Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution

Report to: Citizenship and Inclusion Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 2nd September 2009

Subject: (Part 1): Crime and Disorder Partnership Communications Strategy

(Part 2): Greater Manchester Police Contact Service

Report of: Maureen Noble, Head of Crime and Disorder

Purpose of report:

Part 1 provides members with an overview of the Crime and Disorder Communications Strategy, its implementation and how it links with other key objectives such as community justice. Part 2 provides members with information on the work and performance of GMP’s contact centre.

Recommendations:

Committee members note the contents of the report

Contact Officers:

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<tr>
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<th>Tel</th>
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<tbody>
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Background Documents (if any)
None

1. Introduction

Communicating and engaging with local people is at the heart of Manchester’s approach to reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, strengthening neighbourhood working and relationships and improving resident’s perceptions.

In June 2008 Manchester’s Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership launched its integrated crime reduction strategy ‘One Team’. The strategy sets out the wider context for delivering crime and disorder reduction across the City for the three years to March 2011.
Members of the CDRP seek to communicate with one voice at both a strategic and operational level. At a strategic level this means agreeing the overarching messages, the method of delivery and the target audience. Driving this approach is the multi agency Crime and Disorder Communications Group, chaired by Councillor Jim Battle, which takes the strategic lead on partnership communications and directs the delivery of the Communications Strategy. The Director of Communications for the Council and the Lead for Communications in Greater Manchester Police and other key partner agencies are members of this group.

The CDRP communications function sits within the Crime and Disorder Team but is closely aligned with the Communications Directorate through shared staff resources (a CDRP funded press officer and a joint PR resource) and through a common approach to prioritisation and expenditure and through joint business planning processes which are being further strengthened through the realisation of the Corporate Communications Strategy.

This report gives an overview of the Crime and Disorder Communications Strategy as well as looking at the specific communication issues of, underneath each section we have provided examples of specific communications programmes (materials will be available at scrutiny so that members can see the types of media used).

- How Respect work has improved two way communication with residents
- Communicating outcomes from the criminal justice system
- The role of ‘community force’ in communicating with and engaging local people

2. Overview of the Crime and Disorder Communications Strategy

The CDRP Communications Strategy aims to:
1. Identify the crime and antisocial behaviour concerns of residents at a local level
2. Tell residents what we are doing to address their concerns
3. Provide practical crime reduction advice to minimise the risk of becoming a victim of crime
4. Target crime reduction advice to specific areas and the audiences that need it most (ie in hotspot areas)
5. Provide reassurance that crime is being tackled and the levels of crime are going down.
6. Provide reassurance that those who commit a crime are dealt with effectively.

The CDRP Communications Strategy supports the implementation of the overall crime strategy. This dovetails with the GMP communications strategy to ensure that there is consistency of approach both in terms of messages,
methods and mechanisms for communicating with local people and partner agencies.

2.1 The key crime and disorder messages

There are two key messages that are a priority:

1) “You said – we did” - ie feeding back to residents about the action taken to address the concerns they have raised locally at neighbourhood partnership meetings, through KIN surveys or via direct feedback to agencies.

2) “Do’s and Don’ts” – This entails practical crime prevention messages such as, “do shut your doors and windows” and “don’t leave valuables on display in your car”. It also entails positive messages to encourage residents to act responsibly such as “Do attend a firework display” or “Don’t buy fireworks for children.”

The other main messages that the Strategy seeks to convey are:

- “Things are getting better” - Regular information to residents telling them about outcomes.
- “Don’t put up with it – tell us” - Information on how residents can report crime and nuisance.
- “Community sentencing is not a soft option” - The criminal justice system is complex and we need to explain the basic workings to residents. We need to show that it does achieve successful outcomes (eg by providing information on successful convictions) and we need to correct some of the myths that exist such as the perception that community sentencing is a soft option.
- “Action is taken to address drugs and alcohol” - Information on successful operations (eg cannabis farm closures). Information on how communities can comment on licensing applications and complain about badly run premises.
- “Respect Yourself” - Individuals need to take responsibility for their own behaviour and their own safety. Individuals need to act pro-socially for the benefit of themselves and others.
- “Be proud love Manchester” - Manchester City Council wants to build on people’s pride in their communities and our city, helping them to improve and celebrate life in their neighbourhoods.

2.2 The target audience

The key target audiences we aim to reach through the Communications Strategy are:

- All Manchester residents
- Students
- Visitors to the city
- Young people
- Parents
2.3 How we communicate
The main methods of communication are:
- Face to face through door-knocking/Respect activity
- Leaflets, newsletters and feedback flyers given out at events or posted through doors
- PR and adverts in local newspapers
- Information in other local newsletters e.g. Manchester People and Housing Association publications
- Booklets and flyers on specific crime prevention issues e.g. off road biking
- Events
- Branded goodies
- Face to Face communication through door knocking
- Advertising in the community, via bus stops and buses
- Community Radio stations
- Website – Making Manchester Safer.com
- Advertising on transport, e.g. trains, trams, taxis and buses, and in destinations like train stations, car parks including parking tickets.
- Posters in car parks, public toilets and in washrooms in pubs and clubs.

