

CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26

ADRODDIAD TÎM Y PRIF SWYDDOG

CHIEF OFFICER TEAM REPORT

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CRYNODEB GWEITHREDOL | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This annual report provides an overview of Corporate Communications activity during 2025/26 and demonstrates how the function has supported Gwent Police's strategic priorities, the Chief Constable's Delivery Plan, organisational culture, and the ambition to improve trust and confidence with both communities and the workforce.

During the reporting period, the team delivered a high volume of reactive, proactive, internal and digital communications activity in a challenging operating context, including capacity pressures arising from vacancies, absence and temporary role arrangements. Despite these pressures, the team increased the reach and visibility of Gwent Police activity, supported major operational and organisational priorities, strengthened internal engagement, and provided communications leadership on high-profile and sensitive matters including misconduct, information disorder, community reassurance and public confidence.

Key achievements include significant growth in media coverage and opportunities to see, increased proactive communications output, continued development of digital channels, strong performance across video content, launch of the Gwent Police WhatsApp channel, and sustained internal engagement through leadership communications, the Employee Opinion Survey, Force Direction Forum, recognition activity and culture-focused messaging.

The report is presented for monitoring and information. There are no decisions required, although future governance papers are expected in relation to video subtitling software, digital signage costs and proposed role regrading within the communications team. These areas should be considered in the context of increasing demand, growing digital expectations, accessibility requirements and the need to maintain effective communications capacity across internal, external and public-facing channels.

PURPOSE AND RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of this report is for monitoring and information. It details the work delivered under the Corporate Communications strategy and how communications activity supported organisational priorities during 2025/26, particularly the Chief Constable's Delivery Plan, the development of organisational culture and our ambition to improve trust and confidence among our workforce and communities.

There are no recommendations made requiring a decision.

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

This year's Annual Report focuses on the priorities identified as part of the corporate communications strategy for 2024 – 2026.

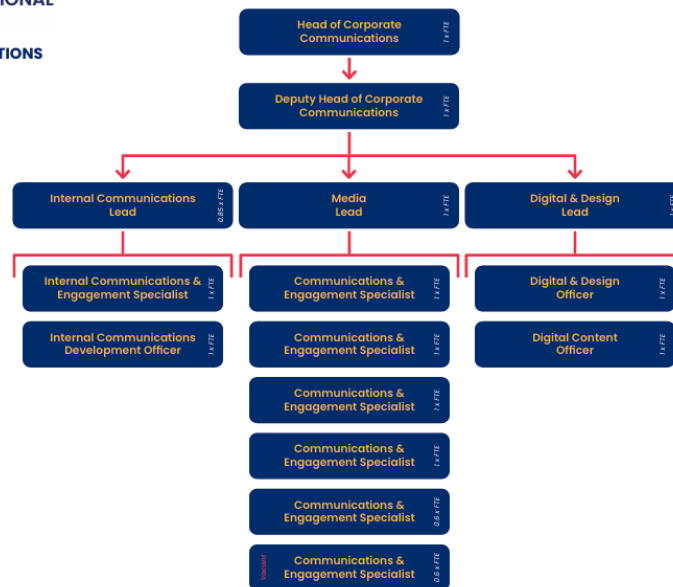
Our efforts remain focused on supporting the business objectives of Gwent Police and ultimately improving trust and confidence with our staff, volunteers and our communities.



The report captures key themes and highlights for the year.

TEAM STRUCTURE

The team delivers a 24/7 news service, internal communications, strategic campaigns (internal and external), digital communications, graphic design, multi-media, and events.



During 2025/26, the team was fully resourced except for one part-time media role and the Head of Communications post. Long-term absence, maternity leave and shared parental leave meant the team operated between 15% and 23% below capacity at times. This affected workload, demand and team wellbeing. The Deputy Head of Communications has also been acting up as Head of Department for the past 18 months, adding further capacity pressures.

In 2024-2025, we made changes to the external communications team structure by moving more resources into proactive media roles and aligning these to the Op Model pillar structures of crime, response and neighbourhood. These changes have increased productivity and ownership from team members in their portfolio areas and have offered opportunities to develop their skillsets.

Due to an increase in demand for internal communications last year, we successfully bid for a 12-month fixed term Communications and Engagement Specialist role for the internal team. This position was filled as a secondment development opportunity by a member of staff within the internal communications team. This allowed us to recruit a temporary additional internal team member in the Internal Communications and Development Officer role, boosting the internal team to three members from October 2025 to October 2026.

In the external communications team, we recruited a communications and engagement officer in a 12-month maternity cover post who started in July 2025.

HOW WE SUPPORT CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

CONDUCT AND CULTURE

- Foster a work environment where officers, staff and volunteers feel safe and valued and support the development of effective, trusted leadership.
- Build an inclusive culture that positively impacts on public trust and confidence both within our workforce and in our interactions with the community.
- Supporting organisational change by articulating compelling justifications for transformation and engaging stakeholders through transparent, effective communication.
- Promoting recognition and awards to honour achievements and positive workplace culture to enhance employee morale.
- Ensure the wellbeing of officers and staff threads throughout all our plans and strategies.

ENGAGEMENT

- Focus on engagement by listening to victims, our communities and colleagues, and involving and updating people as we act on the issues that matter to them.
- Help our colleagues build the skills to tell our story positively to different audiences.
- Deliver timely, engaging and targeted communications via the most appropriate channels.
- Ensure our communications reach the right people, with the right message, at the right time.
- Ensure a consistent and transparent approach to external communications to build confidence in our voice.
- Provide clarity and transparency throughout all communications.

OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

- Help build public confidence by increasing our people's awareness of organisational priorities and goals and their role in delivering them.



- Build our communities' confidence to report crime and change behaviour to prevent crime.
- Build our brand in a creative way to build engagement and support for the service.
- Ensure we use targeted channels internally and externally to meet audiences where they want to be.
- Develop our measurement strategies in order to evaluate as we develop our communications approach.
- Take a learning approach to adapt and refine our approaches to communications.

