



Communications and Engagement Plan

Updated May 2024

Introduction

Engaging with communities to understand their views about policing and crime, keeping them informed and updated about the work of the PCC and the Constabulary, is a fundamental part of my role.

In my current Police and Crime Plan 2022-25 I have committed to look for every opportunity to engage with people and businesses across Suffolk, ensuring communities can discuss their views with me, and know how to contact my office.

Following my re-election in May 2024, my focus this year is to draft, consult on and publish my new Police and Crime Plan. This plan will take us through to 2028/29 and will express my continued commitment to engage with local residents and businesses.

I will endeavour to support the public to understand my role, and in my relationship with the Chief Constable I will strive to balance the importance of operational independence, with transparent public and financial accountability for the benefit of the people of Suffolk.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Passmore". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T' and 'P'.

Tim Passmore
Police & Crime Commissioner

Contents:

1. Purpose
2. Background
3. Vision and Aims
4. Objectives
5. Communications principles
6. Key messages to key audiences
7. Approach
8. Resources
9. Evaluation

Purpose

This plan shows how effective communications and engagement can:

- support the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to achieve their overall aims and objectives
- support the PCC and OPCC to engage effectively with key stakeholders
- highlight the successes of the PCC and OPCC
- ensure people understand the role and work of the PCC and the OPCC
- support the commissioning objectives of the PCC
- change behaviour and perception (where necessary)
- mitigate communication risks, challenging misconceptions and misinformation

Background

Police and Crime Commissioners are the voice for the people, someone to lead the fight against crime, and someone to hold to account if they don't deliver. Their role is to represent you and your concerns, ensuring the policing needs of your community are met.

PCCs set the direction and the budget for policing. This involves:

Setting the strategic direction and accountability for policing

- being accountable to the electorate
- setting strategic policing priorities
- holding the force to account through the Chief Constable
- consulting and involving the public

Working with partners to prevent and tackle crime and re-offending

- ensuring that the police respond effectively to public concerns and threats to public safety

- promoting and enabling joined up working on community safety and criminal justice
- increasing public confidence in how crime is cut, and policing is delivered

Invoking the voice of the public, the vulnerable and victims

- ensuring that public priorities are acted upon, victims are consulted and the most vulnerable individuals are not overlooked
- complying with the General Equality Duty under the Equality Act

Contributing to resourcing of the policing response to regional and national threats

- ensuring an effective policing contribution alongside other partners to national arrangements to protect the public from other cross-boundary threats in line with the strategic policing requirement

Ensuring value for money

- responsible for the distribution of policing grants from central government and setting the precept raised through council tax
- responsible for setting the budget, including the police precept component of council tax, and deciding how it should be spent
- commissioning services from partners that will contribute to cutting crime and services that will help victims or witnesses of crime.
- ensuring financial reserves are properly apportioned and used, including the interest earned on those reserves
- proper economic assessment of demand and response is used by the constabulary in operational decisions

Vision and Aims

Communicating and engaging with the people of Suffolk, our partners, and target audiences is a priority for the PCC.

The Commissioner has the platform and opportunity to speak up for Suffolk and its police force and to make sure Suffolk's voice is heard at a regional and national level.

This Communications and Engagement Plan will allow the PCC to:

- Effectively engage with Suffolk people, including the vulnerable, victims of crime, community groups, police and crime strategic partners and other relevant stakeholders, including elected representatives.
- Meet the policing priorities and objectives for Suffolk as defined in the Police and Crime Plan.
- Engage effectively with the people of Suffolk, giving people a greater say in how their communities are policed.
- Secure and understand issues of local people about policing priorities in Suffolk.
- Act upon community concerns by setting priorities that reflect local needs and leads to improvements in public confidence
- Discharge their statutory duties, including delivering a Police and Crime Plan in the most effective way.
- Represent all Suffolk people and to connect people, developing and fostering positive partnerships which deliver results
- Be accessible and accountable and be recognised as such

This plan provides direction and support for that communication by underpinning the Police and Crime Plan and the PCC’s main priorities and objectives.

