



**South  
Yorkshire  
Police and Crime  
Commissioner**  
*Your Voice*

# **South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner**

## **CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT PROTOCOL**

**2015-2016**

# South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner

## Consultation and Engagement Protocol

The consultation and engagement protocol is a tool for the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), the Chief Executive, the senior management team and other employees at the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to provide clarity on the processes involved in consulting and engaging with stakeholders on behalf of the PCC.

All employees are links between the OPCC and stakeholders, however the Engagement and Communications Team co-ordinates the consultation and engagement channels and activities on behalf of the PCC. This protocol outlines the approach to consultation and engagement as well as the procedure for instigating or arranging consultation and engagement activity.

Consultation and engagement with communities ensures that police and crime services are focused on the needs of the communities they serve, including those that are hard to reach.

In due course, the OPCC should seek to join up with partner organisations on consulting and engaging with communities. This will allow for a more holistic and meaningful consultation with stakeholders and will reduce the risk of consultation fatigue, where a range of partners are asking questions of the public during similar timeframes.

The OPCC's goal of carrying out consultation and engagement activity is to work with partners to actively seek the views of stakeholders. These views should then be taken into account as part of the decision-making process, both in terms of holding SYP to account, and in establishing police and crime priorities as part of the budget setting process and commissioning services.

### 1. Five principles and aims of engagement and consultation

- I. To ensure that stakeholders are aware of the OPCC's approach to consultation and ongoing consultation activity by:
  - Publicising consultations using a variety of methods including media releases, on the website and using appropriate social media channels.
- II. To ensure that consultation is transparent and accessible by:
  - Adopting approaches that maximise participation and response rates.
  - Identifying networks and mechanisms to consult with hard-to-reach communities.
  - Ensuring that consultation activity is accessible in terms of venues, use of plain English and offering a choice of response methods.

- Providing information in alternative formats such as braille, audio and translation into other languages if required, ensuring that our website meets a high accessibility standard.
  - Setting realistic timescales for consultation (where these are within control of the Engagement and Communications Team).
- III. To ensure that the consultation process is well planned and coordinated hence achieving value for money by:
- Seeking opportunities to deliver joint initiatives with partners to avoid duplication and share resources and avoid consultation fatigue.
  - Making the most of existing groups and networks (through our emerging and developing stakeholder lists).
- IV. To deliver engagement and consultation that is effective by:
- Ensuring that colleagues have the necessary skills and resources to enable them to undertake effective consultation and facilitate effectively.
  - Implementing quality standards that will apply to all engagement and consultation activity.
- V. To provide feedback to those consulted and the wider public on the findings of consultation activities and actions taken, as a result by:
- Ensuring that feedback is fed directly into the policy development and decision-making process and ensuring that the Communications Officer is kept informed of engagement and consultation activity and outcomes in order that publicity on outcomes can be planned.

## 2. Consultation overview

### Budget setting

Consultation activity should take place every January by way of an online budget simulator and face to face, online and telephone opportunities for stakeholders to have their say on priorities in the setting of the Council Tax precept.

### Police and crime priorities

Representatives from the OPCC should attend a range of meetings and events throughout the year, such as local fayres and shows (e.g. Penistone Show, Rotherham Show and Lowedges Festival etc).

### Specific issues

Throughout the year, in line with the topical themes calendar of awareness days, weeks and initiatives, consultation will take place on a range of specific issues in line with the PCC's priorities and through tapping into other consultation activity taking place. The need to share intelligence and public feedback across public and voluntary sectors is increasing in order to make best use of limited public funding and resources.

### **Public meetings**

The PCC will attend a range of public and community meeting throughout South Yorkshire, often alongside South Yorkshire Police colleagues, to speak with members of the public on issues relating to crime and disorder and criminal justice. Many of these will be on invitation by groups and individuals but the Engagement Team will also seek out appropriate meetings for the PCC to attend, especially where there are community issues relating to crime and disorder.

In holding SYP to account, it is appropriate that some of the PCC's management meetings such as the Governance Advisory Board, should allow for a non-restricted element through which the public can attend and participate in questions and answers either in person or online (via webcasting).

## **3. Engagement**

### **Engagement days**

In order to provide proactive approach to engaging with communities we will be looking to establish a programme of engagement days, which can be kept free and therefore flexible for the PCC to have appointments with stakeholders arranged and also to attend public meetings and events arranged by partners etc.

### **Engagement calendar**

In addition to the monthly engagement days kept free to allow the PCC some flexibility in engaging with stakeholders, an engagement calendar will also be developed whereby the OPCC arranges for the PCC or an alternative OPCC representative to attend public meetings and meetings of specific community groups so that the PCC is tapping into networks that already exist in order to reach people who are truly representative of the communities the OPCC serves and also to achieve value for money.

