

Agenda Item: 8

TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

FROM: Head of Transparency, Media and Communication – Hayley Douglas

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FORUM - UPDATE

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the Community Engagement Forum (CEF) launched by the Media and Communication Team in late 2022. This update was requested at the committee meeting held on 6 October 2022.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The committee is asked to note the contents of this report and make comment as they deem appropriate.

3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Political** – Feedback from the inspection in 2021 by His (then Her) Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) was that the service could improve community engagement, particularly with regard to consulting with communities to produce the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). The CEF provides a structured communication channel enabling us to partially achieve this.
- 3.2 **Economic** – There is very little cost to running the CEF; a very small amount has been spent on promoting it on social media channels.
- 3.3 **Legal** – The forum is compliant with GDPR requirements.
- 3.4 **Social** – The service is working on ways to ensure diversity across those signing up for the forum so it is representative of the communities it serves.

4. Current Position

- 4.1 The Media and Communication Team has been aspiring for some time to try and better engage with the communities of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. As much as having very active social media channels that tap into community groups has proved to be somewhat successful, the team has highlighted this as an area for development. It was also picked up by HMICFRS in 2021 as an area the service could improve.
- 4.2 The team used a combination of technologies to put together an online form to allow people to sign up to receive periodic questions about the service's activities, known as 'Hot Topics'. This short form captures equality data, based on the recent UK census fields, to allow the team to monitor the demographic make-up of the people signing up to the group. This data is password protected and stored securely.
- 4.3 The CEF was launched to the public in November 2022. People were given a few weeks to join to be entered into a prize draw as a reward for signing up early. Within a short time, the group reached more than 100 members.
- 4.4 The first 'Hot Topic', about responding to incidents with crews of three, was sent to members of the forum in December 2022. As this was a complex subject for those without knowledge of the service, a briefing note was sent along with the survey. The note and the results of the first survey can be found in Appendix A. The social media channel *NextDoor* was also used to engage with the public over crews of three and the results combine both communication channels although are split between the two. A full report of the engagement about crews of three can be found in Appendix B.
- 4.5 There are currently more than 200 members signed up to the CEF; the group demographics can be found in Appendix C.
- 4.6 A second survey about the service's use of social media yielded 74 people responses and the Media and Communication Team are using the feedback to plan future content. The survey and results can be found in Appendix D.
- 4.7 Growing the forum is a key priority for the Media and Communication Team for the next year. The plan is to try and increase participation with harder to reach groups using targeted advertising. This will then allow the forum to provide a representative view of our activities and help shape our plans moving forward.
- 4.8 No more than an average of two emails a month will be sent. They will vary in length and complexity, ranging from a single question to a more structured survey.
- 4.9 The CEF will be a key way of engaging with the public about our next Community Risk Management Plan.
- 4.10 There are limitations with the CEF in that, although the service are aware of the demographics of people who have signed up to receive the emails, with each

survey they do not know the demographics of those responding. This may be a potential development later down the line if the CEF concept proves successful. As this will likely require a more integrated data collection system, a business case will need to be made and presented to the appropriate board for approval.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents - None