



Ministry of  
**JUSTICE**

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OFFICE OF THE **POLICE & CRIME**  
**COMMISSIONER NORTH WALES**

North Wales Police and  
Crime Commissioner

“Making the Connections”

Third Sector Engagement Event  
17 December 2015

Post Event Report

# Post-Event Report

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## Event

On 17 December 2015 the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner once again hosted his annual event to engage collectively with organisations from the voluntary and community services sector (also known as the third sector). The main purpose of this event is to consult with stakeholders about policing priorities for the 2016/17 Police and Crime Plan.

The event was held at The OpTIC Centre, University of Glyndwr, St Asaph. There were 42 attendees, representing 30 local and regional organisations. Appendix A shows a list of the organisations who attended and contributed to the consultation.

The purpose of this report is to feedback to contributors of that event about the key messages they raised and how these contributions will be taken forward by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

## Police and Crime Plan 2015/16

Participants were asked if the existing outcomes and objectives set out in the 2015/16 Police and Crime Plan continued to be relevant. There were three identified outcomes and four objectives as shown in the table below.

Outcomes	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Security at home</li><li>• Safety in public places</li><li>• Visible and accessible policing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prevent Crime</li><li>• Deliver an effective response</li><li>• Reduce harm and the risk of harm</li><li>• Build effective partnerships</li></ul>

As had been the case for our other methods of consultation, the general consensus was that the outcomes and objectives remain relevant, however it is the specific crime issues that sit underneath these broad headings that require more focus by North Wales Police.

Participants were particularly keen to discuss key crime issues with consideration as to how the Commissioner's Plan could impact upon these and improve services.

# Post–Event Report

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## 1. Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Service

### Primary Issues Raised:

- **Funding**:- Sustainability of existing funding is problematic. Year on year funding arrangements are causing a risk to the continuation of domestic abuse and sexual violence services.
- Need more investment in perpetrator programmes.
- Recognise that Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence are of equal importance and require a specialist response.
- North Wales Police along with public partners need to understand and manage demand.

### Detail:

#### a. Funding, continuity and effective delivery

“Commissioner could inform strategic discussions relating to funding specialist services and also invest in prevention initiatives.”

Ongoing concerns were raised about funding for domestic abuse services both in relation to amount of investment and the annual nature of that investment.

There is also concern about the increasing pressures on the service such as the high numbers of public inquiries and political reviews taking place that are leading to increasing numbers of people coming forward to report historic abuse. However, there is no additional funding or provision to cope with this extra demand.

#### b. Training of Police Officers

North Wales Police are not mandated to attend National Training Framework sessions on violence against women, sexual violence and domestic abuse, but implementing training in line with the framework would improve all response to violence against women, sexual violence and domestic abuse.

An [HMIC report](#) identified that North Wales Police need to improve on identifying and assessing risk at initial point of contact and ensuring appropriately skilled staff conduct investigations.

Currently crisis intervention how do we intervene earlier?

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## 1. Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Service

### Police and Crime Commissioner Response

The issue of the sustainability of funding was raised last year and again this year. I understand it is a continual and persistent issue that is causing real uncertainty within services. In particular I have great sympathy for the people that occupy posts funded by these grants who face this period of uncertainty each year and of course the victims who rely so heavily on these most vital of services.

I have taken these issues seriously. You expressed to me that funding for domestic abuse and sexual violence services was too low and that annual settlements made planning extremely difficult. I have challenged ministers on this point, and my appointment as chair of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners put me in a stronger position to continue my challenges around short term funding. I am therefore delighted to say that whilst only one year funding has been announced for 2016/17, there has been a commitment from the Government that from 2017/18 all Police and Crime Commissioners will be given three year funding commitments. This will make longer term planning much easier and I am sure will be welcomed by all who work within the voluntary sector.

Perpetrator programmes are incredibly important to the prevention of domestic abuse and sexual violence. I feel that the significance of such programmes has not had enough focus in the past but this needs to change. More and better emphasis on offenders and tackling offender behaviour is required which is why I have previously invested funds into a perpetrator scheme and very much welcome the fact that the majority of local authority partners are for the coming year are also investing part of their Domestic Abuse Services Grant into perpetrator programmes.

