



**Cumbria Office of the  
Police and Crime Commissioner**

**Public Engagement Strategy  
2016 -2020**

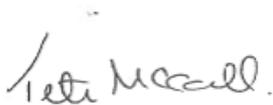
## Foreword from Cumbria's Police and Crime Commissioner

Welcome to the Public Engagement Strategy for 2016/20. This Strategy covers the period May 2016 – March 2020 and outlines my approach to engaging with the public and communities across Cumbria.

As Police and Crime Commissioner I am elected to provide a voice for the public in policing and to ensure that local people's views are considered in deciding on police priorities.

Already some good public engagement takes place within Cumbria, and I intend to build on this and continue to link with partners to ensure that we connect, develop and bring resources to boost activity so that people feel they are able to make a difference by their contribution.

Finally, one of my manifesto pledges was to raise the profile and increase the public's awareness and knowledge of what the Police and Crime Commissioner does, and this is something else I want to achieve through my activities over the next few years.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter McCall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small mark above the first letter.

Peter McCall  
Police and Crime Commissioner

# Part One: The Policy on Community Engagement and Participation

## 1. Introduction

The OPCC is committed to ensure a direct dialogue between the Police and Crime Commissioner (Commissioner) and the people of Cumbria. Information gathered by the OPCC will form an integral part of the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan which sets out the future policing priorities for the next four years.

The OPCC will be pro-active as well as reactive and will cover the core business areas of: community and public engagement, complaints and Quality of Service issues.

The Commissioner has a statutory obligation to engage with communities under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 as well as to consider the welfare of victims.

The Public Engagement strategy will run alongside the Constabulary's engagement plan as well as in conjunction with the existing partners work at district councils and the county council.

## 2. Our Commitment

The Commissioner will listen to and value the voice of the people in policing matters.

## 3. Objective

To ensure communities are given the opportunity to participate to the fullest possible extent in the decisions that affect their lives and in delivering the police services that make a difference to them. To offer a wide range of engagement activities to give as many people as possible including diverse groups an opportunity to participate.

## 4. Aims

To ensure that through the use of a wide range of approaches the Commissioner actively listens, considers and effectively uses the views of residents as an integral part of his decision making.

We asked

You said

We did

## **5. Principles of Public Engagement**

- To ensure that engagement is undertaken to the highest standard and the findings are accurate and can be used to influence strategic decisions.
- The engagement activities will be two-way and where possible people are informed of their influence on decisions and the results.
- A clear strategy linked to key dates is defined so that the OPCC is open, transparent, accountable and people's opinions are valued.
- People are confident that their views are being gathered, listened to and used to improve police services and improve knowledge and confidence in the role of the Commissioner.
- To increase awareness of the role and the work of the Commissioner.
- To build and develop relationships between the Commissioner, public, partners, private sector, volunteers and third sector.
- To recognise and respect the various cultures (protected characteristics) and diversity of communities and other factors that influence how different members of the public will engage/ are likely to communicate and engage in all aspects of designing and implementing community engagement approaches.
- Provision of a comprehensive and robust communications strategy using all forms of communication.

## **6. Strategy Outcomes**

- People feel that their voice is being heard.
- Raise the profile and understanding of the Commissioner's role.
- All results are used to improve decision making and that the decisions are firmly based on the evidence of local needs alongside strategic policing.
- Ensure that the results of the community engagement are communicated and where required linked to improve services and quality of service.
- Communities feel that they have been empowered.
- All partners and the third sector feel that their voices are being included in decision making.
- Actively engage groups that don't normally participate with the Police and diverse communities are afforded the opportunity to as well. Utilising the Strategic Independent Advisory members and their groups.
- The information ascertained from complaints is used to influence decisions and future quality of service.

## 7. Community Engagement

There are a range of techniques for engaging different audiences. Due to the diversity of techniques and the wider ranging issues that the Commissioner may potential engage upon, it is important to have a set of guiding principles for public engagement.

Best practice suggests that the following five strategic principles are developed for undertaking engagement programmes:

- **Strategy and Planning** – be clear about the purpose of what the engagement activity seeks to achieve
- **Clarity and framing** – look at the context of the engagement including wider cultural, social and media context
- **Transparency and Responsiveness** – consider the people who should be involved, what their needs are, and what support may help them take part
- **Integrity of Process** – design the process and choose a method that is appropriate to the purpose, context and people
- **Outcome** – set the goals and overall objectives and engagement principles

The Commissioner will have four strategic areas that will require on-going community engagement:

- Police and Crime Priorities – linking to the Police and Crime Plan
- Budget – value for money and future levels of council tax precept
- Quality of Service – ensuring that the service provided meets expectations
- Victims – consider the welfare of victims

In addition there may be other community engagement that takes place throughout the Commissioner's tenure.

