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Police and Crime Commissioner Community Engagement: A Scoping Review

Report for the Lincolnshire Office of the Police and
Crime Commissioner

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Glossary of Terms

ABCD:	Asset-Based Community Development
MOPAC:	Mayoral Office for Police and Crime
OPCC:	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
PCC:	Police and Crime Commissioner
PFCC:	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
RSQM:	Restorative Service Quality Mark
STT:	Safer Together Team
VAWG:	Violence Against Women and Girls

Summary

Aims

This report is the first output from the evaluation of the Safer Together Team (STT) in Lincolnshire, commissioned by the Lincolnshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). The aim of this report is to present the findings of a scoping review that explored community engagement initiatives been developed OPCCs or that they had reported being involved in.

Method

A scoping review following the framework suggested by Arksey and O'Malley (2005) was used to gather information on community engagement initiatives that have been developed by the OPCC, or ones they had been engaged in, across England and Wales. The review aimed to answer the following question

“What initiatives have been developed by (Offices for) Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in England and Wales to help develop and increase community engagement and empowerment?”

All 44 OPC websites were searched using the term ‘community engagement’ as well as exploring each of the content tabs. Additionally, the academic literature was searched by entering the following search terms into 11 databases; police and crime commissioner, office for police and crime commissioner, PCC, OPCC, community, neighbourhood, engagement, safe, security, empower, involve, and partner. The searches included data from 2011 onwards (after the implementation of PCCs) and were conducted between 19th January and 16th February 2022.

A total of 18 articles were retrieved from the academic literature. Information from each of these plus the 44 websites was recorded and then sorted thematically to produce the findings for this report. This consisted of 13 themes as outlined below.

Findings

Theme 1: General communications

Most OPCC websites had communications surrounding community engagement approaches and Police and Crime Plans. Some had additional communication around key strategies and objectives, desired outcomes, and summary of attentivities. Areas of good practice included having easy to read infographics on the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner. However, where desired outcomes and activities were discussed, there were no identified measures of how the outcomes were achieved or an evaluation of the activity. Information was also found that was out of date. Annual reports were common on the OPCC websites, and these helped to identify progress against the Police and Crime Plans and highlight any areas to that required focus. Several OPCCs used newsletters to engage with the community, usually on a quarterly basis. They included information on events, key issues and initiatives, and links to social media accounts. There appeared to be no report or evaluation on the uptake and utility of the newsletters. Some OPCCs used values to help underpin their work and clearly communicated these via the website.

Theme 2: Community engagement staffing

Most OPCCs detailed their office structure and how this involved community engagement work. The amount of resource dedicated to this area appeared to vary, for example,

some areas had dedicated teams whilst others had roles relating to community engagement.

Theme 3: Consultations

Most OPCC websites discussed ways they had consulted with the community. The common method was to report the outcomes of the Police and Crime survey and the precept survey. The reports were detailed however, many lacked details on how the information could be used to inform the Police and Crime Plan. There were also few comparisons of how information had changed over time, such as the feeling of safety. Some OPCCs had considered how they consult with a representative sample of the community and detailed how they developed a strategy which increased the responses from under-represented groups. The need for greater consultation from under-represented groups was confirmed in the academic literature following an evaluation on the consultation for a Community Remedy scheme, a review of engagement for the Police and Crime Plans, and a review of hate crime services. There were no versions of “easy to read” consultation information found during the review. The most common used method for consultation was surveys however, some OPCCs discussed the use of focus groups to gain a richer insight into the community’s view. Consultation topics included focus on priority areas for youth, victim’s needs, dog theft, naming a new sexual violence hub, rural crime, road safety, serious organised crime, cybercrime, and community remedy. Additionally, there were calls for evidence to gain information about specific areas such as Violence Against Women and Girls. It was noted that a clear consultation plan is needed in terms of the focus and on the activity to be undertaken.

Theme 4: Events

PCCs and engagement teams reported attending events such as question and answer events, informal meet and greets, conferences, listening events, third sector engagement events, community walkabouts, engagement stalls, webchats, informal drop ins, and strategic boards. Some events were to engage with specific members of the community such as adults with learning disabilities, ethnic minority groups, or rural communities, and other events were to mark international/national significant dates such as anti-slavery day. Most OPCCs detailed upcoming events or provided a description on ones that had concluded. Some provided a post event report and ‘next steps’ to help inform the wider community as well as show the PCC response to what had been raised. One OPCC aligned the events to the specific PCC priority areas. The impact of Covid-19 was apparent, with most OPCC websites not detailing any events after 2019, although some reported holding virtual events to continue engaging with the community. Some of the websites had event calendars although for several areas, these had not been populated.

Theme 5: Campaigns

Some PCCs held specific campaigns that aimed to encourage community engagement. These campaigns had a specific topic such as safer streets, anti-social behaviour, young people, and gangs, and they advertised how the public could be involved.

Theme 6: Use of social media

Most OPCCs were utilising forms of social media including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, to engage with communities, although the level of engagement varied. Most posts were linked to specific campaigns, events, or awareness days, and included photos and videos to share information. There was no evidence found of OPCCs utilising TikTok.

Theme 7: Volunteering

All the OPCC websites provided details of volunteering opportunities which enabled community engagement through giving back to the community, sharing skills and experience, meeting new people, and opportunity to raise concerns and bring fresh ideas.

Opportunities included Independent Custody Visitor Schemes, appropriate adults, animal welfare visitors, independent scrutiny panels, independent observers, Police Special Constables, Police Support Volunteers, Police Cadets, watch schemes, community peer mentors, speed watch volunteers, mystery shoppers, consultation volunteers, and youth commissions. There was limited evaluation of volunteering opportunities.

Theme 8: Lived Experience

The websites found there was a lack of initiatives that explored the lived experience however, some sites detailed a 'Lived Experience Advisor Scheme'. There are benefits to both the individual, service providers, and policy makers. The academic literature found evaluations and research into ensuring the lived experience of victims was included as a form of community engagement to help focus further work and efforts by the OPCC. Understanding the victims' needs was suggested to help with future service commissioning but it was found that OPCCs may not always work with people with lived experience, often due to time constraints, and if they did, it was not always representative.

Theme 9: Funding

The websites discussed funding opportunities that were available or that had been granted. Most detailed projects that had been funded such as community connection projects, mentoring projects, mental health support, safe spaces, safety initiatives, and initiatives for specific communities such as young people, the travelling community, or women.

Theme 10: Specific safety initiatives

There were a range of specific safety initiatives funded or supported by OPCCs and this was evident in both the academic literature and on the websites. These initiatives included a grant scheme for people affected by Adverse Childhood Experiences, a women's whole system approach and 18-25 early intervention service, security upgrades to prevent acquisitive crime, training to become hate crime champions, and working with organisations to develop initiatives to tackle knife crime. Studies into the Community Speed Watch Scheme found that it empowered communities and could reduce the burden on police at least in the short term, as well as highlighting the presence of the PCC. However, it was highlighted that gaining the public's views can often involve managing competing views and interests which are focused on a local level, rather than aligning to national priorities. A study into Neighbourhood Watch schemes found that most people did not belong to one simply because they had not been asked. Schemes were less likely to be run in areas of concentrated disadvantage, in urban areas, in areas with a younger age profile, and areas with a high number of terraced or vacant properties. Areas with a high crime rate, that had positive views of the police, that had a higher fear of crime, that had higher levels of social housing, and that had visible burglar alarms were more likely to have a scheme in place. This knowledge enabled an understanding that community engagement is likely when the conditions promote this. A study into child abuse, trauma, adversity, and loss of children within the criminal justice system demonstrated that by engaging with the community to learn about how they are affected, it was possible to develop a new service (diversion hub) to help the individuals and prevent entering the criminal justice system. Similarly, a study into supported older people who experienced crime found that there was a need to listen to their experiences to develop policy and shape support services.

Theme 11: Community learning initiatives

Community engagement work also included OPCCs reporting being involved in or funding community learning opportunities. These included half-term workshops, safety

packs, interactive online modules, and diversion activities for young people. These often lacked details of any formal evaluation.

Theme 12: Community engagement initiatives

There were several examples in the academic literature of specific community engagement initiatives that involved the OPCC that had been formally evaluated. A case study in Brighton and Hove saw a restorative city approach taken for prevention and intervention across a range of settings (education, social care, health, and community safety). The initiative used the Restorative Service Quality Mark (RSQM) standards to evaluate their work which resulted in formal acknowledgement of their achievements which focused around involving the community to find solutions to the problems they face. A further study reported on another restorative approach taken to improve the relationship between young people and the police, as this was a strategic priority within the PCC Police and Crime Plan, which found positive outcomes from this event.

One article spoke to people involved in three youth commissions and the author concluded that although the principle is for equal relationships between young people and the partners, language used often demonstrated an unconscious value which undermined this, as well as an unequal power balance. A further report discussed the evaluation of a programme to target hate crime and domestic abuse by working alongside victims and perpetrators as an early intervention. This initiative boasted improvements in self-worth, empowerment, health and wellbeing, relationships, communication, access to services, and social inclusion. They discuss what they had learnt from the project and make suggestions around multi-agency stakeholder engagement, the ability to measure change in a real way, the need for longitudinal research to realise the impact, and the importance of understanding disengagement so that this can be improved in future.

A report into initiatives to target Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) hoped to encourage other PCCs to engage in similar projects by stating five key themes for good practice; 1. Importance of prevention and early identification including involving those with lived experience; 2. Early intervention and diversion from criminal justice system utilising support systems; 3. Building community capacity such as forums or hubs, or community champions, mentors or advocates; 4. Deterrence to address repeat victimisation by developing initiatives for perpetrators; 5. Intensive specialist support where services work together through a support hub for example. Another evaluation into a project to develop awareness of healthy relationships and domestic abuse in young people made 13 recommendations of which two could be applied to community engagement; 1. Comprehensive data monitoring to ensure the ability to evaluate; and 2. Clear communication of the roles of everyone involved.

An evaluation into an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) programme discussed the development of Community Builders which aimed to work with organisations and communities in a strength-based way to improve community safety amongst other aims. The evaluation demonstrated that applying the ABCD principles in practice was difficult but that they had learnt a lot about their communities and their strengths which increased their confidence in working with communities rather than reacting to a problem. It was found to have a significant impact on how connected the community felt, their ability to cope with certain situations, their trust in services and professionals including the police, and their fear of crime. The report concluded with some recommendations including the importance of collaboration and the ability to think differently.

Other initiatives found via the websites included a project to complete a piece of art for the police headquarters, funding a community therapy dog for police staff and their families following traumatic incidents, projects to increase engagement with those in prison, and an initiative to develop construction skills within a prison.

Theme 13: Evaluation

One area discussed the development of a Youth Outcomes Framework to help organisations identify their intended outcomes and how this could be assessed and measured to demonstrate impact. However, in the main, there were few examples of how OPCC websites were gaining or using evaluation data of their community engagement initiatives.

Summary

The scoping review identified relevant literature that explores how OPCCs have engaged with their communities, identified areas of good practice to help achieve this in a positive and meaningful way, highlighted areas that could be improved, and provided useful recommendations based on experience.

Future considerations

The report concludes with 55 suggestions based on the evidence reviewed that Lincolnshire OPCC may want to consider as they develop the STT initiative.