REACHING OUR AUDIENCES EXTERNALLY

Through our media monitoring system, we can see that in 2025 there were **13,356** published articles or broadcast pieces which referenced Gwent Police, compared with **7,456** in 2024. This represents an increase of more than **79%** in terms of all media coverage when comparing the two 12-month periods.

This coverage generated around **14 billion** opportunities to see, up from **3.87 billion** the previous year. Opportunities to See (OTS) is a measurement offered by our media analysis platform. It is an estimate of the potential audience reached through media coverage. It reflects the number of opportunities people had to encounter Gwent Police coverage across print, online and broadcast media, based on independently sourced audience figures. It should be viewed as an indicator of potential reach rather than the number of people who definitely saw the coverage. The opportunities to see is calculated by our media analysis platform which uses audience data such as:

- **Online news** – estimated monthly website visitors or readership.
- **Print media** – circulation and readership figures.
- **Broadcast** – viewing or listening audience data.

Our approach increasingly prioritises outlets and content formats that have the greatest reach with our target audiences. Our priority remains Gwent residents, followed by those who regularly visit the area and stakeholders who influence public confidence.

To ensure that these groups have the opportunity to see our coverage, we have explored the use of national and regional broadcast opportunities, including BBC Cymru Wales and ITV Cymru Wales as well as their network counterparts, alongside our own social media channels and traditional print media to tell our story in 2025/26.

We have also built relationships with hyperlocal community radio stations, such as Newport City Radio and Blaenau Gwent FM, to ensure we are reaching people across our communities who want updates on the issues affecting their specific area.

In terms of where those media references appeared, we saw rises across each of the three distinct areas – broadcast, press and web.

The biggest percentage increase was seen in **broadcast (TV and radio)**, which went from **697** pieces in 2024 to **1,655** in 2025 equating to an increase of more than **137%**. **Web** stories, which account for our highest volume of hits, also more than doubled.

As the majority of this broadcast coverage was either positive or balanced (**93.77%**), this indicates to us that a greater proportion of people will either see or hear about the work of Gwent Police in keeping their communities safe which may then result in a boost to trust and confidence.

There were **9,167** stories in 2025 compared to **4,496** in 2024 – a rise of more than **103%** - while **press** articles also rose by 12% from 2,263 to **2,534**.

CURRENT DEMAND

The external press team has maintained the same structure as referenced in the 2024 report to match with the wider organisational pillars, with two communications and engagement specialists focussing on the neighbourhood pillar, two within the response pillar – which predominantly pick up reactive media queries in the press desk – and one member of the team with the responsibility for the crime pillar.

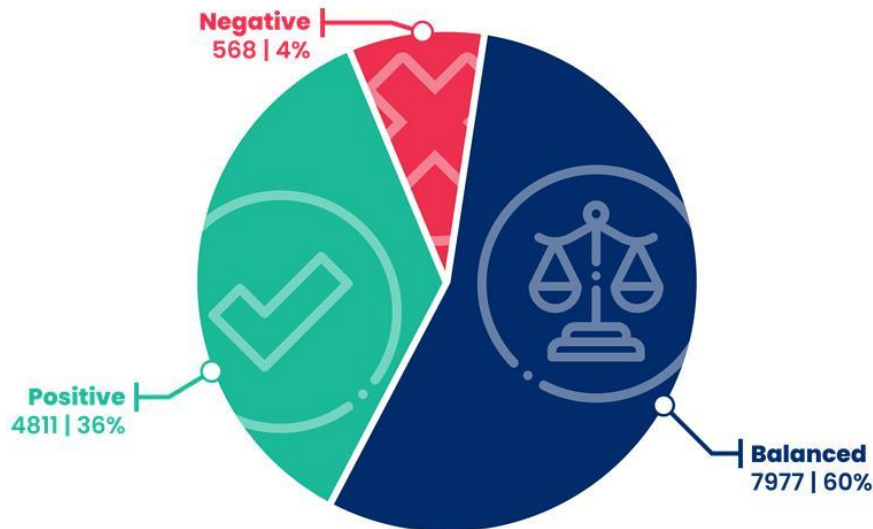
Our demand continues to include high volumes of local media queries, particularly from outlets such as the South Wales Argus, Wales Online, BBC Cymru Wales and ITV Cymru Wales and this is to be expected given their proximity to our service area.

The team handled 2,860 media enquiries in 2025, which is an increase of more than 13% on the previous year when there were 2,515 submitted to the press office.

The department dealt with 235 call outs as part of the out-of-hours press office service in 2025.

TONE AND SENTIMENT





Each piece of coverage that refers to Gwent Police which our media monitoring software system picks up is manually reviewed by a member of the department and then categorised as either 'balanced', 'negative' or 'positive.'

The table above represents a breakdown of the entire coverage from 2025 based on the tone or sentiment of each article.

Positive coverage: despite a drop in overall percentage, a higher volume of positive stories

We see that positive coverage is driven by good criminal justice outcomes, proactive operational activity and content which showed the public how officers are tackling issues affecting communities.

Examples of positive coverage include the investigation into the assault on PC Nathan Attwell, the return of Crash Detectives and a mini documentary for Operation Mayland.

Although 41% of our coverage was positive in 2024 compared to 36% in 2025, we saw 1,855 more articles or references to Gwent Police in the media which were classed as positive.

Negative coverage: a fall in volume and percentage

Negative coverage was largely linked to professional standards and misconduct proceedings, IOPC updates, inquests and other sensitive incidents.

Although only 4% of our coverage was negative in 2025, down from 9% in 2024 and 104 fewer articles across the two 12-month timeframes, these stories can generate high volumes of coverage and have a negative impact on public trust and confidence within our communities and among the workforce.

The perception of negative media is high within the organisation. As part of Team Gwent input and follow-up articles on the Beat, we have sought to give colleagues a clearer understanding of media coverage and how the volume of negative media coverage is far less than often assumed when compared to either balanced or positive articles.

