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| Annual  Volunteer Report |
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| Citizens in Policing  2023 |
| 1. PURPOSE AND RECOMMENDATION   The purpose of this report is to highlight the past 12 months volunteering activity within the Gwent Police Citizens in Policing (CiP) portfolio.  There are no recommendations requiring a decision.   1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND   This report provides an annual update on Gwent Police volunteering activities, including the Special Constabulary, Police Support Volunteers and Volunteer Police Cadets covering April 2022 – March 2023. Whilst the management and overall work of schemes such as the Independent Advisory Group (IAG) and Community Speed Watch do not currently sit within Citizens in Policing (CiP), they are still requested to align themselves to the CiP governance, with regards to their volunteering activities and numbers. A brief update on their volunteering activities is also included.  Over the past 12 months there has been a focus on integration of volunteers into business as usual and this has been successful with the support of the All Wales CiP governance and working relationships with other Welsh forces for best practice and problem solving.  The All Wales CiP Strategy 2022-2026 is being utilised for strategy development within Gwent and this will be further developed over the coming months under the guidance of a new strategic lead. The Gwent strategy will not only align to National CiP objectives but to policing in Wales and will allow for local variances to meet community needs in line with the Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025.  Over the past 12 months Gwent has seen a change in volunteering and the needs and requirements of volunteers which has led to a review and areas of improvement across the portfolio. Decision making is still on going and this will inform the subsequent delivery and growth plans. Considerations around the governance structure in Gwent are included within areas of improvement and all volunteering portfolios will continue to be supported by the Assistant Chief Constable.  The Volunteer Police Cadets have implemented the Safe to Operate standards with these regularly being reviewed and progressed in Gwent. Gwent has been successful at gaining Quality Mark Bronze for their safeguarding processes for Cadets and a policy review has been completed to include further safeguarding measures.   1. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION    1. Special Constabulary   The Special Constabulary is currently supported by a dedicated PC trainer, CiP Co-Ordinator, Supt Portfolio Lead, Chief Insp Tactical Lead, ACC strategic lead and a dedicated recruitment officer.  Within the past 12 months the Special Constabulary has successfully contributed a staggering 32,190 hours between April 2022 and March 2023, this has been delivered across 4,438 duties, with an average of 34.4 hours per Special Constable, significantly exceeding the nationally asked minimum of 16 hours per month. Our headcount of Special Constables has remained one of the most consistent across Wales and has been the least affected by the National Uplift Programme to date with our headcount up 2% in the last year as seen in the Gwent Local SC Benchmarking Assessment 2023 (Appendix 12.1). We are one of the few forces to see an increase in headcount.    Over the past 12 months the Special Constabulary seen the resignation of 34 officers with 74% leaving to join the regulars of both our home force and others.  This is a testament to the training and experiences received as Special Constables and that valued officers wish to continue to use skills gained towards a career.    We are still progressing towards achieving a baseline SC establishment of 10% of the regular officer numbers and will continue to work towards this over the next 3 years. This means the force will aim to increase the SC headcount to around 136 officers and we currently sit comfortably at 73. To be able to achieve this, and to implement the new College of Policing training standards, we have a full-time trainer in post with support from a new SC recruitment officer who is focussing on a new recruitment delivery plan. This will focus on undergraduate students on key courses and career Specials via Employer Supported Policing.    **New leadership structure**    There have been several changes to the leadership structure this year with the retirement of Specials Chief Officer after 39 years’ service and with the stepping down of a valued Specials Chief Inspector. The need for additional supportive structures has been highlighted as a result of this and a review of current challenges and needs has been instigated. In the interim, the portfolio lead Chief Inspector has been working closely with the Special Constabulary and has personally invested into the position of Chief Inspector for oversight and direction. Appendix 12.2 outlines the current SC SMT structure.    **Changes to SC Training**    SCLP Phase 1 is now completed and is in full implementation with the new PDP now issued. Work with University Wales Trinity Saint David did not proceed due to the lack of students from the Gwent area at their university. However, initial scoping is in progress to develop a bespoke 'Summertime' course' to capture students who will attend SC training full time for 6 weeks in the summer then go operational alongside their university studies.  Further training opportunities have been implemented to improve operational capabilities, all officers are now up to date with Niche training and driver training has been progressed for A to B, small van awareness and compliant stop. One SC has attended counter drones training to assist with high profile events and provide mutual aid as and when required.   An initial cohort of three SC’s are going to be accessing blue light driver training over the summer with 6 consecutive weekends to ensure the course is achievable. This will support the officers who are using taser in line with operational need and ensure policy compliance. It also enhances continuous professional development for career specials to increase their operational capabilities.   Attestation has moved to week 1 of training to reflect Federation and College of Policing Guidance (Appendix 12.3)  **Operational effectiveness**    The Gwent SC team go above and beyond the minimum requirement of 16 hours per month. This small but dedicated team have continued their support across all departments. They have supported Neighbourhood Policing teams with over 2,672 duty hours (8%), response teams with 11,933 hours (37%) and prearranged events / operations with over 2,713 hours (8.4%) and 4108 hours specialist negotiation (12%).    As well as providing a valuable responsive resource, running successful operations, and assisting at planned public engagement events, below provides a condensed snapshot of several activities the SCs have undertaken in the past 12 months:     |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Activity Type** | **Total** | | 1-2-1 or 2-1 (Custody or A&E) | 105 | | Alarm/Premises Check | 76 | | Arrest/Assist Arrest | 447 | | Crimes Recorded | 165 | | Domestic (Crime/Non Crime) | 257 | | Drug/Alcohol Seizure | 41 | | Fixed Penalty Notice (Traffic) | 46 | | Foot Patrols (Uniform) | 218 | | Licensing Checks | 66 | | Misper (Located) | 107 | | Misper (Search) | 177 | | Mobile/Vehicle Patrols (Uniform) | 580 | | Prisoner Transport | 180 | | Stop and Search | 67 | | Vehicle Check (Moving) | 878 | | Vehicle Check (Roadside) | 282 |     The Special Constabulary senior management team has seen a decrease in numbers with vacant positions that are hoping to be filled post review with the support of positive action to improve diversity within the team.  Specials led operations has been running successfully across the LPA’s including Operation Toogood which includes the Special Constabulary enforcing no bail warrants to reduce demand upon response teams. This has led to 18 arrests, multiple areas of intelligence gathered relating to nominals which have led to further arrests by regular officers and proactive patrols throughout deployments. Further developments for operations to target drink drive and drugs intelligence are being undertaken in addition to another for a Gwent wide task force with specialist skills for areas of high demand.   Additional work has been carried out by the SC with the licencing team and trading standards to test licenced premises, neighbourhood policing week of actions and Operation Harley deployments. As a result, some special constabulary officers are now able to carry and deploy SmartTag in partnership with the We Don’t Buy Crime Team.    **Federation Representation and Taser**    On the 28th of April the Police Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 was enacted.  This act effectively made changes to the provisions in place to support Special Constables, with the introduction of Federation Representation.  The Federation representation has been fully supported within Gwent police with all SC’s having the opportunity to sign up with financial support from Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner. This has been welcomed by the SC and we have one of the highest saturation rates within Wales at 79%.    As a result of the implementation of the Act and Federation Representation, the National Police Chief Council has also shown full support for Special Constables to be deployable with Taser.  As a result, taser implementation for Special Constables has been embraced by Gwent Police with the application process now embedded into the constabulary. There is an initial cohort of 3 SC’s attending taser training in August, with further applications approved and waiting training allocation.    **Regional and National Engagement**    The Gwent CiP team continues to fully participate in regional and national CiP collaboration groups, this includes All Wales SC recruitment, All Wales SC working group and further working groups. These have been used to inform a recruitment plan, development plans and future proofing of the Special Constabulary, PSVs, and Cadets across Gwent.   * 1. Police Support Volunteers (PSV)   Police Support Volunteer are individuals who give their free time to perform tasks which complement the duties performed by Police Officers and Staff. We currently have around 30 volunteers, playing an active role within our communities and organisation. Volunteering roles across Gwent serve both internal and external functions and are as follows:  **Community Crime Prevention Volunteers** 9 community Crime Prevention Volunteers are utilised within the community to complete crime prevention initiatives and public engagement around all things crime prevention such as property marking, delivering of the Safer Streets Initiatives, support for neighbourhood watch recruitment, valuable items on display and delivery of the Trinity safeguarding protocols. They have represented the police force at open days, community events and areas of high demand. Recruitment for additional resources is ongoing in summer of 2023 with expectations to grow to approximately 15 volunteers by September 23.  **Chaplains**  Our chaplains offer personal, practical and spiritual guidance to all Gwent Policecolleaguesand support extends to families too**.** As well as offering personal guidance, our chaplains assist in building links with our communities and can advise on operational religious matters, co-ordinating and leading services where appropriate.  The Gwent Police Chaplaincy service is currently made up of eight members, including one lead Chaplain and this has grown by three members over the past year.  Chaplains represent a wide range of faiths and belief systems, including Christianity, Islam, Bahai and the Buddhist belief system.  The team covers the whole of Gwent, and each Chaplain is assigned to a particular area- in most cases where their places of worship are situated.  As well as offering personal guidance, our Chaplains assist in building links with our communities and can advise on operational religious matters, co-ordinating and leading services where appropriate. This includes weddings, funerals, and official services for police employees.  Our Chaplains are also available to support colleagues at incidents which could be deemed specifically traumatic or stressful, such as a death, road traffic collision or major incident.  This year our Chaplaincy team has contributed to some exceptional work including the official closing out ceremony of the memorial garden in old headquarters, Stephen Lawrence memorial events, community events and positive engagement with internal members of the force.  Our chaplaincy team has embraced the utilisation of Dutysheet alongside other PSVs across Gwent which will ensure a smoother transition for expenses claims, information sharing and recording of hours and duties to support their own wellbeing too.  **Gwent Police Sports Association –**  Gwent has 1 individual Gwent Police Sports Volunteer who has regular commitments for Police Sports Gwent and Police Sports UK events, PSG events, accounting etc.  This role is currently being reviewed.  **Coroners Volunteer -**   Work was undertaken with HM Coroner for Gwent who agreed to volunteers assisting her team on a limited basis, potentially in an usher role for inquests. On this basis the DS at Major Crime worked with the Citizens in Policing Co-ordinator to recruit a volunteer. However due to an injury the individual did not commence the role and later withdrew from the process. The Coroners Service have their own volunteer scheme well established and this is progressing in Gwent now therefore it is felt that this route can be managed by the Service.  **Airwaves**  1 airwaves volunteer oversees the management of Airwave radio fleet map, programming of Airwave terminals, Installation and management of Mobile ANPR vehicle systems, Advanced car and Motorcycle installations for ANPR and Airwave terminals, Assistance to fleet for programming and technical support on Vehicle electronic control systems, Motorcycle safety checks. The role also provides support for RPSA with target operations such as UTAH and TISPOL and also assists in the running and tasking of RPSO Bikesafe courses.  **Independent Advisory Group (IAG)**  The IAG are independent from Gwent Police Support Volunteers however they have oversight from the CiP governance structure. We currently have 13 active IAG members in both the East and the West of the force.   Gwent Police’s IAG takes the role of a ‘critical friend’ in relation to the development of policing policy and services.  The group provides practical guidance on local and national issues impacting the communities of Gwent.  