Introduction

Aims

This report is the first output from the evaluation of the Safer Together Team (STT) in Lincolnshire, commissioned by the Lincolnshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). The aim of this report is to present the findings of a scoping review that explored community engagement initiatives been developed OPCCs or that they had reported being involved in.

The aim of the scoping review was to discover any available literature which outlined existing frameworks for engaging with communities across different OPCC areas. It was hoped that the evidence from this literature may provide indications of successful practice and outcomes achieved in other areas which may be comparable to Lincolnshire so that any learning can be embedded within the development of the new STT.

Context

Historically, the engagement between the OPCC and local community has been focussed on strategic level engagement with statutory and larger voluntary sector partners and has tended to be Lincoln centric. In response to this, the OPCC has recently implemented the STT. The team has been set up to engage with the community across Lincolnshire at a local level, particularly with those who are unwilling or feel unable to engage presently, and to ensure local views, priorities, and issues are understood and escalated appropriately by the OPCC or Lincolnshire Police. An understanding of how this could best be achieved would be beneficial when implementing this new initiative.

Funding

Funding for the evaluation of the STT which included the scoping review presented in this report, was provided by Lincolnshire OPCC.

About the research team

Rachael Mason

Rachael is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Health and Social Care. Prior to working at the university, Rachael worked for a supported housing charity in Newark. She supported young people aged 16-25 years old to develop life skills to help them prepare to live independently and engaged with many organisations throughout this position including Social Services, healthcare professionals, counselling and mental health services, education and employment providers, local Councils and the Department of Work and Pensions. She developed a new role of Training Coordinator whilst at the charity and engaged with external agencies to deliver training contracts to the young people. Prior to this, Rachael worked at HMP Lincoln facilitating a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy based accredited Offender Behaviour Programme for substance users. Rachael's research interests are centred around the criminal justice system and around addictions, with a particular interest in New Psychoactive Substances.

Lauren Smith

Prior to joining the University of Lincoln as a Lecturer in Psychology in 2020, Lauren worked voluntary sector services supporting people in the Criminal Justice System for 14 years. Her roles included performance and development of services, delivery of resettlement

support services in prisons, development, and delivery of support services for people transitioning from the community into prison, delivery of services to families of people in prison, and work within a supported accommodation provider for families and young people. Her research interests are centred around the rehabilitation and reintegration of people with convictions, including the complex relationships between homelessness, employment, health and addictions and offending and reoffending. Lauren utilises a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods to undertake her work.

Tochukwu Onwuegbusi

Tochukwu is currently a Lecturer in Forensic Psychology at the University of Lincoln and a Chartered Psychologist with the British Psychological Society. He has previously worked as part of a forensic psychology team focused on delivery of Offending Behaviour programmes at Her Majesty Young Offenders Institute. His research interests are centred around attitude and risk judgements, applying experimental research designs and eyetracking technology to assess a variety of real-world forensic and clinical phenomena. Recently, Tochukwu and Professor Todd Hogue developed a simple, but powerful data-driven method of analysing eye-tracking data related to dynamic video streams, particularly where you want to identify inter-group differences or identify specifically salient stimuli. A key goal is to uncover and understand group differences in eye movement patterns, that can be used for diagnostics, skill assessment, or to compare offenders and non-offenders. His other research interests include improving police lineup identification procedures, eyewitness testimony issues.

Todd Hogue

Todd is a registered clinical and forensic psychologist. Prior to joining the University of Lincoln, Todd worked both in the Prison Service and at Rampton Hospital. His main areas of practice in these settings involved developing and managing services for sexual offenders and high-risk individuals with personality disorder. Most of this experience included training and supporting staff to provide these services with the main clinical experience related to the assessment of risk and how to provide input to manage and reduce the risk of future offending. Since joining the University of Lincoln in 2006, Todd has developed the forensic psychology courses to train to become a Forensic Psychologist and has undertaken research across a range of areas of offending and forensic interest. Todd is particularly interested in how to successfully manage reintegration of individuals post-conviction to reduce the risk of future reoffending.

Method

Overview

A scoping review following the framework suggested by Arksey and O'Malley (2005) was used to gather information on community engagement initiatives that have been developed by the (Office for) Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) across England and Wales.

A scoping study aims to address a broad topic and retrieve relevant information from publications varying in design and context, rather than answering a specific well-defined question as would be expected with a systematic review (Arksey and O'Malley, 2005). This design was deemed as appropriate to gather information that had been published on community engagement initiatives developed by the PCCs. A scoping review aims to summarise information on what is known, draw conclusions and make recommendations based on the information retrieved. However, quality assessment of the publications is not within the remit of this type of review (Arksey and O'Malley, 2005).

The following outlines the protocol for the scoping review using the stages outlined by Arksey and O'Malley (2005).

Framework stage 1: Identifying the research question

The research question for this scoping review was defined as

“What initiatives have been developed by (Offices for) Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in England and Wales to help develop and increase community engagement and empowerment?”

Framework stage 2: Identifying relevant studies

The aim of the scoping review is to be as comprehensive as possible and explore any published or unpublished studies and information regarding the research question (Arksey and O'Malley, 2005). The following areas were considered to help identify relevant materials.

Sources that were searched: electronic databases accessible via EBSCO host (Academic Search Complete, Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts (ASSIA), HeinOnline Law Journal, International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS), JSTOR, PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, Scopus, SocINDEX, Social Care Online, and Social Policy and Practice), hand searching of reference lists to find additional sources, and all Police and Crime Commissioners websites.

Geographical regions: Documents that have been published regarding community engagement initiatives within the United Kingdom. This helped to ensure that information collected and findings from the review may be transferrable when planning, implementing, and developing the Safer Together Teams for Lincolnshire OPCC.

Time span: Any documents/information published between 2011 and the present day to gain a comprehensive review of any initiatives developed since the implementation of the PCCs.

Language: Documents published in English language

Table 1: Search terms used to search sources:

“Police and crime commissioner”	AND	Communit*	AND	Engagement
OR		OR		OR
“Office for police and crime commissioner”		Neighbourhood		Safe*
OR				OR
PCC				Security
OR				OR
OPCC				Empower*
				OR
				Involv*
				OR
		Partner*		

A pilot of the search terms was conducted to ensure it was effective and allow for any refinement. As the scoping review process is iterative rather than linear, a reflexive approach was required. This resulted in the revision of search terms and inclusion and exclusion criteria based on the source being searched to prevent information being discarded and to identify all relevant literature (Arksey and O’Malley, 2005).

A record of the number of references retrieved from each of the academic sources was documented. This would enable any necessary updates of the search to be conducted in the future (Arksey and O’Malley, 2005). See figure 1 for the breakdown.

The term “community engagement” was entered into the Office for Police and Crime Commissioner websites, as well as searching their online pages, to gather data relevant to the question.

Searches were undertaken between 19th January and 16th February 2022.

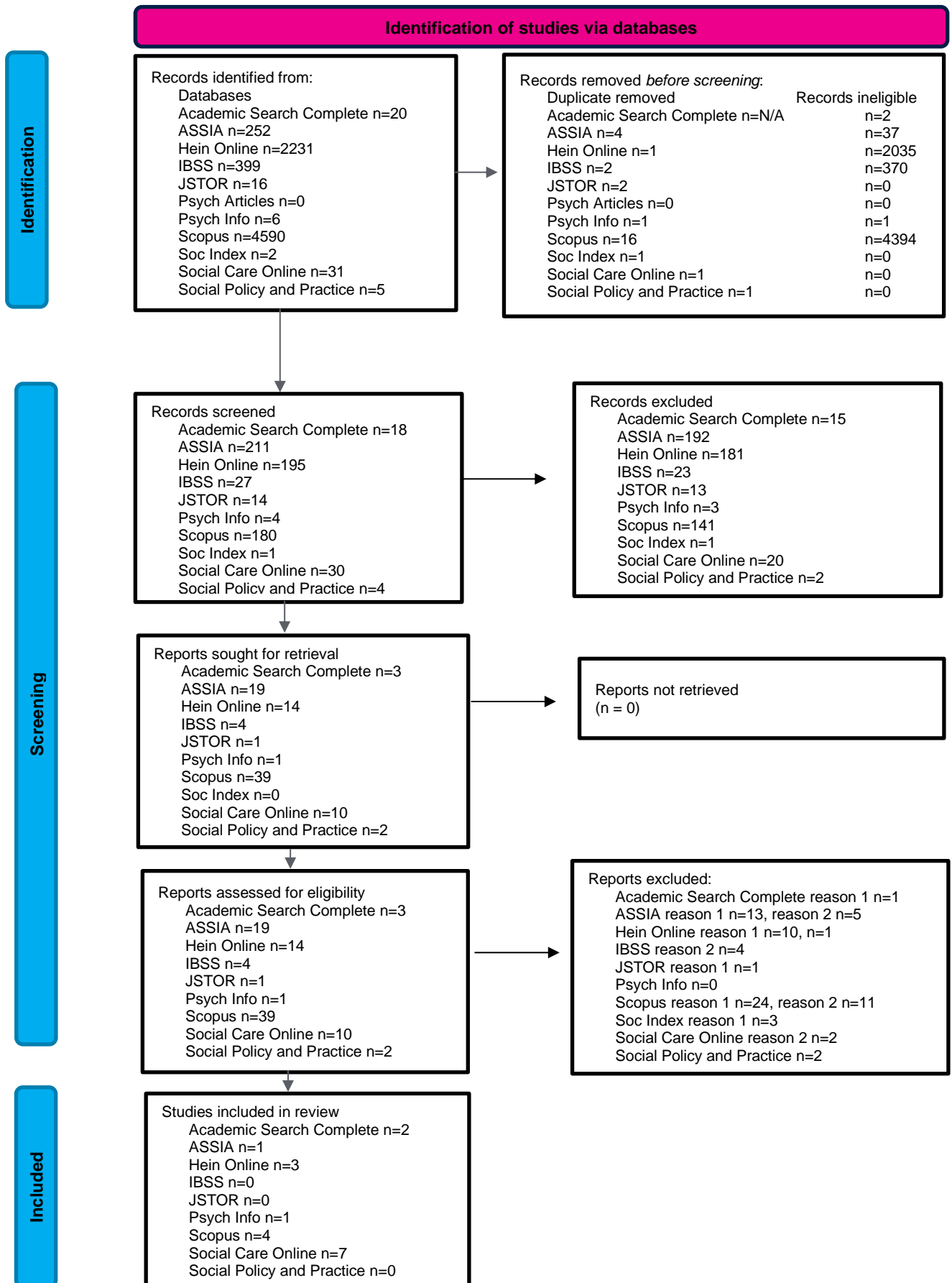
Framework stage 3: Study selection

This stage aims to optimise the number of references retrieved by specifying clear inclusion and exclusion criteria determined initially at the start of the review to aid with decision making but amended post hoc as familiarity with the information was developed (Arksey and O’Malley, 2005). The final criteria were applied to all references found to ensure consistency.

Table 2: Inclusion criteria (exclusion criteria not stated as was the opposite):

Any type of study or reporting design	Ensured breadth of information relating to initiatives and reflected that not all would have been researched or evaluated using a specific research design.
Any type of community engagement initiative	Ensured breadth of information relating to initiatives and to capture information on the design and elements of different ideas.
Community engagement initiatives for adults or children	Addressed the research question and explored all members of the population
Full text availability	Ensured the information could be obtained, free of charge, and examined in full.
Information obtained within 2 weeks of starting the scoping review	Ensured the review was completed within a set timeframe.

