

ITEM 2	
Report Name:	Barnet Safer Communities Partnership Draft Communications / Engagement Plan 2016 / 2017
Meeting:	Barnet Safer Communities Partnership Board (SCPB)
Meeting Date:	29 th January 2016
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – Draft Communications Plan Appendix 2 – Communications group Terms of Reference
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Restricted	No

SAFER COMMUNITIES
PARTNERSHIP



Keeping Barnet Safe

Barnet Safer Communities Partnership

Draft Communications / Engagement Plan

2016 / 2017

1. Introduction

Improving the perception of Barnet as a safe place to live, work, study or visit in is one of the three strategic objectives set out in the 2015-2020 Community Safety Strategy.

Barnet is one of the safest boroughs in London with a low crime rate and over the last five years further reductions in crime has been achieved. A challenge for the Barnet Safer Community Partnership (BSCP) is to address residents' perception of crime and fear of crime and community confidence.

Maintaining public confidence is essential to the effective operation of a criminal justice system in a way that can be distinctively different from services such as health and education.

The BSCP works together to protect communities from crime and help people feel safer; it deals with local issues such as anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse and reoffending and annually assess local crime priorities consulting with partners and the local community about how to deal with them.

The Safer Communities Partnership recognises the need to improve external communications, the communication plan will aim to address residents' concerns and help bridge the gap between perception and the actual levels of crime.

2. What we know

- Over the past year various consultations have been conducted, including the regular Resident Perception Survey (council), Public Attitude Survey (Police), as well as smaller one off consultations also relevant to community safety

issues that have taken place for example Police open days, CCTV consultations, the Barnet Crime and Community Safety Survey.

- It is clear from the Resident Perception Survey that residents want more feedback and want to be kept informed about what is being done to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Rubbish and litter concerns, ranked high with residents, when asked about their ASB concerns in the Residents Perception Surveys and the Public Attitude Survey.
- There is under reporting of Domestic Abuse and Violence and Violence Against Women and Girls, Violent Crime and Hate Crime, however this is not an isolated issue locally but an issue across London and nationally.
- Perception of increasing levels of ASB were higher among the younger residents.
- Survey respondents have made clear the need to keep victims and communities informed of action taken to tackle ASB in their local area.

3. Communication aims

The communication plan will focus on addressing the issues highlighted in the surveys to ensure we are addressing concerns residents have raised. The overarching aims will be:

- To raise the profile of the Safer Communities Partnership.
- To ensure that residents and staff are aware of the work the partnerships is doing.
- Improve perception of what council and partners are doing to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.
- To reduce the fear and perception of crime; substance misuse, anti-social behaviour and adverse impact to the environment.
- To increase awareness of initiatives and projects that are being carried out by the partnership.
- Promote crime reduction and provide advice and information on preventative measures to those living, visiting, working or studying in Barnet.
- Participate in Regional/National Campaigns.
- Highlight enforcement activity being conducted by partners.
- To improve community confidence and gain community support, engagement and involvement in identifying and addressing priorities.

4 Communications objectives

To Inform	Tell the community what action is being taken to reduce crime. What has happened? How the teams have responded. What the results are
To explain	Why you are doing something and how it works. Focus on transparency, fairness and accountability
To reassure	To show we are responding and have the interests of the community at heart
To engage	To gain greater understanding of local priorities and concerns by providing opportunities for community involvement/reporting
To help prevent a crime	Highlighting safety measures and signposting to other useful resources
To provide a supportive resource	For example, providing contact details and information to victims and witnesses who will need support when attending court

Communications will have emphasis on:

- **Prevention advice** - pro-active (measures to take to help reduce the risk of becoming a victim and re-active (e.g. after a spate a burglaries etc.)
- **Creating awareness** - contact numbers, highlighting reporting avenues, how to access service
- **Good News Story** - e.g. successful initiative, operations taking place, case studies.
- **Provide reassurance and inform** – measures being taken to tackle crime, ASB trends or local problems
- **Being accessible / publicising contact details** – linking with local community events – providing localised messages, prevention advice
- Sending out a joint **partnership message**
- **Highlight the vital role of residents** in helping keep Barnet a safe place to live, work, study or visit in.

5 Target audience

Internal

- All Staff within the partnership organisations and elected members.

External

- All Barnet residents including young People
- People who visit, study and work in Barnet
- Victims of crime and anti-social behaviour and their families
- Perpetrators of crime

- Relevant Voluntary sector and private provider organisations (such as Victim Support Barnet, Community Barnet, Home Start)
- Stakeholders at regional and national level and partner agencies in the Barnet Safer Communities Partnership

6 Where Communication should be focused

Communication / Engagement will be either locally based or the borough wide, depending on what the context and purpose of the communication is.

- **Locally based communication / engagement** – based around specific issue or concerns and providing reassurance, prevention advice or information to a contained area e.g. a street, ward

This could be a location which has come to the attention of partners for a specific community safety issue e.g. arsons, ASB issues, crime or if it's a location with high fear of crime based on local surveys.