A core part of governance, IAG members sit on several boards including but not limited to:  • Hate crime  • Data  • Coercive powers  • Violence against women and girls  • Victims  Members of the IAG are also engaged with during critical incidents to assist the force’s response but also to feedback on community concerns.  The group are governed through a refreshed terms of reference and supported by the diversity and inclusion team.   Chair of the IAG, Vida Greaux was nominated by Gwent Police and chosen by Their Majesties The King and The Queen Consort, as a Coronation Champion in conjunction with the Royal Voluntary Service and attended as a special guest the Coronation Concert on 7 May in Windsor.  Samaritans–  14 volunteers are accessed via the Samaritans organisation, and they have overall responsibility for the management, training and wellbeing of the volunteers. Samaritans attend custody suites and provide support and signposting to individuals in custody who may require it however due to the nature of the role no figures or information is shared with Gwent Police.  PSV Summary  Over the past 12 months, the volunteers have contributed over 800 hours collectively, supporting officers, victims of crime and communities.  The CiP portfolio will be looking to implement specialist volunteer roles over the next 12 months, with support from Senior Officers HR Business Partners and Unison. This includes cyber volunteers who will provide a range of skills to the Cyber Crime department to support investigation, process support and community engagement. A successful recruitment campaign has been undertaken with a high level of applications and qualities to bring to the role. There are hopes of a cohort of around 10 volunteers joining the department. (Appendix 12.4)  The focus of 2022-2023 has been volunteer line management and induction processes. Line management of the volunteers has now been built in to the CiP governance structure (appendix 12.5) and a standardised induction package is being created using online platforms, mandatory training packages and a welcome to Gwent video from the Chief Constable.  Throughout 2023 this will continue to be developed and created into a volunteer’s toolkit to support line managers and compliance.  The Valuing Volunteering Framework has been completed for 2022/23, we are currently showing an overall rating of 78.8%, this has decreased by 4% since 2021/22. This could be due to a range of factors including lack of volunteer recognition and reward and connectivity with partner agencies in the community. However, with the implementation of the induction process, improvements to line management consistency, accountability and the introduction of new roles this should significantly improve over the next year.   * 1. Volunteer Police Cadets (VPC)     There are currently 161 Police Cadets, across 5 LPA units within our Cadet programme, with the annual open recruitment campaign underway in readiness for September 2023.  The Cadet Programme has a working two-year strategy which outlines the focus and ambition of the programme, this strategy falls in line with the National VPC strategy launched in 2020. (Appendix 12.6)  In March 2022 and following NPCC approval, the National VPC Safe to Operate Standards (UK Youth Safe Spaces framework) was launched. These standards have been implemented within Gwent Police with further work ongoing to achieve a gold standard of service. All staff involved within the Cadet programme have undertaken several Safeguarding workshops, and are fully DBS compliant, through our partnership with Vibrant Nation. They have also completed several Youth Work practitioner qualifications to support their youth engagement work and continue to ensure their compliance and explore further development opportunities.  Gwent is working towards the Silver Quality Mark for youth work, which is a Welsh Government endorsed, standard for youth work in Wales. The Quality Mark is linked to the Welsh National Youth Strategy, National Occupation Standards for Youth Work in the UK. All relevant statutory and regulatory policies and procedures, workforce development plans and national youth work policy ensures full alignment to devolved and UK governance.  The NxtGen Team have worked closely with internal and external partners to improve the service available to Cadets and the communities with oversight of the Problem-Solving Sgt in the Problem-Solving Hub. This guidance and direction has provided direction for the team with streamlined tasking and development. The NxtGen team has undertaken training to support neurodiverse communities and as a result cadet sessions are being built with accessibility at the forefront. Further development is going to be undertaken on cadet sessions with the cadets to further improve learning opportunities.  