The implementation of the strategy is supported by an allocation of from the Crime and Disorder Working Neighbourhoods Fund. This pays for a dedicated Crime and Disorder Communications Officer, a Crime and Disorder Press Officer and funding to run campaigns. As stated above, the implementation of the strategy is overseen and performance managed by the CDRP Strategic Comms group.

3. Communicating through RESPECT Activity

Over the past year and a half, the CDRP has engaged with thousands of people across the city through the RESPECT campaign. This has been achieved via a mixture of doorstep engagement, street briefings in some areas and family fun-days.

The RESPECT campaign began with 19 RESPECT Action Weeks (RAWs) across 19 wards. Partner agencies from across Manchester committed staff resources to RAWs, including the Police, Council officers and the Fire Service, as well as non-traditional partners such as the RSPCA, British Gas, bus operators and TV licensing, among others. The RAWs provided a successful template for communicating with residents at a local level in terms of:
- finding out local concerns from residents,
• addressing those concerns and
• telling residents what action has been taken as a result.

Collective Respect activity is now the norm and every Local Tasking Meeting now holds at least one Respect Action Day or evening per month, and in most cases more than this. A number of priority areas across the CDRP are having or have had intense and sustained RESPECT work that can last up to three months. This collective activity has played out at street level with the widespread use of the door-knocking tactic, whereby anywhere between 5 and 25 officers will knock on doors in targeted streets, complete questionnaires aimed at finding out local priorities alongside general reassurance and intelligence gathering.

Feedback to local communities about activity undertaken is vital in order to improve the confidence of local communities. This has formed a key part of Respect Activity and will be continued across the city using the “You said, we did” format to illustrate the work that has been done to deal with the issues identified by local people.

RESPECT activity has supported the recruitment of over 1200 Key Individual Networks (KINs) across the city. A KIN is a network of individuals who live or work in a ward and who can be consulted to identify concerns and perceptions of community safety. 40 KINs have been identified in each Manchester ward who will take part in a survey every six months to help build an up-to-date and locally focused picture of crime and disorder concerns. The responses from the KIN surveys will feed directly into the Local Tasking Meetings) and is one of the ways in prioritising the actions of local agencies.

In some areas, KINs have been rightly recognised as the valuable asset that they are, and have been visited monthly by local officers, used to disseminate information locally and, on thankfully rare occasions where a serious incident has occurred, utilised to get our messages out quickly.

There are many examples of successful communications with local people through RESPECT activity, of particular note is the ‘off road bikes’ campaign where a sustained response to residents concerns has been achieved. This sends a message to those who buy and ride bikes that the nuisance they create will not be tolerated, messages to retailers with regard to the sale of bikes, messages to local people about the removal of bikes and tangible activity such as bike crushing which often features in Respect action programmes.

The local community justice programme managed by the CDRP aims to increase local accountability of the justice system and promote effective community engagement. Communication is key to improving public confidence in the way in which crime is tackled and justice delivered.

There are numerous examples of where communication with local people is being strengthened, we have chosen to focus on two of these below:
4.1 Increasing the intensity and visibility of Community Payback

To ensure that justice is done and seen to be done. From 1 December 2008 those carrying out Community Payback have been wearing high visibility vests carrying the Community Payback logo. This is intended to raise the visibility and credibility of this activity to the public. In Manchester, since April 2009, the Crime and Disorder Safer Neighbourhoods Team have developed a programme of Community Payback events that have linked directly into Respect activity in 12 neighbourhoods in the city.

In relation to Community Payback the approach taken in Manchester was to organise community walkabouts with local Councillors, Ward Coordination Officers, Street Environment Managers, Community Safety Coordinators and Probation Service Placement Managers prior to any work taking place. The reasoning for this approach was to ensure the most appropriate sites for Community Payback were selected in local neighbourhoods prior to any unpaid work taking place. Community groups were also consulted and in most cases the work carried out by the community payback teams had been requested by local residents.

The main reason for linking this activity with the Respect programme was twofold; firstly to make the work appropriate to the local neighbourhood and secondly to enable local officers taking part in the Respect activity to let local residents know that community payback teams were working in their areas on schemes that would benefit them. Wherever possible, this work has been publicised in the local press.

4.2 Keeping the public better informed

Local people should be better informed about the outcomes of cases that are processed through the criminal justice system - improving the information they receive about case outcomes, ensuring they can see a real connection between the crime and the consequences, the punishment and reform delivered in response."

