighbour disputes, all time consuming and should be picked up by other agencies. The force should be informing the public that quite often their scarce resources are stretched because of lack of capacity in other agencies. When all else fails the first port of call is police.

I don't think we receive the respect deserved by Cleveland Police. In the main, we are regarded as 'normal' citizens, when we are trying to make their job easier. I find it really difficult to try and defend them.

More high-profile policing with officers seen to be out and about thus giving confidence to the public, also better communications between the local officers and Councillors.

Every officer should have a mobile phone which they are allowed to give out the number for. And then when we meet new ones for our area, our community team, they could give them to us and then we could talk more often and more easily. And the other issue is that they can't look at Facebook and YouTube (I think from memory) on force equipment which makes it hard to share social media posts with them, where they relate to crime and I need them to see. This may have changed but I remember for instance a film I wanted to share which showed a criminal act taking place, and I couldn't share it because they weren't allowed to use that platform. Ridiculous.

Now that our Ward Surgeries are back on track, it would be useful to arrange attendance by the Neighbourhood Police Team, incidents permitting.

Difficult to assess due to Covid situation and pressures of numbers. However, this may be alleviated if or when the 400 or so officers which have been removed from Cleveland to the last years of austerity.

4.33 The Group asked if responses (both positive and negative) could, in some way, be compared to analyse if any patterns / differences could be established between areas which had experienced either a high or low rate of crime / ASB. This was subsequently undertaken and resulted in the following table (a larger version of which can be found at Appendix 2):

Ward	Crime / ASB Prevalence (see below explanation)	Survey Question							
		General comms with Force	Relations with local Officers	Comms mechanisms / info-sharing	Positive / constructive examples	Negative / lacking examples	Ability to reflect local views / are they acted on	Receiving feedback from Force to relay	Ways in which comms can be improved
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Stockton Town Centre	1 st								
Mandale & Victoria	2 nd								
Parkfield & Oxbridge	3 rd								
Newtown	4 th								
Hardwick & Salters Lane	5 th								
Billingham Central	6 th								
Billingham Central	6 th								
Billingham East	7 th								
Roseworth	9 th								
Norton North	11 th								
Eaglescliffe	13 th								
Village	14 th								
Village	14 th								
Yarm	15 th								
Ingleby Barwick West	16 th								
Ingleby Barwick East	17 th								
Billingham North	20 th								
Billingham North	20 th								
Fairfield	22 nd								
Billingham West	23 rd								
Norton West	24 th								
Western Parishes	26 th								

mainly positive response
mixed / neutral response
mainly negative response
no response

Crime / ASB-prevalence rating: This is based on the number of reported incidents between police, fire and SBC over the periods 2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021 combined. In terms of grading, 1st is the highest level of reported incidents and 26th is the lowest (i.e. the lower the number, the higher the rate of incidents reported). This is data contained within the Partnership Strategic Assessment (PSA) for the Community Safety Partnership.

4.34 With the responding Councillors' Wards listed by 'crime / ASB prevalence' order (third column in the above table):

- There appears to be fewer positive and more negative comments evident in both the highest (Stockton Town Centre / Mandale & Victoria / Hardwick & Salters Lane) and the lowest (Fairfield / Billingham West / Western Parishes) areas of recorded crime / ASB.
- Most of the positive comments were received from Councillors representing those ranked around the middle of the 'crime / ASB prevalence' rankings (Norton North / Eaglescliffe / Village / Ingleby Barwick East).
- The outliers to this were Roseworth, Yarm, and Ingleby Barwick West, all of which saw mainly negative comments despite being outside the top or bottom eight Wards for reported 'crime / ASB prevalence'.

4.35 Towards the end of this scrutiny review, the Chair of the Crime and Disorder Select Committee expressed deep concerns regarding a significant breakdown in communications by Cleveland Police (and Cleveland Fire

Brigade) following a major incident which occurred during December 2021 in the Hartington Road area of Stockton. Despite a robust, multi-agency-agreed, Emergency Plan being in place, it was felt that the communication provided to SBC, relevant Ward Councillors, and the Lead Officer for the Emergency Plan very poor and very disappointing.

Members were subsequently informed by a Cleveland Police representative that a formal debrief would be taking place within the Force and gave assurance that concerns would be fed back to the Force's command structure. It was also noted that the events surrounding this incident would be picked-up by the Emergency Planning Team and that mechanisms existed to obtain a resolution on what had / had not taken place.

Public Consultations

- 4.36 To further explore the mechanisms in place to facilitate communication between Cleveland Police, its partners, and the public, the Group was keen to understand more formal arrangements involving crime-related consultation.

Cleveland Police

- 4.37 Examples demonstrating the Force's consultation activity were considered – these related to overall and Stockton-on-Tees-specific summaries (see Appendix 3) of results from the bi-annual Communities Survey.
- 4.38 Pointing to the low survey response rate from those aged 25 and under (8%), the Group asked what Cleveland Police was doing to communicate with young people. Several aspects were subsequently highlighted around the issue of youth engagement, including Officers attending schools (part of the PCSO-pledge to conduct such visits across all education settings – primary schools through to universities / colleges), Army Cadet groups and the Youth Independent Advisory Group. The Force was also undertaking a large recruitment campaign which would see younger Officers joining, and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Cleveland Youth Committee was reviewing the future of the Police Cadets scheme. The potential development of an Instagram page aimed at young people was being looked at, and increased engagement with schools (via the Force's School Engagement Officer) was planned – Members were encouraged to provide any ideas for visits.
- 4.39 In terms of gaining future views, the Force was working on getting an uplift in engagement following COVID-related restrictions, as well as ensuring responses were as diverse as possible (not just white, middle-aged). Members were assured that further work is undertaken following consultations to try to obtain the voice of any low-responding 'hidden' groups (only 2% of Force-wide survey respondents stated they were non-white; 4% in Stockton-on-Tees), and that engagement takes place with Catalyst to assist with this.

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Cleveland

- 4.40 As part of the wider partnership with Cleveland Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) for Cleveland also undertakes consultation

work to engage the public in key topics that inform policy and strategy. The results of two recent examples were provided in relation to the Police and Crime Plan, and an online violence against women and girls (VAWG) consultation. With regards the latter, this work had aided bids into the Home Office for funding to further promote safety, an example of how consultations can lead to action.

