

INDEPENDENT ETHICS PANEL

Thursday 2 July 2015, Session 1 – 2.15pm

Offices of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Regent Street, Barnsley

PRESENT: A Lockley (Chair)
 M Ismail, Member
 M Lewis, Member
 A Macaskill, Member
 S Parkin, OPCC
 Insp Richard Burgess, SYP
 Sgt Brendan Pakenham, SYP
 C Goodwin, SYP
 F Topliss, OPCC
 T Webster, OPCC
 M Staples, OPCC

APOLOGIES: L Christon

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to a special session on Community Engagement and Cohesion.

2 NOTES OF THE MEETING

OPCC/FORCE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

The Panel were given an overview of the relevant statutory responsibilities of SYP and the PCC, and detailed information around the different engagement channels that are used to engage with members of the public including attendance at public meetings, shows and events, roadshows in schools and social media.

Information was provided on some of the activities commissioned by the Commissioner including the 'Is it worth it' school tours where the office had engaged with around 6,000 secondary school pupils promoting important safety messages on issues such as internet and social media safety, substance abuse, anti-social behaviour and the consequences.

Action: Invite to be extended to members of the Panel should further tours take place.

A discussion took place about what were felt to be gaps in engagement and what activity was taking place to bridge those gaps; these included young people, some minority groups and disability groups.

My Place in Rotherham was suggested as a useful link in Rotherham.

The OPCC is developing a campaign calendar to enable links in to regional and national campaigns; this would be linked to preventative work.

Information was provided on the engagement work taking place in schools, colleges and Universities, particularly the work taking place with private landlords and working with students around safety and crime prevention. It was acknowledged that the Force had strong links with Freshers' Weeks in both universities. Appreciation was expressed of the work of PC Tom Goodhill as police liaison for both universities.

Action: Invite T Goodhill to a future meeting to give an input into the work he does with the Universities.

A number of members had positive experiences of the engagement work taking place in schools, colleges, the Universities and faith communities.

M Ismail said he met regularly with Sgt Pakenham and had a good relationship with him.

A discussion took place around the different parts of the county, and the need to police each area based on its individual make up.

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

C Goodwin highlighted the work it was doing around digital engagement including providing a new website.

Digital engagement was required otherwise people will no longer engage; print media was now considered a dying industry.

The Force uses Facebook and Twitter to aid investigations by enabling people to provide comments. The Communications and Engagement Team provide training to officers on the use of Social Media and have strict guidelines.

Track My Crime was being promoted to enable victims of crime to log on to get updates on their crime – have to opt out rather than opt in.

The website is out of date. The current website has over 800 pages, while the new website will have only 5 pages with portals opening to other material.. The new website should also reduce the number of calls to 101.

Action: The Panel to be given a demonstration on new website.

COMMUNITY LED POLICING

Insp Burgess provided information on the new Local Policing Teams and the work to make engagement more effective with fewer resources. Engagement activity will be monitored by the OPCC and will feed into the strategic planning process.

PREVENT

Sgt Pakenham provided members with information on the PREVENT agenda including the changes to legislation on 1 July which now imposes on partner agencies such as the NHS, a statutory requirement to engage.

PREVENT started in 2007 and it was acknowledged that initially we got it wrong, we didn't know our communities and the focus was very much on the Muslim community.

SYP have had to invest in learning and understanding communities to build trust. They rely on a small group of key individuals. The PREVENT team has 5 officers who are Home Office funded.

B Pakenham highlighted that we need to understand extremism, which uses violence to make its cause known. What happens internationally affects what happens locally. He drew attention to the contribution made by M Ismail.

Every city and town is different. Sheffield has priority status.

The Force works closely with the local authorities and other partners, but the new legislation will make it easier to engage partners.

It delivers awareness training to over 80 different organisations. It has also trained over 150 Imams on CSE and PREVENT.

One of the biggest problems is the Internet.

B Pakenham stressed that PREVENT was about effectively managing people who have gone down the wrong path. It is not about spying but is about protecting people.

So-called Islamic State is the biggest threat to the Country.

Reassurance was provided. So far, no resident of South Yorkshire has been apprehended in connection with these activities.

ORGREAVE

A Macaskill provided an overview of the work she had undertaken with former mining communities (including working with a women's support group) which looked at how to enable them to move forward. The project was stopped because it did not receive backing from the NUM.

In the light of the recent decision by the IPCC not to investigate complaints about policing at Orgreave in 1984, the panel had an initial discussion about the scope for increasing confidence in policing within the former mining communities. Panel members will explore in the future what might be done to acknowledge community concerns about what is still seen as a disproportionate response by police during the miners' strike.

C Goodwin highlighted the difficulties in dealing with this subject whilst the Hillsborough Inquests are taking place. The Panel accepted this advice. It also bore in mind that policing during the strike – and particularly at Orgreave – was carried out by a number of forces.

CHAIR