Balanced coverage: the majority of day-to-day media reporting

Balanced coverage refers to our day-to-day policing appeals and requests for information, and it remains an important part of our work because it keeps communities informed and demonstrates transparency.



EXTERNAL PROACTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

In 2025, the team issued 1,544 statements and press releases, compared with 1,222 in 2024. This was an increase of 322 outputs, or more than 26%.

Our media monitoring platform breaks this down into 929 statements and 615 press releases, covering both English and Welsh language outputs.

The platform also distinguishes between reactive and proactive outputs. In 2025, more than 42% of our statements and press releases were classed as proactive, reflecting our continued focus on increasing proactive communications activity.

This shift supports our aim to tell our own story through media engagement, rather than relying solely on responses to media enquiries. While reactive media work remains a significant part of day-to-day demand, we are continuing to identify opportunities to explain how we are keeping communities safe in a more accessible and people-focused way.



Highlights of the proactive work in 2025 include an ITV network package on e-bikes and anti-social behaviour which required several different filming opportunities and interviews with officers, resulting in more than 16 million opportunities to see, a rural crime team operation around nighthawking for BBC Cymru Wales, which achieved around 49.8 million opportunities to see and our interview with PC Nathan Attwell whose victim-led storytelling led to 49 articles generating 126 million opportunities to see and the video content achieving nearly 220,000 views across all channels.

The team, working closely with Design, has significantly increased short-form video content across our social media channels. In July, we used footage produced with the National Police Air Service (NPAS) to highlight officers' work to seize more than 300 vehicles linked to off-road bikes, electric bikes and e-scooters. The video addressed a key concern for

residents across both urban and rural communities and generated more than 216,000 impressions.



We also supported the launch of priority policing initiatives, including the launch of Neighbourhood Matters and the Community Action Team (CAT), through proactive communications. Content was filmed with CAT officers to in June 2025 to launch during Neighbourhood Policing Week of Action, the campaign and four-month update generated 109,000 social media impressions, reflecting strong engagement with our communities.

DOCUMENTARIES AND STANDALONE PROGRAMMES



We took part in several documentaries and standalone TV programmes during 2025/2026 covering a range of teams and topics. These formats help us reach large audiences while giving communities a behind-the-scenes look at policing, investigations and the work officers do to keep people safe.

BBC's *Crash Detectives* returned for its fifth series in October and November 2025, supported by internal and external communications activity led by Corporate Communications. Following a suggestion from the team, the BBC hosted a special screening event at Central Square, Cardiff, for officers, staff and family members involved in the

programme. The event helped celebrate the contribution of colleagues and included a Q&A with BBC presenter Claire Summers, series producer/director Jenny Casterton and forensic collision investigator Dean Burnett. An internal article on The Beat marked the launch of the series, while the Design team produced a video from the event to share highlights internally and recognise the officers and staff involved. Externally, we worked with the BBC on social media promotion throughout the series, using collaborative posts and short video clips to maximise reach and engagement. We also produced short interview clips with FCIU officers to show the people behind the investigations. The full series achieved 10.8 million views, with BBC social media clips receiving a further 4.27 million views.

The BBC Cymru Wales Catching a Crime Boss mini-documentary on Operation Mayland followed an organised crime investigation through to sentencing. It was one of the most read BBC website articles, received close to 90,000 iPlayer requests, was streamed for almost 24,000 hours and helped generate more than 66 million opportunities to see.

We also took part in Crimewatch and Crimewatch Caught, including the Operation Zetland episode, which resulted in 15.8 million opportunities to see and supported wider knife crime awareness work during Sceptre.

INFORMATION DISORDER IMPACTING OUR COMMUNITIES

Following national disorder during 2024, we continued to support community reassurance activity throughout 2025/26. This included attendance at community tension meetings, coordinated messaging with partners, providing accurate information to communities and issuing statements to counter misinformation while reinforcing action taken against criminal behaviour.

The team supported several incidents where inaccurate or misleading information circulating online had the potential to affect public confidence, community cohesion or operational policing activity. Local examples, including the Newbridge Scouts incident and Ebbw Vale Premier Inn-related narratives, demonstrated how online misinformation can contribute to community tensions, protest activity and public concern. In these cases, communications activity focused on providing accurate information, supporting partner engagement and helping de-escalate tensions. Information disorder is now embedded as considerations into major incident and operational communications planning.

We continue to strengthen our response to information disorder by working with Intelligence teams to develop risk frameworks and supporting policy.



MISCONDUCT

Throughout 2025/26, the Corporate Communications team managed a significant programme of work relating to misconduct, professional standards and Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) matters. These cases often attract intense public scrutiny, significant media interest and strong reactions from both colleagues and communities. As a result, they require careful coordination between Corporate Communications, the Professional Standards Department, Legal Services, Chief Officers and external partners to ensure information is accurate, transparent and legally compliant.

The team led communications activity for a number of high-profile misconduct hearings, accelerated misconduct hearings, criminal proceedings and IOPC investigations during the year. This included proactive media statements, internal communications, stakeholder engagement, media handling and support for senior officer interviews. A key priority was maintaining public confidence by demonstrating the organisation's commitment to holding individuals to account while reinforcing the standards expected of everyone working for Gwent Police.

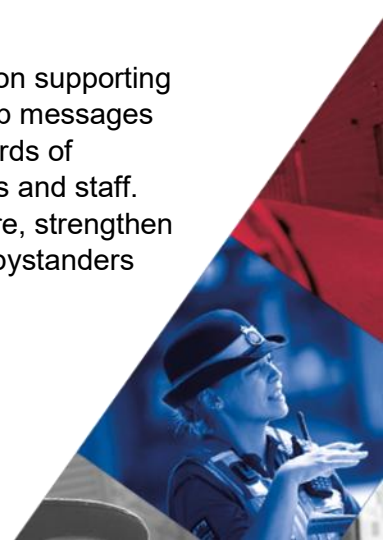
Among the most significant cases for 2025/26 were two high-profile investigations: Operation Rhone and Operation Tower. The team supported communications surrounding Operation Rhone, following the IOPC announcing their investigation findings into police actions prior to the collision in which sadly three people died. Communications activity included preparing media statements, developing internal communications and managing extensive media interest as officers were referred for misconduct hearings and misconduct meetings. For Operation Rhone, communications activity continued to support a transparent approach to media handling and stakeholder briefings.