- 4.41 Referencing the VAWG consultation findings that 1) several victims did not feel as though they could report an incident as they felt it was their fault for putting themselves in a compromising situation, and 2) that some victims experienced long response times (or no response at all) and a dismissive attitude from Officers, the Group queried what the Force was doing around this messaging. Officers gave assurance that there was currently a lot of ongoing dialogue around the Sarah Everard case, that the Force would never put any communications out regarding a victim being to blame or needing to change their behaviour, and that anyone contacting the Force regarding a sexual offence would be dealt with sensitively. The overriding message was for people to stop committing rape, violence and abuse against women and girls. A large-scale domestic abuse campaign took place over the last Christmas period – the Force was careful to check with local support networks that information was accurate and reflected victims’ feelings / experiences.

Safer Stockton Partnership (SSP)

- 4.42 Community Safety Consultation results were provided for review and comment – this included raw data from engagement regarding the SSP Plan 2020-2023 (see paragraphs 4.43-4.44) and a summary of a more recent SSP Plan 2021 consultation (see paragraphs 4.47-4.48).
- 4.43 Members heard that Local Authorities have a statutory duty to administer a crime and disorder partnership, and that the Safer Stockton Partnership (SSP) is the local mechanism which is discharged with reducing crime and disorder across the Borough. There is a legal obligation to formally consult with the public on such matters, and the actions that arise from the resultant Community Safety Plan are owned by those who sit on the SSP.
- 4.44 The initial information (SSP Plan 2020-2023) provided to the Group represented raw data from the annual public consultation (148 responses), and the learning from this is considered by the SSP and used as part of a Partnership Strategic Assessment (PSA). Priorities are then identified and agreed, with the new Community Safety Plan due for publication in January 2022.
- 4.45 Although communication-related feedback was prevalent throughout the document, a specific section on ‘Communication’ highlighted the current use of (and preference of using) websites, Stockton News and, in particular, social media for engagement around crime and disorder. Interestingly, though face-to-face resident meetings were not often accessed (a likely result of COVID-19 impact), a healthy percentage stated they would prefer this method of communication. A number of comments accompanied the data, including:
- *‘Better times for meetings as consultations seem to take place during working hours. Out of hours need consideration also.’*

- *'Hardly get any information unless via social media which not everyone has, particularly the elderly.'*
- *'I'm more concerned with the accuracy, honesty and transparency of any information communicated rather than the method!'*
- *'Must have more social media engagement. Plenty of bad social media reports but no news on the good stuff. All feels doom and gloom at the moment.'*
- *'Needs to be available in relevant language – which can be a "common" other language, or what a victim needs.'*
- *'Large community campaigns and advertising that get key messages embedded for wider public – these initiatives never seem to reach beyond the standard echo chamber of those that are proactive in keeping themselves aware. Large adverts, billboards, sides of buses – key messages that people can't miss, radio adverts, etc.'*

4.46 Regarding the continued disparity between actual crime (falling) and the perception of crime (still high) across the Borough, it was noted that public consultations are used to more accurately reflect reality through individual views. However, the large percentage (54%) of respondents who feel less safe in the community compared to a year ago was a cause for concern, though it might be that some of this is attributable to national events / incidents too which produces high-profile national media coverage.

4.47 The Group queried if there was opportunity for Town and / or Parish Councils to feed into the SSP and was informed that, whilst no formal links were in place, public consultations enable anyone to express their views. Assurance was given that the SSP does work to capture information from 'hidden' groups (e.g. BAME, LGBT) as well as rural communities.

4.48 A *Safer Stockton Partnership Plan 2021 – Consultation results summary* report was subsequently considered by the Group. This consultation involved an online questionnaire (available between 1st February 2021 and 30th April 2021) and activity resulted in a total sample size of 143 responses.

4.49 Respondents were asked to select how they currently find out or receive community safety information and advice and also how they would prefer to access this information. The table below shows the breakdown across the total sample, with 'Social Media' ranked the most used and the most preferred method of communication.

Communication Method	Count	
	Currently	Prefer
Social Media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.)	92	73
Stockton News Magazine	49	30
Website	46	43
Ward Member Newsletter	32	28
Local Newspaper	27	18
Email	24	36
Neighbourhood Watch Scheme	11	19
Face-to-Face Residents Meetings	10	32
Market Stalls	5	7
In Local Shops	3	10

- 4.50 Officers highlighted the common theme across all consultations that people feel as though there is not enough Police – a key challenge was therefore how the Force and its partners can get the message across that there is presence. The Corporate Communications Unit promotes the good work carried out by the Force, but increasing demand is difficult to counter with existing resources, and this perception is by no means unique to the Borough. Engagement with the local population is PCSO-led (there are not enough PCs for each Ward – instead these Officers must be moved around to areas of greatest demand) and this remains a crucial part of the Police function (reinforced by the Community Engagement *Ward Pledge* to provide robust communications with Councillors and the wider public (see Appendix 4).

5.0 Conclusion & Recommendations

- 5.1 Emphasising the critical nature of this scrutiny topic, the College of Policing (Authorised Professional Practice) states that:

‘Effective communication shapes service delivery towards the needs of the public. Communication is broader than face-to-face interactions. It includes making information available about what the police do and how they do it. Communication involves interacting with communities, listening to their views and ideas and acting upon them in a way that improves police performance and service delivery.’

To this end, numerous engagement mechanisms are used by Cleveland Police, both internally and externally, in order to carry out and communicate its core functions. Central to this is the small, yet proactive, Corporate Communications Unit whose overarching remit is to raise awareness and promote the Force’s activity across the Cleveland area. From a wider organisational perspective, a *Communications and Engagement Strategy 2020-2025* provides a five-year vision for effective internal and external engagement, a key aspect of which is to support positive stakeholder relationships.