The Volunteer Police Cadets have been a visible resource within our communities supporting initiatives such as the local birdbox scheme, community engagement events, foodbanks, safer streets, and the delivery of crime prevention advice. Gwent Cadets also had the incredible opportunity to attend the first Trooping the Colour for King Charles. They attended the Mall and Buckingham palace to welcome the Royal Family and had a prime location to sing the National Anthem to the King.  Gwent Cadets have also supported the pilot of “money mules” in partnership with Tarian.  The NxtGen team were approached by the Regional Crime Team with a view to running a pilot scheme with the Gwent Volunteer Police Cadets.  Staff from the team were trained in delivering the presentation and asked to present the information to the Cadet Units.  Feedback was gained from the Cadets on the input and fed back to the Tarian Team.  On the whole, the feedback was excellent, and the project is now being rolled out to other Cadet units throughout Wales, along with the possibility of being embedded into the SchoolBeat curriculum in the near future.     * 1. **Mini Police/Heddlu Bach**   The Heddlu Bach programme has continued to be established in schools across Gwent with the programme now being hosted in 132 Primary Schools across all LPA’s (25% increase on 2021/22). The schools continue to take part in several police led initiatives, including road safety, stranger danger, and the Heddlu Bach Activity book. The schools have actively partnered with Neighbourhood teams to undertake a number of community initiatives, many focusing on parking outside schools, speeding, litter picks and community intergenerational work.  The High Sheriff of Gwent visited HQ to present two NxtGen CSOs with a commendation for their excellent youth engagement and crime prevention work. NxtGen Officers have undertaken a 6-week course to achieve Hwb Minecraft Certified Teacher status, and this is now being implemented in schools across the force. The Minecraft police world has allowed children to have the freedom to build their perfect school / community taking crime prevention into account. This has given the children a sense of accountability in their areas, rule setting and opened conversations with the local counsellors around the improvements the children wish to see. This initiative has received excellent feedback from the schools. Further work is ongoing to develop characters within the Minecraft world to allow children to be signposted to key partners such as mental health services, ChildLine, We Don’t Buy Crime and others.  Heddlu Bach has also reached out to Special Educational Needs (SEN) schools and is being successfully implemented with increased knowledge around neurodiversity and special educational needs. Internal training has been taken in partnership with the Neurodiversity Network which has led to implementation of amended programmes to suit the children’s needs and achievability.  3.5 Community Speed Watch  Community speed watch still sits under the CiP governance structure within Gwent and reports to the CiP strategic board quarterly. Currently, there are 11 watches in the Gwent area with 102 members who complete approximately 1 hour speed watch sessions to increase road safety within Gwent.  These watches are in the following areas, Usk, Magor, Goytre, Pwllmeyric Hill Chepstow,  St Arvans all Monmouthshire, New Inn, Llantarnam both Torfaen, Western Avenue Newport. DWR Draethen, Waterloo and Rudry all one watch and Cascade in the Caerphilly area.  St Brides/ Peterstone Newport West.  There are also multiple expressions of interest for other watches in the Gwent area.   1. NEXT STEPS-   The Special Constabulary will continue to increase its establishment with an aim of reaching 10% of the regular officer workforce. Whilst there has been a decrease in intakes due to uplift this should begin to even out again in 2023/2024. Whilst implementation of SCLP Phase Two is not underway this would require a larger supportive infrastructure to be able to deliver correctly. Specialist training has been identified to increase continuous professional development and SC capability including taser courses in Aug 2023, Blue Light courses in Aug 2023 and further conversations ongoing to specialise SCs with external skills into departments such as cyber.  The Special Constabulary will continue to encourage Federation membership, to ensure as many of its officers as possible are represented.  We will work on raising the profile of Police Support Volunteers, both internally and externally. We will focus on the integration, correct alignment and utilisation and line management across the PSVs with the support of the standardised induction process and usage of the same recording systems. This will allow for consistency and volunteer value.  The NxtGen team will continue developing the youth engagement programme and will utilise new partnerships to create cadet sessions that are innovative and engaging for Cadets. They will increase opportunities for Cadets to explore their communities and the world and give young people a voice in policing.  