Where there is a need for localised communication / engagement the lead agency should approach the agencies communication subgroups advocate who will liaise with other partner agencies to establish if there are partnership benefits to be gained with joint messages and to help establish if there is communication already planned to prevent duplication e.g. if it's a vulnerable area scope for fires safety check referrals, or Safer Homes referrals can be obtained or offered.

- **Borough wide engagement/communication** – where the partnership is aiming to cascaded news for example on crime reductions, crime trends, crime prevention message applicable to the whole borough, creating awareness of national campaign, or borough wide consultations

7 Making use of communication channels

There are a number of existing communications channels, assets and resources available to the partnership. The plan will help ensure the partnership is using them effectively to cascade key messages more widely.

As part of the communication plan, the Partners will be asked to identify channels and resources available to them as well as identify an advocate/ambassador who will be the key communications link for partners.

Below is a list of communication channels the partnership has access to (*will be updated to take into account communications channels partners have access to*).

<i>Barnet Magazine</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barnet First is the council's residents' magazine, delivered to nearly 190,000 households in the borough. • 16-page magazine four times a year (roughly once every three months) to let local people know about the services the council is providing, give information about what's on in the borough and keep them up-to-date with council news.
<i>Regular Press coverage</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on a specific issues / awareness week etc. / or a specific time of the year e.g. winter burglary preventions messages. • If sent by partners - capturing the partnership working aspect
<i>Partner communication avenues</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agencies have their own regular communication channels (e.g. online, user groups, publications)
<i>Community forums / Community Stands</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying issues /concerns, obtaining information from the public and providing reassurance about the work being under taken to address concerns
<i>Facebook</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness, prevention advice, asking for information from the public
<i>Twitter</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners twitting of awareness days, prevention advice, asking for information from the public
<i>Ward Panel meetings</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying ward issues and providing reassurance of work being under taken
<i>Online messaging</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using on-line messaging links to cascade messages widely to registered users. E.g. Neighbourhood Watch use alert coms, police use Neighbourhood links.

8 Governance

The Partnership will be establish a subgroup that will oversee the delivery of the communications plan. Partners will be asked to nominate a communication representative / advocate within their organisation who will be invited to attend the communications subgroup.

The Group will have a clear Terms of References and will be accountable to and report into the Safer Communities Partnership Board.

The Communications Group will produce a forward communications plan for the year to support the Safer Communities Partnership outcomes set out in the Community Safety Strategy.

9 Anticipated outcomes

- Reduced perception in crime levels
- Reduction in Crime and Anti-social behaviour levels
- Awareness created on the work being carried out by the Safer Communities Partnership to tackle crime and ASB issues
- Impact of the engagement reflected in survey responses.
- Increase in effective engagement numbers
- A clear record of what partnership communications have been issued in partnership for 2016/2017

10 Partnership Commitment

In order for the aims set out in the partnership communication plan to be successfully delivered, the Safer Communities Partnership agencies must be committed to ensuring that the Communications Subgroup is kept informed of the of partnership projects, campaigns being proposed and communications planned.

This should be via each agencies designated Communications Subgroup representative. This will help identify opportunities for joined up communication and help ensure coordinated messages are disseminated.

It is important to promote public awareness of the Safer Communities Partnership and awareness that the partners are working together on the community safety agenda. To further this aim the Safer Communities Partnership logo should be included on all localised community safety related leaflets where 2 or more partners have had an input e.g. when promoting a project.

Agencies will proactively consider opportunities for joint communication, engagement and ensure a reference is made of how the work/project being undertaken will contribute towards achieving the Safer Communities Strategy objectives in any relevant communication that goes out irrespective of which agency or team is leading on the communication.

This will ensure a coordinated message goes out with a clear link on the impact it will have, giving a clear message partners are working together towards shared objectives. All communication should be with in the spirit of the partnership working.

In addition to using the BSCP logo, it would also be beneficial to have a key BSCP message on communications – for example “Working together for a Safer Barnet” .

Strategic Plan

1	There is strategic and co-ordinated communications
2	Communication is consistent amongst partners on shared agendas
3	Identify and utilise communication channels available to the wider partnership
4	A communication plan to be developed and monitored and updated with planned communications
5	A forward plan of anticipated Communication is produced following each Communication Subgroup meeting, to enable partners the opportunity to identify areas where they can help or contribute minimising duplication.
6	That communications advice is given to the partnerships subgroups and that communications issues are given a place on meetings agendas.
7	Ensure communication is targeted, intelligence driven and focused e.g. on areas identified within respective surveys i.e. areas where they have scored low score on such as The police and other local public services are successfully dealing with crime and disorder issues in my local area
8	Improve internal communication between partners by having nominated 'Communication Advocates' from each partner agency;
9	Community safety messages released to the local media at relevant times in response to seasonal rises in particular types of crime;
10	Communication being considered within service areas to take in account Community Safety implications and recognise the link to Community Safety in their area of work – Champion to be identified within each service area