



Overview of Advisory Group Meetings – Round 3 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

A selection of key points raised and issues discussed by each of the groups can be found below:

Gender Advisory Group

- The meeting was held at the office of Ben-Hoare Bell as members felt it would be useful to rotate meeting venues.
- **VAWG Bid Progress** - the group were informed about the progress we have made with regards to the success of the VAWG bid. They were informed about the Diversionary Support Worker, in particular. Group members were strongly supportive of the potential 'Complainant Advocates'.
- **MARACs and MATACs** – advisory group members were concerned that the MARACs and MATACs had become 'disconnected' and began to develop divide. They suggested that the volume of perpetrators being brought to the table needed consideration to ensure partner remain engaged in the process and not overwhelmed. This to be shared with Northumbria Police with a potential follow up back to this meeting.

Age Advisory Group

- **Community Messaging "Your Northumbria"** – A brief overview of the Community Messaging scheme was provided. The group were impressed that the bespoke facility can forward information to the public so quickly and can be made area specific. Alan Gower from the Elders Council will arrange for the scheme to be publicised in the next edition of their publication, information which is accessed by a large number of people across Newcastle. Nitin agreed to circulate wording to all members of the group.
- **Northumbria Police's Hate Crime Action Plan** – Rebecca Fenney provided members of the panel with an overview and update on Northumbria Police's Hate Crime Strategy and Action Plan. In the last 12 months NP have recorded a greater number of age related hate crime seeing an increase of 65%. This is viewed positively by Northumbria Police as people have confidence to report hate crime and it enables the police to identify who is vulnerable and provide the right support/signposting to the appropriate support services. Community Engagement Officers are currently working closely with groups such as Age UK Alzheimer's Society, Dementia Care and attending pop up cafes to raise awareness of hate crime and encouraging people to report hate crime.

- **Introduction of new technology to record safeguarding information** - a brief overview was provided to the group on the use of technology to record vital safeguarding information. Officers are now using a tablet/minicomputer which immediately enters information onto the “Your Northumbria” and links to the victims needs assessment – ensuring victims are connected to Victims First and the specialist support they need at the earliest opportunity.

BME, Faith and Belief Group

- **Community Safety** - Tom Krause from the Polish Community updated the meeting regarding the development of a survey for the polish community to raise their concerns, particularly on community safety issues. Panel members had the opportunity to comment upon/make suggestions to the proposed questions in the survey. Although there was a slight delay launching this, the survey is now live on ‘Polnews.co.uk’ and has so far, generated 30 responses across Tyneside. The survey will also be uploaded to ‘POLNEWS.TV’ to reach the community in wider geographic locations. OPCC to be provided with an overview of the survey results to share with NP and to shape the Commissioners future priorities and areas of work.
- **Community Engagement Strategy** - PC David Burton from the Community Engagement Team presented Northumbria Police’s Community Engagement Strategy which is aligned to the priorities within the Police and Crime Plan. Members of the panel were keen to emphasise the importance of measuring the impact of the strategy, once released to understand its success and purpose. The North East Chinese Association has invited PC Brunton to talk directly to the Chinese community about the Community Engagement Strategy and its impact on the community.
- **Operation Sanctuary** - PC Burton updated the meeting on Operation Sanctuary and in particular, Operation Shelter which targeted Child Sexual Exploitation. A number of convictions have taken place and PC Burton highlighted the important work of building trust and confidence within communities following the concerns raised in some quarters about the methods used by the police in Operation Shelter. PC Burton also explained that there has been no definitive rise in hate crime due to the sentences and feedback has been very positive overall. PC Burton informed the panel that HMIC recently conducted inspections in to Modern Day Slavery (MDS) across 10 police forces, however Northumbria Police was not one. The report following the inspections was critical of nine of the forces highlighting the need to improve performance in this area of work. Police forces have also raised concerns regarding the lack of sufficient resources to tackle MDS which is complex and an emerging crime.

LGBT Group

- **Hate Crime Action Plan** – Rebecca Fenney gave the group an update on the NP Hate Crime Action Plan. The group discussed at length the recent rise in hate crimes and the possible reasons for this including Brexit and recent terrorist attacks. Rebecca also informed the group that there has been increase in Hate Crime reports which in

one way is viewed positively by Northumbria Police as the public have confidence to report hate crime and it enables the police to identify who is vulnerable and provide the right support/signposting to the appropriate support services. Rebecca informed the group of recent work that had been undertaken with a Transgender rape victim to encourage victims to speak out and come forward. Rebecca also discussed the training given to new recruits in relation to the LGBT community to make sure that officers are more aware of the diverse community they police.