For Operation Tower, we carried out media interviews with the Chief Constable following the conclusion of the misconduct hearings. The hearing and subsequent media interviews generated 45 articles or broadcast pieces and was the single biggest media story referencing Gwent Police in March 2026. Communications activity included media statements, Chief Constable interviews, stakeholder briefings and an internal article on The Beat viewed around 1,000 times.

The team also managed communications relating to the misogyny and workplace culture case featured by S4C, ensuring messaging was clear, consistent and aligned with our wider position on standards and culture. This included holding a background briefing with our Professional Standards Department and a media interview with the Deputy Chief Constable.

Over the past few years, we have worked hard to build a narrative with media that positions our robust stance on misconduct as evidence of our commitment to setting clear expectations, supporting victims, investigating reports and taking decisive action where required. During the year, we maintained this position through high-profile cases, media and stakeholder briefings, and periods of significant external scrutiny.

In addition to external communications, the team placed significant emphasis on supporting colleagues through timely internal communications. Internal articles, leadership messages and briefings helped explain misconduct outcomes, reinforce expected standards of behaviour and signpost support and reporting mechanisms available to officers and staff. This work formed part of the organisation's wider programme to improve culture, strengthen confidence in reporting processes and encourage colleagues to act as active bystanders when they witness inappropriate behaviour.



Following national media coverage of the Panorama documentary on culture in the Met, a Chief Constable vlog was produced for internal audiences. It encouraged colleagues to challenge discrimination and inappropriate behaviour, reinforced inclusion, allyship and speaking up, and reaffirmed the force's commitment to an inclusive, caring and connected culture. Internal Communications also developed a supervisor briefing pack to support team discussions on positive culture and the Chief's Delivery Plan. A letter from the Chief Constable was also sent to community stakeholders to reassure them of the force's values and expectations.

Throughout the year, the team continued to strengthen relationships with local, regional and national media, helping to build a reputation for transparency and openness in relation to professional standards matters. By proactively communicating misconduct outcomes and demonstrating decisive action where standards were breached, the organisation was able to reinforce public confidence while supporting wider efforts to build an inclusive culture founded on integrity, accountability and professionalism.

CAMPAIGNS

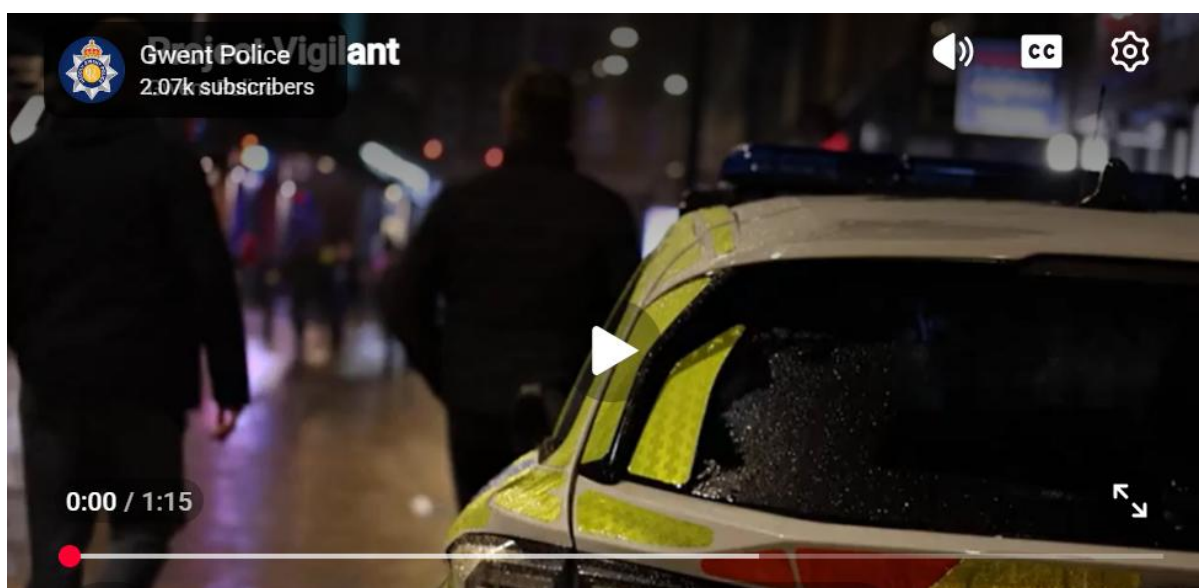
The team develop creative and effective campaigns to support our policing objectives throughout the year. We also support nationally-led policing campaigns such as Op Sceptre on knife crime, roads policing, county lines intensification weeks and male violence against women and girls. In order to land these locally, we created additional content for example interviews with families of victims to show the impact on communities.

In 2025, our summer campaign focused on supporting communications for our roads policing and specialist operations unit with Operation Wheeler, which was launched to tackle illegal car meets and associated ASB. Social media reached nearly 458,000 people across corporate and specialist Facebook accounts, Instagram and TikTok, generating more than 500,000 impressions from 13 posts.



Project Vigilant was developed as a proactive communications campaign to support operational activity tackling violence against women and girls in Newport's night-time

economy. The campaign aimed to build trust and confidence by showing visible action against predatory behaviour, encouraging reporting and helping women and girls feel safer. Communications activity included a dedicated campaign plan, stakeholder engagement with night-time economy partners, social media videos and content explaining predatory behaviours, and printed materials such as posters and beer mats for venues. Messaging was tailored for women and girls, male allies, potential perpetrators and business owners, with a focus on calling out behaviours such as catcalling, following women, invading personal space or filming without consent. Internal communications were also planned to update colleagues and highlight the proactive work of officers involved. The Design team further supported the campaign by developing visual materials and turning Project Vigilant into a live student brief, creating additional opportunities for fresh, bilingual campaign ideas focused on preventing sexual violence. A social media video featuring the project's lead detective explaining the initiative during a busy night in Newport generated more than 57,000 views across Facebook and Instagram.