Figure 1: PRISMA



Framework stage 4: Charting the data

Once the documents and sources of information had been obtained from the academic sources, the information from this was placed into a spreadsheet which enabled the data to be entered into a chart using the following headings: Author details (names); title of reference; where information was published (source); date of publication; geographical location of publication (city/area); type of publication (primary research, secondary research, initiative description, evaluation); aims of the study if applicable; aims of the initiative; study population/sample; study design if applicable; methodology if applicable; details of the initiative; outcomes or results of evaluation if applicable; details of comparator if applicable; duration of the initiative if applicable; recommendations for future (e.g. research, policy, practice, evaluation), other (iterative).

The information from the OPCC websites was collated into a Word document alongside the relevant links to the website pages.

Framework stage 5: Collating, summarising, and reporting the results

The breadth of a scoping review requires a potentially large amount of information to be presented. A scoping review does not aim to synthesise data due to not assessing the quality of the information used, but to present a narrative account of the information in relation to the references included (Arksey and O'Malley, 2005). This can then be used to present recommendations based on the knowledge developed from undertaking this review.

An overview of the information included in the review is presented in the following section, 'findings'. This allows readers to "quickly get a flavour of the main areas of interest" (Arksey and O'Malley, 2005). The information from the academic sources and the OPCC websites was analysed thematically using the six steps suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). This involved two researchers conducting the searches (one focusing on academic sources, one focusing on OPCC websites, collecting the relevant information, recording the data from the sources, reading the collected data, and finally developing codes based on the ideas emerging from the information with a focus on the details and outcomes of the community engagement initiatives. These codes were arranged into themes and the two researchers met to discuss their coding and themes, they came to a consensus on these, and defined the themes ready for reporting. To reduce any bias, the remaining two authors then examined the themes and the data from a non-objective viewpoint to determine if the themes were accurate and relevant to meeting the scoping review aim. The findings were then confirmed and reported in the next section.

Findings

OPCC Websites

Access to all OPCC websites was via the Association of Police and Crime Commissioner 'find your PCC' site which lists all 44 OPCCs including the Northern Ireland Policing Board (Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, 2021). Some PCCs were joint Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners (e.g., Essex, North Yorkshire) but for the purposes of this report, the police and crime related engagement is reported, rather than fire safety related engagement. Some PCCs were deputy mayoral offices where the Deputy Mayor held the OPCC roles (e.g., West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester, and London). The OPCC websites were variable in their content and ease of navigation. However, most websites had, as a minimum, 'Who we are', 'What we do' 'News', 'Get Involved' and 'Contact Us', or similar, sections.

Academic literature

There was a total of 18 articles included following the search criteria outline above. The articles all discussed an element of community engagement that had been undertaken in partnership with the PCC, and for some initiatives, with other relevant stakeholders. The academic literature demonstrates initiatives where an independent review has been requested to help evaluate the outcomes, providing an opportunity to demonstrate impact and disseminate knowledge and good practice.

Results

The information from the OPCC websites and the academic literature have been collated into themes and presented below. Each theme provides potential points of consideration for the Lincolnshire STT, or OPCC in general, as the initiative is developed to learn from areas of good practice or from previous evaluations. These are easily identifiable in bold text below and are collated into the considerations section at the end of the report.

Theme 1: General Communications

Most PCC websites had standard communications which underpinned community engagement approaches. Some of these were statutory publications, such as the Police and Crime Plan for each area. In addition, websites (variably) published key strategies such as Equality Objectives (See, for example Devon and Cornwall PCC n.d.a). Given that it is a statutory obligation for each PCC to engage with communities under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act (2011), it is not surprising that several OPCC websites outlined their strategy and commitment to this. Cumbria PCC (n.d.) outlined the commitment, strategic areas (police and crime priorities, budget, quality of service, and victims), their principles of public engagement and the desired outcomes of engagement. However, there was no indication of measures of success against desired outcomes. A further example is from Devon and Cornwall PCC (n.d.b) who published a clear statement about their commitment to engagement. The statement outlined their aim to bring people and communities together to address issues of common importance, solve shared problems and bring about positive social change through increased understanding of decision makers about perspectives, opinions, and concerns. The page then provides a summary of previous engagement activity. None of the reported activity appeared to be recent (post 2019) but this could be a result of Covid-19. In a further example, Thames Valley (n.d.) had a colourful and easy read infographic leaflet which outlined 'What your Police and Crime Commissioner does for you'. However, the leaflet had become out of date; while much of the information contained within the leaflet remained relevant, it had the date of the 'next election' as May 2021. Nevertheless, there seems to be some

importance in outlining the legal basis and principles of public/community engagement, as well as desired outcomes. **However, it would also seem pertinent to ensure these are kept up to date (or are not date sensitive), to ensure they are appealing and accessible, and to also monitor adherence to principles, and progress against desired outcomes. This may be a future consideration for the STT and Lincolnshire OPCC.**

Many PCCs published annual reports to summarise progress against their Police and Crime Plans, summarise spending, highlight actions taken against specific priorities, discuss specific initiatives and provide resources to the community for specific issues. (See for example, Dorset PCC, 2021 which provided a colourful summary using a slide deck). **Lincolnshire has its own annual reports, and it will be important to highlight the work of the STT within these moving forward.**

Several OPCCs published newsletters as part of their community engagement strategy. The newsletters were available via websites, usually in 'news' tabs. However, Thames Valley also offered the opportunity for people to sign up to receive the newsletter via a pop-up box which appeared when a person visited any page of the OPCC website. Newsletters appeared to be published roughly quarterly and included current initiatives, such as Violence Against Women and Girls, knife-crime, Safer Streets, Street Watch; recent events such as a recent partnership day; details of grant funding opportunities via the OPCC; recruitment campaigns such as Independent Custody Volunteers; recent press releases, with hyperlinks to the releases; and reminders about social media account handles (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) linked to the OPCC (Bedford PCC, 2021). There was, however, no detail about the uptake or any outcomes linked to community engagement from the newsletters. **In Lincolnshire, the team opted to utilise the 'Neighbourhood Alert' scheme for communications to the community. The review of newsletter content may provide additional ideas for alert content, but this should be done in consultation with the community accessing the alerts about what is useful to them.**

Some OPCCs had a list of values to underpin their work. For example, Avon and Somerset OPCCs (2022a) values were openness, partnership, compassion, and courage. There was no indication of any specific values for Lincolnshire's OPCC. Having a value-based organisation can have a range of benefits such as increased productivity, improved working relationships, empowered employees, greater stakeholder satisfaction, personal accountability, more informed decision making and greater industry understanding through the fostering of a common purpose amongst all employees (Davidoff, 2019; Hosari, 2017). **The development of specific values may be a future consideration for the Safer Together Team and the wider OPCC team but should be done in consultation with staff, partners, and the community.**

Theme 2: Community engagement staffing

Most OPCCs had published on their websites the details of their office structure, which usually included some reference to community engagement work. However, the amount of resource that appeared to be specifically dedicated to community engagement appeared to be variable. Alongside Lincolnshire, Devon and Cornwall PCC seemed to have one of the most developed community engagement teams where the team were referred to as 'Community Link Officers' who provided communities with a single point of contact for the OPCC and the officers for each area were named on the website: 12 officers to cover the county (Devon and Cornwall, n.d.c.). Most other areas did not appear to have dedicated community engagement staff but did have roles such as a Head of Communications and Engagements, and Senior Communications Officer (e.g., Avon and Somerset, 2022a). **Given that Lincolnshire seems to have one of the most developed community engagement resources via the Safer Together, this may provide an opportunity for Lincolnshire to become a leading example of good practice for community engagement. However, activities should be supported by**

robust monitoring and evaluation, and sharing of successes and learning for this to be facilitated.

Theme 3: Consultations

The review of OPCC websites revealed some consultation activities across most PCC areas. As would be expected, most areas published the outcomes of their Police and Crime Plan survey reports and their precept surveys which inform the policing element of council tax. These were typically reports of about 10-15 pages in length and included the background and methodology, results in the form of tables of statistics, as well as qualitative findings in the form of anonymised direct quotes from respondents (e.g., Kent PCC, 2021). Lincolnshire's was particularly long with a 138-slide presentation of the findings published on the website (Habit5, 2022). Topics included alignment of PCC current priorities with public views about what the priorities should be (analysed holistically and in 2 groups: 'victims' and 'non-victims'), perceived safety (analysed holistically, by age and by victim/non-victim groups), actual experience of victimisation and interaction with the police (analysed by geographical area) and what matters to respondents (analysed holistically and by rural/urban/coastal grouping, and age groups).

While the reports were informative, there were few areas that provided detail about what the implications of the findings might be i.e., how this would be implemented into the police and crime planning for the short- and long-term future. An exception to this was Hampshire PCC who provided a section in their online report about 'what does the data tell us?' whereby they detailed the implications such as 'young people need support and opportunities to avoid criminal routes and 'a sense of apathy' towards reporting crime via the 101 service which needed to improve (Hampshire PCC, 2021). **Specific discussion and feedback around the implications and next steps may be a consideration for the Lincolnshire STT and wider OPCC and would support the 'closing of the feedback loop', whereby actions taken because of feedback and consultation are published.** While the literature around closing feedback loops within criminal justice jurisdictions is sparse, there is literature from business which indicates better engagement and continuous service improvement following the implementation of feedback loops (see, for example, Markey, Reichheld and Dullweber, 2009).

In addition, there was very little in the form of published comparisons about how perceptions, such as feelings of safety, had changed over time which would seem pertinent to measure successes or areas where resources may need to be improved in the future. **This may also be a consideration for Lincolnshire.**

Kent had evidenced some specific work to encourage greater engagement in the police and crime consultation and, while people from ethnic minority communities were still under-represented, the strategy had led to a reported 68% increase in responses between 2016 and 2021, despite a lack of media publicity (Kent PCC, 2021). Their engagement strategy had included posting on OPCC social media accounts, sending the survey to all newsletter subscribers, posting hard copies on request, posting to popular local community social media sites (the local equivalent being something like the 'You're probably from Lincoln if...' Facebook site), social media sites popular with specific ethnic minority communities, councillors and MPS being encouraged to share the survey via their own contacts, and the survey link being included in the outgoing e-mail signatures of all OPCC staff. **While Lincolnshire also employed some of these measures, it is suggested that an evaluation of engagement strategies may be helpful to establish "what works" in increasing community engagement.**

From the academic literature, Heap and Paterson (2021) investigated how the Community Remedy anti-social behaviour policy had been established and implemented by Police and Crime Commissioners using consultation. This policy aimed to put victims at the centre of the process by having a responsive system that involves victims in the

punishment of the offender by choosing from a list of predetermined actions. This list was created by Police and Crime Commissioners alongside their police forces, which required community consultation and engagement to help ensure that the responses were relevant to the local communities. Focusing on the public consultation of the community remedy, the authors found that of the 43 PCC websites, 18 lacked any detail about a public consultation, 17 simply said that it had happened, and eight had given detailed information about what the consultation entailed and the results from this. Following a review two years later, of the initial 18 that had no mention of public consultation, 10 had been updated to include this. The most common way of accessing public opinion was through a survey located on the PCC website which was accessible to the community for four weeks. There were differences between the PCCs in terms of response rate (3500 responses was the highest and 100 responses was the lowest), the activities to promote engagement (e.g., emailing 2400 agencies and groups, and press releases), and the method of reporting consultation events and data. The authors note that the sample sizes for consultation were low, and participants self-selected to complete the form, reducing the external validity of the results. They continue to discuss the access (physical and ability) of internet-based surveys and suggest that the voice of those without this access is not captured. ***They concluded that further research is needed on the engagement of stakeholders for the Community Remedy policy and that more is needed to be done to help increase the representativeness of the respondents.***

