



Office of Police and Crime Commissioner
Office of Chief Constable

Corporate Communications

Annual Report 2020 | 2021

7th June 2021



1. PURPOSE AND RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information for monitoring purposes and OPCC reporting.
- 1.2 There are no recommendations made requiring a decision.

2. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Communications is essential to telling the story of Heddlu Gwent Police. Whether it's building public confidence in our services and our work to protect our communities or explaining our approach to the use of public resources communications is key to delivery.
- 1.2 This is the first full year of operation within the new resourcing model for the Corporate Communications team with the majority of posts in the new structure now filled.
- 1.3 The Annual Report also covers an unprecedented period of a national pandemic, the first of this scale experienced across the UK in recent times.
- 1.4 The report is structured to reflect our work to support the delivery of the Police and Crime Commissioner's objectives for 2017 – 2021.

3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Crime Prevention

Throughout the year the team has run proactive campaigns on a range of themes aimed at supporting our communities in avoiding becoming victims of crime, or perpetrating crimes.

Road policing has been a key theme throughout the year with 110 social media posts covering drink and drug driving, mobile phone use, young drivers and speeding, often working in partnership with Go Safe. This has generated nearly 3,500 clicks through to further information, a reach of 2.6 million and a 3.1% engagement rate*. A sentiment analysis provides a 79.5% positive to neutral rating.

**While engagement rates vary by platform an engagement rate of over 0.5% is considered reasonable with anything above 2% regarded as extremely positive.*



With people spending more time at home during the pandemic cyber-crime, in particular fraud, was high on the agenda. From media interviews to online events and digital content we have shared advice on how to stay safe online. 136 social media posts linked to this topic over the year generated 1200 clicks for more detail, a reach of 1.4m and a 3.05% engagement rate. A sentiment analysis provides a 69.5% positive to neutral rating – with 14.5% of those rated positive which makes it the best received crime prevention campaign run during the year.

Over the **Christmas** period we ran a targeted campaign focussing on the key advice linked to the festive period. This was adjusted from our usual campaigns to reflect new priorities during the pandemic.

Later in the year we have worked with the newly created ***We don't buy crime*** team to create and source resources to support officers in promoting and engaging the community with the new approach, and to plan the launch with the team both internally and externally. This was a resource-intensive project for the team on both communications and design.

The period also saw the BBC series **Crash Detectives**, filmed with Gwent Police, move from BBC Wales to network television. Each episode was watched by 2m viewers. This is a huge achievement for the series which examines the causes of serious collisions and with series three already filmed its first transmission in Summer 2021 will take place on national BBC2. A commitment to film series four has been made.

As part of our **Caught and in court** approach we are gaining traction across social and traditional media sharing the consequences of committing crime. By producing more regular content we have gained increasing prominence for the work of our operational teams. Caught and in court is the most frequently used search term on our website.

3.2 Supporting Victims

The risk of domestic abuse was heightened by the pandemic lock down and campaigns were run throughout the year to encourage victims to make contact with either Gwent Police or our partners – the message focussed on help remaining available despite the restrictions in place.

Working with the Survivor Engagement Coordinator we created a short film to mark Domestic Abuse (DA) and Sexual Violence (SV) awareness week. This proved particularly impactful. Although a relatively low number of individuals viewed the video, the duration of viewing greatly exceeded the usual viewing times for social video content. (detail).

Over the Christmas period we also created a video with a survivor of domestic violence not just helping fellow survivors, but the individual involved who shared that the opportunity has benefitted her a great deal. This also gained ITV Wales coverage expanding the reach of the messaging.



With the OPCC leading on White Ribbon Day communications we supported by sharing our activities on social media and arranging media interviews with DCC Blakeman.

We have also supported virtual engagement events with survivors of DV (Domestic Violence) and SA (Sexual Assault), encouraging participation through our social media channels. For 11 posts over a two-month period there was an engagement rate of 0.33 per cent with a total reach of 482,268 reflecting a smaller target audience.

The Corporate communications team play an active role in supporting the Victim's Board and is currently working towards the launch of the new Victims' Hub.