It sets out how the PCC will engage with the public and other target groups, supported by an annual Communications Action Plan outlining activities and opportunities matched against the PCC’s key themes and strategic priorities.

Objectives

Communications and engagement objectives of this strategy

Objective:	Raise the profile of the PCC
Plan:	Publicise and engage to connect successfully
Tactics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use all available communication channels • Issue newsworthy, accurate and relevant press releases and statements • Foster good, constructive media relations • Continue to develop the PCC’s website as a place for key information for partners and the public

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise digital media, including via monthly e-newsletter, social media, website etc • Communicate directly with people, developing and growing contacts database including for specialist media and ‘hyper-local’ publications and websites • Respond to questions through the appropriate medium • Identify and set-up engagement opportunities for the PCC
--	--

Objective:	Successfully communicate the role, aims and objectives of the PCC
Plan:	Be straightforward and relevant
Tactics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise media opportunities and platforms and explain the role, aims and objectives wherever and whenever possible • Use Plain English and Easy Read and stay jargon free • Arrange ‘meet the public’ events – public meetings, surgeries, Street Meets etc • Produce videos to explain aims and objectives of PCC • Promote key PCC activity such as Accountability & Performance Panels and Police & Crime Panels • Promote the PCC’s day-to-day activity • Continue to develop the PCC website as a place for key information for partners and the public • Communicate directly with people, developing and growing contacts database including for specialist media and ‘hyper-local’ publications and websites

Objective:	Enable the PCC to discharge their statutory responsibilities (incl. budget, police & crime plan) informed by public views
Plan:	Engage with the right audiences, asking the right questions at the right times
Tactics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver bespoke engagement and consultation plans • Make it clear what people are being asked, what will happen to their comments/views and where they can see the final results. • Secure and understand the views of local people about their policing priorities • Use all available communications channels including online, face-to-face, media, direct communication etc • Use Plain English and Easy Read and stay jargon free • Attempt to engage with diverse groups on crime and policing issues, which may include but are not limited to Black, Asian, Minority, Ethnic communities (BAME), young people, Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Transgender (LGBT), faith groups etc • Identify key audiences and use the most appropriate communications for the relevant audience • Ensure consultation process is robust, worthwhile and meaningful • Feedback consultation findings in a clear and concise way

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish consultation results as soon as possible after the close where appropriate and explain how they have been considered.
--	---

Objectives:	Support the aims and objectives of commissioning activity across all themes within the commissioning cycle
Plan:	Communicate key information and outcomes
Tactics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and communicate key commissioning aims and outcomes • Publicise key information to partners and those looking for funding • Publicise key funding and outcomes with case studies – answering the ‘so what?’ question. • Support key commissioning initiatives and events • Assist with communications and engagement support to raise awareness of commissioning as a key part of the PCC role • Publicise lay OPCC activity

Objective:	Protect and enhance the reputation of the PCC/OPCC by promoting role and relevant governance arrangements
Plan:	Publicise, simplify and make relevant
Tactics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the role of the PCC/OPCC wherever and whenever possible • Develop a clear brand which is used across OPCC products • Attend and live tweet key meetings, including Accountability & Performance Panel, Police & Crime Panel and public meetings. • Ensure visibility for complaints procedures • Ensure accessibility to OPCC through variety of media • Respond to enquiries in an appropriate and timely manner

Objectives:	Be accessible, transparent and inclusive during PCC term across all areas of OPCC business
Plan:	Actively promote equality, diversity, accessibility and transparency both internally and externally
Tactics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate around equality, diversity, accessibility and transparency both internally and externally • Challenge if we find standards around equality and diversity falling short • Publish all agendas and minutes of key meetings, decision notices as appropriate • Make our website easy to navigate and easy to use • Comply with the Specified Information Order and other relevant publication requirements. • Use plain English and stay jargon free • Support community advisers • Explore ways to make communication activities even more inclusive

Communications principles

Communication activity will follow principles of good practice by being:

- **Willing to listen as well as speak** – encouraging and enabling a two-way flow of information
- **Open and transparent** – about the purpose of what is being communicated and any resultant processes and outcomes
- **Accessible and accountable** - we will use Plain English to ensure easy access for all, supporting equal opportunities.
- **Understood** – we will articulate our messages clearly and simply
- **Engaging** – we will respond to communications received, including tweets and e-mails requiring a response
- **Listening** – we will listen to, value and use feedback
- **Consistent, regular and ongoing** – we recognise communication as an all year round, 24-7 activity
- **Honest** – we are clear about the purpose of our communications and never knowingly mislead or misinform
- **Monitored and evaluated** – we identify and build on good practice or results and identify and learn from experience
- **Value for Money** – we are committed to delivering and promoting best value for money and careful use of public funds
- **Measure** – we will evaluate and learn from what we do.

