

# Police and Crime Panel

4<sup>th</sup> January 2018

## Community Engagement and PACT

### Report of Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner

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#### Purpose

1. To provide the Panel with an overview of the community engagement activity, and methods used, by Durham Constabulary.

#### Introduction

2. At the previous meeting of the Panel, members requested a report to a future meeting giving an update on PACT (Police And Communities Together) activities. PACT is the name given to local meetings at which residents can discuss issues relating to crime and community safety with Police Officers. PACT was reviewed by the Force in 2015-16 and changes made, setting PACT meetings in a wider package of engagement activities. This report therefore covers all engagement by the Force.
3. The PCVC has a separate (but linked), wide-ranging programme of community engagement, with a focus on raising awareness of community safety issues, listening to community concerns, and providing reassurance to communities. This report does not cover PCVC engagement, focusing only on engagement undertaken by the Constabulary.

#### Background

4. Section 34 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 places a statutory requirement on Chief Officers to obtain the views of people within local communities regarding crime and disorder and must offer a process whereby local people within Neighbourhoods are provided with information about policing at a neighbourhood level. The Act specifies that such arrangements must include a series of regular and ongoing meetings between the community and the local police.

#### PACT

5. Durham Constabulary currently hosts and attends the following number of Police and Communities Together PACT meetings (PACT):

Area.	Number of PACT Meetings
Consett	8
Stanley	6
Chester le Street	10
Durham area	17

Seaham	4
Peterlee	7
Bishop Auckland	9
Crook	4
Newton Aycliffe	11
Spennymoor	2
Barnard Castle	1
Darlington	9 (including Super PACTS)

6. PACT was reviewed by the force during the latter part of 2015 and the number of events was rationalised during 2016. There are currently 88 PACT meetings occurring on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. Prior to the review of PACT there were 170. The number of PACT meetings were reduced following a review examining the number of people attending and engaged as well as the outcomes of issues raised. Some PACT meetings were very poorly attended by members of the public and also supporting partners. Meetings at which fewer than five (and sometimes zero) people were in attendance at some events were fairly common place.

7. It previously cost Durham Constabulary between £143,280 and £310,080<sup>1</sup> a year to facilitate PACT. The cost range is based upon whether a PCSO or a Police Constable attends the meetings. Indeed, where issues are significant it is commonplace for Inspectors or above to also attend. The costs now with the reduced number of events is between £100,000<sup>2</sup> and £218,000, dependent on the balance between PCSO and Constable attendance.

8. Within County Durham, PACT feeds directly into the Area Action Partnership Groups. The issues raised at all PACT meetings feed into the local process for multiagency problem solving. These LMAP (Local Multi Agency Problem) groups meet monthly and have their own budgets or access to funding to support their work.

### **Other areas of community engagement**

9. *Force internet site and use of social media.* The force currently promotes the work it does and issues it is dealing with via 'In the Know', Facebook and Twitter, and via the Force website. PACT updates are provided on 'In The Know' and the force website.

10. *Attendance at community events.* Examples of these are community gatherings, coffee mornings, and Age UK. Some more innovative approaches include the training of officers in rural farming practices followed by attendance at farmer's livestock auctions. A dedicated rural policing unit run by the Special Constabulary and supported by the PCVC seeks to offer enhanced engagement with our rural communities that can be harder to reach.

11. The force continues to attend certain key social events ranging from local community fairs (eg Wolsingham Show, Middleton in Teesdale Carnival) to cattle markets.

12. *Children and schools:* The force continues and has recently increased its community engagement with children and schools. In addition to the mini police and cadets, Durham

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1. <sup>1</sup>Calculated on 125 PACT meetings per month at 1 hour preparation, 1 hour to attend and 1 hour to deal with issues and update. In surveys, this time period was found to be even longer in many instances. This is a lost opportunity cost. The number 125 is used as some of the 175 meetings are bi-monthly.

2. <sup>2</sup>Calculated on 88 PACT meetings per month at 1 hour preparation, 1 hour to attend and 1 hour to deal with issues and update. In surveys, this time period was found to be even longer in many instances. This is a lost opportunity cost.

Constabulary are actively supporting schools in the fight against cyber-crime, bullying, grooming and sexting by working directly with Teachers, children and their parents with the schools acting as an access hub.

13. *The Digital Investigation Unit* have been hosting breakfast conferences with local businesses to improve their cyber security and business continuity. They unit also provide inputs to key workers within the 'keeping the Safe-guarders safe' strategy.

14. *Older people:* the Safeguarding Neighbourhoods Teams continue to support people within our older communities working with partners such as Age UK and Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue with their wellbeing visits.