- 5.2 Whilst this review principally focused on communications between Cleveland Police and Councillors / the public, the Task and Finish Group were made aware of the large reach of internal Force communications – this therefore provides an opportunity to reinforce the need for regular engagement with Ward Councillors who can act as a conduit between the Force and residents in their locality regarding intelligence and good news stories.
- 5.3 All Officers within Cleveland Police must recognise the critical role of Councillors as a partnership-tool with which to address policing issues, particularly as it is acknowledged that some people may be more comfortable reporting concerns to Elected Members than the Force itself. Consideration could therefore be given to the further use of external communications to strengthen Force-Councillor partnership-working (highlighting examples of positive engagement leading to direct action and good outcomes).
- 5.4 The use and reach of social media is much valued by the Force, though such platforms also create challenges around perceptions / false stories which contribute to negativity about the Borough (requiring further work to address). Although there are benefits in using technology as a means of seeking intelligence, promoting services and celebrating successes, such platforms continue to bring less desirable effects, an understandable source of frustration for those trying to present what is actually happening across the Borough regarding the prevalence of crime.
- 5.5 The Group was keen to reinforce the crucial communications feedback-loop which, if effective, enables confidence to be built between the Force and Councillors / the public. Whilst acknowledging resource limitations, a focus on ensuring robust mechanisms are in place to update those who report or experience crime / ASB (as regularly as agreed), even when there has been no significant developments around a case, is encouraged.
- 5.6 The Force’s Corporate Communications Unit continues to face a real challenge in light of well-publicised recent, and historic, issues concerning

Cleveland Police which has impacted upon its reputation and standing amongst local residents. For some time now, the Force has seemed to be in a constant state of change, with Officers across all ranks arriving and departing at a concerning rate which inevitably impacts upon the ability to forge relationships within communities. Ensuring Councillors are kept up-to-date with any changes of Force personnel / oversight (including all relevant contact details, as well as escalation points) within their Ward's should be a high priority in order to maintain open communications lines that will assist in tackling crime and ASB across the Borough.

- 5.7 As with many other organisations, the COVID-19 pandemic has both adversely impacted existing processes and accelerated new ways of working, particularly through the increased prevalence of remote contact. Whilst the offer of alternative methods of communicating are to be embraced, being as physically visible within Wards as possible will continue to be important for Councillors (as evidenced with the Ward Councillor survey) and their residents (as reflected in the desire for more Police visibility via recent consultations) as the Force looks to deliver strong engagement as part of its service plans.
- 5.8 Central to any engagement with the local population, PCSOs have been, and will continue to be, key players in providing robust communications with Councillors and their residents as part of the Force's neighbourhood policing model. That said, the public continue to raise concerns around the limited powers PCSOs have, a perception which is amplified in light of a lack of PCs to cover each separate Ward. As efforts continue to raise Police numbers, providing greater awareness of the role of PCSOs within communities may assist in managing public expectation and also raise their profile as a crucial part of the police function, particularly around their status as a vital initial contact within a neighbourhood.
- 5.9 The results of the Ward Councillor survey, undertaken as part of this task and finish work, demonstrate a varying degree of satisfaction with past and current communications arrangements. Whilst some good examples of positive engagement with the Force were received, familiar concerns around a lack of Officer visibility and turnover alongside limited information-sharing and feedback on cases was also shared. Worryingly, closer analysis of responses when compared to Ward crime / ASB prevalence showed that those areas with the highest (and, curiously, the lowest) number of reported incidents had the most concerns in relation to Force communications.
- 5.10 As the public continues to adapt to living with COVID-19, the Group welcomed the Force's positive intent around increasing purposeful engagement, including the resumption of regular attendance at Councillors' Ward Surgeries and Community Safety Partnership meetings, making its bi-monthly newsletters more Ward-specific, and the potential introduction of out-of-area reporting clinics (for those who fear reprisals from individuals committing crimes and ASB within their neighbourhoods). The Group, however, remains mindful that such endeavours are undertaken against an ongoing backdrop of stretched resources that must be directed towards areas of greatest impact – this will inevitably leave some Councillors and members of the public with the, somewhat unfair, impression that the Force does not take concerns seriously (as seen within both consultation and Ward Councillor survey responses).

- 5.11 The reported strengthening of relationships between Cleveland Police and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council during the pandemic is hugely encouraging and is a helpful starting point with which to build firmer links with all Elected Members across the Borough. Survey responses demonstrate a conflicting range of experiences when it comes to Force-Councillor relationships, therefore much work clearly remains to ensure a consistent approach that will benefit both the Force and the public in identifying, addressing and, crucially, communicating crime and ASB concerns for the betterment of all residents within Stockton-on-Tees.

Recommendations

The Committee recommend that:

- 1) **Any scheduled reviews of Cleveland Police's 'Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2025' document factors in the key findings and recommendations from this review.**
- 2) **As part of the future communications protocol / agreement between Cleveland Police and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) Ward Councillors:**
 - a) **Cleveland Police promotes the need for regular and Ward-specific engagement with SBC Ward Councillors amongst its internal workforce (including the provision of information to Elected Members which is relevant to their particular Ward);**
 - b) **Cleveland Police and SBC use their various public-facing communication platforms to raise the profile of Force-Councillor partnership-working (highlighting examples of positive engagement leading to direct action and good outcomes);**
 - c) **Expectations around the physical visibility of police officers (i.e. Ward Surgeries, partnership-meetings, resident meetings) be re-established between Cleveland Police and all SBC Ward Councillors;**
 - d) **PCSO contacts for each Ward be reinforced to all SBC Ward Councillors, along with relevant escalation points if a PCSO is unavailable for any reason;**
 - e) **Consideration be given to using available platforms to raise the profile of PCSOs and their crucial part in the policing function (providing clarity on what they can and cannot do, including their use of social media as a communication tool);**
 - f) **Cleveland Police provides a response to concerns raised within the SBC Ward Councillor survey (undertaken as part of this review), with specific reference to what it is doing to promote better engagement in those Wards where Councillors have expressed dissatisfaction with existing communications arrangements.**

continued overleaf...

Recommendations (continued)

The Committee recommend that:

- 3) Cleveland Police ensures robust mechanisms are in place for victims of crime / ASB which:
 - a) provides clarity on the expected communication process between Force and victim;**
 - b) ensures updates are provided (as regularly as agreed with each individual victim) regarding the progression of investigations, even when there have been no developments.****
- 4) The SBC Ward Councillor survey is repeated in approximately 12 months to gauge developments around Cleveland Police-SBC Ward Councillor communications arrangements.**