Over Christmas 2025 – Operation South Pole our campaign focussed on the key areas of drink/drug driving, cyber security, vehicle security and nighttime economy safety. The Operation South Pole campaign reached 1.3m people across all social media platforms during its 26-day run, delivering sustained visibility throughout the festive period. Facebook accounted for most of the reach, with 1.2m people engaged through 59 posts, supported by additional activity across Instagram and TikTok (video content only) to broaden audience coverage. Overall the 96 social media posts had a total of 917 comments and 6.3k likes and reactions.

A varied content mix of graphics and short-form video was used to communicate key safety messages, ensuring the campaign remained accessible and engaging. Messaging focused on priority themes including drink and drug driving, cyber security, nighttime economy safety, and vehicle safety. Consistent posting helped maintain momentum, while early engagement patterns indicate strong public interest in several of the core topics.

The campaign contributed to wider seasonal safety efforts by reinforcing practical advice and raising awareness of behaviours that help reduce risk during a traditionally high-demand period.



In March 2025, we launched a refreshed PC recruitment campaign under the slogan 'Our community needs.' The campaign focused on the qualities we want to attract, including kindness, ambition, leadership and resilience, to reach candidates with the right skills and values for the organisation. It continued throughout 2025/26, with Corporate Communications supporting 15 recruitment windows. Across 2025, 210 recruitment posts reached 3.2 million accounts, generated 17.9k website link clicks, 2.9k comments, more than 20,000 likes and 713.9k video views. It remains one of our most successful social media recruitment campaigns.



Resourcing pressures meant we were unable to deliver longer-term campaigns during 2025/26. However, stakeholder engagement has taken place for a non-contact sexual offences campaign, which is due to be rolled out in 2026/27. A paper will also be submitted to regrade a digital content role to include digital campaigns, providing dedicated capacity to produce high-quality behaviour change campaigns that help prevent crime and protect our communities.

SOCIAL MEDIA & DIGITAL

In the past year, we have grown our digital audience across all of our social media channels. Our corporate social media channels (Facebook, X, and Instagram) have gained 16,836 new followers. The team have produced more than 5,000 posts with a reach of 97.4 million —an increase of 19.9 million compared to 2024.

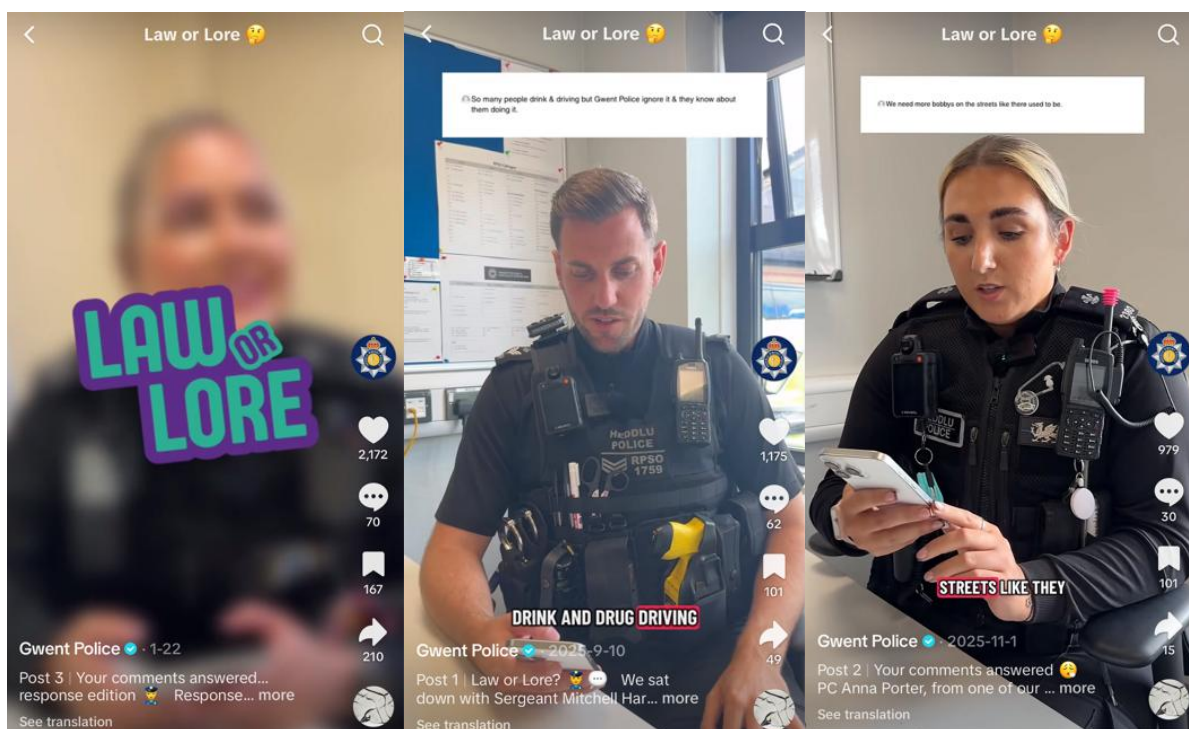
By the end of March 2026, we had 324,206 followers across our six corporate channels which equates to a potential of 54% of Gwent's population 587,800. This is a 7% increase on last year.

