

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Infrastructure
DATE	20 October 2016
TITLE OF REPORT	Thematic Report - Police Scotland, North East Division: Community Engagement

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report seeks to provide members with information on current and future methods that North East Division uses to engage with its communities. Police Scotland see Community Engagement across all of our communities as a priority, informing Strategy and Policy at both a local and national level.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are asked to note the paper.

3. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

4. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

5. **BACKGROUND**

Community Engagement is a cornerstone of Police activity in North East Division. The Command Team through to Constables and Police Staff in our communities recognise the importance of hearing our communities and turning those views into tangible outcomes that help in Keeping People Safe.

North East Division in Aberdeen undertakes its engagement activity with the objective of providing a citizen focussed police service that meets community concerns and increases trust and public confidence.

The key principles of North East Division's approach are:

- Engagement that is open, proactive, visible, accessible and ongoing.
- Engagement that understands and responds to the needs and concerns of communities, their elected representatives and partners in relation to policing and community issues.
- Engagement which ensures that these views, needs and expectations can inform and influence a) the policing service that is delivered, in conjunction with our partners where appropriate; and b) the future direction of policing.
- Inclusive engagement. North East Division is committed to proactively engaging with all stakeholders from individuals to communities and organisations.
- Flexible engagement to connect with different sections of the community, recognising Scotland's changing demographic profile. North East Division is committed to working to identify seldom heard or hard to reach groups, identifying barriers that limit their access to policing or community involvement, so that they can be informed, consulted and engaged with.

6. **CURRENT ENGAGEMENT**

What follows is a summary of Community Engagement in Aberdeen. It is not an exhaustive list, but rather is designed to highlight some of the current best practice:

Community Policing Teams

Community Engagement in its purest form is undertaken by the Community Policing Teams (CPTs) which are embedded in our communities throughout Aberdeen. These officers are led by a dedicated area Police Inspectors and a number of Sergeants and Constables. These teams are the visible face of North East Division and will routinely engage with communities in response to calls for assistance or whilst on patrol.

Officers continuously engage with elected members, Community Councils and also provide Crime Prevention advice to businesses and residents.

The key engagement activity for CPTs is to listen to their communities and respond to their needs producing tangible outcomes and improvements for them. Three examples of such engagement and response are in Northfield, Tillydrone and Torry are as follows:

Northfield Total Place

Northfield Total Place is a place based approach that seeks to improve outcomes for the local community in the Northfield, Middlefield, Cummings Park, Heathryfold and Mastrick neighbourhoods.

Inspector Andy Barclay (Northfield) sits on the Strategic Board for Total Place and this strategy is at the heart of all community projects within the area.

It has been operating for around 18 months and involves Community Planning Partners (including public and third sector), community organisations and members of the local public working together to identify priorities and put in place solutions, using the best available resources, to meet the unique needs of the local people within the Northfield area.

Although Aberdeen City Council (ACC) oversees Northfield Total Place, the ethos runs through Northfield CPT and there are continual engagement and consultation events to discuss and consider improvements and projects within the community.

The main highlights include the CPTs involvement and lead in the Manor Walk 'pocket park' regeneration, The Choices for Life Tobacco Project in partnership with the Police Scotland Youth Volunteers and Inspector Barclay's recent involvement with the 'Imagineers' of the Children's Parliament. The 'Imagineers' focussed on the views of children from four of the City's lowest attaining schools (2 of which are within Northfield) and their idea of a healthy, happy and safe city where human dignity is at the heart. The Manor Park report of the 'Imagineers' saw the Police as a positive factor in the area, which in an area that shows on indices of deprivation is positive.

Inspector Barclay also chairs the Northfield Youth Action Group (NYAG). The group meets bi-monthly and its aims are:

- Provide an opportunity for workers to meet on a regular basis as an Action Group, and in particular to facilitate networking between members of this Action Group (and between other relevant agencies throughout the North East) and to generate joint partnership working through shared projects, research, training or seminars.
- Promote greater understanding and raise awareness of anti-social behaviour and disengaged young people in the Northfield area.
- Promote positive images of what is happening in Northfield by, where possible, inputting to education, media and through general awareness-raising.
- Support the development of services for young people in Northfield.
- Taking opportunities to gather information on the needs, opinions and experiences of the young people in Northfield.
- Promote and facilitate the involvement of young people in the planning & development of services.
- Develop best practice across the Action Group.

NYAG has been responsible for providing a wide range of positive diversion in Northfield including, Project Fit, Cummings Park Youth Project and Streetsport.

Tillydrone Network

The Tillydrone Network sees Tillydrone CPT working in direct partnership with the community on a number of issues. The issues are decided on by the community,

based on their emerging requirements. This ability to directly influence the local policing direction gives the community access to timely and tangible results that are delivered in partnership with key stakeholders such as elected members, Housing and ACC.