Additionally, McDaniel (2018) reviewed the implementation of the PCCs, and the Police and Crime Plans published by them. He suggested that the plans have “no clear attempt to pinpoint the concerns of particular neighbourhoods or reconcile a cross-section of views” suggesting that further engagement with communities is needed. The PCCs were challenged by the Home Affairs Committee (2016) about this, and replies stated they felt they did not have the resources to communicate with the public effectively and directly. The author detailed accounts of minimal engagement in events and communications delivered by the PCCs in both London and the West Midlands, demonstrating a lack of interest from the public and resulting in feedback based on a non-representative sample. The author cites the work of Caless and Owens (2016) who suggested that PCCs engage with the public for people to recognise them and understand what they do, rather than listen to their needs and wants. The author concludes that there is no standardised approach to the engagement of communities, and it is at the discretion of each PCC, but this leads to sections of society, ones who may be averse to dialogue with the police, having their voices go unheard. Whilst reviewing the Stevens Commission (2013), the author notes this raised the concern that one person could not listen to all members of their constituency, but efforts had been made by some PCCs through a committee or group that were tasked to engage in community consultation. West Midlands PCC have a Strategic Policing and Crime board to achieve this, but it was noted there was a lack of evidence of community consultation being achieved. ***Increasing engagement in consultation events from a representative sample of the community is essential to ensure equity.***

Chakraborti (2018) wrote about the lack of meaningful engagement with diverse communities when exploring the issue of hate crime. He makes the point that policy is driven by academia in terms of research that is conducted and the understanding that is derived from this, but this can often exclude contexts where research has not been able to be conducted, resulting in policy, and understanding that is disconnected to the real-world experience and impacts on the victims. The author reflects on data from four studies which explored the lived experience of hate crime, two of which were funded by the OPCC (Hertfordshire and West Midlands), which included people from diverse backgrounds and those that had been a victim of hate crime, potentially on more than one occasion. One of the themes the author notes was “failure to prioritize meaningful engagement with diverse communities” which is summarized below. The UK Government Action Plan (Home Office, 2016) discuss the need to work in partnership with local communities to tackle hate crime, and this is then reflected in the Police and Crime Plans developed by OPCCs. However, Chakraborti (2018) highlights that his findings suggest

this does not happen in practice. Participants, both victims of crime and those working for organisation delivering services, revealed feelings of fear, anger, isolation and disconnection, which ultimately results in not reporting a hate crime. The author acknowledges that diverse groups are often referred to as 'hard to reach' but in his studies, he was able to spend time with a vast amount of people from diverse backgrounds due to the methods employed to increase this engagement (attending leisure centers and community meeting points for example) and that they welcomed this engagement and opportunity to share their experiences. The author details how participants feel engagement approaches are tokenistic and prevents them sharing their experiences which results in policy and services being developed that are not always suitable. Participants wanted police and relevant organisations to make diverse community engagement an integral part of their work. The author concludes the theme with a reflection on service closures for those deemed hard to reach due to funding cuts and how these have further isolated victims of hate crime, as well as preventing their understanding of what constitutes a hate crime and where to access help. ***The author suggests that stronger links between academia, policy and those with lived experience is needed to improve the communication***, as can be seen with organisations that have helped to improve the support and reporting of hate crimes (such as Tell MAMA, Stop Funding Hate, Stonewall, and Sophie Lancaster Foundation). ***He concludes that more is needed to be done to engage diverse communities to better support them: training, shared languages, evaluations of interventions, easier methods of reporting, information sharing structures, shared polices, and sharing best practice. We need to be explicit when we say we are working with people to show how this is achieved, how it is monitored and how it is evaluated.***

On the OPCC websites, there were no 'easy read' versions of consultations located by the review. Given that there are an estimated 1.1million adults in the UK with a learning disability, with 956,000 of these adults residing in England (Mencap, 2021; Public Health England 2015), ***it would seem pertinent to ensure easy read and engaging versions of these survey, reports and all community engagement consultations are made available.***

In addition to online surveys for the Police and Crime Plan, a very small number of areas supplemented these with focus group discussions (e.g., Hampshire PCC, 2021). Members of the community were able to register their interest in focus groups via the PCC website (Hampshire PCC, 2022). While surveys are useful for gathering large amounts of information with a wide reach, focus groups can be useful to share thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and ideas in more detail, providing rich data, deeper insights, and can be particularly useful for engaging with people from marginalised groups (NHS England, 2016).

Other consultation topics included youth surveys into crime which identified priority areas affecting young people (Cleveland Youth Commission, 2022) and a victim needs assessment survey which provided information about how victims access recovery services to inform future commissioning (Centre for Process and Innovation, 2021). Nottinghamshire PCC had also consulted on public views of dog theft and to find a name for a new sexual violence hub (Nottinghamshire PCC, 2022). West Mercia PCC had held additional consultations focussed on rural crime, road safety and serious organised crime (West Mercia PCC, 2020). Warwickshire PCC had previously conducted a cybercrime survey (Warwickshire PCC, 2017). Consultations about Community Remedy had also been carried out (see below). Consultation can support understanding and problem solving, allowing for more informed decision-making which can subsequently lead to resource saving, improved morale, better co-operation, reduced stress, and reduced conflict (see, for example, Tamburrini, Gilhuly & Harris-Roxas, 2011). However, it is also important for stakeholders to not be over-burdened with consultations to maintain engagement over time (HM Government, 2008). In addition, consultations need to be conducted at a time when there is opportunity to influence outcomes, be long enough for people to be able to engage, be clear on their scope and impact, be accessible by their

target audience, be responsive to feedback and be led by people with relevant expertise (HM Government, 2008). ***It is therefore important that the STT and wider OPCC implement a clear consultation plan about what areas are required for consultation and how this will be done effectively.***

Alongside core consultations about the Police and Crime Plan and other priority areas, calls for evidence were also publicised in a small number of areas (e.g., Hampshire PCC), with a current call for evidence about Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) from the VAWG local task group. The call for evidence was an online survey tailored to 3 groups: residents, young people, and professionals and experts (Hampshire PCC, 2022). In some areas, such consultations/calls for evidence had been utilised to inform bids to the government's Safer Streets funding (e.g., Cleveland PCC, 2021). Calls for evidence vary in their definitions; they may or may not include consultation but tend to be defined as information gathering processes which invite interested parties to provide feedback and empirical evidence on legislative or policy proposals (Gov.UK, 2019). ***Calls for Evidence may be useful on a local basis to inform the STT and Lincolnshire OPCC about the impact of potential future legislation, priorities, policy and to gain evidence for funding bids.***

Theme 4: Events

In addition to their own events, PCCs and their engagement staff/teams reported attending other community events on their websites. Attendance at existing events alongside partner agencies, was reported as being to ensure the best use of resources and avoid any unnecessary duplication (Merseyside PCC, 2020a). Examples of local community engagement events included engagement stalls within local venues such as libraries (South Yorkshire PCC, 2020); third sector engagement events (North Wales PCC, 2016); community walkabout events where the PCC, accompanied by a PC and a Community Engagement officer, visited a range of community venues and a walk through the town centre (Leicestershire PCC, 2018); 'what matters to you' Q&A events and informal meet and greets (Leicestershire OPCC, 2022); one-to-one 'Time to Talk' sessions held online or over the phone for residents to discuss any issues they may have about policing and crime (Norfolk PCC, 2022); attendance at conferences such as tackling violence against women and girls, and 'the life journey of trauma' conference (Hampshire PCC, 2022); accountability and performance panels which included 15 minutes of public questions (Suffolk PCC, 2022a); 'Listen Live' events which were panel discussions centred on priorities from the police and crime plan with audience questions (Suffolk PCC, 2022b); webchats (Suffolk PCC, 2019); 'on tour' events such as local county shows (Suffolk PCC, 2019); informal drop ins (Suffolk PCC, 2019); the hosting of regular meetings with MPs (Merseyside PCC, 2022a); attendance at local carol services and cadets evenings (Dorset PCC, 2021); and strategic and policing and partnerships boards (Merseyside Police, 2022b). ***Future considerations could include a review of what existing community events the STT team can continue to or start to attend, including local conferences or training events. Additionally, there could be consideration of specific events that could be organised to maximise the involvement of the third sector.***

Some of the events attended were aimed at engaging with specific groups. For example, although historical, the Devon and Cornwall team had attended a specific event to engage with adults with learning disabilities (Devon and Cornwall PCC, 2017) and Dyfed-Powys PCC had addressed a summit focussed on rural policing (Dyfed-Powys, 2013). Essex PFCC (2022) had embedded their engagement with ethnic minority communities within a collaborative project called Community360 which comprised an independent advisory group, safety workshops and specific events to mark cultural events. Some events were also linked into specific national or international recognition days. For example, Hampshire PCC (2021) had attended an exhibition to mark Anti-slavery day, and then published a YouTube clip about the event providing resources for people to utilise should they be in need or concerned about a member of the community. ***There***

could be a consideration of events which could be held or attended to promote engagement with specific groups within the community including ethnic minority communities and those who have learning disabilities, as well as consideration of what national and international dates of recognition should be tied into engagement events.

Most PCCs detailed upcoming events for people to attend or reported on events retrospectively. These retrospective reports were mostly descriptive. However, areas such as North Wales completed post event reports which summarised discussions and next steps from the events to inform the wider community and those who could not attend (North Wales PCC, 2016). The North Wales Reports listed each area of discussion e.g.: a) domestic abuse and sexual violence, b) hate crime and modern slavery, c) mental health, d) age-older people/young people, e) community policing, community contact and communication with the police, and f) crime prevention and partnership working. For each area, the report detailed issues raised, what people said, with direct quotes, and the PCC response. A latter third sector engagement event took a different format whereby local stakeholders presented their work followed by a question-and-answer session with the OPCC and the details of the discussions were provided in a similar post-event report (North Wales, PCC, 2020). Similar reports were produced for third sector engagement events on an almost annual basis. Bedfordshire PCC (2021) also reported on events held and attended but within their reporting they aligned each event to the specific PCC priorities. The priorities were set at priority setting meetings within each constituent authority areas every quarter, led by community officers (Bedfordshire PCC, 2022). **In the future, there could be consideration of what pre-event promotion and post-event evaluation and reporting could be done to maximise engagement before, during and after events. Additionally, events could be aligned against PCC priorities.**

Some events, particularly during Covid-19 had been held online. For example, West Mercia (2020) had held online engagements events for residents to have their say which were reported to be lively; anti-social behaviour and officer visibility were among the issues discussed. It was also noted that there seemed to have been much fewer events listed since the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic, with some pages having not updated their events since 2019 and/or stating that they were unable to attend events due to the 'current climate' but that they hoped to start organising and attending events in the future (e.g., South Wales, 2019). **There could be consideration and trialling of a mix of online and face to face events to maximise accessibility, especially to help increase community engagement since Covid-19 restrictions had eased.**

Some OPCCs had an events calendar where viewers should have been able to view forthcoming events for the next week, the next month, or 'all events'. However, from several areas (e.g., Nottinghamshire PCC, n.d.) there were no events detailed at the time of the review. **It is important that events pages are kept up to date.**

Theme 5: Campaigns

Several PCC areas held specific time limited campaigns and encouraged community engagement around each one for communities to build resilience and help make a difference in each area. For example, Hampshire PCC (2022) had held previous campaigns supported by Community Engagement staff/teams on Safer Streets, anti-social behaviour, 'stand up to hate crime', 'call time on FGM- female genital mutilation', fraud and 'safer superheroes'. Each campaign had some artwork, or a logo attached to it, details of any events, details about how people could be involved e.g., by reporting crime and where to report, resources for support and learning (linked into community learning, see below); and some also had You Tube clips by the PCC talking about each campaign. South Yorkshire PCC (2018) team had previously held a 'YOYO' (You're Only Young Once) Campaign for young people which included topics of guns, gangs and knives, and child sexual exploitation. This included the production of podcasts by young people. **A consideration for the STT could be to align with any future campaigns**

delivered by the OPCC and devise specific community engagement activities linked to these.

