

Annual Engagement Report 2024/25

***ADRODDIADAU'R
BWRDD
ATEBOLRWYDD A
SICRWYDD***

**ACCOUNTABILITY
AND ASSURANCE
BOARD**

24 October 2025



1. *DIBEN AC ARGYMHELLIAD* | PURPOSE AND RECOMMENDATION

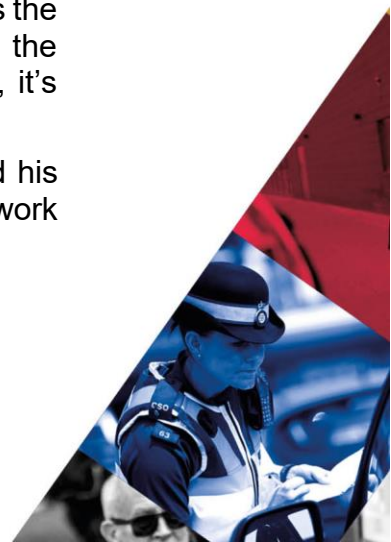
- 1.1. The purpose of this report is for monitoring.
- 1.2. There are no recommendations made requiring a decision.

2. *CYFLWYNIAD A CHEFNDIR* | INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

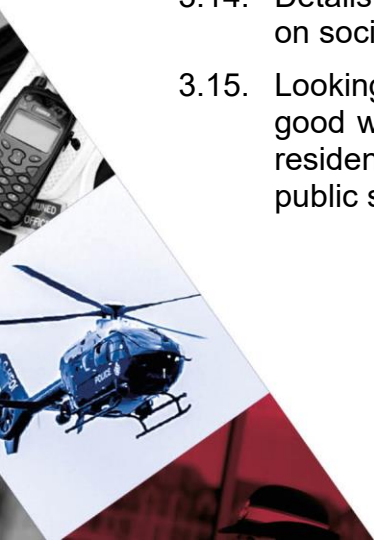
- 2.1. Community engagement is a cornerstone of effective policing. It is underpinned by legal duties set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, which mandates that police forces must engage with the public to understand their concerns, build trust, and ensure accountability. The Chief Constable, as the operational leader of Gwent Police, is legally responsible for delivering policing that reflects the needs and expectations of the communities served.
- 2.2. This report outlines how Gwent Police has worked to strengthen its relationship with the public through proactive engagement and responsiveness.

3. *MATERION I'W HYSTYRIED* | ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1. In the Autumn of 2024, the Chief Constable, on his appointment, set out a mission to build trust and confidence in Gwent Police. The approach would put a strong emphasis on community engagement, as well as improving force performance and building the right culture
- 3.2. The first major task was to implement a review of the force operating model. This has resulted in significant changes to the way the resources of the force are now organised and led. The structure of Gwent Police now includes three operational pillars, which are: Response Policing; Neighbourhood Policing; and Crime.
- 3.3. A new Neighbourhood Policing Strategy was developed, which sets out the actions the force will take to ensure community policing is delivered effectively and efficiently, in line with HM Government's Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee
- 3.4. A new Engagement Strategy was also developed, which describes the work that will be done over the next three years to ensure that the organisation listens and responds to the needs of its workforce, its communities, and victims of crime.
- 3.5. The following paragraphs describe how the Chief Constable and his team are delivering on these commitments and the improvement work that is being done to build on this.