15. *Groups with protected characteristics:* The Joint Hate Crime Action Group was established by the PCVC to understand the nature and drivers of hate crime, and to develop and implement an Action Plan. It consists of representatives from organisations and services across County Durham & Darlington that focus on hate crime. The organisations and services include Police, Local Authorities, NHS, Independent Advisory Group panel members and local community organisations and charities representing diverse groups. Durham Constabulary utilise the group as a means to engage with people who work closely with protected communities.

16. The Independent Advisory Group has a pivotal role to play in the delivery of equality objectives, providing senior police officers with the opportunity to have open dialogue with members of diverse communities, receiving individual independent advice from members. This provides valuable insight and views on policing policies and practices and their impact within these communities.

17. The group is made up from members of protected communities and the current membership stands at eight members with some of these members currently undergoing vetting. At meetings, the Group conducts engagement and scrutiny around certain aspects of policing.

#### *Scrutiny Panels*

18. As well as the IAG process on the scrutiny of hate crime Durham Constabulary have various scrutiny panels that conduct scrutiny on hate crime, stop search and alcohol seizures. The panels consist of members from all types of communities and the Constabulary have utilised current community groups and education establishments.

Below are a list of the panels that are in place:

- Independent Advisory Group
- Durham Miners Association
- Durham Sixth Form PACT group
- Confidence In Me - Bishop Auckland Youth Group
- Durham Constabulary Cadets
- Durham University Panel (In Development)

19. *Cohesion Officer Community Engagement:* Within Durham Constabulary there are eight Cohesion Officers (CO) and one of the roles of a CO is to engage with members of the public from protected communities. Each month the COs detail their engagement and this is tracked within the

unit. Below are the figures for monthly engagement in hours that the COs have engaged including school engagement:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Total Community Engagement (Hours)</u>	<u>Total C&amp;YP Engagement (Hours)</u>
January	246	32
February	269	12
March	340	6
April	317	21
May	328	14
June	180	13
July	291	43
August	138	20
September	101	13
October	139	23
November		
December		
<b>TOTAL</b>	2350	196

20. *Drugs and alcohol:* Operation Aries seeks to engage with the local community to inform and reduce the consumption of alcohol and lower the incidents of violence, ASB and reduce calls for service across all the blue light services and NHS.

21. There are specialist officers in force who deliver drug and alcohol safety messages to all aspects of our communities. Not only are these officers very active across our school population but they also attend a wide range of other youth groups to deliver specific messages targeted at young people.

22. As well as targeted education to young people, Officers engage with a number of professional bodies and individuals to increase the community's confidence when dealing with drug and alcohol issues. This includes training doctors, nurses, prison staff and more; but also taking our message to the workplaces of County Durham and Darlington and engaging with our communities during their work place training days.

23. *Broadcast and Print Media:* The use of media is strong within Durham Constabulary and is used to good effect as a community engagement tool. Recently the force has appeared on television for a number of issues such as Police Interceptors, Police interviews of suspects and the missing person's series. All have been well received with good positive feedback demonstrating quality community engagement.

24. *BikeWise and DriveWise:* The force holds a number of public events such as 'BikeWise' and 'Drive wise' which seek to work with communities to improve social issues.

## Outcomes

25. The force takes community engagement very seriously as it is recognised that it is a key driver of community confidence, along with community satisfaction. Within the force, satisfaction

averages at around 85% and confidence has been steadily improving, with Durham now ranking 6<sup>th</sup> in the country according to the Confidence Survey for England and Wales. When asked whether the police can be relied upon when needed, Durham Constabulary ranked 1<sup>st</sup> nationally.

### **The Future**

26. Durham Constabulary continues to develop its community engagement work in support of its ambitions around community confidence.
27. The force is considering advertising for volunteers to become Parish Wardens to assist the force in increasing our community presence and to allow the public more opportunity to volunteer with the service and to support their local area. If introduced, current thinking is that this will be a uniformed role based within a very small geographic location.
28. The force is in the process of launching two further iterations of Mutual Gain, a process of community engagement and empowerment with the objective of increasing community capacity, resilience and engagement.
29. In Darlington, 'Respect Your Street' has been launched and whilst in its very early stage this initiative again seeks to develop the community volunteer approach as a third sector by combining it with state services.
30. The Special Constabulary Rural Policing Unit will be expanding its role to increase the level of engagement already undertaken.
31. The Safeguarding Neighbourhoods Command are completing the final stages of an engagement audit the results of which will be used to maximise the organisation's community engagement opportunities from next year. A review of Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators is also underway with every co-ordinator receiving a personal visit. When completed, the up to date list will be used to maximise volunteer capacity from this group of people and in Darlington will link in with 'Respect Your Street'.

### **Recommendations**

32. The Panel is asked to note the report and offer any comments.

Ron Hogg  
**Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner**

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