Internally we have increasingly ensured that our messaging on behaviour change, or changes in practice focus on the beneficial outcomes for victims of crime, constantly reminding ourselves of why we are working to tackle crime.

3.3 Community Cohesion

The pandemic brought a halt to our main engagement event Behind the Badge as a physical event and so the team devised an online event which was very successful. Due to the COVID-19 situation, the 2020 Force open day was facing cancellation. However, given the success of the previous two years, Gwent Police were able to create a virtual open day which was shared through social media. While unable to capture the breadth of a real-life event, the online event was highly successful in highlighting the work of the force.

The first year of the open day saw over 19k attendees, and the second year over 14k. Across all social media platforms over 51k people viewed our videos with an average watch time of 2 mins 30 seconds which is unheard of on social media when a 30 second watch time is more usual. Hosting the event online enabled us to engage with close to 10% of our population.

The success of the event will ensure that, regardless of decisions around our real-life event, we will continue to offer the opportunity for on-line engagement, as this is crucial to engaging a broader section of our community. Ensuring this early commitment will also enable us to improve our on-line offering to reflect more of our work in a range of ways.

Throughout the pandemic the team has worked closely with the Chief Officer team to balance our engagement with the public around following the regulations and legislation relating to lock down. By carefully balancing our 'thank you' messages and positive reinforcement with messages around the consequences of not following the requirements we have maintained public support overall.

We have taken the time to recognise elements of our communities who wanted to see the police take enforcement action and were themselves taking great care to follow the guidance, against messages focussed on those who were putting our communities at risk.

At the start of the pandemic Gwent Police was the dominant voice appearing regularly on both ITV and BBC broadcast media, and we have continued this engagement throughout ensuring filming opportunities wherever possible. We have also highlighted partnership



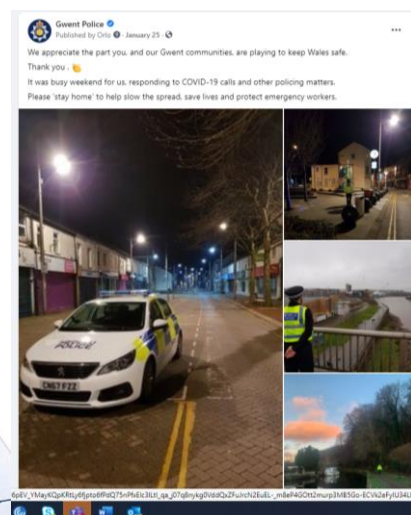
work such as working with local authority licencing officers at different times to ensure compliance of pubs for example.

The team has worked to create a number of different approaches during the year to ensure content remains fresh and engaging. The use of analytics has enabled us to identify how each approach is landing with the audience and refine our approach. Innovative approaches included a children's colouring book launched during the first lock down, quizzes and videos aimed at providing a distraction which generated positive engagement.

The development of the Confidence Strategy provides a direction of travel for our communications planning; the supporting survey results will enable us to focus our efforts in support of neighbourhood teams to tackle specific local issues as well as address Gwent-wide reputational issues.

Alongside this we supported the South Wales Argus Pride of Gwent awards along with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). By switching our sponsorship to a community focussed category, we were involved with three winners: nominating the winners of the 999 category, sponsoring the Community Hero category and Police Constable Mark Powell won the Life Saver Award.

The team has also developed and delivered communications to support a range of engagement events including Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) community online events, recruitment campaigns and supported community engagement as part of the new Head Quarters (HQ) development.



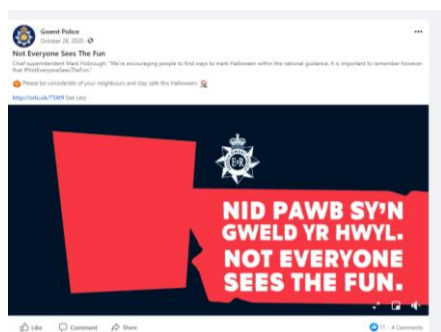
3.4 Tackling Anti-social Behaviour

Throughout the year we have sought to work with our partners to clarify the types of behaviour Gwent Police can address – this included devising a poster for local teams in the West to direct individuals to the correct agency.