- 3.6. Residents in Gwent have access to information about their local Neighbourhood Team, primarily through Single Online Home, which is the agreed platform for communities to find out about Neighbourhood Policing in their area across England and Wales.
- 3.7. Single Online Home in Gwent provides details of named officers from the local Neighbourhood Team and details of how to contact them directly from Single Online Home. It also provides data about crime trends in the local area and a summary of the local policing priorities. Single Online Home also has details of local police stations and the dates and locations of police surgeries in each area.
- 3.8. Local policing priorities are set with regards to a range of sources, including: the Police and Crime Commissioner's Policing, Crime and Justice Plan; the Chief Constable's Operational Delivery Plan; Home Office initiatives; local crime data; police intelligence; and community feedback.
- 3.9. Gwent Police recognises that it needs to improve the way in which it captures information from community engagement and how it uses this to inform local priority setting.
- 3.10. For this reason, the force has recently invested in a new IT system called Neighbourhood Alert, which has tools designed to transform the way in which Neighbourhood Teams capture information from residents about their concerns and experiences of issues affecting their neighbourhood.
- 3.11. This initiative, called Neighbourhood Matters, will ensure that the force has a secure system for carrying out surveys, analysing the results of those surveys, and for residents to receive updates about the results of interventions on the issues that concern them.
- 3.12. Neighbourhood Matters surveys will provide valuable insight into setting local priorities, and it also allows for residents to report changes following interventions. The force will also be able to track changes in relation to public confidence in Gwent Police through these surveys.
- 3.13. One of the strengths of Neighbourhood Policing in Gwent is the engagement we have with communities through local events and projects across the force area. This helps with building positive relationships, offering crime prevention advice, and it also provides a good opportunity for people to discuss issues and concerns with their local policing team.
- 3.14. Details of our community engagement activities are widely publicised on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram.
- 3.15. Looking forward, the Neighbourhood Matters initiative will build on this good work and see a greater degree of pro-active engagement with residents on their doorsteps, as well as at community events and public spaces.



- 3.16. Neighbourhood Policing Teams are supported on a range of specialist topics by a Problem-Solving Hub, and the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion team.
- 3.17. The Problem-Solving Hub provides specialist resources and tactical advice to help with addressing issues such as rural crime, heritage crime, business crime, and a range of other crime prevention initiatives.
- 3.18. Recognising the importance of problem-solving, the Chief Constable has used Home Office funding to create a new Community Action Team, which provides additional resources to be tasked dynamically in support of Neighbourhood Policing interventions across the force area.
- 3.19. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team provides support to Neighbourhood Policing Teams and the wider force through the provision of specialist advice on a range of ED&I topics. The team also maintains direct contact with individuals and community organisations that act as 'critical friends' to Gwent Police.
- 3.20. An example of this is the Independent Advisory Group, which is a group of community members, usually representatives of minority communities, who advise and challenge senior leaders on policing operations and the development of policy. On 1st August 2025, a member of the IAG sat in an advisory capacity in a Critical Incident Gold Group, meeting which came together at short notice, to oversee the Gwent Police response to an outbreak of serious disorder in Newport.
- 3.21. The Community Tensions Monitoring Group is another example of members of the community coming together with senior leaders every two weeks to discuss ongoing or emerging issues of concern, which affect minority communities.
- 3.22. Looking forward, Gwent Police is investing in the development of a Youth IAG, which will give young people a new opportunity to have a say in how policing works in their area.
- 3.23. Citizens have opportunities to be directly involved in policing through a range of opportunities within our Special Constabulary and Police Support Volunteer roles. Children and young people are actively involved in Gwent Police through the Cadets and Heddlu Bach initiatives. Further details on these initiatives can be found in the Volunteers Annual Report.
- 3.24. Gwent Police has dedicated Schools Advisors embedded within its Neighbourhood Policing structure. Each Neighbourhood Policing Team has arrangements for listening and responding to the needs of each school in its area, based on an assessment of incidents reported from the school and the risks and issues identified there, and in the wider community, which may affect children attending the school.



- 3.25. It is acknowledged that the withdrawal of Welsh Government funding for the School Beat programme has resulted in changes in the way Gwent Police engages with schools. The Chief Constable is currently seeking feedback in relation to the impact of these changes, to ensure that we continue to work with schools to learn, adapt and improve.
- 3.26. To ensure executive oversight of engagement activity, Gwent Police has implemented an Engagement Board within the last year, chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable (Operations).
- 3.27. The Engagement Board now forms part of the force governance structure and provides accountability and oversight for the delivery of all engagement activity across the force. The outcomes of this board are reported through the chain of command to the Chief Constable.
- 3.28. The Chief Constable takes an active interest in the delivery of Neighbourhood Policing and engagement and receives a monthly presentation directly from the senior leaders in Neighbourhood Policing pillar. For illustration, the June 2025 presentation is attached as an appendix to this report.