Work will continue to increase the number of schools hosting the Heddlu Bach scheme and ensure inclusivity for SEN, Welsh Language and underrepresented communities. The aspiration is to offer the Heddlu Bach scheme to every primary school in Gwent by September 2024.   1. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS   The Citizen in Policing portfolio is financially supported by the Officer of the Police and Crime Commissioner.  Financial considerations will need to be factored into future budget reviews to achieve a baseline of 10% Special Constabulary compared to the regular workforce. The largest proportion of spending is volunteer expenses and subsistence, which will, over time increase the expenditure. Due to cost of living and the increase in travel and subsidence prices, this should be examined for amendment in line with this so volunteers are not out of pocket   The PCC is supporting all SC Police Federation Subscriptions so this needs to be upheld for the foreseeable future.  Police Support Volunteer budgets are being set by the individual departments and uniforms, resourcing and costing is at the discretion of the hosting department. Departments are able to apply to external funding sources to support with this and for this reason budgeting is to be kept separate.  The current budget for the VPC appears sufficient with uniforms and additional items catered for in the last financial year. However, with cadet figures steadily increasing and the ambition to deliver mini police in all schools across Gwent the budget will need to be considered in line with this for future proofing.   1. PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS   The Citizen’s in Policing portfolio incurs a significant amount of strategic delivery, decision making and consideration. With policing resources considered, demand placed upon officers’ force wide is having an adverse effect on the ability to have oversight of the three volunteering strands.   As part of a special constabulary review, it has been highlighted that strategic police staff support is operationally critical to the development of the portfolio and correct management of integration and alignment could reap financial, retention and volunteer satisfaction rewards whilst building public confidence in policing. As a result, a role for a Citizen’s in policing manager is being developed and considered to bridge a strategic gap and reduce workload on leading police officers. This would also need to be built into future financial considerations.  The Police Support Volunteers need to be well established and supported by departmental management to ensure they are nurtured and integrated. This will require further oversight from the CiP portfolio to ensure compliance and to be able to assess KPI’s and value for money.  The Volunteer Police Cadets and Mini Police is now driven by the NxtGen team who are well placed in the Problem-Solving Hub, with oversight of day-to-day tasking by the Problem-Solving Sergeant. This has ensured the work meets the vison set out in the strategy.  The CiP strategic board is now aligned to the Operational Policing Board to ensure infrastructure is in place to implement, sustain and develop the portfolio. This governance will ensure there are sufficient resources in place to develop the Citizens in Policing agenda. This will allow us to support the ongoing developments of growth with the Special Constabulary, the introduction of new Police Support Volunteer roles and to develop and our Police Cadet and Heddlu Bach programmes.   1. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS   Close consultation and engagement will be maintained with staff associations and people services regarding further use of volunteers.   1. EQUALITIES & HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS   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.  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.   1. RISK   No risk to be considered.   1. 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   1. REPORT AUTHOR   CiP Co-ordinator Leigh McFarlane  Supt Michael Richards   1. LEAD CHIEF OFFICER   Assistant Chief Constable Mark Hobrough   1. ANNEXES    1. Gwent SC benchmarking Assessment      * 1. SC SMT Structure poster       12.3 SC training plan Timeline picture   * 1. Cyber volunteer role profile      * 1. CIP line managers governance        * 1. VPC strategy      1. CHIEF OFFICER APPROVAL    1. This report has been presented to the following board:   Scrutiny Executive Board  Meeting chaired by:  DCC Rachel Williams  Meeting date:  01.08.23  Actions and amendments arising from meeting:  N/A   * 1. I confirm this report has been discussed and approved at a formal Chief Officers’ meeting.   Meeting chaired by:  CC Pam Kelly  Meeting date:  15.08.23   * 1. I confirm this report is suitable for the public domain.   Signature: Electronic signature Date: 15.08.2023 | | |
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