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

1. From a Ward Councillor perspective, what is your general experience of communications with Cleveland Police? Has this changed over time (including impact of COVID / lockdown on communication channels)?	
1	<p>Over the last two years the communication at Ward Level with Cleveland Police has been a bit hit and miss. It has however begun to improve, but not to a level where it is drilling down to Ward level, it is still at the level of the Police Team that may cover several wards.</p> <p>The communication newsletters are sometimes a cut and paste job. Errors/typos often highlighted. Examples, in Ward A problem has arisen with burglary, which is factual. The same message is put into Ward B, which is not factual, no burglaries have taken place in Ward B. These may be initial teething errors as the force tries to get better with this approach.</p> <p>They should be an emphasis placed on the Ward Councillor to request specifics for their ward.</p> <p>Norton West is lucky in the respect that the Councillors and Police Team have a good relationship, requesting and receiving information. However, it would be useful to see this in a much better and structured format.</p> <p>Easily accessible data, that can be analysed simply, and added to from a Councillor perspective. Times, dates, etc.</p>
2	<p>We receive updates on a regular basis.</p> <p>Emails are answered in an acceptable time.</p> <p>They have attended meeting when requested.</p> <p>Covid and lockdown has affected all services.</p>
3	<p>I have always made a particular effort to liaise closely with the police. Sometimes communications are fantastic, sometimes <u>good</u> and sometimes poor. The differences occur depending upon whichever individuals are in post as Sergeants or Inspector at any given time. As each new person takes over, I make a point of contacting them and explaining how I would like to work with them and how I will facilitate the passing of community intelligence to them, and we agree how we will set local priorities. Sometimes that is very successful, when individual officers recognise how much difference it can make when the community is plugged into the force through their elected members. Sometimes however officers fail to grasp this, and I only discover what is happening via social media of reports of police raids etc. This always makes me very cross, because it is much harder to keep the community safe and reassured if the police don't engage directly or through me. Covid hasn't really affected this situation, either my local officers keep in touch, or they don't. We do have reasonably good attendance at Tenant and Residents Association meetings from the police, but less than we did, I suspect that is a resource issue (COVID notwithstanding). But it does make a difference if a PCSO or constable or sergeant comes regularly. It makes the community feel much more engaged and more likely to pass information on.</p>

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

4	Ok When the officer is available. However, if on annual leave or on the wrong shift it can be more problematic. There is nobody to pick up messages and there is no information given on who to contact in their absence.
5	Basically, our main experience is with Community Support Officers who we have been contacting on line during Covid and <u>actually met</u> face to face last week at a Ward Surgery. Once our Ward Walkabouts <u>resume</u> they will hopefully attend if their shift allows; they also attend our Community Partnership meetings if available. Actual Police Officers appear to be thin on the ground and change far to regularly so there is little time to get to know them.
6	There is none. We have no contact with our local police team. Covid has been an excuse for lack of policing presence in the villages.
7	I think it has improved over recent years. We get regular updates from the Temporary Chief Inspector <u>and also</u> are kept informed at ward level with regular contact with our PCSOs who we have had online meetings with plus they are happy to attend ward surgeries when they recommence. I also have regular contact with the Sergeant in charge of dealing with off road bikes which is a big concern for residents. Positive messaging on social media has also improved.
8	I find communications with the Inspectors and the Neighbourhood Police Team very good. Sometimes there is a delay in receiving a response, but you must consider shift patterns. If an email is copied into multiple recipients normally someone will respond in a timely manner.
9	Have not seen much change over the years.
10	We have a <u>fairly reasonable</u> relationship. During COVID – we had telephone catch ups with PCSO (though I told him more than he told me). We were sent regular reports from Snr Officer – since the easing of lockdown, we have met with the PCSO for a catch up.
11	Very little contact over the year. There when I need them. No change over time.
12	We have regular emails from our local police and PCSOs. The PSCOs attend our Ward Surgeries as often as possible.
13	I would like to register my dissatisfaction with policing in Thornaby and appalling dearth of communication. Pre Covid, I arranged public meetings that police attended and initially there was some reassurance. I also had a meeting in Stockton Police Station to register <u>a number of</u> concerns. Since <u>then</u> however, communication has been one sided and ranged from patchy to now non-existent.

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

14	Generally, not <u>good</u> and certainly poorer over the last year. I find that I <u>have to</u> chase police for incidents in the ward and follow up is poor. Only way of getting feedback is by going to someone personally known to myself who is a senior officer.
15	Communications with Police are generally good.
16	My experience is limited at this time. I have never met the new officers although I have communicated with them by email. When I first was <u>elected</u> I knew our officers well and would often see them around or in Tesco and could chat with them. They attended surgeries and resident's meetings. That rarely happens now.
17	My communications with police <u>has</u> generally been good. However due to cut backs in numbers over the last decade we have seen PCSOs rather than PCs attending meetings and a definite reduction in ward surgery attendance due to lack of availability. This is not a criticism of them it is a criticism of the reduction in officers available. I do however receive regular updates of ward activity from the area officers.
18	On a personal basis we used to have a great rapport with the local beat officers and the PCSOs, but since the introduction of just two PCSOs covering the area we have lost touch. They used to attend our ward surgeries, I am aware that this was difficult over the pandemic period however email and Teams were still available but not used.
19	Over the previous few <u>years</u> it has been difficult to establish a relationship with the Cleveland Police. We get an email from a particular stating they are the main contact, but then they move to another role quickly, and are replaced by another contact. It can be difficult to keep track. In the last month we now have an identified PCSO contact and are hopeful that this will continue. Having a business card helps, rather than just an email.
20	Generally good. I personally haven't encountered any problems.
21	Police communications have improved over the past couple of <u>years</u> and I find the updates useful.
22	Very poor.

Themes:

- Fluctuating experiences across the Borough and of some individual Councillors.
- Shift patterns and a change in police officers on the ground impacting communications.
- COVID-19 pandemic impacting services – most contact is virtual/telephone.
- Email is the most successful and used contact form.

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

2. Describe your relationship with your local Neighbourhood Police Officer.	
1	As above.
2	Local Officers are approachable / helpful.
3	It is a bit of a curate's egg, good in parts. It would depend who is in post. <u>At the moment</u> it is pretty good, I am on first name terms with a couple of sergeants, the inspector and of course my PCSO. Unless you meant some other person with a specific title called "Neighbourhood Police Officer", in which case I perhaps don't know that is their title? You may need to be clearer with the question. Or if there is a person then that person needs to work harder at making themselves known to me.
4	Good, no problems at all other than contacting them on occasion.
5	Don't know who it is – see above.
6	Who? We don't have a local police officer we have a PCSO who is not a police officer! With respect how can a PCSO provide any form of policing when they are not police?
7	Relationship at local level is really with the two PCSOs and as above I would say it is positive. We share information, meet when we need to, and they offer to attend our ward surgeries to help respond to residents with crime/ <u>asb</u> related concerns. That said we have in the past met with neighbourhood sergeants and could again if felt necessary.
8	I have a very good relationship with several PCSO's and we do Community Speed Watch whenever possible. We have resurrected this after being unable to do it during lockdowns. Although traffic volumes were much reduced, speeding was still prevalent.
9	Don't come into contact very often.
10	ZERO! Our relationship is with PCSO.
11	Don't have much contact at all.
12	I think we have a good relationship with them, they keep us up to date with issues that are happening in the Ward <u>and also</u> ask us if we have things that we want them to look at.