Parts 2 and 3 of this strategy set out the comprehensive range of techniques and the use of them throughout the next four years.

Evaluation is key for community engagement. The results are will be summarised for the Public Accountability Conference on a half-yearly basis and used to influence decisions. Results will where possible be shared openly and transparently to increase future participation in engagement opportunities.

## **8. Communications**

Communication is paramount for the Commissioner and the OPCC. As a result a separate strategy has been developed to include all types of communication from internal to external and online and offline.

## **9. Feedback, Compliments and Complaints**

Feedback, compliments and complaints will provide the OPCC with a good source of information about the quality of service that the Constabulary is providing and the issues that are arising. The Commissioner will have satellite offices in Kendal and Workington so that when required he can engage directly with people. If necessary, alternative arrangements will be made if people want to meet the Commissioner away from police premises.

The Commissioner's Office only deals with complaints directly against the Chief Constable. All complaints below the rank of Chief Constable are dealt with by the Chief Constable or on their behalf by someone in the Constabulary. This is further supported by the Commissioner 'dip sampling' the Constabulary's processes and procedures for monitoring, overall numbers handling complaints and main issues which takes place on a quarterly basis.

There is a policy and process in place to deal with both complaints and quality of service issues.

A full review of complaints and quality of service issues will be reported to Commissioner on a regular as well as the statutory obligation to consider the welfare of victims.

## **10. Equality and Diversity**

Cumbria has a diverse population that is constantly changing as well as a large rural area with a scattered population. It is often these individuals plus people that don't engage with the police that feel isolated and are important to engage with to build a level of understanding and involvement. The OPCC understands and recognises that there are a number of third party and voluntary groups (both paid and un-paid) that work with and represent these groups and where possible these will be used to support any engagement especially specific engagement with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act refers to nine different protected characteristics – age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Act also covers those that do not see themselves as protected characteristics and this will be considered. For Cumbria in addition to the protected characteristics rural isolation will also be considered.

The Commissioner has already started a dialogue with the Strategic Independent Advisory Group (SIAG) and this will be on-going throughout the strategy term. Any engagement will be undertaken with an awareness of the Equalities Act 2010 and our statutory obligations.

The Constabulary already has well developed relationships with protected characteristics voluntary groups and the OPCC plans to work together to build on these at a local level.

This strategy has a full Equality Analysis which has helped in the development of the strategy and identified the further work that needs to be undertaken.

This Engagement Strategy uses a wide range of engagement tools as people like to communicate in different ways and we want to provide people with that flexibility.

## Part Two – Options

Detailed below are a range of options that will be used by the Commissioner. The tactics cover a range of online and offline activities to ensure engagement is as inclusive as possible.

Communications /Media	Please see the separate communication strategy
Surveys	Online and paper surveys  Summer survey in conjunction with the Constabulary and using comprehensive and representative database of contacts  Crime Survey for England and Wales (previously British Crime Survey) – feedback quarterly
Feedback direct to OPCC, quality of service issues and complaints	Pulling all the data together to ascertain trends and any service issues and half-yearly reports to the Public Accountability Conference.
Online Commissioner Question Time	Quarterly Online Question Time for the Commissioner trying to focus on a specific area: e.g. budget, plan, rural crime.
Surgeries (MP Style) Or Community drop-in sessions	Rotating around each TPAs (North/South/West) in a variety of venues, ie. village halls, supermarkets, libraries, community centres, etc.
Public speaking arrangements	Speaking directly to community groups - at least one in each TPA per quarter
Public meetings	To join or participate in public meetings about key issues
Public Places	Commissioner and OPCC staff visit supermarkets / agricultural shows / events/town centres

Virtual meetings	Web discussion and questions to consider webcams and questions for Public Accountability Conferences.
Meetings, forums, seminars, exhibitions and conferences	e.g. youth or vulnerable people, re-offenders to ascertain views and perceptions
Email, letters, newsletters, leaflets	Signing up to an email circulation list
Annual policing report	To be produced each year
Partners	Using partner publications and working together on joint consultation e.g. Safer Cumbria, Safer Communities Network
Community Messaging	Use Community Messaging to get messages out to 6,000 + neighbourhood watch and farm watch members
Social Media and internet	On-going activity to promote the work and the role of the Commissioner and activities and engage with people directly
Staff consultation/ Question time	Consult with the staff within the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
Community events	Visiting NPT youth engagement e.g. youth café, use of property fund / grants for young people
Territorial Policing Areas/HQ Walkabout sessions	Commissioner to advertise to staff, officers and PCSOs time each quarter when he will be visiting a TPA/HQ to speak to people or take telephone calls
Video Blogs	Commissioner in conjunction with internet technology developments to communicate via video blogs