Some of the themes that the network has had success in are:

- FLYTIPPING - Councillor Ross Grant and Inspector Darren Bruce have been working on this issue for over a year. Through local advertising of the issue, signs being erected, enforcement action, education of those responsible and the erection of physical barriers (i.e. bollards), the problem has significantly reduced. They now plan to run an 'Amnesty' with Aberdeen Waste Aware.
- M26/LIGHTHOUSE PROJECTS - 2 different projects offering similar services to different groups. M26 offers activities, Support and Drugs workers to males over 25. The Lighthouse offers access to a wide range of services and support to the community. Local Officers work with both groups giving real opportunities for engagement.

Torry - Operation Smallwood

The Torry area of Aberdeen has been identified as a deprived and regeneration area both locally and nationally. Operation Smallwood was instigated in 2014 in response to ongoing issues of open public space youth anti-social behaviour in Torry, with reports of up to 40 youths being involved, with the 'ringleaders' becoming confrontational towards the authorities.

Varying levels of success were recognised, but this year Torry Community Policing Team (CPT) took a more focussed approach to strengthen the partnership working to ensure key issues were addressed, which saw a range of preventative, pro-active and diversionary measures being introduced. Keen to build upon the successes of previous years', and linking in with Police Scotland's priorities, reducing violence, disorder and anti-social behaviour, it was clear that the strategic aims put in place could be improved and ultimately anti-social behaviour (ASB) could be reduced further and youths diverted.

To support the anecdotal evidence a problem profile was produced to highlight the current issues and inform Police activity.

A multi-agency meeting with stakeholders, elected council members and members of the public were invited to the Community Safety Partnership Hub (CSP) to discuss the key areas of concern and the wider issue of why the youths were committing ASB and potential associated family problems.

This, along with detailed analysis provided by CSP analysts, allowed set objectives to be set:

- Enhance the quality of life for residents and increase public confidence.
- Reduce the number of reported incidents of youth anti-social behaviour.
- Increase the number of detected crimes.
- Devise a structured process for dealing with repeat offenders.

- Increase direct links with support services to offenders and their families.

Intelligence gathering was instigated to gain a thorough knowledge of the problem and individuals involved. This was vital in order to effectively deploy the resources at the right time in the right place, which afforded no additional financial cost to Police Scotland.

By adopting the three "D" approach, Disrupt, Divert, Deter, strong relationships were reinforced with Aberdeen City Council (ACC) and Third Sector agencies at the CSP with partners being co-located, and with Information Sharing Protocols already in place, this allowed for the exchange of data concerning vulnerable youths and families. A phased process was implemented for the duration of the operation.

Regular meetings were held between partners to collaboratively achieve the aims and objectives set:

- A robust policing approach was instigated to provide reassurance to the community and ensure enforcement options were pursued.
- Joint patrols between City Wardens, Police and youth workers in 'hot spot' areas.
- Wi-Fi CCTV camera was provided by ACC.
- School Based Officer's provided class inputs, engaged individually with known offenders.
- Joint home visits with CPT, Early Intervention Worker (EIW) and ACC housing to deliver sanctions and advise parents of the impact of their child's behaviour on their tenancy and wider community.
- Streetsport provided a weekly engagement activity in 'hot spot' areas for diversion.

Officers submitted a daily returns document which allowed the CSP to monitor and analyse the incidents and nominals at a daily meeting. This allowed for constant evaluation to track progress throughout the operation. During the operation, stakeholders highlighted concerns regarding the inconsistent feedback received and the governance of same. As such, a designated Sergeant was allocated to the Operation to improve the link between the CPT and CSP which in turn ensured that the wider issues of family concerns and vulnerability were addressed.

The CSP were then able to signpost repeat offenders and their families to the relevant supporting agencies such as Social Work, Education and Third Sector agencies such as Barnardo's.

Operation Smallwood successfully accomplished the objectives in accordance with the three D's strategy:

Disrupt - The number of Crimefiles raised increased by more than two-fifths (46.8%). This is due to the increased police presence and an increased trust by members of

the public to report youth crime. Just under 90% of crimes were detected during the Operation.

Divert - Incidents decreased by almost a fifth (19.7%) during the operation when compared to the same period prior, the real impact of the operation was felt in the second half with incidents significantly decreasing. 'Streetsports' were implemented as a diversionary tactic and continues to be a weekly activity and there are hopes to expand to introduce 'Streetsport Dance'.

Deter - A structured process was carried out when dealing with offenders including Acceptable Behaviour Contracts being served by the EIW, in conjunction with ACC and the CPT. Further referrals/support was also made/provided to partner agencies when required.