Local campaigns such as Operation Harley which tackled off road biking force-wide with successful media and social media traction gained over specific work in Blaenau Gwent.

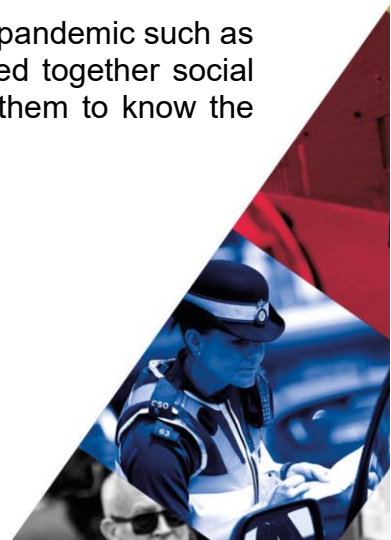


Campaign focussing on Halloween and November 5th targeted behaviour linked to these events.



The team has also been quick to respond to emerging issues during the pandemic such as unaccompanied children breaching restrictions. The team quickly pulled together social media content and generated media interest to target parents asking them to know the whereabouts of their family.

3.5 Effective Service Delivery



Internal comms during pandemic has meant working at pace to ensure officers and staff were up to speed with changes in the regulations and legislation, wellbeing changes around Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and best working practices. In order to target communications for officers we developed a new communications channel and provided daily operational updates, moving to twice weekly or ad hoc updates as the situation stabilised.

We have also supported a change in working practices to help managers and staff navigate home working to ensure that support services were delivered to front-line officers. The communications team also demonstrated the ability to maintain an effective office-based presence to ensure that a press office function and support for proactive media carried out by chief officers was maintained.

Communications to support the implementation of the estates strategy continued through the year. Internal communications focussed on the new HQ development and covered events to engage staff in selecting furniture, regularly updating on developments at the site, organising a topping out ceremony at the site and working with BAM on their community engagement agenda.

A virtual event to recognise some of the great achievements of staff and officers attracted 135 participants. The online awards ceremony was organised by Chief Officer Executive Support Team (COEST) and the communications team and ensured that the work of officers and staff who went above and beyond was acknowledged, alongside those receiving long service awards. The team also designed and arranged the creation of a Covid-19 pin as a recognition and thank you to everyone working during the pandemic.

A significant amount of work has supported recruitment, positive outreach work and sharing operation uplift progress with our public to reassure them on our visibility and capacity to tackle crime across Gwent.

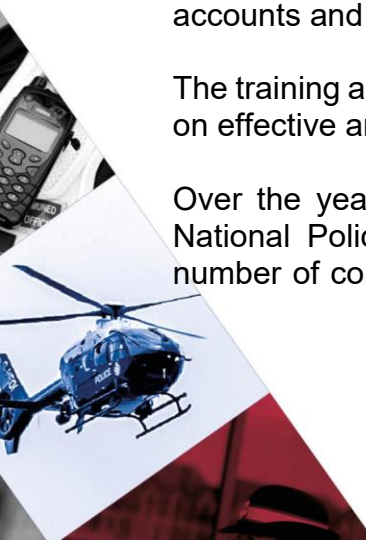
4. Behind the Scenes

The move to single online home, the new force website was a significant strand of work for the team. From creating new photography, ensuring relevant and up-to-date content for the move and tackling early teething issues the team worked to ensure the move was successful.

A major tender for a new social media platform carried out with Dyfed Powys Police concluded this year and Orlo was introduced in October. The team trained nearly 200 officers and staff to ensure that the transfer was successful for the social media desk, and to all social media users across the force. The new platform provides better oversight of all accounts and more robust analytics to improve future activity.

The training also provided an opportunity to refresh the understanding of social media users on effective and appropriate use of these channels to raise engagement.