Theme 6: Use of social media

The use of social media for community engagement was prevalent across PCC areas, with most using various platforms to encourage engagement more generally and attached to specific events, although the level of engagement and volume of posts varied across areas. Most PCCs and their engagement teams, including Lincolnshire, used Facebook and Twitter as a minimum with some also using Instagram (e.g., Cambridge PCC; @pcccambs) to post photos of events and videos. Examples of videos included ones for specific awareness events. For example, Cambridge PCC had posted a series of videos for deaf awareness week on their Instagram page. Posts across all platforms were often linked to specific campaigns and awareness days/weeks such as mental health awareness week. As detailed previously, some PCCs had also made use of YouTube accounts to share informative and campaign-related videos. There was no indication on any OPCC site of the use of TikTok. However, given the increased use of TikTok, especially amongst young people, and the decreased use of Facebook, this may be a consideration for the future. ***Therefore, the use of a wider breadth of social media platforms by the STT may be a consideration for the future. However, this should be accompanied by a robust social media strategy to ensure suitable and co-ordinated communications across platforms and should monitor the reach and engagement across platforms to prioritise resources.***

Theme 7: Volunteering

All OPCC websites detailed volunteering opportunities, usually via specific get involved/volunteering sections but the breadth and scope for these varied. Volunteering opportunities provide a further opportunity for community engagement. Many volunteer descriptions listed specific benefits such as giving back to the community, sharing skills and experience, advancing professional development/careers, meeting people, enjoyment and fulfilment, and the opportunity to raise concerns and bring fresh ideas (see, for example, Staffordshire PFCC, n.d., a). Volunteering opportunities included:

- Independent Custody Visitor Schemes: Volunteers attend police custody suites to check the conditions and wellbeing of people detained within them. They ensure that legal rights and entitlements are being met and that the person is aware of what these are (Staffordshire PFCC, n.d. a). Any concerns are highlighted to the custody staff and a report completed after each visit. While Independent Custody Schemes tend to be sited within, Volunteers are eligible to become members of the Independent Police Custody Visitors Association, funded by the Home Office, Police Authority and PCCs, to provide support and training (ICVA, n.d).
- Appropriate Adults: Appropriate adults provide independent support to people detained on suspicion of a criminal offence who are vulnerable, to safeguard their interests, rights, and entitlements, including police adherence to The Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE;1984) (NAAN, 2014).
- Animal Welfare Visitors: Animal welfare visitors visit the facilities where police horses and dogs are housed, trained, and transported to report on the conditions (Merseyside PCC, 2020b).
- Independent Scrutiny Panels: Scrutiny panels monitor and scrutinise specific areas of policing and ensure compliance against relevant legislation, such as PACE (1984). Different themed panels were evidenced in different PCC areas. Examples included Stop & Search scrutiny panels, use of force, body worn video, custody, arrests amongst ethnic minority communities, and topical themes such as Professional Standards (see for example, Staffordshire PFCC, n.d. b).
- Independent observers: Some forces operated independent observers' schemes. For example, Cheshire PCC operated an Independent Observer of

- Protests and Demonstrations whereby volunteers observed and feedback on planning, the actual event, and post-event briefings (Cheshire, 2021a).
- **Police Special Constables:** Police Special Constables are volunteer police officers with the same powers as regular officers. 'Specials' volunteer for a minimum of 4 hours per week (Nottinghamshire Police, n.d.). There are around 9,000 'Specials' across England and Wales (Home Office, 2022). Whilst recruitment for Police Special Constables was largely via police force websites, some PCC websites had links to Specials recruitment sites, alongside their other volunteer opportunities.
 - **Police Support Volunteers:** Police Support Volunteers (PSVs) are not warranted officers and have almost no policing powers but promote community engagement and increased social responsibility (College of Policing, n.d.). However, they perform a range of supporting tasks to enable police officers and staff to better focus on core duties; duties can include staffing police station front counters, administrative tasks, role playing for the purposes of officer training, skilled support such as social media or marketing, vehicle maintenance, and IT tasks (College of Policing n.d.). There are approximately 8,000 PSVs in England and Wales (Home Office, 2022). Like 'Specials' recruitment, whilst recruitment for Police Special Constables was largely via police force websites, some PCC websites had links to specials recruitment sites, alongside their other volunteer opportunities.
 - **Police Cadets:** For young people aged between 13 and 17 years covering a range of topics such as social responsibility, leadership, community safety, physical fitness, and outdoor adventure (see, for example, Cleveland PCC, 2022). Similar 'Junior Police' schemes operated for primary school age children and included practical demonstrations and skills such as fingerprinting, forensics and police radios (e.g., Staffordshire, n.d. c). In some areas, there were cadet schemes, which did not appear to be linked to the PCC e.g., Lincolnshire's 'mini police' scheme delivered by Lincolnshire Police as a community cohesion project (Lincolnshire Police, 2022).
 - **Watch Schemes e.g., Neighbourhood Watch, Farm Watch:** Several PCC websites also advertised watch schemes. Neighbourhood Watch is a voluntary organisation with around 6 million members which encouraged neighbours to look out for each other, while helping the police to guard against crime, vandalism, and other local community problems (Merseyside PCC, 2020c). In some areas (such as Staffordshire), Neighbourhood Watch members received information via Smart Alerts issued by officers and the Community Engagement Team. Rural crime forums included Farm Watch (for people to utilise knowledge of what is happening on and around their land to reduce rural crime) and Horse Watch (for members of the equine community to keep informed of horse or rural related incidences), also supported by alert schemes and advice on securing property from Crime Reduction Officers (see, for example, Avon and Somerset PCC, 2022b).
 - **Community peer mentors:** A small number of PCC sites detailed community peer mentor schemes. Community Peer Mentors empower, change, reduce vulnerability, and provide a voice for people whether they are a victim, survivor, perpetrator, prison leaver, or an under-represented group in society (Durham PCC, 2022). The scheme in Durham reports an 81% reduction in contact with services, reduced offending, and hospital admissions, assisted reintegration back into society, returns to employment or education, learning new skills and coping techniques, and reduction in suicide.
 - **Speed watch volunteers:** Speed watch volunteers provide a framework for local communities to tackle speeding issues using passive notices and speed indicating devices. Hertfordshire PCC had a variation on this, 'DriveSafe', where residents were able to act themselves and speeding motorists were sent advisory letters, with repeat offenders receiving a visit from an officer (Herts PCC, 2022).
 - **Mystery shoppers:** Not many OPCCs appeared to operate this scheme but mystery shoppers act on behalf of the OPCC as customers for a range of agreed

tasks including listening to 101 calls, attending a local station, and asking for information, attending Neighbourhood Policing Meetings, and Custody food tasting before reporting back on areas such as customer service, accessibility, and professionalism (Nottinghamshire PCC, 2017). Cheshire Police had a version of this scheme where Call Management Auditors reviewed emergency and non-emergency calls (Cheshire PCC, 2021b) and Front Desk Auditors checked the accessibility and quality of information provided by desks in stations (Cheshire PCC, 2021c)

- Consultation volunteers: Consultation volunteers were documented in few areas. They attended local events and community activities to listen to and collate comments and opinions to relay to the PCC (see, for example, Cheshire PCC, 2021d).
- Youth Commission: Youth Commission members aged 14-25 years, formed a group focussed on allowing young people the opportunity to raise policing and crime issues within their local communities through a series of peer-led workshops (Lincolnshire PCC, n.d.).

Staffordshire and Cheshire both had extensive lists of opportunities, all easily available on one page, with a single link to application forms (Cheshire PCC, 2021e; Staffordshire PFCC, n.d d;), rather than a need to request an application form or e-mail the OPCC, which was seen on some other sites. Lincolnshire PCC listed 7 volunteering opportunities: Special Constables, Cadets, Police Support Volunteers, Lincolnshire Youth Commission, Independent Custody Visitors, and Safer Together Research Panel. However, these were across several different web pages. In addition, information about some schemes, such as the Youth Commission was not easily accessible in one location. ***There may therefore be scope to consider listing all the volunteering opportunities in one place, for ease of access, whilst reviewing if there are activities not yet listed on the website and ascertaining if there are additional volunteering opportunities from the examples listed above that may be feasible and beneficial within Lincolnshire. In addition, there may be scope to consider greater linking of the Lincolnshire Safer Together Team to existing initiatives such as watch schemes.***

It was noted that there was limited evaluation and monitoring of volunteering on any OPCC website and ***therefore this may be a consideration for the future for Lincolnshire and may also help to increase recruitment e.g., by promoting the benefits of volunteering.***

Theme 8: Lived Experience

The review of OPCC websites found that, overall, lived experience initiatives were limited. In addition to the volunteer opportunities outlined above which included lived experience (e.g., Youth Commission and Community Peer Mentors), a small number of sites detailed specific 'Lived Experience Advisor schemes'. For example, Devon and Cornwall PCC (n.d.d) detailed their scheme which states that the OPCC recruits 'people with lived experience for specific pieces of work. Rather than retaining a pool of people, they recruit to specific tasks and people are encouraged to monitor the web page for opportunities. At the time of the review, the site listed a paid lived experience advisor position to join the Working in Partnership for Women in the Criminal Justice System subgroup to support system wide improvements for a woman's journey through the Criminal Justice System, embedding a trauma-informed approach (Devonshire PCC, 2021). Lived experience initiatives have been gaining increased traction in recent years with benefits for policy makes, service providers and people with lived experience. Organisations benefit through ensuring their services reflect the needs of communities and benefit the people they intend to serve, increased 'humanisation' of activities, and increased credibility and legitimacy in organisations (Sandhu, 2017). People with lived experience benefit through increased hope for the future, reduced isolation, increased reflection, and increased empowerment (see, for example, Honey at al., 2020). ***Given the potential***

benefits of lived experience for all involved, a future consideration for the STT and OPCC would be to consider the development of a lived experience strategy to involve lived experience at each suitable opportunity and to ensure this is accessible by people with relevant lived experience, and to monitor the impact of this.

