

Scrutiny Review of Police Communications in Stockton-on-Tees (Task & Finish)
 Recommendation 4: Re-Issued Elected Member Survey (post-review) Feedback

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	Communication between Ward and Police is virtually non-existent and hasn't really changed in recent years. If I need information on an issue I tend to go to the Inspector in charge rather than the Police first coming to brief me. Very much a one-way route.
2	<p>Communications with individual members of the Neighbourhood Police team are good. Responses to emails are usually within a reasonable time span. Due to different shift patterns, I normally copy emails into the Chief Inspector and Inspector to ensure a prompt response.</p> <p>The general communications department I feel requires improvement. I have requested several times that Ward Councillors should be made aware of the dates of the Police surgeries so that we can advise our residents, should they wish to attend.</p> <p>We arranged meetings during Covid lockdowns via Teams.</p>
3	The response received and general communication from Cleveland Police and officers is generally very good. In the time that I have been a councillor I cannot fault the responsiveness of PC's and other officers. I do however feel that local PCSO's are less helpful and are extremely slow to respond and ineffective. This is not the impression I have of all PCSO's, just the one in my own ward.
4	I have found that communication with Cleveland Police has been generally good over the last few years, however, there has been a notable change in recent months, which I have to say is not good news for the Force. Quite often emails are going unanswered, particularly through the central contact desk (when one only has a collar number, surname, etc, of the officer/staff). Further, on a personal / councillor experience a 999 call was answered, however no feedback as promised by the call taker was forthcoming. I chased this up via an expression of concern with the OPCC and subsequently received feedback. This was hopefully a one-off.
5	We receive little to no comms from the Police apart from the odd email from a PCSO. From having a village Police Officer (not a PCSO) we have no policing presence in the villages whatsoever! Covid and the ludicrous lockdowns are just used as a get-out for ludicrous inefficiencies. PCSOs can offer no real policing as unable to enforce anything from speeding to ASB.
6	I feel our relationship is better than a few years ago but not as good as when I was first elected and they would come out on ward walkabouts and it was clear then the public knew them.
7	The general experience is fairly good. We know how to contact them and vice-versa. We do have meetings when required, however, due to being reduced to 1 PCSO this only happens when required. During the pandemic all contact was by phone or email.
8	It was great for a long time. Then, coinciding with when I last completed the survey, it was poor. And it is better again now.
9	We get regular news letters with Ward information.

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10	Communication channels have improved post pandemic. PCSO named officer is useful and police based at Stockton Station are keeping in touch via e mail and feeding back a little on outcomes. However police presence is very limited and the wider issues of speeding and off road bikes still need addressing.
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2. Describe your relationship with your local Neighbourhood Police Officer.

1	Have never met since being re elected in 2019.
2	I get on very well with both PCSO's. We regularly correspond and meet to exchange intelligence.
3	The local Neighbourhoods team are great. Whether it is Jon Willoughby or Mitch Baldwin they deal with concerns in a timely manner. While our relationship is perfectly amicable with our local PCSO, I do feel that they are slow and not at all responsive.
4	<p>This is becoming a major area of concern, the numbers of promised Neighbourhood Officers have not materialized, and the force is now bottom of the table for Neighbourhood crime numbers / offences.</p> <p>The neighbourhood officers are generally PCSO's, who are by fine and large dedicated members of the force, however, their powers are limited and rely on the warranted officers to further any enquiries in relation to crime. The warranted officers are a must to combat neighbourhood crime, but they don't exist in the numbers promised by the current PCC.</p>
5	How do you define a Neighbourhood Police Officer? The villages are given a PCSO not a Police Officer. Can we stop calling PCSOs Police Officers which they are not! I have no relationship with a real warranted Police Officer and have seen a PCSO once and that was at a meeting offering nothing apart from some rubbish about community speed watch!
6	-
7	Non-existent.
8	I have a good strong relationship with my current PCSO. And am starting to make some progress with my PC. I have always worked well with the Sergeants and Inspectors.
9	Very good.
10	PCSO Stephanie Edge is attempting to engage with the community and access wider services for residents eg. Crime prevention advice, fire services educational advice in our local schools. We have an open dialogue via e mail and regular meetings.

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3. What communication mechanisms exist between you and Cleveland Police? Do you feel these facilitate robust and timely information-sharing?	
1	Communication mechanisms? Very little information sharing or intelligence.
2	Police surgeries are usually planned on a three weekly basis but don't always take place due to workload. Meeting with PCSO's and Inspectors takes place either at our request or at their request, approximately every six months. We recently requested a meeting with the PCC which was granted and was a very useful and informative meeting.
3	Usually, communication us via email. I am great believer in a paper trail and sharing the exact concerns of the residents. I feel the points made in Q2 answer my opinion in the reactiveness.
4	-
5	None.
6	The PCSO's have been in touch regularly with emails and info. The police /pcso's have attended some surgeries but not many. I feel they are approachable and responsive to our concerns but stretched too thin to be able to do all they are being asked to do.
7	Phone/email. We have our PCSO's roster so we know when to contact him and the response is usually prompt.
8	We are on first name terms. We email each other at least once a week and occasionally ring each other up. Our current PCSO comes to our ward surgeries and public meetings too.
9	Yes we have telephone numbers and email address.
10	Definitely room for improvement, just establish solid communication links and personnel change. Always share information but sometimes no feedback or acknowledgement, frustrating mainly for our residents as we try to reassure. Often residents contact me after trying to contact the police directly without response. Residents want to be proactive in policing their communities and want to help the police.