The introduction of local and specialist Facebook pages has transformed how we engage with communities. The move away from X (formerly Twitter) has enabled officers and staff to communicate in spaces more frequently used by the public, generating higher levels of engagement and stronger two-way conversations. During 2025, the accounts attracted more than 33,900 followers and delivered a post reach of 23.2 million. Independent evaluation found increased levels of likes, comments and shares, improved visibility of policing activity and a stronger sense of connection between local policing teams and the communities they

serve. The pages are now a key part of our neighbourhood engagement model, helping promote local priorities, police surgeries, community events and the work officers undertake to keep communities safe.

The team has focussed on developing more engaging content that attracts and holds followers. Video content has become one of our most effective ways of increasing reach, engagement and public understanding of policing. During 2025, we produced more video content than ever before with the Design and Digital Team producing 405 videos, an increase of 68% from the previous year. This includes behind-the-scenes reels, caught-and-in-court features, drone footage, NPAS footage and body-worn video. These videos were viewed more than 7.7 million times, up from 3.3 million views in 2024, helping bring policing closer to communities, demystify our work and celebrate operational success.

In particular short-form video content is one of the most impactful ways in which we can show the work of officers. Our strategy is to continue to grow our social media channels every year including on YouTube with both short-form and longer-form content. While videos are highly effective at engaging audiences, their production is typically the most time-intensive. To meet the growing demand for video content and improve accessibility, we intend to invest in software that will expedite the subtitling process, which will make our content more accessible and be able to produce more Welsh subtitles.



Introduced in late 2025, Law or Lore became one of our most engaging short-form video series. The myth-busting format featured officers from Roads Policing and Specialist Operations, neighbourhood policing and response answering questions and challenging common misconceptions raised in comments on our social media channels. By explaining the law in a simple, accessible and shareable way, the series helped make policing information more relatable to online audiences. On TikTok alone, the videos generated 191,400 views, with almost 300,000 reach across all platforms and 5,000 likes.

Our TikTok content has grown with successful engagement rates, but our presence on the channel is closely monitored in line with government guidance given ownership concerns. By

the end of March 2026, we had more than 19,500 followers on TikTok. This is an increase of 35% from our followers this time last year and represents a stronger rate of growth than the previous year. We use TikTok for non-time-sensitive video content, as posts are not displayed chronologically and can appear in users' feeds at any point.

Instagram shows the same growth in followers but also offers a much higher rate of engagement. Ofcom's 2025 Wales data shows Instagram is used by 17% of adults in Wales for news, placing it among the top online news sources in Wales. What our engagement analysis shows us through the detail is that business as usual posts – road closures or crime prevention advice - has little engagement, but more dynamic footage involving warrants, dogs and cars drives engagement. The team is therefore focussed on creating strong content in these areas to deliver key messages. Individual posts can have an engagement value of up to 5% which is significantly above the public sector industry standard goal of 1.5%.

Our English Corporate Facebook page continues to attract more followers with an increase of 6%. Our Welsh language account continues this trend. We have created a Welsh Language account on Instagram which was set up in May 2026.

We use TikTok for non-time-sensitive video content, as posts are not displayed chronologically and can appear in users' feeds at any point.

VIDEO | ON SHIFT WITH SERIES

Our video strategy will be sustained through 2025/26, with an emphasis on expanding our use of YouTube for long-form content. Ofcom's 2025 Wales news consumption data shows that YouTube is used by 15% of adults in Wales for news, while BBC iPlayer is used by 17% and ITVX / ITVX Premium by 10%. This reinforces the opportunity to develop video content across both social and on-demand platforms, ensuring our messages are available in the spaces where audiences increasingly access news and information.



ON SHIFT WITH



During March to April 2026 we launched On Shift With, a short-form documentary series designed to take audiences behind the scenes of policing in Gwent. The series followed officers and staff as they carried out their daily duties, providing an authentic insight into the realities of modern policing and the challenges faced by frontline teams. Teams included RPSO, RIT, PPST, Custody, Response and the Dog Section. The content aimed to improve understanding of policing, showcase the professionalism and dedication of our workforce, and help communities see the people behind the uniform. This was filmed over many months during 2025/26 by our Digital Content Officer.

The series proved highly successful, generating strong engagement across our digital channels. The launch episode achieved a reach of more than 260,000 people in March 2026, while the series as a whole achieved approximately 1.3 million views across English and Welsh language content.

The success of On Shift With reinforced our wider digital strategy of using video content to increase transparency, improve public understanding of policing and build trust and confidence. By enabling audiences to experience policing through the eyes of our officers and staff, the series helped bridge the gap between the organisation and the communities we serve while demonstrating the breadth and complexity of policing activity across Gwent.



SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNEL METRICS

The table below shows the available metrics for each of our corporate social media channels for the end of 2025.

Account	Followers	Acc. Reach	Post Reach	Acc. Impressions	Post Impressions	Link Clicks	Published Posts	Post Engagement
 Gwent Police	188.2k	130.7k	80.8m	93.7m	148.7m	224.6k	1.7k	0.5%
	 11.8k	 29.9k	 21.8m	 17.8m	 66.9m	16.6k 	 340	0.27% 
 Heddlu Gwent	632	46	36.4k	46.3k	50.5k	178	1.3k	1.55%
	 36	31 	21.3k 	14.8k 	9.7k 	 1	165 	 0.66%
 Gwent Police	84.6k	N/A	N/A	N/A	2m	21.3k	947	1.39%
	4.5k 	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.8m 	10k 	393 	 0.26%
 Heddlu Gwent	559	N/A	N/A	N/A	24.8k	347	760	2.5%
	26 	N/A	N/A	N/A	18.2k 	 96	307 	 1.05%
 Gwent Police	27k	15.1k	3.5m	8.8m	6.1m	N/A	448	1.5%
	 5k	 7.6k	 2.6m	 4.9m	 4.1m	N/A	 132	1.61% 

These metrics reflect a wider policing trend of declining engagement on X. As a result, and in response to the increasingly challenging tone of discourse on the platform, we are scaling back content and using X primarily for urgent appeals and warning and informing messages.