In Manchester work is underway to provide clear information to the public about cases and arrests that are of interest locally, at a neighbourhood level. Following over 20 recent arrests for drug related offences in Wythenshawe, GMP leafleted the area concerned outlining the action taken to address drug dealing, raised as a local issue through Respect activity.

The CDRP intends to issue a follow up leaflet that will contain details of the sentences that the offenders received, along with any civil action taken (for example by the local housing associations with regards to evictions). Similar activity is also proposed for Cheetham, following arrests for drug dealing, again identified through Respect activity. A draft protocol, involving GMP, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Crime and Disorder Unit has been produced that should enable this type of end to end communication become common place within the next 6 months.
5. The Role of Community Force

‘Community Force’ is a term used by the CDRP to describe an ‘atmosphere’ of community engagement and participation. It is, at present, a concept that is being shaped in conjunction with the wider neighbourhood focus/community engagement strategies and the engagement elements of neighbourhood policing.

The principles behind Community Force are:

At present there are a number of different opportunities for local residents to get involved with reducing crime and disorder issues in their local area. This includes:

- Homewatch Schemes
- Tenants and Resident Association
- Community Guardians - The role of a Community Guardian started off as reporting environmental defects/problems, but has evolved to include community projects, and supporting the local neighbourhoods and communities by acting as a point of contact and even a role model in some cases.
- Key Individual Networks - These are around 40-50 people identified throughout each ward in the city who have a good knowledge of the area because they live and/or work there and know about the problems that occur in that ward. KINs can include Councillors, shopkeepers, local residents, people who take their children to school in an area, community group representatives, outreach workers and others whose daily activity is embedded in the community.

This represents a large number of people across the city that is willing to volunteer their time to improving their local area. Manchester City Council and GMP are keen to support and work closely with these groups of residents who are interested and willing to help make their neighbourhoods a better place to live, work and play in.

Under the banner Community Force, these groups can be brought together to form a network of active citizens, spread across the city and grouped into local neighbourhoods, mirroring the 14 Neighbourhood Policing Teams. These groups will have a closer relationship with officers from GMP and MCC responsible for leading the partnership at a neighbourhood level. We would like members of the Community Force to help us -

- Meet the needs and priorities of neighbourhoods better (through Respect activity for example)
- Engage more closely and effectively with local residents
- Tell us what we’re doing right and what we’re doing wrong, and what we should be concentrating on and prioritising at a local level
The individuals will be offered the opportunity to get involved with local neighbourhood teams to the extent that they would like. This may mean identifying local priorities and letting the teams know whether issues have been solved, participating in community events or volunteering in the local neighbourhood. It will be up to each individual to decide how much they wish to be involved. For example, some may only wish to receive an email or visit from PCSOs every three months, some may like to be in contact with the local police team and MCC staff on a more regular basis and be involved in deciding (for example) how services such as Community Payback are used locally, and some may wish to help us organise and run community events on a regular basis, or become involved in Respect activity.

An initial pilot has taken place in Wythenshawe at which around 100 residents met with local agencies to discuss how they can be get involved in community force activity. Further pilots are proposed which will build on learning whilst also ensuring that the development of the principles and practice around community force are tied into wider work on engagement.

6.1 How will they be supported?

Whilst some of the community force may wish to attend meetings with their local teams, others may not. The community force will be a virtual group in the area and in order to accommodate this they will be supported using a number of different mechanisms including; visits, email updates, invites to events, training and awareness sessions, briefings and on occasion meetings.

The aim is to encourage groups and individuals locally to work with the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, to encourage neighbourhood focussed work and assist with the dissemination of information. As described above, this agenda is not restricted to MCC and GMP, so the force could be utilised by other agencies interested in or required to communicate and engage at a neighbourhood level – agencies such as Crown Prosecution Service and the Courts within the criminal justice system for example will shortly be engaging a lot more closely with communities around sentencing decisions and local priorities.

This work will be achieved, on the whole through mainstream resources. Where possible events to recruit and promote the community force will be joined up with existing local events in order to link with other agency’s community engagement and to ensure that we are making the most of the use of MCC resources.

Once a community force is established officers with a neighbourhood responsibility, such as Neighbourhood Police Teams and Community Safety Co-ordinators will make sure that the Community Force is kept up to date with the latest neighbourhood events and issues, acting as a local point of contact.

It should be emphasised that Community Force does not replace other mechanisms for engagement with local people and it is a component of the
City’s overarching community strategy. It also has strong links to the ‘Proud of Manchester’ agenda.

6.2 How do people get involved?

They can contact their local neighbourhood team or Community Safety Coordinator who will be able to let them know what is going on locally and how they can get involved. Officers from GMP or MCC will working with people locally to offer out the chance to get involved.

7. Conclusion

Research has shown that the more informed people are the more confident they are that their concerns are being addressed.