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

13	Fellow councillors and I have no idea what is going on and even feedback on a crime committed at my property has completely dried up. It has got to the stage where I totally agree with residents and share their very low opinion of policing - neighbourhood or other.
14	Non-existent.
15	Very good.
16	The officers I have communicated with have always responded but not necessarily how I would have liked them too. Residents get very concerned over ASB and the officers do not place it on the same high ranking as them. I appreciate resources need to go where they are most needed but to residents it is a high priority.
17	Very rarely see the PC but regularly “Bump” into the PCSOs in the Town Centre and around the Ward Always available to chat and discuss problems This has obviously been curtailed during Covid.
18	Very spasmodic, not the contact we are used to.
19	New officer attended our recent ward surgery. It was good to talk through issues, so we are now hopeful that the relationship will work well, especially as she encouraged interaction.
20	We have got a good relationship with our local PCSO's. Although, they seem to have to spend more time in other parts of their area. We have recently met the new PCSO and we'll now meet up on a regular basis.
21	-
22	Non-existent.

Themes:

- Main relationship (if there is one) is with PCSO as opposed to PC – again, a mixed picture regarding Councillor experiences.
- Concerns based on the amount of contact received or change in contact levels with no prior warning or explanation.

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

3. What communication mechanisms exist between you and Cleveland Police? Do you feel these facilitate robust and timely information-sharing?	
1	As above.
2	Emails, personal visits, phone, social media contact. Information is shared as soon as it is released.
3	Mostly we use phone and email, they email or phone me, or I do the same for them. I find email a bit easier as they don't seem to have mobile <u>numbers</u> they are prepared/allowed to share, and nobody ever answers the phone in the station. I get a newsletter every now and again from our PCSO telling me what they are doing about local priorities. But there is never anything in there that I didn't already know as we work so very closely together anyway.
4	Email, not robust due to lack of systems already stated.
5	We get e-mails from time.
6	Not a clue?
7	Email updates, online/in person meetings, phone calls, Ward surgeries. I think collectively these afford adequate opportunities for communications generally.
8	I receive emails through Cleveland Connected and from <u>Neighbourhood Watch</u> . I also receive a Cyber Crime Newsletter. I have been a regular attendee at the Rural Crime Forum prior to Covid.
9	What exist I feel are <u>OK</u> .
10	Fairly – We get regular reports via email (after the events). We do have direct telephone numbers, as they have ours for any emergencies.
11	I get newsletters etc. Sometimes ward statistics. No.
12	Emails and face to face at Ward Surgeries. We used to have joint meetings at the Police Station but that has not happened for some time. PCSOs will attend Billingham Town Council Meetings when required.
13	-
14	Not robust and little information sharing, usually <u>have to</u> rely on 13 housing to initiate contact or enforcement.

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

15	Emails and telephone, which gets any messages or responses required are good.
16	<u>At the moment</u> it's email. A virtual meeting was set up, but I was unable to access it.
17	Ward updates by email and hopefully attendance at Ward Surgery now that can be allowed.
18	We are in constant contact with supervision and get more progression on incidents by contacting them direct.
19	We used to get monthly charts, but these didn't really tell us much. We'd prefer more one to one, two-way discussion on what is happening in the ward.
20	Direct email, <u>tel</u> no and mobile no, plus regular catchups are being arranged.
21	-
22	Very little communication.

Themes:

- Main point of contact identified is through email. Other means also mentioned include phone (though not always two-way), social media, newsletter.
- Ward surgery / joint meeting attendance impacted by COVID.

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

4. In your capacity as a Ward Councillor, do you have any personal examples where communications with the Force were particularly positive and / or constructive?	
1	An area known as the Gravel Holes was being frequented by a great number of youths during lockdown. Residents were complaining that anti-social behaviour was taking place en-route to and from the location, litter, damage, foul language, noise, etc. A request was made direct to the Police Team to conduct patrols. This was readily agreed to and carried out over targeted weekends.
2	Cleveland Police have regularly been in attendance to concerns in the ward with extensive vehicle patrols and walks.
3	Hundreds of examples. Particularly with the Inspectors and Sergeants. We will discuss drug hotspots for instance together, we will discuss patterns of activity, I will find residents prepared to feed intel in, and to give statements. The police will organise the raids and the arrests. Several times we have had drugs houses closed down after the police have worked with me and our ASB team to gather the necessary evidence to get the paperwork into court. Marlborough Road (twice), Wembley Way and Wren Street come to mind. The work of the police supporting the Low Hartburn Residents Association was very good a few years ago when acquisitive crime was rampant on Van Mildert Way and Queensgate etc. The residents set up an informal neighbourhood watch, with walkie talkies and home CCTV, and dayglo waistcoats etc, and were able to follow criminals and alert the police to their location so they could be arrested. This was hugely successful, with tens of arrests, and there is barely any of that crime there now. The informal group became a constituted group later and the police would come to resident's meetings regularly to update and offer confidence (prior to COVID). The police were great in enabling that group and ensuring there was no chance of vigilantism etc.
4	-
5	No.
6	I am unable to answer this question.
7	Passing on residents' information about off road bikes has led to a number being seized. PCSOs have responded to support individuals in the ward experiencing asb/criminal damage.
8	The Neighbourhood Police Team collate information and intelligence that is sent to me by residents on drugs related issues and, although it does take longer than any of us would like, we have seen results through house raids.
9	Yes, I have had a personal experience and the officer concerned was very positive and very helpful, went that extra mile.