EXPANDING DIGITAL CHANNELS - WHATSAPP LAUNCH

In March 2026, we launched the Gwent Police WhatsApp Channel as part of our commitment to reach communities in the channels they use most frequently. The introduction of WhatsApp provided a new way to share trusted information directly with the public, including updates on local policing activity, community engagement, crime prevention advice and positive stories from across the force.

The channel was developed to complement our existing social media presence and reach people who may not use traditional platforms such as Facebook, X or Instagram. As a one-way broadcast channel, WhatsApp offers a simple and secure way for communities to receive information directly from Gwent Police while maintaining user privacy.

The decision to launch the channel was informed by feedback from the Independent Advisory Group during previous information disorder and community tension discussions, which highlighted WhatsApp as a commonly used channel within Muslim communities. The launch formed part of our wider digital engagement strategy and reflected the need to explore new ways of reaching harder-to-reach audiences. To support accessibility and inclusion, launch materials were translated into a range of commonly used languages across Gwent and promoted by neighbourhood teams through posters in community spaces. The channel is still in its early stages, with 192 followers, and we will continue to grow it during 2026/27.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Our internal communications engagement statistics have again for 2025 outperformed other government and public sector bodies along with the internal communications industry benchmark, with high open rates for our news bulletins.

The table below shows that we achieved an average open rate for our weekly news bulletin of 61.29% which is higher engagement rate than that of other government and public sector bodies (54.13%).

Engagement vs Benchmarks

IC Benchmark	Government & Public Services	Gwent Police
58.14% Avg. Open Rate	54.13% Avg. Open Rate	61.29% Avg. Open Rate
7.90% Avg. Click to Open Rate	9.32% Avg. Click to Open Rate	12.16% Avg. Click to Open Rate
4.60% Avg. Click Rate	5.04% Avg. Click Rate	7.45% Avg. Click Rate



IMPROVING TRUST AND CONFIDENCE INTERNALLY

At the centre of our internal communications is a main objective to connect colleagues to our mission, vision, strategy and values. We aim to build the belief that those elements are the right ones for success and engage colleagues with how they play a part in delivering them.

Throughout 2025/2026, Internal Communications focused on supporting the introduction of the Chief Constable's Delivery Plan, mission and vision by shaping a programme of leadership led engagement across the organisation. Through Force Direction Forum, Team Gwent events and the Chief Constable's Roadshows, colleagues had the opportunity to hear a consistent narrative about the force's long-term direction and the ambition to improve trust and confidence. Feedback gathered from these events suggests that, for those who attended, the purpose of the delivery plan and the rationale behind it were becoming clearer, with colleagues increasingly able to describe the direction of travel and why it matters. The repeated use of clear language, practical examples and direct leadership messaging helped the core messages begin to filter through the organisation. By the end of the year, feedback indicated an emerging shift from questions about what the plan is, towards early discussion about how it would be delivered locally, suggesting that the foundations of the mission and vision had started to land among participating colleagues.

In February 2026, 1,000 colleagues joined Chief Constable Mark Hobrough for a series of hybrid in-person and online roadshows to hear his focus for the organisation for the year. A question-and-answer session at the end of the roadshow saw good engagement. Of those who gave feedback after the session, 95% said they found the session informative and engaging, and 92% said the event helped them better understand what we've achieved and where our focus needs to be this year. While 93% said they understood how they contribute to engagement, operational effectiveness and conduct and culture to improve trust and confidence in Gwent Police, and 94% said they felt motivated to play their part to make our force an inclusive, caring and connected organisation, providing outstanding service for communities in Gwent.

SHOWCASING IMPACT IN THE COMMUNITY

Following positive feedback on the introduction of 'From the Frontline' and 'From the Community,' these features continued to showcase the impact colleagues have on the communities they serve. Articles highlighted operational successes, victim feedback, positive community engagement and examples of colleagues living our values. These stories helped create stronger links between daily activity and our wider mission to improve trust and confidence.



FORCE DIRECTION FORUM

In February 2026, we held our second Force Direction Forum (FDF), where strategic leaders discussed ways to improve trust and confidence. The internal communications team supported the event, including building a consistent narrative and managing Slido for engagement during the panel session. Building on previous Team Gwent events in 2025 and two planned for 2026, these in-person Town Halls aim to increase involvement of colleagues in two-way discussions with chief officers about key issues affecting trust and confidence.



REWARD AND RECOGNITION



Force awards are held annually, and our 2025 award ceremony was attended by 150 recipients. Attendance was managed via direct invitations through our internal email communications platform. The night was captured and shared on social media externally and shared internally via a Beat article and a bespoke email communications to all colleagues which received very high engagement with a 9% click rate. (This is higher than the industry standard for internal communications of 4.73% click rate.)

Recognising and celebrating the contribution of our officers, staff and volunteers remained a key priority throughout the year.

The internal communications team also supported the continued development of the Celebrating Success framework, helping to create a more consistent approach to recognition across the organisation. Communications activity promoted local recognition, force awards and wider external awards, ensuring colleagues were recognised for their achievements throughout the year rather than solely through annual events.

Work also continued with portfolio leads and stakeholders to expand opportunities for recognition aligned to the new operating model, ensuring good work is regularly acknowledged and linked to organisational priorities and values.



Internal Communications worked closely with the Engagement Board and departmental leads to ensure survey findings were communicated openly and transparently. Toolkits, action planning resources and regular updates helped leaders demonstrate how colleague feedback was being used to drive improvements. This approach reinforces our commitment to listening, responding and creating meaningful opportunities for colleagues to influence change across the organisation.



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

White Ribbon Day 2025 was supported internally by Corporate Communications promoting the OPCC-led artwork exhibition at headquarters through The Beat and talking point cards, encouraging colleagues to reflect on violence against women and girls, misogyny, microaggressions and the role policing has in rebuilding trust and confidence. The Design team produced materials, including boards and floor vinyls, to make the display more visible and engaging within HQ. White Ribbon Day content also promoted the domestic abuse workplace policy and guidance, which was read by 768 colleagues, and shared a police constable's personal story as a survivor of domestic abuse, which was read by 1,117 colleagues and generated strong engagement.