Over the year the team has also managed our social media presence in line with the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) Digital Strategy target operating model. The number of corporate accounts has reduced from 75 to 24 which enables to public to find



relevant and targeted content from Gwent Police more easily. An agreed strategy is in place which will continue over the coming year.

Internal communications across the force developed over the year. The team carried an internal communication audit which enables improved targeting of messaging and best use of existing channels. A dedicated internal communications role is in place to ensure that internal communications continues to develop over the coming year.

The team played a key role in introducing the new values to the force and continue to work to embed the values. As part of this work the team also developed a refresh corporate identity for the force which is in use across the force. The aim was to update our look and feel to reflect our new values and priorities. The design team undertook a significant piece of work to ensure that this was delivered in-house. Work is now underway to ensure that this branding is also reflected in our estate including the new HQ.

Alongside this, two additional documents are in place to set out the force's style guide and tone of voice. This enables Gwent Police to present a consistent approach to public audiences and reminds us all to maintain an approachable and accessible voice in our engagement. Training and discussions with key groups including COEST and Local Policing Area (LPA) inspectors. Work to build familiarity with the approach will continue.

The team has worked hard to support recruitment, uplift and diversity & inclusion agendas to ensure that Gwent Police is positioned as an employer of choice at all levels, and reflective of the community it serves.

5. Evaluation

Website

The analytics for single on-line home apply from 27 November 2020 when we transferred to the new site and do not therefore represent a full year. However, in four months we have:

106,194 sessions

241,122 views

01:29 average duration of visit – this gives an indication of whether the site user found information of use

4,478 online forms started

2,235 online forms submitted

New visitors | 72,347

Returning visitors | 33,874

The most frequently visited pages indicated that recruitment and news are the most popular reasons for visiting the site and reflect the areas where the force has the most ability to direct local content. Work to improve our use of the new format will continue.



The majority of visitors who reach the site are directed via social media (46k), with referrals from organic searches eg search engines the next most popular entry point (39.5)

The Beat - intranet

The following stats run from **1 October 2020**:

Total page views: **2,369,280** – this is a 10% increase on the same period last year which reflects improved content and the necessity for staff and officers to keep up to date with a rapidly changing situation throughout the pandemic.

Discussions are underway with Digital Services Department (DSD) to improve the Beat further and to ensure it fully reflects Gwent Police's requirements.

Social media accounts

	FACEBOOK	TWITTER	INSTAGRAM
CONNECTIONS (GROWTH)	127,672 to 136,300 (6.7%)	75,200 to 119k (58%)	14.7 to 18.4k (25.1%)
IMPRESSIONS	35 million	7.8 million	934k
REACH	17.8 million	122.6million	601k
ENGAGEMENT RATE	0.83*	0.56*	2.51 (1-3 is considered good for Instagram)
LINK CLICKS^	97.5k	27.3k	n/a
POSITIVE/NEUTRAL SENTIMENT	74.8%	74.5%	80.5%
GENDER BALANCE F/M	63%/37%	47.15/52.8%	n/a

^ link clicks are a good indication of the number of individuals seeking more information on our posts and clicking through to SOH etc for more detail.

This indicates that:

- Facebook continues to be the channel of choice for our social media engagement, although Twitter has a wider reach these followers tend not to be Gwent -based
- Facebook generates the most user engagement although this fluctuates widely across posts
 - Our work to grow our following by using more visual content on Instagram is having a significant impact on the number of followers
 - The strategy to consolidate the number of social media accounts the force holds which was initiated last year in line with the national strategy has led to a dramatic increase

in followers on Twitter. This is likely to be a one-off bounce rate and next year we will target a more sustainable growth level.

- Our engagement rate remains lower on Twitter due to the number of posts each day given the number of operational updates we provide to the public – the more posts, the lower the level of engagement as content drops from followers' feeds.

Social media analytics for each campaign are now available through Orlo and are used to ensure the team uses the learning to refine and improve future campaigns.

Media

The pandemic has created a very different opportunity for media engagement over the year. The planned strategy focussed on developing our relationship with all media outlets, in particular building our broadcast coverage, and increasing our focus on proactive work to deliver a compelling narrative of our work.