The new legislation in Wales, Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 along with the National Training Framework and introduction of “Ask and Act” are very important developments that strengthen the partnership response to domestic abuse and sexual violence. Although North Wales Police are not mandated to deliver the National Training Framework they will map the requirements of the framework to ensure that current training practices are complimentary to this.

There is undeniably an increase in the number of cases being reported due in part to publicity surrounding national inquiries and historical cases and also due to the impact of the 2015 Act. I will continue to monitor the burden increased reporting is having on policing services and how that can be best managed in conjunction with partners.

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## 2. Older People, Vulnerable People, Hate Crime

### Primary Issues Raised:

- Cyber-crime is under-reported and is on the increase especially for older people
- Need an improved response to people who report scams
- Older people need protecting from domestic abuse
- Hate crime is on the increase and should be a policing priority
- Vulnerable people reporting crime need to be taken seriously

### Detail:

Cyber-crime is an emerging area of crime where older people are particularly vulnerable. More advice and more engagement is needed to prevent cyber-crime and to prevent older people in particular from becoming victims. Furthermore an active response is needed where people do report scams.

Older people are also vulnerable to domestic abuse, there needs to be a focus on this by the police. The police also need to engage with elderly people residing in care homes directly and not through carers or family members to speak on their behalf.

Police need to properly recognise hate crime and hate crime victims (this is not always done). Furthermore, black and minority ethnic (BME) people are over-represented in key indicators of vulnerability and are more likely to suffer discrimination. The police need to be trained on issues affecting BME victims such as forced marriage, honour based violence, female genital mutilation and modern slavery.

## Police and Crime Commissioner Response

### Cyber–Crime

Over the past year cyber-crime has emerged as a growing and concerning crime trend. Online scams, fraud and even blackmail have all been reported to North Wales Police in recent months. The Force have been working to keep older people safe from this type of crime by, for example, producing advice which is available on the [Force website](#) and in a short [leaflet](#) produced in conjunction with Age Cymru.

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## 2. Older People, Vulnerable People, Hate Crime

Due to the growing nature of this crime I have also decided to fund the Get Safe Online project. Get Safe Online is a not for profit organisation that helps the public and small businesses to stay safe whilst using the internet. They identify national and local cyber-crime trends and victim groups then provide specific information about these through their [website](#) and information packs. Over the year, North Wales Police and Get Safe Online will be holding pop up shops in supermarkets and other public places to provide cybercrime advice and answer any questions people may have. The idea of the pop up shop is to give people a chance to speak to members of the Force, local businesses and banks to receive advice on online safety. The pop up shops will be accessible to people of all ages but are particularly aimed at meeting the needs of older people. Get Safe Online will also hold a number of workshops for young people where they are most vulnerable online. The workshops will be for 11-14 year olds and will focus on staying safe from online bullying and exploitation.

### Engagement with Elderly People in Care Settings

My own engagement programme takes me far and wide across many different communities, people and interests and it is constantly developing. It was raised with me both during the year and again during my consultation events that there is not sufficient direct police engagement with elderly people in residential care settings. In response to these concerns, North Wales Police's local policing teams have now begun to attend at residential care homes to engage directly with residents. In my role as police and crime commissioner I will scrutinise that activity by the Force to ensure that engagement meets the needs of people in residential care. Furthermore in my own future consultation I will explore how I can best obtain feedback directly from those people living in residential care settings.

### Older People and Domestic Abuse Vulnerability

In respect of domestic abuse and how it affects older people, North Wales Police currently have an action plan in place that operates alongside the main domestic abuse action plan for North Wales. The Force works together with the [Older People's Commissioner for Wales](#) to ensure its approach to this issue is effective and meets the needs of victims. The Force have highlighted issues around domestic abuse of older people that need to be tackled, such as unwillingness of victims to report due to perceived stigma and a generational culture that is against reporting domestic abuse to the police. The Force have undertaken campaigns aimed at encouraging reporting in places frequented by older people.

North Wales Police are aware that there is under-reporting of domestic abuse by older people. Throughout the year they will continue to undertake publicity campaigns to tackle this. Furthermore through my scrutiny of the Force I will review domestic abuse statistics specifically in relation to older people.