CULTURE AND OUR VALUES

Our activity to promote and connect colleagues to our strategy is underpinned by our work to help develop our culture. Our activity is focused on helping define the culture we want and clarifying the culture that we don't want. This centres on setting out standards of behaviour, for example when reporting on misconduct hearing outcomes, alongside positioning and celebrating our values in action.

During 2025/26, Internal Communications played an important role in supporting cultural change across Gwent Police by helping colleagues connect with the Chief Constable's mission, vision and values. Activity focused on defining the culture we want to build, reinforcing the standards of behaviour expected of everyone, and celebrating examples of our values in action. This included communications support for Team Gwent, Force Direction Forum and Chief Constable Roadshows, alongside culture-focused initiatives such as the PSD advocates programme, the domestic abuse workplace support network, Leading Inclusive Teams and Female Flightpath. The team also supported reward and recognition activity, proactive messaging ahead of the Christmas party season on expected standards, and internal content linked to misconduct outcomes, inclusion, speaking up and colleague wellbeing. Together, this work helped reinforce the ambition to create an inclusive, caring and connected organisation where colleagues feel informed, valued and confident to contribute to improving trust and confidence.



CHANNEL DEVELOPMENT

We are committed to continuously reviewing and improving our channels and content to help ensure our internal communications reach the right people, with the right message, at the right time.

Work continues to develop new pillar pages on The Beat, improving intranet usability and making information easier for colleagues to find. A business case for digital signage was approved in January 2026 to extend communication across the estate, particularly to frontline officers and staff. The project has not yet progressed due to ICT capacity, but is expected to be unpaused in the coming months. As hardware costs have increased since the paper was approved, these will need to be rescoped before further work begins.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial decisions required as part of this annual report. However, a paper seeking approval for new video subtitling software will progress through governance in the coming months. The cost of the digital signage project will also need to be rescoped, as costs have increased since the original paper was approved through governance. A separate paper will be drafted on proposed role regrading within the communications team, including amending the vacant Digital Content Officer post to also include digital campaigns, regrading Digital and Design Officer and making the temporary 12-month Internal Communications and Engagement Specialist role a permanent role.

PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS

A separate paper will be prepared on proposed role regrading within the communications team, including a proposal to make the 12-month temporary internal communications post permanent to increase internal communications provision to three staff members.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no legal considerations.

EQUALITIES & HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

This report has been considered against the general duty to promote equality, as stipulated under the Strategic Equality Plan and has been assessed not to discriminate against any particular group.

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.



RISK

Capacity and resilience — vacancies, long-term absence, maternity/shared parental leave and acting-up arrangements have left the team operating 15%–23% below capacity at times.

Wellbeing and workload — reduced capacity affected workload, demand and team wellbeing.

Demand — media enquiries and out-of-hours call-outs remain high, with media enquiries increasing by more than 13%.

These can be mitigated through recruitment and effective allocation of resources.

Reputational/public confidence — misconduct, IOPC matters, inquests and sensitive incidents can generate negative coverage and affect trust and confidence.

Information disorder — misinformation online has affected community tensions, protest activity, public concern and operational policing.

Accessibility — increasing video output creates pressure to subtitle content effectively, including Welsh language accessibility.

Digital channels — TikTok is monitored due to government guidance and ownership concerns; X is declining in engagement and has a challenging tone of discourse.

Delivery/cost — the digital signage project has been delayed due to ICT capacity and increased hardware costs requiring rescopeing.

Campaign delivery — resourcing pressures prevented delivery of longer-term campaigns in 2025/26.

Future capability — the report flags the need for role regrading and permanent internal communications capacity to meet future demand.

PUBLIC INTEREST

In producing this report, has consideration been given to ‘public confidence’?

Yes.

Are the contents of this report, observations and appendices necessary and suitable for the public domain?

Yes.

If you consider this report to be exempt from the public domain, please state the reasons:

N/A.

NEXT STEPS – 2026/27

Strategic Campaigns

Launch the Non-Contact Sexual Offences Campaign in 2026/27 following stakeholder engagement.

Develop more long-term behaviour change campaigns, not just operational or awareness activity.

Support continued delivery of the Chief Constable's Delivery Plan, mission and vision.

Team Structure & Resources

Progress business cases to:

Regrade the Digital Content Officer role to include digital campaigns.

Regrade the Digital and Design Officer role.

Make the temporary Internal Communications and Engagement Specialist role permanent.

Address ongoing capacity pressures caused by vacancies, acting-up arrangements and absences.

Digital & Social Media

Invest in video subtitling software to:

Increase content production.

Improve accessibility.

Increase Welsh language subtitling.

Expand YouTube and long-form video content following the success of On Shift With.

Continue growth across Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and WhatsApp.

Reduce reliance on X, focusing it primarily on urgent appeals and public information.

Community Engagement

Grow the new WhatsApp Channel, particularly among harder-to-reach communities.

Continue developing neighbourhood and specialist social media pages.

Strengthen communications around trust, confidence and community reassurance.

Internal Communications

Continue engagement around:

Mission, vision and values.

Trust and confidence.

Culture and inclusion.

Misconduct and professional standards outcomes.



Support departmental action plans arising from the Employee Opinion Survey.

Expand recognition and reward communications across the organisation.

Channel Development

Restart the Digital Signage Project once ICT capacity allows.

Rescope signage costs due to increased hardware prices.

Continue developing The Beat intranet with new pillar pages and improved usability.

Measurement & Evaluation

Move beyond output measures (posts, press releases, reach).

Develop stronger measures for:

Trust and confidence.

Community engagement.

Behaviour change.

Organisational culture.

Recruitment outcomes.

I confirm this report has been discussed and approved at a formal Chief Officers' meeting
08.09.2026.

I confirm this report is suitable for the public domain for the reasons stated previously.

Signature	
Date	23.09.2026