4. 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>?	
1	Local Inspector has briefed me regarding ongoing 13 Housing issues and possible evictions.
2	Meeting with the PCC on 26/09/22. Meeting with Inspector which resulted in a weekend dispersal order being observed.
3	We have seen a rise in theft at the Coop. I raised this directly with Mitch Baldwin who was only too happy to arrange a meeting with the store and other key stakeholders. As a result mechanisms were put in place to try and combat the existing problems.
4	-
5	No.
6	-
7	-

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8	We are doing better with the sharing of intel around drug dealing in residential areas. It was great for several years but fell away. I have always passed intel in but for a while last year, I couldn't get anyone to talk to me about what they were doing with it. I had a chat with the CI a few months ago and he had a word in the appropriate ear and now communications are much better again. It is when new personnel arrive in the neighbourhood, they aren't familiar with how intel flows in our patch and they don't understand why they need to bother with local councillors. Once they realise that we are a key resource, things tend to improve quickly. In consequence we have had about half a dozen drug dealing houses boarded up under ASB legislation in the last six months.
9	Yes local help with drug dealing and off road motor bikes. Attendance at residents meetings and ward surgeries.
10	Yes, recent car thefts, a tool bag containing expensive tools was recently spotted, photographed by a resident and sent to me and the police. The car for your engineer collected and delivered to Stockton Station; the tools were reunited with the owner. 24 hours later a PCSO informed us by e mail this had happened.

5. In your capacity as a Ward Councillor, do you have any personal examples where communications with the Force were particularly negative and / or lacking?

1	When there is or has been more high profile activity with the Police, Ward members should be briefed as constituents expect the Ward member to at least have an insight into what is going on?
2	Communications made date error on social media for a bike marking session which, in my capacity as a Ward Councillor, I had to try and rectify by posting the correct information via various forms of social media. Some residents were left disappointed.
3	We are always keen to undertake speed watches. We have raised this countless times with our Local PCSO who always states she will organise, but there is always an excuse as to why it isn't done (sore back, sickness, forgot).
4	As above.
5	No if it was a policing matter I'd call the police as PCSOs cant actually deal with any policing issue.
6	-
7	I have tried 101 some time ago and gave up after 20 mins.
8	I don't want to go over old ground now that things are better. It is simply a case that officers who are new to our area have to be firmly encouraged to partner with us. I guess they come from areas where councillors have not been proactive so they aren't used to it.
9	No.
10	Police do not seem willing or able in some cases to access ctv footage of crimes. Residents offer footage and hear nothing and 'The COOP' found that the systems in place did not allow them to download footage of shoplifters.

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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	Not really. The general feeling is that due to [the] Ward being relatively low down on the list of incidents, residents have the perception that there is little activity and that many issues are left to be dealt with by Enforcement.
2	Yes. The COPA App will also assist both myself and residents. Impressed with this App. For the most part concerns/issues are acted upon in a timely manner.
3	Putting it simply, Yes.
4	-
5	No.
6	-
7	As cabinet member and a member of the police & crime panel, I have good access to the police at all levels. The leader also meets with senior officers regularly which I attend. We don't feel things are always acted upon and the level of information the police require to do so is at Detective level!
8	Absolutely I can and do They are acted upon in so far as Cleveland Police resources allow That is the only barrier.
9	Yes.
10	I am actively learning to ask the right questions of residents who do not always recall the detail. Sharing intelligence is a two way process and residents want to help. Hearing issues from several sources allows me to understand the most issues for concern. Unsure if these concerns are acted upon because I rarely get feedback and many of the issues remain a concern.

7. Do you receive any feedback regarding views / issues / concerns raised so that you can forward information back to those who raised them?

1	Very little. One regular complaint which is nothing new is that residents would more readily report issues if they knew some feedback would be given. Unfortunately you too often hear , `What`s the point as we never get feedback or response`.
2	Yes, usually via email.
3	Yes always. We get responses to all issues we raise that can be shared.
4	As above.
5	n/a
6	-
7	No.
8	Not as much as I might but certainly some. More than I was getting last year. Not as much as I was getting three years ago.
9	Yes.
10	Only occasionally and often only, when further contact is made because the problem continues.

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8. Are there any ways in which you feel communications between you and the Force could be enhanced / improved?	
1	Perhaps a monthly or quarterly report given on Ward issues. Regular meeting or catch up with a PCSO if we have one? Unfortunately despite the rhetoric in our [Ward] situation we share an Officer with 2 or 3 other Wards.
2	As previously mentioned, advising of Police surgery dates.
3	A more responsive and competent PCSO.
4	-
5	Get rid of PCSOs put actual police officers back on Neighbourhood teams so they can actually provide a police service. Communications will then follow as Policing presence resumes.
6	-
7	Regular updates from a police officer as PCSO information is vague as they do not get to know most of the information required. This would be ok by teams /zoom. Any urgent issues could be relayed by email or text.
8	A mobile phone number to be made available for each officer in the neighbourhood team.
9	No not really.
10	Face to face has always worked best for me in the past, unfortunately this only happens when I have to escalate issues.