In the academic literature, Madoc-Jones, Hughes, and Humphries (2015) investigated victim needs and experiences through interviews with 33 service providers. The study was funded by the OPCC as they wanted to understand the needs of victims in the local area to help develop services in the future. Participants discussed the problematic nature of victim support and the initiation being based on type of crime committed. They reported that only the victims of the most serious crimes would receive automatic contact whereas victims of less serious crimes, such as anti-social behaviour, would not. It was acknowledged that low level anti-social behaviour can have a devastating impact and that these individuals may not be supported. This meant that police officers would need to actively encourage the individual to contact victim support themselves, however, police officers were not aware of the lack of automatic contact and so these individuals were not always supported. In the case of domestic abuse and hate crimes, it was acknowledged that an individual may be contacted by multiple agencies due to the nature of the case, and that there were no joined up approaches between these agencies to help reduce the burden and duplication. The authors noted that dedicated or specialist support services were missing for victims of crime, except for recent sexual assault and domestic abuse. They discuss the extensive use of support groups and described these as “the bedrock for support services with victims of domestic crime” due to the social support. The authors discussed the issue of Women’s Aid in terms of the gendered name and the lack of services available for men. The issue of multiple needs was raised in that services often needed to help people with accommodation and mental health. A discussion surrounding offering services for specific groups versus more generalized services was had in terms of tailoring support versus cutting the “resource cake”. Rural areas were assessed as being a particularly difficult place to implement effective victim services as they were more costly, poorly developed, and difficult to access. They discussed the reluctance of some people or groups to report their crimes to the police (such as travellers, migrants and younger people, and people experiencing domestic abuse), and that when they did, they were not always kept informed of the progress. However, this communication was facilitated when they had a specific support person, usually for domestic or sexual assault cases. Participants struggled to understand who had strategic oversight of victim services which led to duplication of resources and a lack of overall cohesion between providers. ***The authors concluded the services for victims need developing in terms of meeting the rights and needs of individuals. They suggest the PCC should explore services and processes that can aid with joining up service provision to enhance service delivery.***

Hall (2018) explored how 10 PCCs engaged with victims to assess their needs to help develop/commission victim support services. The author noted that reports on this work by the PCCs often detailed a lack of engagement with people with lived experience and this was often cited due to time constraints of needing to complete the needs analysis. Where consultation had taken place, the samples were often small and may not have represented those who had been a victim of crime. Some PCCs based their victim engagement on previous studies conducted or data collected that was transferrable to their reports, rather than generating new data which may have been more suited to their report. The majority of PCCs were reliant on collecting their own data for their needs assessment which is appropriate for a local needs analysis although there were methodological issues relating to the statistics produced in terms of who was engaged and the numbers of the sample. The author discussed how local commissioning of services leads to an issue of disjointed working and fragmentation between services, leading to a complex system, and an element of competition rather than collaboration. When exploring other sources of information from the PCCs, it was noted that they often reproduce information that is taken from a national context, furthering the idea that

although local approaches should be taken, that this is not always the case in practice. ***Much is often said about victims rather than including their voice and interacting with them during the commissioning process. The author concludes that there is significant variability across PCCs with services that are offered, as well as the way they are commissioned and the extent of engagement with communities.***

Theme 9: Funding

PCCs have access to funding, sometimes via funds elicited from Proceeds of Crime Act (2002) hearings, sometimes through specific Government initiatives such as Violence Reduction Units (in 18 areas, currently not in Lincolnshire), and through bids to specific funding post either individually or in collaboration with other organisations. Most PCCs provided detailed reports about what forthcoming opportunities there were for local community organisations to bid for and what initiatives had been funded from these pots of money. A broad range of activities had been funded in recent years. For example, North Yorkshire PCC (2021) detailed a broad range of projects including a short term temporary accommodation project; funding to their local Men's Shed mental health support project; mentoring support to people in contact with the criminal justice system; community connection projects which included activities such as walking and talking adventures and wellness promotion activities; mentoring support to young people considered to be at risk of engaging with crime; safe spaces for young people to meet including workshops to reduce the sale of drugs and increase young people's resilience, confidence and life skills; funding to the road safety partnership for speed monitoring devices; specific safety initiatives for people experiencing learning and physical disabilities; play space improvements; detached street-based youth work; the implementation of a car park barrier to reduce anti-social behaviour; specific support to young people to develop mountain biking and maintenance skills; improvements to local sports clubs; specific projects for women; and a project to support community cohesion with the local traveller community. Further detail about funded is also provided below in the following sections on specific safety initiatives and community learning initiatives. Whilst the webpages detailed a description of the projects, there was little publication in the way of evaluation and monitoring of projects. ***Future areas for consideration for the STT would be to inform priorities for funding based on their knowledge of local communities; to promote funding opportunities to local communities; and to support the monitoring and evaluation of funded initiatives.***

Theme 10: Specific safety initiatives

A range of specific safety initiatives funded and or supported by OPCCs as part of their community engagement work were discovered via the review of websites. For example, South Wales PCC (2021) had provided a grant scheme to support people impacted by Adverse Childhood Experiences with the aim to bolster initiatives that support people growing up or living in homes where there is domestic abuse or substance misuse, or which provide practical support to families to improve resilience. South Wales PCC (2019) also launched, in partnership with Gwent PCC, HMPPS and the Welsh Government, a Women's whole system approach and an 18-25 early intervention service. The aim of the service is to support women and young people to access the early intervention they require to reduce their likelihood of contact with the criminal justice system through enabling opportunities; ensuring consistent practice methods, values, tools, and timing; promoting engagement and relationships; and working in a trauma-informed way. Hertfordshire PCC (2021) had used money from the Home Office Safer Streets fund to provide free security upgrades with the aim of reducing acquisitive crime. Measures included additional monitored communal CCTV, intercoms on communal doors, new fencing, and gates, upgraded lighting and defensible landscaping, with anecdotal evidence suggesting people felt safer (Page, 2021). Northumbria PCC (2020) had part funded training for individuals and organisations to become Hate Crime Champions to increase awareness and impact of hate crime and to address issues of

under-reporting. Lancashire PCC (2020) provided specific funding to community organisations working to tackle knife-crime. The funding was to support the reduction in young people becoming involved in knife crime through tackling underlying issues which may contribute to offending. **Given the range of ongoing safety initiatives funded and supported by PCCs, it would seem pertinent for the STT to be central to the decision making around safety priorities, using their knowledge of the communities they work in and through gathering feedback from residents.**

Wells and Millings (2019) explored the Community Speed Watch scheme through interviews with 22 PCCs and Chief Constables in England and Wales. They found that the participants viewed the scheme to empower the community, provide a degree of satisfaction, and provide accountability by getting people involved to do something in response to something they had identified as a problem. This has the additional benefit of allowing the PCC to be more visible in the community as a result. The authors comment that volunteers are likely to respond well to localized interventions as this address's specific problems, however, there may be an issue of perceived equality when a full force approach is not taken. This can be overcome through engagement with communities: residents prioritize the issues affecting their quality of life, which may be different to that of the police, and action is taken by the volunteers in the localized areas. The authors suggest that the scheme may provide short-term reductions in the demand for police action, and short-term empowerment of the community. However, they note that this may not last, and feelings of satisfaction may reduce over time which could affect their feeling of safety. The authors state that the ideal volunteer is "mobilized by fear, but has accepted that resources are scarce, has internalized the need for self-help, is willingly responsabilised but is prepared to be empowered to the extent that the authorities are prepared to sanction, and to go no further". **The STT might want to consider how the community can be engaged in schemes to help empower them to take local action on areas of safety identified at a local level.**

Wells (2018) examined data reported on above in the community speed watch initiative where PCCs and Chief Constables were discussing road policing and gaining the public's view. She notes that the PCCs reported, and seemingly prioritized, multiple ways of engaging with their constituents to hear their views such as meeting people in community halls, on the high streets, at events and at people's homes, as well as receiving views via email, social media, and in the post. Wells notes that when discussing road policing, the public are often the offenders as well as the voters for the PCC and that any initiatives targeting this may not be welcomed. However, road policing issues, such as speeding, parking and 'rat runs' are often discussed passionately by the community as being a priority for targeting, and an area in which the public often feel that not enough is being done. On the other hand, it is an area that some vocal members of the public feel is being targeted in order to bring in money for the police. This raises the issue of engaging with the public and having to manage both views on a safety topic that most people have an opinion about. She concludes that it is not easy to create a consensus in the public about what action is desirable by the police and this harms the ability to forge the connection between police and the public. The issue of anti-social behaviour was found to be a large concern for the majority of those interviewed as well. This is due to this behaviour, and speeding/road issues, relating to a person's 'quality of life' in that these are issues that affect them daily. She notes that when engaging with the public "... many of the reported anxieties are potentially those that will have been witnessed or recalled on the complainant's route to meeting with their PCC". **This highlights the authors point that when engaging with the public, they will discuss local issues of safety rather than national issues that the police are likely to be focusing on.** The author highlights the issue of trying to represent one set of views from the public, or from certain groups such as young people, without alienating another group or view. She concluded the paper with "PCCs may have to be cautious that they do not create a demand that cannot be satisfied when they 'reconnect' with the consumers of police services by asking them what kind of policing they would like to receive".

Brunton-Smith and Bullock (2019) examined the national Crime Survey for England and Wales to explore the long-term trends of Neighbourhood Watch schemes and the engagement and co-production of these by members of the public. They found that the number of NW schemes increased during the 90's and then remained stable during the 00's. However, the number of households involved in the schemes declined steadily over time. The main reason for people not being engaged in the scheme was that they had not been asked. Most people (70%) suggested they would be a part of a scheme if one were available, and this number has remained steady overtime demonstrating the demand for the scheme. People who lived in detached houses were more likely to report being a part of a scheme, as were wealthier households, owner-occupiers, and long-term residents. Future engagement in a scheme was less likely to be reported by residents living in flats, living in rental accommodation, and by people who said they did not feel safe at home after dark. It was more likely to be reported as a future opportunity by women and those with a higher income. NW schemes are significantly less likely to be in operation where there are higher levels of concentrated disadvantage, in urban areas, in areas with a younger age profile, and areas with high numbers of terraced properties or vacant properties. Areas with a higher crime rate were significantly more likely to have a NW scheme, as were areas with a low level of disadvantage regardless of the crime rate in the area. Areas that held positive views about the local police were 50% more likely to have NW scheme operating, as well as people who were fearful of crime, as did areas with high levels of social housing and those that had visible burglar alarms, whereas households with more children are less likely to be in a NW area. The authors conclude by stating that co-production is dependent on certain favourable conditions (such as ability to volunteer, good community relationships) but even when these are not present, living in a high crime rate area prompts engagement from the community. They concluded their paper with "citizens will co-produce in unfavourable circumstances – but the conditions have to be right". ***This demonstrates the need to consider how to encourage engagement from the community and to understand what conditions will help to increase this.***

A report from the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and the West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) (2021) discussed their findings of child abuse, trauma, adversity, and loss of children within the criminal justice system. Based on the findings (significant adversity faced by those children, wider than the original ten Adverse Childhood Experiences often referred to) one of their actions taken to date is the development of a diversion hub. This built on the work of the PCCs Gangs and Violence Commission to help identify and support opportunities to address the underlying causes of crime, prevent reoffending, and help to keep communities safe. The reports suggests that police officers will be encouraged to think diversion first which aims to increase the number of out of court disposals whilst learning from the success seen in rehabilitation diversion schemes. This demonstrates the ability to learn from engaging with the community and develop services that aim to help the individual and, in this case, prevent re-offending. ***Learning from the information gathered from the community can help to shape the services that are created to help improve the outcomes.***

The Commissioner for Older People in Northern Ireland (2019) wrote a report exploring the experiences of older people who had experienced a crime. The report makes several recommendations regarding supporting older people in society. Some of these included working with older people and stakeholders to design specific policy guidance on the criminal justice system and handling of cases, developing a better way to identify needs and related support measures for older victims of crime, introduction of an older person's victim advocacy scheme, elaborating what is meant by a vulnerable victim or witness in documentation, introduction of support hubs to support victims of crime, and development of an outreach programme or public engagement scheme that works with and represents older people. ***This demonstrates the need to engage with all members of society to ensure they are supported with issues related to crime.***

Theme 11: Community learning initiatives

Several PCCs had funded and/or provided community learning opportunities as part of their community engagement work. For example, Cheshire PCC (2022) funded half term workshops Kops N Kids 'My Hidden Chimp' mental health workshops for young people aged 8-13 years. The model introduced age-appropriate neuroscience of the brain content to encourage learning, recognition of mental health, coping strategies to manage mental health, and take responsibility for actions. The workshop article included a testimonial from a parent whose child had attended but no formal feedback or evaluation.