4. CAMAU NESAF | NEXT STEPS

- 4.1. The roll out of Neighbourhood Matters is expected to commence in September 2025. This allows for the necessary preparation phase of the project to be completed.
- 4.2. Neighbourhood Matters will provide opportunities for enhanced levels of engagement with residents. Neighbourhood Policing Teams will have the tools to accurately capture the results of door-to-door surveys, which in turn will provide a reliable evidence base for local priority setting.
- 4.3. The results of surveys will provide a rich source of information about crime, anti-social behaviour and other policing problems that people are experiencing in their area. This in turn will provide a reliable evidence base for local priority setting.
- 4.4. The Neighbourhood Matters system will allow for the accurate recording of all engagement activities in the force and will provide evidence of the number of people who have provided feedback in an area. This will ensure that the voice of the community is representative, it will allow for enhanced performance monitoring, and for better scrutiny arrangements.
- 4.5. Another benefit of the Neighbourhood Matters initiative is that residents will be able to receive timely and relevant updates about the issues they are concerned about, via a two-way messaging system. Residents can sign up and indicate which language they would like to receive updates in. They will also be added to 'recipients lists' which



will provide updates to them on any issue that they raise in a survey, or are otherwise interested in.

- 4.6. In order to ensure the capacity exists to deliver the Neighbourhood Matters initiative, Gwent Police is implementing measures to monitor and reduce the abstraction of resources from Neighbourhood Policing Teams to other policing duties.
- 4.7. Gwent Police will continue to assess and respond to feedback from schools in relation to new ways of working.

5. *YSTYRIAETHAU ARIANNOL* | FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1. Gwent Police has made provision within its budget for an initial three-year investment in the Neighbourhood Alert community messaging system.

6. *YSTYRIAETHAU PERSONEL* | PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1. None identified.

7. *YSTYRIAETHAU CYFREITHIOL* | LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1. None identified.

8. *YSTYRIAETHAU CYDRADDOLDEB A HAWLIAU DYNOL* | EQUALITIES & HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1. 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.
- 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. *RISG* | RISK

- 9.1. None identified.

10. *BUDD Y CYHOEDD* | PUBLIC INTEREST



- 10.1. In producing this report, has consideration been given to 'public confidence'? **Yes**
- 10.2. Are the contents of this report, observations and appendices necessary and suitable for the public domain? **Yes**
- 10.3. If you consider this report to be exempt from the public domain, please state the reasons: **N/A**

11. *AWDUR YR ADRODDIAD* | REPORT AUTHOR

- 11.1. Chief Superintendent Ian Roberts

12. *PRIF SWYDDOG ARWEINIOL* | LEAD CHIEF OFFICER

- 12.1. T/ACC Vicki Townsend

13. *ATODIADAU* | ANNEXES

See separate presentation: App A – Sample Chief Constable NPT Update - June 2025

14. *CYMERADWYAETH LLYWODRAETHU A BRIF SWYDDOG* | GOVERNANCE BOARD AND CHIEF OFFICER APPROVAL

- 14.1. This report has been presented to the **Scrutiny Executive Board**.
Meeting chaired by: **DCC Nicola Brain**
Meeting date: **5 August 2025**
Actions or amendments arising from meeting: **Report to be aligned with the Safer Schools Report. Actioned 7 August 2025.**
- 14.2. I confirm this report has been discussed and approved at a formal Chief Officers' meeting.
- 14.3. I confirm this report is not suitable for the public domain for the reasons stated in 11.3.



Llofnod | Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. H. Jones', written in a cursive style.

Dyddiad | Date: 14 August 2025