Key messages to key audiences

Our voice: confident, a voice of common sense, strong messages, clear and simple language, speaking out, saying it like it is.

Our style: dynamic, fresh, we are open to new ideas, we are forward thinking, we are relevant.

Key messages:

- The PCC is the strong voice of Suffolk people for policing and crime issues

- The PCC listens to the view of local people
- The PCC is visible and accessible
- The PCC is the only directly elected figure for the whole of Suffolk.
- The PCC is the voice of the victim
- The PCC will forge positive partnerships which deliver results which are at the heart of what we do
- We will listen to and empower the experts
- The PCC is a criminal justice leader
- We are all about long lasting change and what's best for Suffolk within the statutory responsibilities of the PCC role
- We support and actively promote joined-up services in our county and closer collaboration regionally
- We support and promote rehabilitation of offenders to break the cycle of reoffending.

Key audience: Those that live, work, travel and invest in Suffolk (to include):

- Victims of crime
- Volunteers
- Veterans
- Charities
- Young people
- Minority groups
- Vulnerable groups
- Hard to reach groups
- Organisations we commission services from
- MPs, Ministers and central Government
- Police officers and staff
- Specialist trade press
- Other PCCs
- Association of Police and Crime Commissioners
- Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC)
- Local authorities
- Ex-offenders
- Road users

- Local, regional and national media
- Representative bodies (Unison, Police Federation, Police Superintendents' Assoc etc)
- Digital and on-line communities
- Readers/listeners/viewers of 'traditional' media.
- Businesses and membership organisations including the rural economy

Tactics

The office's communications and engagement activities will be structured enough to make the most of diary events and partner campaigns but flexible enough to take up opportunities.

Activity will be based on an event and campaigns calendar capturing media and engagement opportunities working in conjunction with the Constabulary's Corporate Comms team. This will enable the office to co-ordinate and manage opportunities to the best effect without being too prescriptive. The campaign plan will run in tandem with a Communications and Engagement annual planning calendar. Some events and opportunities will roll over from year to year and develop over time and the annual calendar will continue to grow. This approach will provide high quality communications and engagement support for the PCC's objectives, support for the OPCC in delivering its main priorities and provide the most effective means of communicating with key audiences.

Daily:

- Social media posts on key issues
- Monitor social media feeds
- Manage and refresh website
- Monitor general media
- Find topical issues/opportunities for comment
- Identify good PR opportunities
- Respond to letters/tweets where appropriate
- Liaise with police communications colleagues over potential opportunities and issues
- Deal with media enquiries
- Record media interaction and engagement activity.

Regular:

- Discussion with the OPCC's senior management team
- Press releases
- Arrange meet the public events – drop-ins, public meetings etc
- Prepare pre-interview briefings
- Support the PCC/OPCC main work themes
- Attend partnership meetings where appropriate

- Attend Police and Crime Panel, Accountability and Performance Panel and other key meetings
- Public Affairs – develop and foster links with key partners locally, regionally and nationally
- Supply copy to key publications – Constables County, SNT newsletters etc
- Launch and manage campaigns in line with Police and Crime Plan
- Other PCC office liaison
- APCC liaison
- Maintain photo library
- Record and measure media interaction and engagement activity.

Engagement schedule

An annual engagement schedule is ongoing.

Resources

The Head of Communications and Engagement will lead on the delivery of this plan. The plan will be managed and delivered in-house.

Evaluation

Evaluation is key to any communication and engagement activities. On-line and social media engagement will be monitored and digital cuttings archived.