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

10	Can't/ won't give <u>particular examples</u> , but we do give tip offs from residents which have had positive results. We did have quite positive outcomes regarding bonfire night, to which both the police and SBC reacted positively.
11	3 times in last year I have requested help and they have responded.
12	There have been leaflet drops when there were local concerns about burglaries in the area.
13	Yes, some raids have been made and no doubt there is occasional police activity, but that is as far as it has got.
14	Last year an assault where the local inspector personally got involved and kept me up to speed, but when he then moved on the relationship is lost. This is an ongoing issue that needs sorting.
15	They have always responded quickly when individual cases have been reported and supplied advice and follow up reports.
16	I feel information sharing has improved recently. <u>Additional submission:</u> Since I completed the survey last <u>week</u> I've had a fair bit of contact with the police re certain matters and I have to say their support and contact on this particular issue has been excellent. They turned up at our surgery and have followed up with emails and telephone contact and visits to properties.
17	Sorting and reporting issues around ASB in the Town Centre / car parks.
18	-
19	In 2019/20 we had police attend <u>a number of</u> community meetings to discuss off-road bikes. This worked <u>really well</u> , as residents appreciated having a person to speak to. They often don't report incidents due to the belief that nothing will happen. Being <u>actually listened to</u> in a community space is a much better way of engaging.
20	I think regular meetings really help.
21	-
22	Nothing positive.

Themes:

- Positive feedback regarding response for individual complaints of crime or ASB.

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

5. In your capacity as a Ward Councillor, do you have any personal examples where communications with the Force were particularly <u>negative and / or lacking</u> ?	
1	-
2	Response times needs to be addressed.
3	<p>My main objections are always where I don't get told things, until I see them in the press. So sometimes there will have been a raid and they haven't told me it was coming, or even told me afterwards, and I <u>have to read</u> about it in the papers. It is hard for me to offer reassurance to residents when I don't know anything.</p> <p>There was an initiative recently about prostitution that I was never informed about, despite raising it regularly with police and calling them together to plan multi agency actions. This initiative might have derailed our efforts, nobody bothered to talk it over with me.</p>
4	-
5	No.
6	-
7	Yes, a matter of concern for residents in the ward arose and I said I would ask police to intervene but when I contacted the <u>police</u> they said they were already well aware of the planned event and had planned actions but had not told ward councillors. They accepted they should have done.
8	No, not really.
9	No.
10	Stopped using 101 as it's a waste of time.
11	No. Very little contact exists.
12	No.
13	Also, I have never known public confidence in police in Thornaby at such a low level. So many residents are at the end of their tether with criminal behaviour on their doorsteps and drug dealing being carried out openly with impunity.
14	<u>Generally lacking</u> , there needs to be a mechanism where ward incidents are brought to Cllrs on a weekly basis.

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

15	None.
16	-
17	-
18	-
19	-
20	-
21	-
22	We had a meeting at Hume House residence (September 2021), 5 PCSOs were contacted to attend. Their response was not one of them could attend to reassure residents about anti-social behaviour, drug-dealing and taking of drugs.

Themes:

- Instances of police already being aware (and taking action) of a situation before a Councillor is aware and/or informed – feeling of being ‘out the loop’.

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

6. Do you feel able to adequately reflect the views / issues / concerns expressed by your residents to the Force? Do you feel these are acted upon?	
1	Yes.
2	Fully confident in expressing the resident's views and concerns in the ward which are acted upon. The Problem is response time.
3	Yes, and yes, broadly.
4	Yes, given the lack of resources that the Police have.
5	No and No.
6	-
7	Yes, I can pass these on to the level of police as appropriate from PCSO up to Chief Inspector.
8	Yes. Emails are acted upon and if we request a meeting with the Inspectors we are always accommodated.
9	Yes.
10	Not always – I have the privilege of being a member of the police and crime panel which gives me direct access to both the Chief Constable and Police Commissioner. Things are usually acted upon if raised with them!
11	Yes, and yes.
12	Yes, and we get feedback.
13	Now, I have <u>actually been</u> asked by a number of people to arrange another public meeting with press in attendance so that residents can register no confidence in the police. The service they pay for is clearly not being delivered. I tend to have a great deal of sympathy with them and understand completely when they say their quality of life has been deeply impacted.
14	No.
15	Yes always.
16	I find that police are reluctant to share active information.

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

	Sometimes we are telling them about drug houses and locations. We never even get our emails acknowledged never mind telling us what is happening <u>as a result</u> of the information. It's frustrating as you don't know if it's even being passed on.
17	Sometimes difficult with noise / drugs / ASB responses as these do not always become a priority due to manning / other issues.
18	The main criticism is that there are not enough police covering the area and those that are assigned to the area are not seen. This gives a distinct lack of confidence in the overall policing of the estate.
19	People know that the Conservative govt has slashed police numbers and <u>as a consequence</u> the responsiveness is much worse than 12 years ago. People don't expect too much, and they don't blame the police officers. Overall, there is feeling that many of the things that matter – drug-dealing, speeding, low level ASB – aren't given enough attention in the ward.
20	-
21	-
22	We have nobody to contact to make links with to support our residents.

Themes:

- Broadly positive, though isolated concerns raised around prioritisation of crime, officer visibility and information-sharing.
- Acknowledgement of resource issues and impact on response and public expectation.

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

7. Do you receive any feedback regarding views / issues / concerns raised so that you can forward information back to those who raised them?	
1	-
2	When action is taken communication on progress (email) is received and fed back to concerned residents.
3	Yes, and yes, broadly.
4	Not always. Sometimes that is for operational reasons. However, if they fed back that they can't feed back that would suffice.
5	No.
6	-
7	Yes, have had feedback re seized bikes and support offered to individual residents as examples. I think the police are getting better at using social media to feedback successes and that there is still some confusion as to who in the police can communicate what and how and when.
8	For the most part, yes.
9	Sometimes.
10	Occasionally.
11	Only the very initial response but then no <u>more</u> follow up.
12	Yes, we get feedback.
13	*****
14	Sometimes but not always consistent.
15	Yes always.
16	I could wish that when they catch the off-road bikers and quads that they would make a big thing out of publicising that they have caught them and that they are off the road. The same when the drug dealers are caught. They need to be more proactive on social media. These are high priorities for residents. They should also let the councillors know!

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

17	Sometimes.
18	To be honest not a lot from incidents reported, it's a matter of us chasing for outcomes.
19	Very rarely get any feedback from the police.
20	-
21	-
22	We have struggled to have contact.

Themes:

- Mixed picture again – some Councillors do, some must chase.
- Highlighting successes important.