The pandemic enabled us to accelerate our relationship building and the early discussions with editors and producers quickly translated into opportunities to demonstrate our commitment to positioning Gwent Police as a leader in our local communities, and across Wales, with a strong narrative on our role within the pandemic. We have continued this throughout balancing our messaging to ensure a positive relationship with the public is maintained. Throughout we have worked to be a trusted voice

Alongside this we have worked with media outlets to focus on key areas of concern magnified by the pandemic such as domestic violence, cyber crime and our ongoing work to tackle crime in our communities.

Maintaining an office presence throughout the pandemic has enabled the media team to maintain a high level of service in responding to media enquiries, but also in supporting the senior team in engaging with the media through interviews.

Our engagement with the media has broadened with an additional 126 news sources reporting on Gwent Police activity this year. The South Wales Argus (print and online) remains the top source for coverage and our coverage with this key outlet has increased by 29% over the past year.

One of our key objectives for the year was to increase our coverage with regional broadcast media and over the past 12 months we have delivered a 30% increase in coverage across radio and TV, with much improved relationships with BBC Radio Wales, BBC Wales tv and ITV Wales. These outlets remain key to reaching audiences who do not engage with social media, and for younger audiences who turned to the BBC for trusted news updates throughout the pandemic.

This has also had an impact on our national coverage with an increase of 27%, although remaining relatively low instances of 100 appearances over the year.



6. COLLABORATION

- 6.1 Throughout the year the team has worked closely with colleagues across the force to deliver communications support on key projects and issues, internally and externally.
- 6.2 The team has also taken an active role in the local resilience forum and part of the Gwent response to the pandemic. We have shared resources and campaigns, and supported partners with their messaging throughout the year.
- 6.3 The team is also active on an all-Wales approach and ensuring that on county-wide issues policing presents a unified voice. Work is currently on-going to develop a campaign tackling assaults on emergency workers.
- 6.4 Work with the Independent Office of Police Conduct (IOPC) has also been key this year dealing with sensitive topics where there is a high level of community concern.

7. NEXT STEPS

- 7.1 The new communications strategy will be developed this year to support the revised police and crime commissioner's objectives. This will set the framework for the ongoing focus of the team.

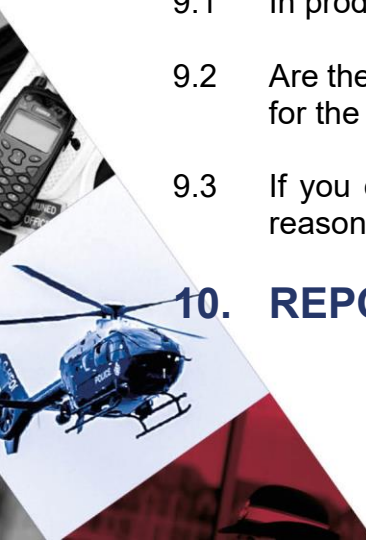
8. EQUALITIES & HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 This report has been considered against the general duty to promote equality, as stipulated under the Joint Strategic Equality Plan and has been assessed not to discriminate against any particular group.
- 8.2 In preparing this report, consideration has been given to requirements of the Articles contained in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998.

9. PUBLIC INTEREST

- 9.1 In producing this report, has consideration been given to 'public confidence'? Yes
- 9.2 Are the contents of this report, observations and appendices necessary and suitable for the public domain? Yes
- 9.3 If you consider this report to be exempt from the public domain, please state the reasons: n/a

10. REPORT AUTHOR



Nicola Wesson, Head of Corporate Communications.

11. LEAD CHIEF OFFICER

11.1 DCC Amanda Blakeman

12. CHIEF OFFICER APPROVAL

12.1 I confirm this report has been discussed and approved at a formal Chief Officers' meeting.

12.2 I confirm this report is suitable for the public domain.

Signature:



Date: 13th May 2021

Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent
I confirm that I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct. The above request has my approval.
Signature:
Date:

