

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES MEETING

MAKE SURE CRIMINAL JUSTICE WORKS FOR COMMUNITIES

27 June 2017

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY COHESION

Report of the Chief Constable

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. This report discusses the current position of Community Cohesion across West Yorkshire Police before outlining that through a reinvestment in Neighbourhood Policing communities will become more cohesive in the future.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That the Police and Crime Commissioner uses this report to scrutinise Force activity in respect of Community Cohesion.

POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

3. Community Cohesion was named as a priority in the Police and Crime Plan 2016 – 2021, working with communities is at the heart of what we do, by strengthening our own relations with communities we will be able to better understand issues with cohesion and support people to overcome them. It is crucial that people get on well together, respect differences and work towards achieving shared goals.

KEY INFORMATION

4. 40% of respondents to the 'Your Priorities, Your Plan' survey (2016) felt that a greater sense of community would make them feel safer. We all have a responsibility to encourage inclusivity and build relations between communities which promotes wellbeing and strengthens our resilience to threats such as crime, terrorism and discontent.
5. In March 2017, the PCC held an event on Community Cohesion which was attended by over 50 delegates from a range of statutory and non-statutory partners. A report and event summary has been produced which includes identifying risks, barriers, improvements and the resources required to build strong and cohesion communities. This will form the basis for the PCCs ongoing work.
6. The Safer Communities Fund Grant Round 11 opened on 24 April 2017, which was dedicated to 4 priority themes including Community Cohesion. The successful projects will be presented at the Awards Ceremony on Thursday 3 August 2017.

PARTNER CONTRIBUTION

7. The PCC is represented on the West Yorkshire Community Cohesion board which looks at key issues affecting cohesion across West Yorkshire. The board is made up of senior leaders of the district councils and West Yorkshire Police.



Community Cohesion

Paper requested by: OPCC for Community Outcomes Meeting 27 June 2017

Report on behalf of: ACC Williams

Report Author : Supt Huison

Date of Report : 22 May 2017

1. SUMMARY

2. The report contained in this paper discusses the current position of Community Cohesion across West Yorkshire Police before outlining that through a reinvestment in Neighbourhood Policing communities will become more cohesive in the future.
3. Community cohesion enables a sense of belonging – to a place, to a group or to a community. Building community cohesion is about building better relationships between people with different personal characteristics including those from new and settled communities.
4. Community cohesion helps people feel safer and more secure in their neighbourhood. In turn this makes people feel better about their personal circumstances, increases general feelings of happiness and wellbeing as well as promoting trust between the community and those who serve it i.e. emergency services and statutory partners.
5. The benefits of cohesion are far reaching and aid not only the community itself but also the police service. A cohesive community will feel empowered through coming together to solve problems and trusting one another, perceptions of equality and fair treatment will be positively impacted and there will be an increased sense of belonging within the community. Assisting community cohesion is beneficial to the police service in terms of crime prevention, self-policing communities, community intelligence and identifying key individuals within communities who

can act as points of contact between the community and the police during times of heightened tension and assist with delivering key messages and calming conflict and mistrust.

6. With a population of over 2.3 million across urban and rural areas, understanding our diverse communities can be complex and whilst there isn't an exact science that enables us to measure community cohesion we do know that more cohesive communities are often less dependent upon the police and show increased levels of confidence in policing in general. WYP have previously relied upon 'public confidence in policing' data to assist with measuring cohesion but this has not been available for the financial year 2016/2017. However, the OPCC has committed to collecting this data for the forthcoming financial year which will help us to identify areas where cohesion needs strengthening.
7. One of the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan 2016-21 is Community Cohesion. Neighbourhood Policing is the mechanism through which West Yorkshire Police works with communities to foster relationships, facilitate community partnerships and further our understanding of the communities we serve. Our communities are best placed to know whether we are achieving our vision and through engagement and working with local people we will be able to make a difference.
8. In recent years West Yorkshire Police has gone through a significant period of austerity. In responding to these challenges there have been a number of structural changes to our delivery model. Whilst Neighbourhood Policing has remained a constant, the form and function have changed significantly. It is widely accepted that the move to increase officers on patrol in February 2016 has been to the detriment of traditional Neighbourhood work, albeit necessary to facilitate the investment of almost 300 officers into Safeguarding and meet increased levels of both crime and call demand. Furthermore after the recent HMIC inspection on vulnerability two Districts have had to temporarily move a number of officers from Neighbourhood Policing into Safeguarding to fulfil this specific 'Area For Improvement' (AFI) set by the HMIC.
9. Neighbourhood Policing is the bedrock upon which West Yorkshire Police delivers policing services. In developing towards the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) Vision 2025 we need to build upon our joint problem solving in partnership at a local level as we develop integrated Local Public Services. We are committed to reinvesting in Neighbourhood Policing but need to ensure all our resources are used effectively and efficiently, it is therefore critical that our policing model is fit for policing in the future and that the additional investment of up to 100 posts delivers a significant step change in our performance.
10. Through effective engagement with our communities, we will identify the issues which matter most to them. By working in partnership and mobilising citizenship to tackle these issues, we will build community resilience and strengthen cohesion.
11. HMIC in the recent PEEL 'effectiveness' Inspection raised concerns around Neighbourhood Policing and found that *'the force engages differently with the public in different localities and, as a result, cannot be confident in its understanding of the issues that cause the greatest concern to the people of West Yorkshire.'*
12. West Yorkshire Police is currently undergoing a period of significant reinvestment. Recruitment is currently ongoing for both Officers and PCSOs not only to fill existing vacancies but to increase