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

8. Are there any ways in which you feel communications between you and the Force could be enhanced / improved?	
1	Encourage the Force to sell their news, good and bad. The force is doing an outstanding job with limited resources. Quite often picking up non-police matters, mental health, neighbour disputes, all time consuming and should be picked up by other agencies. The force should be informing the public that quite often their scarce resources are stretched because of lack of capacity in other agencies. When all else fails the first port of call is the Police?
2	Regular circulations of numbers /departments / names numbers of Officers in each ward. The reason for this is certain residents in different wards <u>make contact with</u> Cllrs not in their wards. This would save time and get a quicker response.
3	Every officer should have a mobile phone which they <u>are allowed to</u> give out the number for. And then when we meet new ones for our area, our community team, they could give them to us and then we could talk more often and more easily. And the other issue is that they can't look at Facebook and YouTube (I think from memory) on force equipment which makes it hard to share social media posts with them, where they relate to crime and I need them to see. This may have changed but I remember for instance a film I wanted to share which showed a criminal act taking place, and I couldn't share it because they weren't allowed to use that platform. Ridiculous.
4	Other than in the ways stated above I'm quite happy.
5	Due to the limited powers of Community Support <u>Officers</u> it would be good to meet face to face periodically.
6	Scrap this ridiculous neighbourhood policing model perhaps?
7	Where appropriate and where it does not contravene data protection or impact on operational <u>activities</u> I think ward councillors could be given more information about planned activity in the ward.
8	Now that our Ward Surgeries are back on track, it would be useful to arrange attendance by the <u>Neighbourhood</u> Police Team, incidents permitting.
9	No.
10	I don't think we receive the respect deserved by Cleveland Police. In the main, we are regarded as 'normal' citizens, when we are trying to make their job easier. I find it <u>really difficult</u> to try and defend them.
11	No. Everyone is too busy.

APPENDIX 1: Ward Councillor Survey – Collated Responses (Anonymised)

12	I think residents would like to see officers on the streets more often as it gives them a feeling of security.
13	*****
14	Yes, see para 5, perhaps because incidents are at a lower rate in Yarm then it may be considered less important. However, things are generally weak, and improvement is needed.
15	Police sometimes attend ward surgeries which is very helpful.
16	-
17	Difficult to assess due to Covid situation and pressures of numbers. However, this may be alleviated if or when the 400 or so officers which have been removed from Cleveland to the last years of austerity.
18	More high-profile policing with officers seen to be out and about thus giving confidence to the public, also better communications between the local officers and Councillors.
19	Arranged monthly <u>catch up</u> telephone calls, scheduled well in advance.
20	-
21	More ward-level information would always be <u>useful</u> but I understand the pressures on police time.
22	Yes! We need to be able to contact someone and get a response <u>on a daily basis</u> .

Themes:

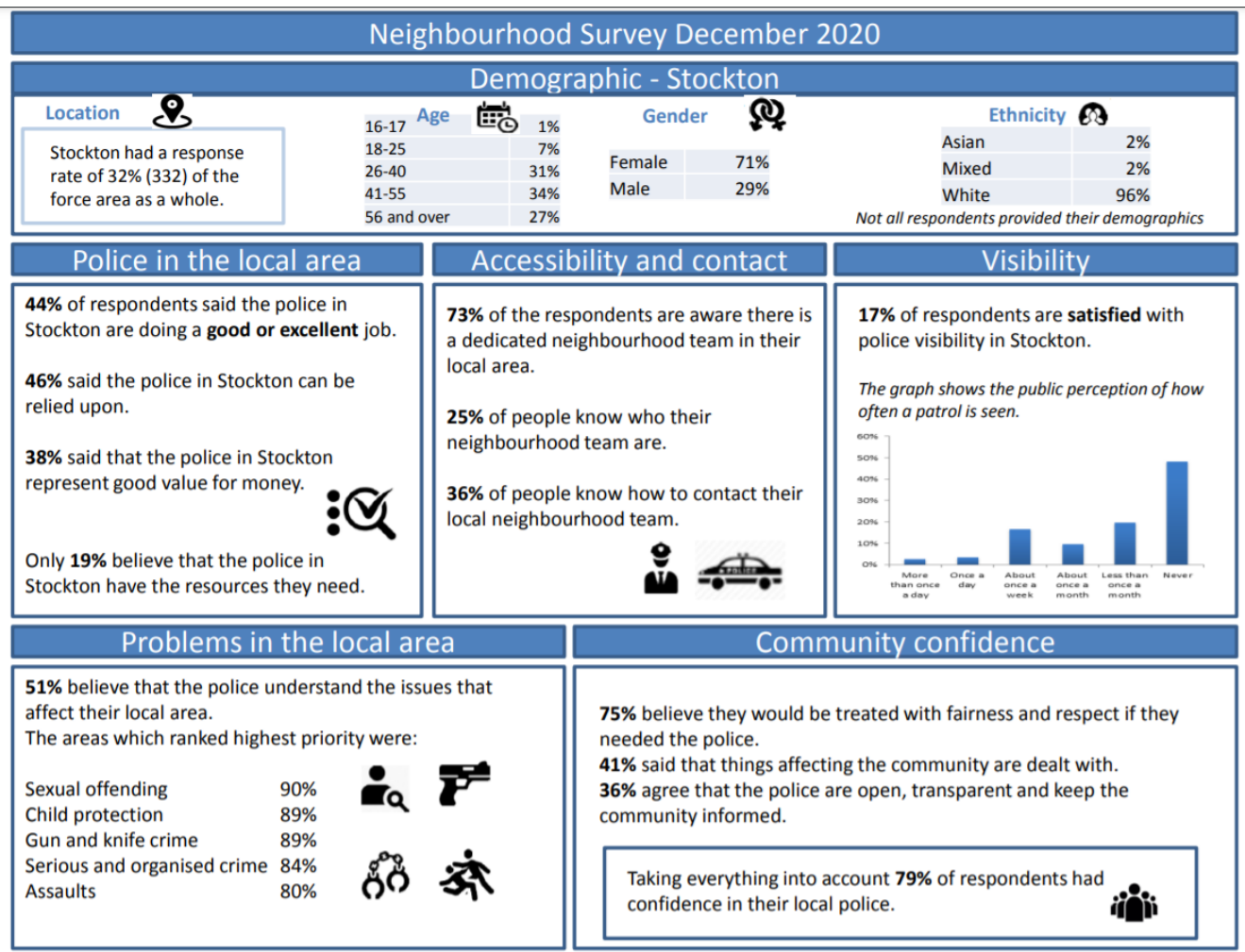
- Stretched resources, limited powers of PCSOs.
- Ensuring multiple communication lines are open and responded to so information can be exchanged on a regular basis.
- Importance of visibility as well as virtual contact.