Consistent, high profile patrols with CPT resulted in building a rapport and trust with the youths which helped to break down the 'age old' barriers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that preventative measures need to be put in place to find a long term solution to the issue which has been described as generational.

Partnership

North East Division is a key Community Planning Partnership (CPP) member and as part of the ongoing collaboration has undertaken significant community engagement recently. This has taken many forms including but not exclusively:

- Three community consultation events in relation to informing and influencing the 10 year Local Outcome Improvement Plans in Aberdeen.
- Ongoing consultation activities in relation to the partnership's community empowerment strategy.
- The arrival and settlement of New Scots Families from Syria.

As well as the wider CPP, North East Division provides a significant contribution to the Community Safety Partnership in Aberdeen in the form of Inspector Jason Carrigan and his team of Officers. With its key CSP partners, North East Division undertakes a host of community engagement activity to achieve tangible results in relation its collective Community Safety Strategic Aims.

Serious Organised Crime (SOC) Partnership Work

Working in partnership with CSP and Safer Communities to the Government's 4 D's Serious and Organised Crime Strategy North East Division has undertaken a host of community engagement activities.

Safer Communities organised a 'Protecting Business from Serious Organised Crime' event which was hosted by the Aberdeen Business Gateway, supported by Interventions and included speakers from the Divert and Deter Team, Scottish Business Resilience Centre Trading Standards and Abertay University Ethical

Hackers. Approximately 30 local business owners were provided with target hardening advice and a crime prevention networking and engagement opportunity. Following the event, Business Gateway compiled feedback from the delegates which was very positive, with a number of businesses now being more aware of the indicators and how to protect their businesses from SOC.

Partnership working with the national charity SPORTED and Robert Gordon University Sports is ongoing. Building on consultation events held by Aberdeen CSP Hub in Torry and on analysis from those events by CSP analysts, SPORTED have submitted a Cashback for Communities funding bid. If successful, this will allow CSP Hub and SPORTED to carry out consultation and diversionary work via sport for young people on the cusp of Serious and Organised Crime in some of the city's most deprived areas. Inspector Carrigan also sits on the steering group of Streetsport, listening, engaging and advising on where and how diversionary activities should take place.

Diverse Community Engagement

It is recognised that Communities, Groups and associations are not simply formed within geographical locations and cannot be reached through one CPT. As such North East Division work proactively to engage with such groups to ensure their views are considered and they too are engaged by the organisation. The following captures a number of examples:

- Third Party Reporting Centres
In partnership with Safer Communities, North East Division has 12 Third Party Reporting sites across Aberdeen. These provide support to report hate crimes and crime of a sensitive nature. These centres are selected and located in communities after consultation with them and on the basis of need. We continue to interact with local faith groups and advocacy groups such as Grampian Regional Equality Council to improve and evolve our service based on feedback from these potentially seldom heard groups.
- Drug Related Death Process
North East Division has evolved and improved its service to the family of Drug Related Death victims. This was after a series of engagement events by Police Officers in the CSP Hub with a support group for bereaved families.
- Suicide Prevention
Inspector Carrigan from the CSP Hub sit on the Choose Life steering group and have also been a key supporter of wider suicide prevention activities in our communities.
- Aberdeen Ethnic Minority Forum
Inspector Carrigan currently sits on the Ethnic Minority Forum (EMF), whose meetings take place at the Town House. This is a forum for wider contact

and engagement with a host of community groups such as Polish Association and various faith groups.

- Minority Groups
North East Division has a long standing relationship and history of positive engagement with minority groups across Aberdeen. As well as the local contact, support and engagement that local CPTs undertake NE Division still have a dedicated diversity officer for Aberdeen.
- PREVENT
PREVENT is the key strand of engagement with our communities in relation to the wider national Contest strategy undertaken in partnership with the PREVENT Delivery Unit ACC.
- Community Impact Assessments in response to critical or significant incidents.

National Engagement Locally Delivered

Police Scotland recognise the importance of Engagement with our communities while at the same time acknowledging the requirement for such engagement to be coordinated locally in a way which ensures local views and priorities are identified and addressed. The following provide examples of such National Engagement opportunities which are allowing North East Division to understand local needs:

Your View Counts

This is the fourth year in which Police Scotland has had the opportunity to undertake a country wide public consultation survey. It gives the organisation the ability to seek the views of Scotland's diverse communities and gives local people the chance to influence the setting of both National and Local policing priorities. The survey results provide valuable information regarding the public's attitude to crimes, antisocial behaviour and other issues that impact on communities and the priorities identified through the consultation will be reflected in future Force, Local and Multi-Member Ward (MMW) Policing Plans.