the number of posts by 200, with up to 100 posts being invested directly into Neighbourhood Policing. Of note, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) had confirmed his commitment to Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) and the 2016/2017 establishment of 571 will remain in 2017/2018. Likewise, the refreshed Police and Crime Plan commits to the numbers and also protects the frontline.

13. As a force WYP are mindful of and have undertaken measures to monitor tensions in relation to some of the key areas which threaten cohesion such as Brexit, the General Election, Domestic Extremism, Migration, Police Resourcing Levels, Human Trafficking, Offender Management and Anti-social behaviour. In order to assist with reducing some of these tensions and working together with communities it is essential that we engage fully with our communities to understand their needs. Our engagement strategy will interlink with our inclusion strategy to ensure that real and perceived barriers to cohesion can be identified by a representative workforce who are empowered to overcome these barriers with creative and innovative solutions.
14. West Yorkshire Police commits to represent everyone who lives, works and visits the county, to listen and be alert to what matters to people, to respond professionally to concerns, and to build positive relationships through inclusion and community involvement. By valuing difference, both in terms of the diversity of physical representation of our organisation, but also the diversity of our thinking we will be better able to make decisions. Ultimately this will build trust and confidence within our communities and assist in mobilising active citizenship.
15. We will work together to tackle local community safety concerns, support work to improve community cohesion and integration, and build stronger, safer and more sustainable communities.
16. Working together we will see an increase in public feelings of safety, an increase in public confidence and trust and an improvement of community relationships with the police.

17. ONGOING WORK AND DEVELOPMENTS

18. Accountability and governance frameworks for Neighbourhood Policing at both a local and force level have been implemented to ensure continuous governance of neighbourhood policing and community engagement.
19. The project team has consulted with Districts to 'benchmark' current levels of community engagement. This data has been used to draw up an engagement map which has been used to identify gaps and best practice.
20. An engagement strategy is currently in development. Once drafted this will be rolled out for consultation with Districts, the OPCC and key stakeholders to ensure the vision is clear and can be delivered upon.
21. A short video is currently in production which will be launched as part of a social media engagement campaign. The video will focus on Neighbourhood Policing and Engagement and will lead those watching to a questionnaire which will allow the project team to consult directly

with the public and understand their current needs and what they would like their Neighbourhood Policing teams to deliver for them. This is a real opportunity to assist in mobilising active citizenship and there are plans for a series of videos, each with a different focus, to be released on social media.

22. A community engagement 'toolkit' is also in development which will support District's with tactical delivery of the engagement strategy.
23. The project team are working closely with the force training school to ensure that every member of West Yorkshire Police understand that engagement is everyone's business. The recent uplift in recruitment has presented a unique opportunity to ensure that new officers and staff members are empowered, and equipped with the skills, to engage with the public through every interaction whether that is via social media, when guarding a scene guard, responding to a call for service or at a community meeting.

24. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

25. An Equality & Human Rights impact assessment has been developed for the project which considers the potential impact on staff and the public. This will be refreshed throughout the life of the project to ensure that any proposals included in the Business case have fully considered any impact.

26. STRATEGIC RISK IMPLICATIONS

27. Community engagement and cohesion has been flagged as a strategic risk and the Neighbourhood Review project has been tasked with mitigating this risk. In part this will be delivered through an uplift in resourcing and a refocus on neighbourhood policing. The creation of a robust engagement strategy will ensure a corporate vision which can be delivered on a tactical level.
28. The project has identified the following as potential risks in effective delivery of the engagement and cohesion strategy:
 - Resourcing – potential limited capacity to reinvest in neighbourhood policing.
 - Culture – resistance to change or a lack of understanding what is required.
 - Governance – accountability is crucial to the success of the strategy and any changes in governance could effect this.
 - Performance – what does success look like? The impact of cohesion and engagement is difficult to measure in terms of performance which may lead to a misinterpretation of the effectiveness of engagement.
 - Partners/Stakeholders – differences in what responses are capable of being delivered and also what capacity there is for service delivery.

29. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Nil