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## 2. Older People, Vulnerable People, Hate Crime

### Hate Crime and Vulnerability

This year my team and I have been particularly active in respect of raising awareness of hate crime. I have received a number of representations through various pieces of engagement that hate crime needs to be prioritised and tackled. During the extensive activity we took part in and funded for Hate Crime Awareness Week in October 2015, we saw a recurring theme that many people who are particularly vulnerable as victims of hate crime are equally reluctant to report this, or else have not recognised that the abuse they have been subjected to amounts to a hate crime.

In order to raise the priority of hate crime I have now referred to it specifically with my 2016/17 Police and Crime Plan. I have introduced formal measures by which I will monitor the Force's handling of hate crime. Furthermore, I will continue to support the Force in its activity to educate people about hate crime and to encourage the reporting of hate crime either to the police directly or to Victim Support who provide third party reporting services. It is my understanding that hate crime continues to be under-reported, therefore over the coming year I acknowledge that our success may (counter-intuitively) lie in seeing an increase in the reporting of hate crime to demonstrate an increase in the confidence of people in the police to deal with such a sensitive issue.

## 3. Community Policing and Community Contact

### Primary Issues Raised:

- Need to balance crime solving and visibility. Also need innovative improvements with where the police presence is in communities.
- Communication and information is so important. The first response of a police officer represents the whole police force and if they get that wrong they can lose confidence in the service.
- There are problems when phoning the 101 number.

### Detail:

- Need innovative improvements with where police presence is in communities.

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## 3. Community Policing and Community Contact

### Detail:

- Need to treat people with respect, listen to them, believe them, have an appropriate response.
- Need continuity of local policing services. There are great differences across North Wales Police community beat managers. Need holistic approach to problem solving. Need to build and maintain trust and partnerships.
- You need to recruit officers to reflect the demographics of North Wales.

### Police and Crime Commissioner Response

Community policing really represents the core of the policing landscape. How people are affected by crime and are given a policing service in their locality is of vital importance to communities and also to me. It is quite true that with the continued scale of funding cuts that policing faces we will have to be innovative and creative with our use of resources in order to continue to deliver local policing that meets the needs of communities. People should feel secure at home and safe in public places and the police should be visible and available when needed most.

It is important that officers and staff in local policing are free to carry out their roles unhindered by unnecessary demands. I am therefore glad to see that North Wales Police have begun an efficiency review project in order to identify and hopefully eradicate any unnecessary demands on police time in order to ensure North Wales Police get the most out of their officers in the community.

Furthermore, last year saw the successful introduction of the Force's Citizen's in Policing strategy. Under this scheme North Wales Police have sought to increase the number of special constables, police support volunteers and also have re-established a cadet scheme. The proper and effective use of volunteers in policing work has a strong and important history. The Citizen's in Policing strategy is enabling North Wales Police to maximise the number of special constables and support roles which in turn helps the Force to have higher visibility in order to reassure communities. From the outset it has been the intention of myself and the Chief Constable that the increase of specials and volunteers is to be in addition to the regular police officers and PCSOs.

I have always scrutinised the Force on their delivery of local policing services. In particularly focussing on the types of crime and anti-social behaviour that occur in local neighbourhoods and how this is then dealt with by the Force.



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## 3. Community Policing and Community Contact

Some communities have experienced specific crime issues over the last year for example in Denbigh and Wrexham. I have challenged the Force on their dealing with these particular crime issues and how they are seeking to reassure communities.

Dealing with crimes and criminals is not the only duty of local police officers, they must engage effectively with their local communities to understand local policing need and to ensure that as a police service they are meeting that need. I have therefore incorporated the scrutiny of local policing engagement plans into my scrutiny programme for the coming year. I will be reviewing how the Force performs its actual engagement with local communities and the actions that result from it against planned activity set out in local plans.

Problems arising with the use of the 101 number have been highlighted to me from a number of participants in this year's consultation and engagement for the police and crime plan. Specific problems highlighted on more than one occasion include

- (i) in the Eastern area calls are diverted to the control room of Cheshire Constabulary
- (ii) the time it takes for the call to be answered, leading to a number of people abandoning the call before getting a response

In relation to the Eastern area issue, to some degree this is not something North Wales Police are able to control or influence as it is a national system anomaly that occurs close to police force borders. However, we recommend that people calling from these border areas dial the full local number which is **0300 330 0101**. I have asked the Force to increase the publicity of this number in these areas to make people more widely aware of the number they need to phone.