In a further example, Hampshire PCC (2022a), had produced Superhero activity packs for families to download and print at home with topics covering staying safe online, staying safe on the road, and staying safe when out and about. They also provided links to access support from their Cyber Ambassador Scheme (Hampshire PCC, 2022b) which is a free cyber safety education and support scheme for education providers. The scheme is described as peer-led, written by young people for young people, free to schools and independent (funded and endorsed by the PCC and kept up to date by police insights but run by industry partners).

In Hertfordshire, the PCC and police force had developed the Hertfordshire Citizen's Academy (Hertfordshire PCC, 2021). This is a series of interactive online modules that any member of the community can access for free on topics such as burglary prevention, protecting vulnerable people, sexting, fraud and cybercrime, business crime prevention, theft prevention, and safety. They could also sign up to an alert list to be informed about new modules.

In Lancashire, the PCC had supported the development of a 42-week course for young people to learn an instrument (Lancashire PCC, 2018a). They had also funded a photography project for young people aged 14-21 (Lancashire PCC, 2018b). The aim was to provide meaningful activities to young people to divert them from the streets where they may be more likely to be involved in crime or be a victim of crime.

A suggestion for the STT and wider OPCC would be to consider offering community learning opportunities as part of their community engagement plans. These could align to the aims of the STT to improve community resilience, with Police and Crime Plans, and with issues identified to the STT by the local community. Ongoing feedback and monitoring should be implemented to ensure effectiveness and to ensure up to date knowledge is provided.

Theme 12: Community engagement initiatives

In the academic literature, Read and Straker (2019) discuss a case study which saw Brighton and Hove City Council strive to develop a 'restorative city' by embedding the principles of restorative approaches across services. This involved the development of a post to explore restorative approaches that could be used for preventative and intervention work in settings such as education, social care, health, and community safety. The project saw training developed around restorative justice, ensuring the key principles of restorative justice were applied to non-criminal justice settings. Key stakeholders were invited to form a strategic group to oversee the project. A register of trained restorative justice facilitators was created, and members were invited to join a Restorative Champions' Network which aimed to bring together agencies and help embed the restorative approaches across settings and the city. One outcome was the creation of restorative circles for those impacted by hate crime, and this appeared to have a positive impact. The Restorative Service Quality Mark (RSQM) standards were used as an evaluation and planning tool for the work, and this resulted in them receiving the RSQM for youth offending, community safety and community mediation. They conclude that this work will continue to develop by engaging communities in the solutions to the problems that they face. ***It might be beneficial to consider how restorative approaches could be used by the STT and to explore any formal standards that could help to evaluate the work.***

Payne, Hobson, and Lynch (2021) reported on an arts-based restorative intervention (“Youth Forums”) between young people and the police which took place in Gloucestershire. The intervention was developed due to a report by the OPCC and Gloucestershire Constabulary which highlighted the issue between the police and young people and aimed to repair relationships by addressing issues on perceived procedural justice and police legitimacy. The evaluation was funded by the OPCC to establish if the intervention could improve the relationships between young people and the police. This was due to them making the relationship a strategic priority within their Police and Crime Plan in 2016. The authors found that there was a change in perceptions of the ‘other’ from participants and they were positive about their future interactions and how these could be more positive. They stated the most important finding was that structured dialogue, using the restorative principles, had a big impact that was most likely only possible due to the arts-based activity which helped to break down barriers. They note a limitation is that the project was a one-off occurrence and that future activities such as this should be a part of education both in school and police training to ensure what was learnt from this is not lost. ***It is worth considering how effective community engagement can be maintained following any events by the STT.***

Burns (2019) interviewed professionals from the OPCC and police forces who were working within three Youth Commissions. Youth Commissions provide a platform for young people to engage with their local communities and provide recommendations that can influence policy and crime prevention initiatives. One of the themes the author discussed is the concept of valuing input from the young people. There were comments that supported the value that they bring in terms of their experiences and opinions but often followed by devaluing statements surrounding the skills and abilities of the young people. She notes that this may not always be a conscious value held by those commenting but that this undermines the principles of the Youth Commission and equal partnership. A second theme she discussed is about professional power and that different participants reported different stances on this. Some were encouraging of helping young people to develop so they can lead and engage others, whereas some saw the relationship as one sided where the young people learn from those in power. She notes that most participants, regardless of how they saw the relationship, may have unintentionally overlooked the abilities and expertise of the young people which effects the notion of a horizontal relationship. They made comments which suggested professionals are required for guidance and support for young people to succeed in this role, placing a too much value on their own skills and knowledge and demonstrating the notion of hierarchy. Young people are asked to speak to other young people about police and crime issues and although this was seen positively by most participants, the author reports how there was some skepticism over the trustworthiness of the information they gather and report back, again highlighting the issue of unequal partnerships. The concept of age was discussed by participants regarding younger people being less capable, and the author comments of the notion of being criminally responsible by the age of 10 but not trusted to have skills and experiences that can help when exploring issues for police and crime. The author provides an illustration of how the transformative nature of co-production may not be achieved if it is not valued or respected, and then acted upon. Additionally, she notes that the wider impact of Youth Commissions may not be achieved as the information may not be shared across the police force, meaning their influence is limited to those in certain positions or during certain activities where they are actively involved. ***The STT may want to develop a clear outline of how relationships are seen and will operate between them and the local communities to address any power imbalances and ensure the influence of any engagement has maximum effect.***

The Brathay Trust (2017) conducted an evaluation of the Turning the Spotlight programme which was delivered by the Cumbria Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. This scheme provided a range of interventions to address hate crime and domestic abuse by working with victims and perpetrators in the early stages of emergent

offending. The aims were to reduce demand on police time due to repeat occurrences, improve outcomes for families and communities, and make savings to partner agencies. The interventions were designed to be needs-led based on the individuals and families that engaged. During the evaluation, they found that there was a reduction in repeat incidents of abuse, that people felt empowered to keep themselves safe and improve their life chances which linked to increased self-worth, improved health and well-being, improved communication, healthier relationships, awareness of the impact of their behaviour on others, wider access to services, and increased social inclusion. There were findings about the nature of workers involved in the interventions, suggesting their knowledge of local services helped with signposting and their empathetic nature helped to engage and support people accessing the interventions. The report made several suggestions about service provision and evaluation. In terms of service provision, they suggest there needs to be rigorous, multi-agency stakeholder engagement and management to raise awareness and clarity of interventions and help services co-ordinate service delivery which would benefit from regular stakeholder events and meetings/networks. In terms of evaluation, the report highlights how appropriate measures are needed for the concept of change in terms of understanding the micro elements which happen to individuals and how this aligns (or not) with the macro elements seen in regional statistics. They reported that many of their objectives could not be fully commented on due to the time constraints and that longitudinal evaluations are required to establish longer-term impacts, and that there needs to be a consideration of when measurements or evaluations are conducted to have a systematic approach. A final recommendation from the report suggested a need to explore disengagement to help understand the barriers and risk factors associated with this, which would help to improve engagement in future. ***The STT may want to consider how they can measure change in terms of the impact they have, as well as considering how long it is likely to be before change will be identifiable. Additionally, the importance of multi-agency working could be utilised to help increase community engagement.***

Casey (2018) completed a report for Revolving Doors on violence against women and girls. This report reflected on initiatives created by PCCs for supporting this area of work in the hope of encouraging other PCCs to engage in similar initiatives. She concludes the report with five key themes for good practice. The first was prevention and early identification both in terms of strategy and practice, such as developing services for those who would not meet a high-risk threshold and identifying the needs of people affected by specific behaviours. Some of the specific initiatives discussed commented on the need to engage people with lived experience in co-production of services and strategies. The second was early intervention and diversion away from the criminal justice system, with initiatives highlighting that by support for young people and women who may be at risk can help to divert them out of the cycle of crime. The third was building community capacity which reflected on initiatives that build knowledge of issues and encourage the community to find ways to address these, such as using specific forums or hubs to support groups of people and meet their needs in an identified space. Initiatives also discussed working with community champions to build capacity for change in local communities, such as using peer mentors or youth advocates. The fourth was deterrence to address repeat victimization which considers initiatives that involve perpetrators to prevent repeat behaviours. The final theme was provision of intensive specialist support highlighting the need for services to work together to provide the complex support that is often needed when tackling violence against women and girls. Initiatives highlighted how this could be done using support hubs to help tackle the process of contacting multiple different services. ***The STT may want to consider how they could utilise some of these suggestions, such as community forums and hubs, and community champions, mentors, or advocates, to develop community resilience and engagement.***

Northumbria OPCC (Cordis Bright, 2020) commissioned an evaluation of the Operation Encompass: the Next Steps (OEtNS) project which aimed to support young people in schools to develop awareness of healthy relationships and domestic abuse. The project

was a collaboration between Northumbria OPCC, Northumbria Police, Barnardo's, and Operation Encompass. The report made 13 recommendations and learning points of which two could be applied to different projects targeting community engagement. The first was comprehensive monitoring data collection to avoid missing any key information needed for evaluation. The second was clear communication of the functions of the service and the role of the staff who are supporting it, to ensure all partners have a clear understanding of the function and what role each partner takes in the delivery. ***The STT may want to consider the two recommendations in terms of how they communicate their roles and how it fits with the partners they work with, and what information is needed to help evaluate the initiative to ensure this is collected.***

Dyde, Warden and Jacques (2019) published an evaluation of a collaboration between Gloucestershire Constabulary, Barnwood Trust, Gloucester City Council and the OPCC. The collaboration aimed to promote asset and strength-based approaches to support local people to build their resilience and collective capacity, empowering local people to act in their local communities. They based their work on asset-based community development (ABCD) which is a strengths-based approach to working with communities, individuals, and organisation to recognise and incorporate the positive strengths and assets that exist within them. These are used as a starting point to build from and to motivate people to take collective action on issues and problems in their community. Barnwood Trust had developed a team of Community Builders using the ABCD principles and this partnership saw PCSOs, and City Council Community Engagement Officers seconded to them to learn about this approach. The team facilitated workshops on implementing strengths-based approaches in professional roles for people working in services across Gloucester. The collaboration had collective objectives including building healthier communities, improving community safety, creating welcoming and inclusive neighbourhoods, empowering citizens to take control over their own lives, and creating places where people can come together. Having a set of collective objectives ensured that the purpose and desired outcome of each of the partners was understood and respected. The authors of the report discussed the literature behind the approaches that were used in this project including the concept of collective efficacy (Sampson, 2006) which suggests that for people to feel safer in a community, and to reduce crime and disorder, they need to be acting together for a common purpose as well as feeling socially connected. The ABCD literature suggests that "strong communities are built by recognising, celebrating and harnessing the community assets that are already there" (p.14).