In previous years the surveys were conducted by Police Officers gathering responses from their MMW areas where they had responsibility, with responses recorded on Survey Monkey. In a change to this approach, from April 2016 an online Survey Monkey portal was created to allow the general public to complete the survey online with an alternative paper version available if required. Through local engagement, community events and media campaigns etc. the general public were encouraged to access and complete the survey. The results from Quarter 1 2016-17 are very encouraging with a surveys completed to date across almost every MMW in Scotland. It is also evident from the demographic responses that the results include representation from all communities throughout Scotland.

North East Division have been involved in promoting this opportunity however we like other areas of the country have seen a gradual up take from our Communities. The initial format, which was managed and promoted through Social Media, saw 7.8% of the national returns being mapped against North East Division and specifically 249 returns relating to Aberdeen, with returns been received from all of the City MMW's.

While clearly recognising the need to enhance this return, to increase the capture of Community views we have supplemented the opportunity to have your say Digitally, by promoting the opportunity and making use of Paper copies during events which have involved traditionally hard to reach groups.

While the consultation runs across the whole year, results are being produced on a quarterly basis, to allow us to review the views of our Communities and react to them. The first quarter for example identified the top 5 concerns across A Division as being:

- Homes being broken into.
- Anti-Social Behaviour / Disorder.
- Drug Dealing / Drug Misuse.
- Road Safety / Road Crime.
- Cars (or other Vehicles) being stolen or broken into.

Multi-Member Ward	Total
	Quarter 1 2016-17 April - June
Airyhall/Broomhill/Garthdee	19
Bridge of Don	29
Dyce/Bucksburn/Danestone	21
George St/Harbour	20
Hazlehead/Ashley/Queens Cross	22
Hilton/Stockethill	13
Kincorth/Loirston	26
Kingswells/Sheddocksley	12
Midsocket/Rosemount	15
Northfield	16
Tillydrone/Seaton/Old Aberdeen	21
Torry/Ferryhill	16
Total	249

Police Scotland Youth Volunteers

The Police Scotland Youth Volunteers (PSYV) programme aims to strengthen the relationship with the Police and young people, breaking down barriers and promoting positive role models. It promotes a practical way for young people to understand policing by supporting the Police in their local area through volunteering. As part of

this, young people are given a chance for their voice to be heard and encouraged to promote good citizenship.

The programme is open to all young people aged between 13 – 18 years; this allows those people to get an insight into policing in Scotland and inspire individuals to participate positively within their communities. Each PSYV group is coordinated by a Police Officer, who will carry out this role secondary to their full time position which can vary from School Based Officer to Community Officer / Community Safety. The coordinator is supported by a team of Adult Volunteers who come from all walks of life.

North East Division has two PSYV Groups, one of which is in Aberdeen City. This group was initially based in and sourced solely from within Northfield Academy but now recruits Young Volunteers from across the City. While numbers are limited to 24 Young Volunteers per group, the recruitment policy ensures a genuine mix of skills, abilities and knowledge is achieved.

Volunteers have been able to participate at many different events, including the Glasgow Commonwealth Games in 2014 where there was over 3,500 volunteering hours from young people. Many events have been attended, such as the UK Police Memorial Service, 5 Baton relay events, T in the Park, The Open Golf Championship and the Edinburgh Military Tattoo, while a multitude of local events such as the Baker Hughes 10K and gala events.

After asking young people who were involved in the pilot of the programme how they felt:

- 33% were more likely to agree with the statement 'Police listen and respond to views of young people'.
- 30% of people were more likely to agree with the statement 'Police understand young people's problems in the area'.
- 76% of young people said it helped them in becoming an adult.
- An increase of 16% in how the young people felt about themselves.
- An increase of 10% in young people's determination to succeed.
- 87% of young people said it helped them at school.
- An increase of 24% in people's confidence after joining PSYV.
- An increase of 12% in motivation to learn.

Communication

The extensive community engagement activity that North East Division undertakes is underpinned by a comprehensive external communication strategy that is delivered by a dedicated and professional Corporate Communications Unit.

The Corporate Communications Unit ensures that communities are updated in a variety of methods including social media and regular outlets such as newspapers,

news websites and TV news channels. These outlets are obviously used to keep the public updated regarding on-going news, appeals and travel updates.

7. **CONCLUSION**

North East Division and Police Scotland as a whole are committed to ensuring that appropriate and proactive engagement with communities and interested parties is mainstreamed within its approach to developing policing.

At a local and national level we will continue to proactively engage with elected members, individuals, communities and organisations so that their views, needs and expectations can influence and inform policing in Aberdeen City and we can all collectively strive together to "Keep People Safe".

8. **REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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