APPENDIX 2: Ward Councillor Survey – Responses v Crime / ASB Prevalence

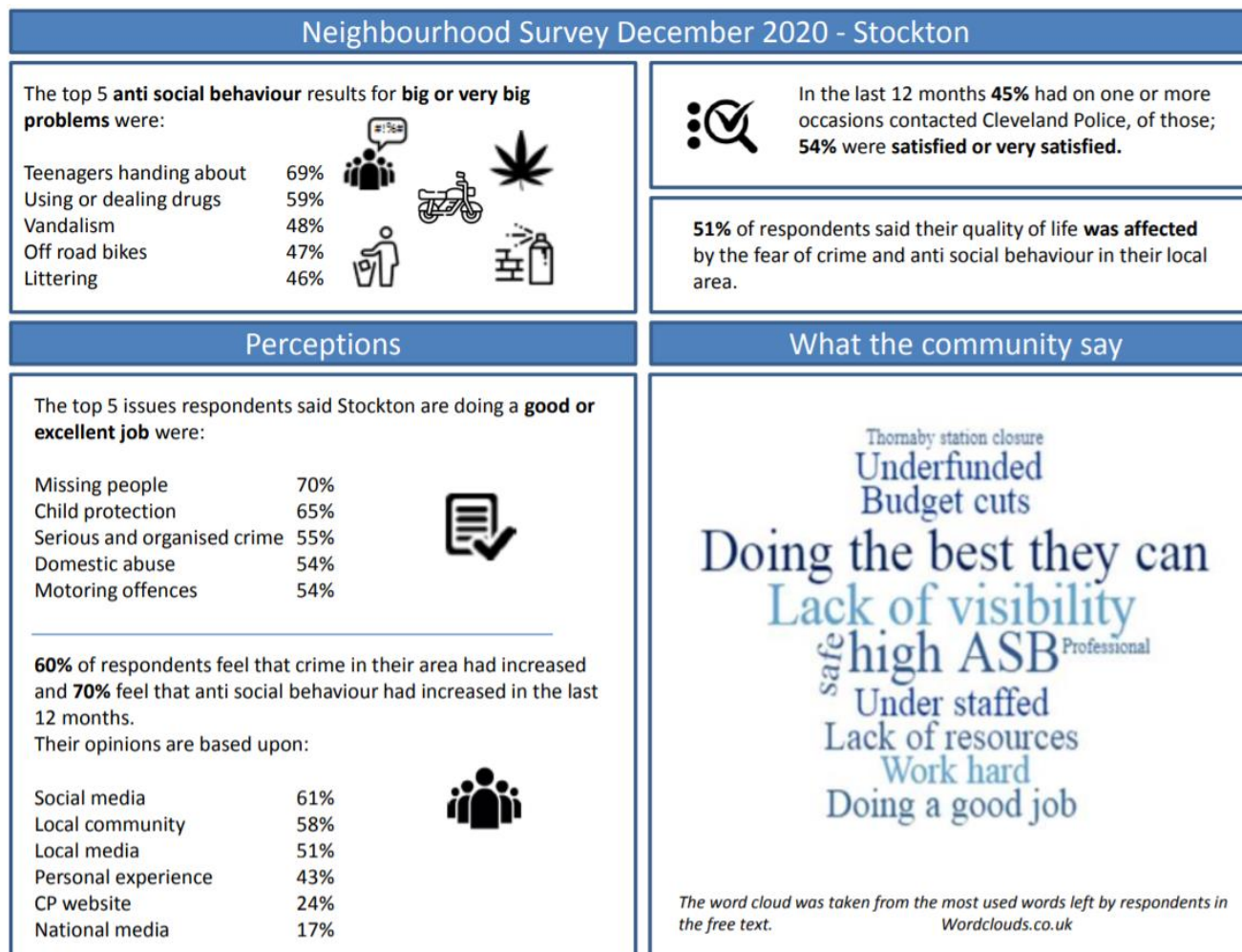
Ward	Crime / ASB Prevalence (see below explanation)	Survey Question							
		General comms with Force	Relations with local Officers	Comms mechanisms / info-sharing	Positive / constructive examples	Negative / lacking examples	Ability to reflect local views / are they acted on	Receiving feedback from Force to relay	Ways in which comms can be improved
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Stockton Town Centre	1 st								
Mandale & Victoria	2 nd								
Parkfield & Oxbridge	3 rd								
Newtown	4 th								
Hardwick & Salters Lane	5 th								
Billingham Central	6 th								
Billingham Central	6 th								
Billingham East	7 th								
Roseworth	9 th								
Norton North	11 th								
Eaglescliffe	13 th								
Village	14 th								
Village	14 th								
Yarm	15 th								
Ingleby Barwick West	16 th								
Ingleby Barwick East	17 th								
Billingham North	20 th								
Billingham North	20 th								
Fairfield	22 nd								
Billingham West	23 rd								
Norton West	24 th								
Western Parishes	26 th								

mainly positive response	mixed / neutral response	mainly negative response	no response
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APPENDIX 3: Cleveland Police – Communities Survey (Summary: Stockton-on-Tees)



APPENDIX 3: Cleveland Police – Communities Survey (Summary: Stockton-on-Tees)



APPENDIX 4: Cleveland Police – Community Engagement Ward Pledge



Cleveland Police

Community Engagement Ward Pledge



Every neighbourhood in Cleveland has a dedicated Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) that works together with the local community and partners to:



- ✓ Prevent crime and anti social behaviour and tackling criminality
- ✓ Care and support our people

- ✓ Serve the public and put our communities at the heart of all we do
- ✓ Recognise and safeguard vulnerable victims



As a minimum expectation concerning engagement, we pledge to provide:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Key message statements from the NPT Chief Inspector to your elected representatives on a monthly basis ✓ Regular contact with relevant partners to address neighbourhood priorities ✓ An update to the community of progress against the identify progress ✓ A two-way mechanism to obtain views, advice and feedback from the community ✓ NPT to engage with community and faith groups ✓ Advance notice of community engagement opportunities via the Ward newsletter and social media platforms ✓ Visible patrols in hotspots for anti-social behaviour and crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Bespoke Ward Newsletters on a bi-monthly basis ✓ At least one community meeting per month in each Ward ✓ Scanning and analysis of local issues to identify up to three Ward priorities on a bi-monthly basis ✓ A designated Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) assigned to every school ✓ Engagement opportunities with ongoing youth outreach in our Wards ✓ Effective use of social media to engage communities and provide effective feedback ✓ Ward profiles to help understand the demographics and engagement needs of each area in the Force
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