The project involved two initiatives: community engagement and strengths-based problem solving, and purposeful community building. The first initiative was described as driving a culture change. This included getting organisations to work in a strengths-based way rather than focusing on deficits and resulted in workshops being delivered to staff to consider ways of problem solving by using solutions from local strengths with the aim to create sustainable solutions which reduced the demand on services, as well as increasing trust and confidence in them. The second initiative around community building related to the secondment of PCSOs and community engagement officers to the Community Builders Team and this aimed to increase citizen-led activity, social connectedness, and collective efficacy to develop resilience in communities, as well as trust and confidence in services. The first initiative was evaluated using the Local Policing Survey and evaluations of the strengths-based workshops. The second initiative was evaluated through interviews, people mapping sessions (who they had connected with), and ethnographic visits to sites.

The report divided the findings into two sections: ways of working and impact for community and residents. Ways of working: Feedback from the workshops indicated participants had initially learnt about ABCD and strengths-based approaches, but they cited difficulties in implementing this in practice. The organizations' culture and sufficient time to meaningfully engage with residents were seen as important to embed the ABCD/strengths-based approach. Participants in the workshops reported developing their

knowledge of the communities and their strengths and assets, and the seconded personnel to the community builders team grew in confidence within their role, including learning how to work with communities instead of simply reacting to a problem. The report noted that “when a professional’s focus is based primarily on the interests and strengths of the community – and activities are established in partnership with local residents – their involvement is more likely to be sustainable in the long-term” (p.48). Impact for community and residents: The Local Police Survey found statistically significant evidence regarding “the value of both professional and personal relationships, and their positive impact on perceptions of community cohesion, wellbeing, life satisfaction and, more broadly, perceptions of the police and fear of crime” (p. 79). The report explains how this demonstrated the need for initiatives that promote community connectedness. Interviews revealed that people were able to develop new relationships, take part in new activities which were inclusive of people from diverse backgrounds (such as being free to attend), and discussed how involvement increased their feeling of being able to cope (the example given was with a health condition). Community involvement was cited as a contributing factor to feelings of cohesion, and increased feelings of trust and confidence between professionals and residents. This led to better relationships and improved perceptions of the police in general.

The report concluded that at a personal level, involvement has a positive impact on wellbeing and life satisfaction, at a community level it improves cohesion and reduces fear of crime, and when thinking about perceptions of agencies, residents were more likely to report crimes, have a more positive view of the police and have confidence and trust in the services they are accessing. The last section of the report discussed key learning points for people wanting to implement collaborative cross-sector projects. These included ensuring there is a space to develop trusting relationships between organisations and enable them to think differently and support each other; that the leaders of organisations need to have bravery to not jump to thinking about obstacles too quickly, a willingness to be innovative and challenge practice, be able to advocate what they think is the right decision, and to communicate practice effectively and consistently; that there is a need to find allies within organisations who have a similar mindset, and ensure the right people are recruited into roles; that when managing secondments, managers need to shield and support the secondees from pressures and expectations and be supported by their organisation to enable them in their new roles. ***The STT may want to consider how they can work with their communities in a strength-based way to help empower local communities whilst increasing their engagement.***

Additional examples of community engagement initiatives not covered elsewhere in this report but found through the review of OPCC websites included a community project to create a permanent piece of art for the Police Headquarters (Lancashire PCC, 2017). Members of the community took part in workshops and met with the lead artists to shape the art and ensure it was reflective of the area. In Cheshire, the PCC had funded a community therapy dog for the benefit of police staff, and local families following traumatic incidents (Cheshire PCC, 2021). Finally, the Avon and Somerset PCC (2022b) and the Devon and Cornwall PCC (2018) had taken their community engagement into their local prisons. Avon and Somerset had done this through funding a specific prisons project to develop construction skills, while Devon and Cornwall had visited the prison to meet people detained. Prison engagement initiatives were based on the premise that prisoners are part of the community too. ***While there was no evidence about the success of these additional initiatives, they could inform future decision making for the STT about how arts, pets and prisons can be integrated into a community engagement strategy.***

Theme 13: Evaluation

The Mayor’s Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) alongside Project Oracle produced a Youth Outcomes Framework (2016) to help those who work in youth justice to identify

intended outcomes of initiatives and to help assess and evidence those outcomes. They describe it as a “menu’ of outcomes and measurement tools which organisations can select from to explore and demonstrate the impact of their work” with the aim to enhance evidence-based practice and commissioning. The framework is split into five key outcomes; offending, violence, and victimisation; behaviour; attitudes and relationships; personal skills and attributes; and mental health and wellbeing. The framework suggests several tools that could be used to gather data from admin sources, self-reports, and coach and parent reports. ***This demonstrates the need for collecting evidence which can help to demonstrate impact for key identified outcomes, and it may be that a community engagement framework could be established using a similar principle.***

OPCC websites, overall had limited publications about evaluation of community engagement activities. Some isolated websites had feedback forms embedded within the pages (e.g., Devon and Cornwall, n.d.b). However, these were specifically about the webpages, rather than OPCC activity and it was unclear how often these were used and there appeared to be no closing of feedback loops whereby the outcome of feedback provided was published.

Discussion

Summary

The scoping review identified relevant literature that explores how OPCCs have engaged with their communities, identified areas of good practice to help achieve this in a positive and meaningful way, highlighted areas that could be improved, and provided useful recommendations based on experience.

Using the information found, the future directions listed at the end of this section have been formulated as considerations for Lincolnshire OPCC when developing their STT initiative. These are potential areas for consideration and thought based on the information obtained, rather than an action plan to be taken forward.

Implications

It is hoped that by completing a comprehensive scoping review of the available literature, the STT initiative will be able to build on what has been found to increase the success of their community engagement.

Strengths and Limitations

The review of websites only reflects work that has been publicised via them; there may be other work that has not been published on the websites. A further limitation is that the review represents a cross section of information and websites are continually updated with new information over time. The inclusion of the websites is a strength of this review as it prevented an over-reliance on academic literature which may not capture the work being completed in practice that has not undergone an academic evaluation.

The review of the academic literature was limited to specific databases and used key words which may have resulted in relevant articles being missed. However, a strength is the systematic approach that was taken to the search to help ensure as many relevant articles were identified and included.

Future considerations

Theme 1: General communications	Ensure that information on the website is kept up to date (or is not date sensitive)
	Highlight the work of the STT within the annual report
	Review the content of other OPCC newsletters to consider if this is useful for the Neighbourhood Alert system
	Consult with the community who access the Neighbourhood Alert system to discuss what information is useful to them
	Development of specific values for the STT and the wider OPCC in consultation with staff, partners, and the community
Theme 2: Community engagement staff	Present a robust evaluation of the STT as an example of good practice for community engagement
Theme 3: Consultation	Develop a way of 'closing the feedback loop' with communities such as through publishing actions taken because of feedback

	Provide an analysis on how feelings have changed over time (i.e., about fear of crime) to measure this against any initiatives that had been implemented
	Conduct an evaluation of engagement strategies used by the STT to establish “what works”
	Develop ways to engage with all members of society to ensure that any consultation is representative of the community
	Strengthen relationships with those in academia and those with lived experience to improve communication
	Provide easy read and engaging versions of any reports, surveys, and community engagement materials
	Develop a clear consultation plan and/or strategy which details what is needed to be consulted on, who with, how it will be completed effectively, and how the outcomes will be communicated
	Identify areas where a Call for Evidence may provide information that could support future STT work and potential funding bids
Theme 4: Events	
	Review events that the STT could attend including local conferences and training events
	Hold specific events that aim to maximise the involvement of third sector partners
	Hold specific events to encourage engagement with specific groups in the community
	Review national and international dates of recognition that could be tied into events
	Maximise engagement by developing pre-event promotion and post-event evaluation and reporting
	Align events against OPCC priorities
	Develop opportunities to deliver online events as well as face to face events to increase community engagement
	Keep website pages with event information up to date
Theme 5: Campaigns	
	Align STT community engagement activities with OPCC campaigns
Theme 6: Use of social media	
	Develop a social media strategy to co-ordinate communications and monitor the reach and engagement
	Explore additional social media platforms that may be utilised (i.e., Instagram and TikTok) to communicate with a wider audience
Theme 7: Volunteering	
	Develop links between the STT and existing volunteering schemes (i.e., neighbourhood watch)
	List all volunteering opportunities in one place on the OPCC website
	Explore additional volunteering opportunities that could be developed and how these may align to the STT
	Evaluate volunteering opportunities and promote the benefits to encourage engagement
Theme 8: Lived experience	
	Develop a lived experience strategy to involved people with lived experience at suitable opportunities, ensuring this includes accessibility and monitoring of the impact
	Aim to understand the needs of the community to develop services to meet these
	Work in partnership with other agencies to aid joined up service provision to enhance service delivery

	Include the voice of the communities that will access services, events, or initiatives, during commissioning and planning processes
Theme 9: Funding	Use knowledge of local communities to inform funding priorities
	Promote funding opportunities to local communities
	Support the monitoring and evaluation of funded initiatives
Theme 10: Specific safety initiatives	Use knowledge of and feedback from local communities to inform safety priorities
	Empower communities to take local action on areas of safety (e.g., using the volunteering watch schemes)
	Discuss with communities both their local concerns alongside the national issues faced by the police to develop appreciation of competing priorities
	Explore the conditions that might increase community engagement from people in the community (i.e., identifying where engagement is low and exploring why to create an action plan)
	Ensure representative engagement from the community to provide relevant support
Theme 11: Community learning initiatives	Offer community learning opportunities as part of community engagement plan, aligned to the aims of the STT to improve community resilience, with Police and Crime Plans, and with issues identified to the STT by the local community
	Monitor and evaluate community learning opportunities to determine impact
Theme 12: Communication engagement initiatives	Develop a community engagement strategy
	Explore the use of restorative approaches when developing community engagement plans
	Plan for continuing community engagement following events (i.e., through forums, follow up events, or feedback on action taken)
	Explain the role of the STT in any initiatives and explore the power balance between them and the community with plans to address this
	Decide what the intended outcomes are of initiatives and how change can be measured and at what points in time
	Explore relationships with partner organisations to increase community engagement
	Explore the use of community forums and hubs, and community champions, mentors, or advocates to help develop community engagement and resilience
	Ensure the role of the STT is clear and well communicated with partners when working on initiatives
	Identify what information is needed to evaluate an initiative at the start to ensure collection of relevant information
	Explore working in a strengths-based way to empower local communities and increase engagement
	Consider how arts, pets and prison could be integrated into a community engagement strategy
Theme 13: Evaluation	Develop a community engagement framework to help evaluate initiatives and demonstrate impact

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