The Crime and Disorder Communications Strategy and the multi agency Strategic Communications Group provide an excellent framework for providing effective messages and joined up communication with Manchester residents.

Work at a neighbourhood level is effective in identifying the concerns of residents, acting on those concerns and then feeding back the action we have taken. GMP’s call centre is a central point of contact with residents about crime and disorder issues and its monitoring results are encouraging.

The CDRP will continue to implement its Communications Strategy and to develop the concept of Community Force based on the lessons of recent working such as RESPECT activity. It will also carry out new work in partnership with the Criminal Justice agencies to achieve the neighbourhood justice agenda. Strong links have already been developed with the corporate Communications function in the Council and with key partner agencies, these links will continue to be strengthened ensuring that both strategic and neighbourhood communications are built on strong evidence of what is effective in delivery terms and efficient in terms of resource management.
Part 2: Communications between the public and the police through the GMP Contact Service

1. Introduction

GMP’s Contact Management service is the responsibility of the Operational Communications Branch (OCB) who take responsibility for telephone contact - via emergency 999 calls and less urgent 872 5050 - and the quality of service provided by Enquiry Counter Clerks at Police Stations.

The OCB shares responsibility with divisional staff for the Command and Control (radio dispatch) of incidents requiring police attendance. The OCB manages the process of prioritising incidents and dispatching officers whilst divisional officers are responsible for the availability of officers.

The telephone and radio dispatch service is provided from four Operational Communication Rooms (OCRs) at Trafford, Leigh, Claytonbrook and Tameside.

2. Telephone Contact Management

Both emergency and non-emergency calls are dealt with in the OCRs. Calls are routed to Call Handlers through Contact Centre technology that automatically prioritises them ensuring 999 calls have precedence and are delivered to a Call Handler with the appropriate skill set to deal with them.

The quality of service for all police calls is governed by National Call Handling Standards, each Call Handler’s calls are audited regularly against this standard, and their performance discussed during a monthly 1:1 meeting with their line manager.

The OCB Quality Assurance Unit perform regular call audits and also perform in depth auditing where performance issues or trends are identified – or in response to a particular concern, e.g. a complaint. This approach has been recognised as good practice, particularly in relation to the OCBs progress in tackling complaints of incivility.

The results of analysis are part of the feedback loop between the QA Unit, Line Managers and OCB Training Unit and can incorporate activities such as specific action planning for members of staff or, as has recently happened, the alteration of Call Handlers’ initial training course in response to Incivility Complaints, resulting in a whole week of the course now dedicated to Customer Service Skills.

The introduction of the Policing Pledge placed an even greater emphasis on the need for the delivery of a truly local policing service. This created a challenge for OCB in that Contact Management technology routes calls as quickly as possible to the next available Call Handler – not necessarily in the area the call is being made from. To meet that need the Neighbourhood Policing Website is used to provide Call Handlers with up to date information.
on local Neighbourhood priorities that influences their grading decisions when creating computerised incidents. They also have access to details of Neighbourhood Policing Teams and local meetings to provide information about policing in the caller’s area.

Calls that are not a local priority are still prioritised according to the Force Graded Response Policy that applies a triaging process to ensure that incidents are managed with respect to their seriousness and importance.

3. Public Satisfaction Results

Set out below are the satisfaction rates of callers to GMP based on recent surveys.

Force Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 – Satisfaction with the initial response from the call handler</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage satisfied</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2 – Satisfaction with the ability of the person who took the telephone call to deal with enquiry</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage satisfied</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Q4 only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>999</td>
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<tr>
<td>5050</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other number</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
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Table 3 – Satisfaction with initial response from the call handler

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage satisfied</th>
<th>Percentage very or completely satisfied</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Priority Grade one</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>999</td>
<td>90.0% [10]</td>
<td>94.5% [73]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5050</td>
<td>100.0% [1]</td>
<td>93.5% [92]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other number</td>
<td>N/a [0]</td>
<td>83.3% [12]</td>
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</table>

Table 4 – Satisfaction with the ability of the person who took the telephone call to deal with enquiry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage satisfied</th>
<th>Percentage very or completely satisfied</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Priority Grade one</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>999</td>
<td>90.0% [10]</td>
<td>93.2% [73]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5050</td>
<td>100.0% [1]</td>
<td>95.7% [92]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other number</td>
<td>N/a [0]</td>
<td>91.7% [12]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>90.9% [11]</td>
<td>94.4% [177]</td>
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</tbody>
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Table 5 – Satisfaction with the overall experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage satisfied</th>
<th>Percentage very or completely satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Priority Grade one</td>
<td>77.8% [18]</td>
<td>66.7% [18]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>76.6% [265]</td>
<td>66.0% [265]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>76.7% [283]</td>
<td>66.1% [283]</td>
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NB – Although these figures are from a small sample size they are included to illustrate that the Force crime based surveys support our findings on satisfaction.