In relation to the second point, the effectiveness of North Wales Police's response to communications via 101 is extremely important. This matter has been raised more than any other matter during consultation. In order to measure the success of the 101 system we must measure not only how quickly the call is answered and dealt with but how effectively it is dealt with.

It was identified by HMIC in an inspection carried out last year that North Wales Police needed to improve their assessment of the possible vulnerability of a caller at the initial point of contact when a call is received.

I will continue to monitor the abandonment rate for the 101 system but will also be asking the Chief Constable for regular updates on progress being made towards meeting the HMIC recommendation to take time to properly assess the vulnerability risk of the caller. I acknowledge that meeting the recommendation may necessitate more time being spent on the call and could ultimately lead to a higher abandonment rate.

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## 3. Community Policing and Community Contact

It is also clear that the 101 system is being used by members of the public for matters that should more appropriately be directed to partner agencies, something I know the Force is concerned to address. I will take these issues into account in my scrutiny of the performance figures.

## 4. Communication with the Police

### Primary Issues Raised:

- Communication and information is so important.
- There is a lack of information for the deaf community. All information is inaccessible to profoundly deaf people. Everything you put out should be accessible to deaf people.

### Detail:

- Communication with the police for those with communication difficulties needs to improve.
- Police officers need to understand that everyone is different, you can't have the same approach to everyone "one size does not fit all".

### Police and Crime Commissioner Response

I agree that it is of vital importance that the Police are able to communicate effectively with the people for whom they serve. There are a number of ways in which the Force already have in place adjustments and additional measures for those with further communication needs other than oral or written Welsh and English. For example translation services are used in the custody setting, or the "Pocket Comms" communication booklets for initial and basic communication needs. There is an SMS text service available and also there is an increasing amount of information produced in an Easy Read format. All these measures represent progress in communication efforts, however, there remains more for us to do in the way in which we communicate and share information with some of our communities.

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## 4. Communication with the Police

Whilst we cannot make every piece of information available in every single format, we certainly can and will endeavour to make the information we publish available in further formats. My office recently translated information on hate crime and reporting a crime into British Sign Language click [here](#) and [here](#) to view. Furthermore the Force are supporting a police officer who is at an advanced stage in studying British Sign Language and will contribute to improvements in the accessibility of information shared with the deaf community.

We can make further progress towards making the information we share more widely accessible across many different needs, such as for blind and partially sighted people, those with learning difficulties, deaf and hard of hearing people and those whose language is neither English nor Welsh.

I will monitor the progress of this matter through delivery of the [Joint Equality Plan](#).

## 5. Crime Prevention and Partnership Working – ASB/mental health

### Primary Issues Raised:

- Mental health – when a crime has been committed it has gone too far. There needs to be prevention measures. Identification and partnership working.
- ASB should be priority due to its impact on victims and mental health. Police could do more.

### Detail:

- Where the police have a visible presence in communities, building relationships they are more likely to be in a position to prevent crime.
- People with mental health conditions need support by the police and partners. They need measures in place to help prevent people with mental health conditions from committing crime.
- The police need to treat ASB as a priority because of its impact on vulnerable people.

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## 5. Crime Prevention and Partnership Working – ASB/mental health

### Police and Crime Commissioner Response

*“Prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour” and “effective partnership working”* make up half of my police and crime priorities for 2016/17. In recognition of the impact that anti-social behaviour has on communities and in particular on vulnerable people within those communities I felt that I should have an explicit commitment about it in my objectives. Therefore the objective which last year was simply to prevent crime has been expanded to incorporate also preventing anti-social behaviour.

Anti-social behaviour, although not criminal is taken very seriously by North Wales Police. Its impact on victims, especially vulnerable victims can be profound. I therefore monitor the Force’s delivery of their Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Reduction Plan and challenge the Force around a number of factors in relation to this. On receiving reports of anti-social behaviour the vulnerability of the victim is assessed to ensure the service received is appropriate and meets the victim’s needs. Furthermore under my 2016/17 Police and Crime Plan I will be monitoring the number of anti-social behaviour reports received by North Wales Police.

