



## Overview of Advisory Group Meetings – Round 1 2017

Following the work undertaken to refresh and re-launch the PCC Advisory Groups, each group has now held their first meeting of 2017. This note provides an overview of key discussions and actions taken.

### Overview of Advisory Group Meetings

All groups received a presentation on the priorities in the new Police and Crime Plan 2017-21. A selection of key points raised and issues discussed by each of the groups can be found below:

#### Gender Advisory Group

- **Sexual violence support** - The Angelou Centre raised concern that there is a gap in sexual violence support for the BME community – something that should be looked at when commissioning future services. To note that all sexual violence services in Northumbria can be accessed by BAMER victims but none are BAMER specific and the VAWG Transformation Fund Bid for assertive witness advocates does make provision for one advocate to have a BME specialism.
- **Islamic weddings** - Through the work carried out by the Angelou Centre, they have been able to identify cases of clerics, within the force area, performing Islamic weddings in the back of cars between vulnerable women and married men. The Islamic culture of allowing multiple wives often goes unrecognised by the Force and these women go on to be abused. This to be shared with Northumbria Police (NP).
- **Honour based violence** - Accurate recording of crimes was raised as an issue of concern in relation to cases of Honour Based Violence (HBV) with the Angelou Centre supporting more women than NP have recorded. An update to be taken back to the next meeting that outlines NPs approach to recognising HBV and their response to it to ensure all potential crimes of this nature are identified correctly.

#### Age Advisory Group

- **Online safety** - the group received a presentation from NP relating to online safety. The group confirmed that in their experience the older generation are nervous to use on-line banking or put data on-line where they have limited knowledge – often leaving them vulnerable to fraud. The group believe that more should be done to educate older people on online safety, understanding of cloud based storage online, bogus callers and fraud in relation to on-line banking. NP to continue to raise awareness of online safety with vulnerable groups.
- **Safety on public transport** - Attendees highlighted the fears of the elderly on public transport system, especially at night as services are decreasing and elderly people are afraid to go out. A more visible police presence on transport systems was encouraged. NP gave an update on how all Nexus staff have been trained on age related abuse. Arch delivered training on hate crime not only to Nexus public

transport but also to INTU Eldon square and gave an update on how Eldon Square is categorised as a “Safe Place”.

- **Domestic abuse and support for victims** - group members highlighted the work still to be done surrounding domestic violence and questioned the lack of support for older people both perpetrators and victims. Further information to come back to the next meeting about support services that are available – request Victims First Northumbria to provide a talk at the next meeting.
- **Neighbourhood Watch** - a request was made by Newcastle Elders for an officer to give an update to their group on Neighbourhood Watch provision. NP to follow up this request.

### **BME, Faith and Belief Group**

- **Hate crime** – members from ACANE (African Community Advice North East) explained that people who use the ACANE centre in Byker report hate crime/hate incidents to volunteers at the centre. Incidents are passed on to the local Neighbourhood Policing Team and the centre and local residents are happy with how NP address the incidents. Will pass these positive comments on to NP.
- **NP recruitment** – the group had a discussion on recruitment and the work undertaken by NP to engage diverse communities to encourage applications from underrepresented groups. This was received very positively.
- **Local funding opportunities** – interested in local funding opportunities. Informed that the Commissioner’s Community Fund was going to be available to local groups and information will be posted on the PCC website in early April.
- **Victims** – Victims First Northumbria will be approached and asked to attend the next meeting to provide an overview of their work.

### **LGBT Group**

- **NP recruitment** - an update by NP on the recent NP recruitment campaign was provided detailing the work undertaken to reach underrepresented groups. At a future meeting the group would like to discuss the rates of LGBT candidates who dropped out of the recruitment process and help to shape solutions to reduce those rates in the future and increase LGBT engagement.
- **Understanding LGBT crime data** – the group were keen to better understand the prevalence of LGBT hate crime and high risk domestic abuse. NP have been asked to attend the next meeting and bring this information and talk about NP’s approach to supporting victims and tackling hate crime.
- **Future membership** – the group agreed that it would be useful for one of NP’s LGBT Liaison Officers to attend the next meeting to talk through their work with the local community. To be arranged.

### **Disability Advisory Group**

- **Safe Reporting Centres** - a presentation and update on Safe Reporting Centres was given by NP. The group were keen to learn about the work of NP and would like to

encourage NP to also recognise the importance of using 'Safe Places' as a trusted method of safe and third party reporting of hate crime.

- **Local funding opportunities** - Group members were also interested in any local funding opportunities that could support them to deliver their work. Information has been provided about the Commissioners Community Fund 2017-18.

### **Youth Advisory Group**

- Streetwise are hosting the PCCs Youth Advisory Group and the office are working with them to support young people to gain an understanding of policing priorities, concerns, statistics, developments, public safety and community need, to help inform and influence service delivery and developments. The aim is to ensure young people's views, opinions and voices can help inform and influence the work of the PCC in relation to decisions, consultations and policy.
- Street Wise are currently recruiting will recruit 12 youth representatives i.e. 2 representatives from each of the of the Sunderland, South Tyneside, North Tyneside, Gateshead, Newcastle and Northumberland areas.
- The representative will be aged 16 – 18 years and will be selected via local schools, community groups, colleges and/or existing youth forums. The representatives will have access to local youth forums and groups to help ensure other young people can take part in consultation and awareness raising events.
- The Advisory Group will meet no less than 12 times per year on a Saturday in Newcastle. In between meetings the young people will be supported via a Streetwise participation worker, who will ensure information, training, events, requests and activities are shared and a program of planned activities/consultation take place on a regular basis.
- The first meeting of the group is due to be held in May where members of the group will make first introductions to each other and set the priorities and the work of the group over the coming year. Dean will be attending this meeting.
- Victims First Northumbria will be asked to attend to present an overview of their work to raise awareness of the service and encourage take-up by young people.

### **Victims Advisory Group**

- The Victims Advisory Group is hosted by VFN - members of the VFN service user group who are all direct victims of crime have taken on the role of the PCC Advisory Group.
- The group were asked to provide their views on policing and crime priorities to help shape the new Police and Crime Plan. Their focus was specifically on victims of crime and the criminal justice system. A further update to be provided once the plan has been finalised.
- Restorative justice was a key theme of the meeting and an in-depth overview of the RJ process and accessibility was discussed. Members of the group were impressed by the RJ service on offer and hadn't realised the potential of the intervention. Agreed further work needs to be done to promote RJ across Northumbria and encourage victim take-up as it is a key building block in the recovery journey.