- **LGBT Liaison Officers** – At the previous meeting of the AG, group members requested that a force LGBT Liaison Officer attend the meeting to discuss the role they have. Rebecca, LGBT Staff Association Chair and Jennifer Christie NP Liaison Officer attended the meeting to introduce themselves to group members. They discussed in detail the training they have received and the work they undertake. The group to report back through their networks to raise awareness of these key roles.
- **Recruitment** - the group were informed that any individual who identifies as one of the protected characteristics will be offered assistance through the recruitment process by a recruitment ambassador. This is a new approach that strengthens support given to prospective LGBT candidates.

Disability Advisory Group

- **Easy Read Police and Crime Plan 2017/21** – At the previous meeting of the group, the Draft “Easy Read Police and Crime Plan” was presented for consultation. Group members were asked for their comments on the content, layout and the ability of their group members to easily understand and engage with the document. These comments were taken on board and included within the new plan which received positive feedback by those in attendance. Once minor amendments have been made, this will be available to view online on the PCCs website with other formats (braille/large print) available on request.
- **Hate Crime Action Plan** – Rebecca Fenney, Northumbria Police Safeguarding Department presented highlights of the Hate Crime Action Plan. Rebecca also highlighted the recent launch of the “Your Northumbria” community messaging service. The group felt that it would be useful to inform all Advisory group members of this service and it was agreed that this would be actioned.
- **Training of Police Officers in disability issues** – At the request of group members, Sgt Sultan Miah from the Northumbria Police Training Department informed the group of the training undertaken by new recruits to Northumbria Police. Sgt Miah confirmed that disability groups are utilised so that new officers can meet and interact with people who have a range of disabilities. This allows for officers to be fully aware of any issues or barriers and different approaches that they could utilise when dealing with disabled members of the community.
- **Victims First Northumbria** - Group members queried which support organisations disabled victims of crime are directed to when they contact Victims First Northumbria (VFN). VFN were to be invited to the next meeting of the Disability Advisory Group to provide an update on the service they offer and also update on the organisations they work with to provide support to victims of crime. Advocacy North has been commissioned by the OPCC to support work with victims of disability hate crime.

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.
- **Priorities and peer research** - the group produced a questionnaire to be used to gather views of young people in relation to policing and crime with over 60 questionnaires having been completed. The young people felt that they would like to produce a video where they could put questions raised by survey respondents to Northumbria Police Officers. The young people have agreed a list of questions that they would like to put to officers.
- **Facebook Page** – The group have requested that a Facebook page be setup for group members to communicate in-between meetings where they could share ideas and pictures relating to the work of the group. The group could also be used to recruit other young people to become involved and increase the membership of the group. Due to safeguarding and to ensure that the group is as safe as possible online, Streetwise staff were to have administration responsibilities for the group to ensure that people joining were legitimate members.
- **An informal name for the group** - the group felt that the current title of the group "Young Peoples Advisory Group" was not very appealing to young people so the group have undertaken an exercise to think of a more appealing title. After a vote by group members it was agreed that the new informal name for the group would be "PoliceWise". Dean to arrange to tweet about the role of the group "PoliceWise" in helping the Commissioner to understand the policing and community safety issues that young people face.
- **Further development** - the group are in the process of setting up a group chat using social media and text messaging which will allow messages to be passed from Streetwise to youth members and also allow discussions in-between meetings. Streetwise have agreed to specifically include the views of looked after children and children carers in the advisory groups work.

Victims Advisory Group

- It was agreed with you that the VFN Service User Group would also fulfil the role of the PCCs Victims Advisory Group.
- **Victims Commissioner Visit** – this was used as an opportunity for members of the group to come together and influence the work of the Victims Commissioner. The event was well attended by victims who have accessed both Victims First Northumbria and other commissioned services. The feedback from Baroness Newlove was extremely positive and she is very keen to visit us again soon to specifically learn more about our work around sexual exploitation and modern slavery.

- **Future topics** – the group are keen to learn more about the VFN Champions and Communications Strategy which couldn't be covered at the Commissioners visit so this will be covered at the next meeting in March 2018.