Mental health issues can and do have a profound effect on policing and are a prime example of something that cannot be tackled by one agency alone. Dealing with mental health is complex and requires all relevant partners to work together in order to help minimise the number of individuals who reach a mental health crisis point and also reduce the impact on communities and services if this does happen.

A conclusion from the North Wales Strategic Assessment I commissioned in 2014 was that mental health problems are identified as a key vulnerability for both victims and offenders across numerous crime types. Furthermore mental health issues are also usually part of a wider range of vulnerability factors. It was suggested that these vulnerability factors could be used as trigger points for different agencies to prioritise early intervention in order to avoid crises points for people and in turn reduce demand on service providers.

In light of this, a pilot project has been introduced in Anglesey to improve the way services deal with mental health issues with a view that upon successful conclusion of the pilot, the approach will be applied across North Wales. It is a multi-agency project involving partners from the police, health service, local authority, youth justice services and the Criminal Justice Mental Health Service. Its aim is to improve our approach to dealing with mental health issues. This includes actions to identify and tackle some key issues, analyse multi-agency information, establish what range of mental health services exist, look at how agencies currently manage cases, how information is shared, where can early intervention be best placed to prevent escalation, how to avoid duplication between partners, how service users are impacted and how agencies can work more effectively together.

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## 5. Crime Prevention and Partnership Working – ASB/mental health

The work of this pilot is reported on by the Chief Constable through the Safer Communities Board at which I attend. I welcome the wider implementation of such a scheme and look forward to the improvements it will deliver to help all public partners deal more effectively and efficiently with mental health issues.

As part of the North Wales Police efficiency review project referred to above, a number of further initiatives are being considered in order better deal with some of the specific issues identified around mental health. Officers in Wrexham are currently piloting a mental health triage scheme. Under this pilot scheme a qualified mental health nurse works on shift to support police officers where they need to make decisions around whether or not to detain a person under section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983. The impetus for this scheme is to ensure that an individual gets the correct service from the outset and police officers are better supported to make decisions. This in turn will ensure better outcomes for individuals and less pressure on both the police and health service. The efficiency review has also highlighted other recommendations in relation to how the police deal with mental health matters. These are currently being put before the project board before they are agreed and can be rolled out through the Force.

Finally, in order to better support the needs of victims of crime who require additional mental health support, we have now introduced the services of a mental health caseworker into the Victim Help Centre.

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## A Word from the Commissioner

### Policing Priorities for 2016/17

Outcomes	Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Security at home</li><li>• Safety in public places</li><li>• Visible and accessible policing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working effectively in partnerships</li><li>• Prevent Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour</li><li>• Deliver an effective response</li><li>• Reduce harm and the risk of harm</li></ul>

As Police and Crime Commissioner I am grateful to all those who attended the event and/or provided separate feedback to inform the Police and Crime Plan. I have listened to your views.

It is essential that I have appropriate and effective engagement with third sector agencies as we go into a new financial and policing year. We need to work effectively in partnership and the year ahead presents many financial and operational challenges for us all.

I have a strategic outlook on policing, yet it is vital that I am able to see the view from the frontline; from those of you who are dealing at the operational end, helping and supporting victims, helping to reduce crime and keep communities safe. I thank you for your participation.

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## Appendix A - Organisations in Attendance

1. Age Cymru Gwynedd and Mon
2. North Wales Race Equality Network
3. Hafan Cymru
4. Victim Support
5. PACT
6. Groundwork North Wales
7. Meirionydd Access Group
8. Flintshire & Wrexham Online Watch Link Association
9. Estyn Llaw/Llesiau Lleol Conwy
10. National Hate Crime Report and Support Centre Wales
11. North Denbighshire Communities First
12. North Wales Women's Centre
13. Wrexham Warehouse Project
14. Action for Children
15. Domestic Abuse Safety Unit (Deeside)
16. Flintshire Disability Forum
17. Sparkle
18. AVOW
19. Stepping Stones
20. Glyndwr Women's Aid
21. CAIS
22. North Wales Deaf Association Wrexham
23. Welsh Government - National Adviser for Violence against Women
24. Professor - School of Sociology and Social Policy
25. Crest Co-operative Ltd
26. Clwyd Alun Housing Association
27. BAWSO
28. Pennaf Housing Group
29. OWL Watch Eastern
30. Wrexham Council
31. Individual Community members



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