### **Engagement visits to commissioned services**

Once the PCC has commissioned services in South Yorkshire, it is important that the OPCC keeps abreast of how the service is performing. A series of visits to such commissioned services should therefore be developed, ideally in line with the topical themes calendar to provide media opportunities at the same time as maintaining an interest in what commissioned services are achieving.

### **Commissioned engagement activity**

Activities such as school tours (for example the recently commissioned Amelix tours) should also be informed by issues raised as areas of concern by the public in the summer engagement and consultation activities. This allows the OPCC to help prevent anti-social behaviour through engagement with young people. Where there is a link to one of the PCC's priorities, services may also be commissioned in line with the communications plan – for child sexual exploitation (CSE) for example, the PCC may

wish to commission educational resources for schools, jointly with partners, on helping to prevent CSE.

## 4. Dealing with stakeholders

Engaging with stakeholders is everyone's job but where specific consultation or engagement is required (which is not already outlined in the engagement and communications strategy or engagement calendar) with stakeholder groups, the lead officer should:

- Allow at least two months' notice (where possible).
- Inform the Community Engagement and Communications Manager.
- Make the request for consultation or engagement activity in writing including:
  - Type of consultation / engagement required
  - Date required by
  - Expected outcomes of consultation / engagement activity
  - Target stakeholder group
  - Details of related project
  - Expected costs of the consultation / engagement activity

### Stakeholder lists

The following are to be further developed into a comprehensive list of stakeholder groups with key contacts and contact details. The lists will help renew and refresh the OPCC's engage-it database in line with data protection legislation.

- South Yorkshire residents
- Councillors of the four South Yorkshire councils
- Police and Crime Panel
- Community panels (by linking in with the South Yorkshire councils)
- Parish councils
- Businesses and business organisations
- Voluntary and community groups and organisations
- Special interest groups
- Communities and neighbourhoods
- Groups of people defined by a common factor such as age, disability, gender, LBTG, ethnicity etc.
- Community groups (TARAs)
- Neighbouring forces
- Crime prevention agencies
- Safer Neighbourhood Teams
- NHS trusts and organisations
- Fire and rescue services
- Academics/researchers
- Media outlets

## 5. Linking with and assessing SYP engagement activities

The PCC has a duty to ensure that SYP is effectively engaging with communities via its Local Policing Teams and other means. As such, the OPCC manages an engagement review group (see briefing developed in October 2014 for more detail). In addition to ensuring that the force is effectively engaging with communities, there is further scope for the OPCC and SYP to make the most of joint consultation and engagement activities, where appropriate and where no conflict of interest would occur (for example on specific issues and campaigns rather than on developing police and crime priorities and on holding the force to account, as these are examples where clearly, the OPCC would need to remain autonomous).

## 6. Consultations and engagement channels

The channels below provide an insight into some of the channels the OPCC will use to consult and engage, though the list is not exhaustive.

- Websites
- Facebook, Twitter and other social media (LinkedIn and Youtube to follow)
- Direct email using Engage-it (email subscription service)
- Questionnaires and surveys
- Drop-in sessions
- Public meetings (quarterly)
- Focus groups
- Bulletins and where appropriate leaflets or online fact sheets
- Written communications with key stakeholder groups
- Existing community-based meetings

### Events and networks

Where possible, rather than running its own events, the OPCC will aim to piggy-back events already taking place in order to ensure optimum attendance and to avoid duplication of events. This also helps the PCC to tap into networks of target stakeholder groups rather than trying to re-invent the wheel and risking developing an industry of special interest groups which may not be as representative as those already in existence.

## 7. Longer-term approach to more collaboration

The OPCC aims to shift from informing to involving stakeholders through effective engagement and consultation and all importantly, to ensure that outcomes from this activity do inform policy development and decision-making. The below Wilcox model on effective participation demonstrates what the OPCC aims to move from (at the top) to what it seeks to move to (at the bottom). It demonstrates how consultation informs broader engagement, which leads to working collaboratively to solve problems for better community outcomes.

## Levels of Community Involvement:

**Information:** Telling people what is planned; sharing knowledge.

**Consultation:** Identifying problems; checking preferences against a number of options; listening to feedback.

**Deciding together:** Encouragement to create additional ideas or options; deciding jointly on the best way forward.

**Acting together:** Here, different interested do not only decide together what is best, but they form a partnership to carry out the joint decision.

**Supporting:** supporting independent community initiatives through funding, advice and other resources.

Source: D. Wilcox (1994) The Guide to Effective Participation

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