

Thematic Report

Community Engagement

15 June 2011

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Community Engagement

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BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

The Inspectorate of Prosecution in Scotland

1. The Inspectorate of Prosecution in Scotland was created in December 2003 and was given statutory authority in April 2007 by the Criminal Proceedings etc (Reform) (Scotland) Act 2007. It serves as the independent inspectorate for the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, the sole prosecuting authority in Scotland which is also responsible for investigating sudden deaths and complaints of a criminal nature against the police.
2. The principal functions of the Inspectorate are to inspect the operation of Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and make recommendations for improvement. The Lord Advocate may call upon the Inspectorate to undertake a particular piece of work.
3. The Inspectorate of Prosecution in Scotland also examines the outcomes and results achieved by Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and promotes good practice. By doing so the Inspectorate makes Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service more accountable and helps where appropriate to raise public confidence in its service delivery. All reports are submitted to the Lord Advocate and are published on the Inspectorate's website at www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Justice/ipis.

Remit

4. The remit of this inspection was to examine the arrangements that the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service has in place to engage with the community and to consider the extent to which liaison filters into policy, planning and service delivery and whether it is meeting communities' needs.

Objectives

1. To consider the extent to which the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service has implemented its aim of engaging with the community through policy and procedure and how it is monitored.
2. To compare community engagement practices around the country and identify areas of good practice or areas where practice can be improved.
3. To identify if there may be better ways to co-ordinate engagement with local people, communities and agencies.
4. To ascertain whether local people, communities, agencies feel they are able to participate at a level in which they believe can influence decision making and policy development.
5. To evaluate whether diversity within communities is recognised and represented in the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service community engagement process.
6. To consider the impact on community engagement for Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service in light of reduced public spending.

Methodology

5. Our methodology included the following elements:
 - Consultation - we held scoping meetings with key leaders
 - Interviews - we conducted interviews with staff within Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service
 - Review of documentation – including current aims, objectives, guidance, etc
 - Benchmarking – review of guidance and standards in other government departments
 - Observations – we examined processes relating to community engagement including review of Community Engagement Planners and links with media
 - Focus Groups – we met with members of community and local groups in three of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Areas
 - Letter – we wrote to several community and local groups in one of the Fiscal Areas above due to it's geographical dispersion

6. Our report largely follows the European Foundation of Quality Management (EFQM) fundamental concepts of excellence and examines community engagement under the following headings:-
 - Leadership – Chapter 1
 - Policy/strategy – Chapter 2
 - Processes - Chapter 3
 - Finance – Chapter 4
 - People – Chapter 5
 - Partnerships – Chapter 6
 - Results – Chapter 7

7. Equality issues are considered throughout the report.

Acknowledgements

8. We thank all the members of communities and groups who contributed to our focus groups and are grateful for the time and attention that staff across the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service afforded this inspection.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What is Community Engagement?

Community engagement is the method of involving people in decisions that affect them and allows matters of individual or wider public concerns or priorities to become known. It allows organisations to focus on what customers needs are and how to respond to these. This in turn can then be considered and taken account of in policy, strategy and practice. It can also help to increase awareness of and confidence in services provided, improve reputation, build trust, promote better relations, help improve quality of work along with providing communities with a sense of ownership and empowerment.

Community engagement can take many forms. It can involve taking part in local events, representation on local working groups, asking people to fill in a survey, sponsorship, or supporting groups to encourage them to be involved. Messages can also be put across through media, websites, posters, newsletters and local radio. There is a need to ensure that communication is available to all and that consideration is given to the diverse nature of our communities today. Whatever method is used, communication needs to be clear, relevant, sufficient, customer focused and accessible.

The Office for Government Commerce describe community engagement as 'communicating with everyone in the local area'. This should be aligned with a customer focus approach where customers are listened to and understood, relationships are maintained and feedback is accepted.

Being customer focussed and engaging with communities helps organisations to focus on providing services that meet needs and should allow them to manage this with resources available.

Community Engagement has a particular significance for the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service. Its first published aim is to serve the public interest etc and the published prosecution code states that "in considering reports the prosecutor must consider what action is in the public interest. Assessment of the public interest often includes consideration of competing interests including the interests of the victim, the accused and the wider community".

One factor informing this decision is "in assessing the public interest the prosecutor will take account of general public concerns as well as local community interests. Arrangements can be made to enable local community representatives to discuss general matters of concern with the Procurator Fiscal although the final decision is the responsibility of the prosecutor".

Main findings

We consider that the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service is deeply committed to ensuring that communities and the wider general public are engaged. In relation to how this is organised we found there to be duplication of responsibilities as a result of an overlap between the 'community engagement' and 'diversity' roles.

We found that each Fiscal Area¹ takes steps to address the objectives of the organisation's community engagement strategy although evidence suggests that some are more proactive than others. We found many examples of engagements from attending working groups, involvement in multi agency events, contact with individual groups and communities, raising funds for charity, involvement in various initiatives targeted at specific groups, participation in court open days, speaking at conferences, liaison with schools and offering work placements, etc.

We acknowledge the wide geographical spread of the organisation and are aware that there are differences in demographics in each Fiscal Area therefore different approaches to engagement may be necessary. However, we believe that there should be some form of guidance and standards available that can be adapted to meet needs.

Community Engagement Planners are used to record work done and to monitor activity. Our review of the planners showed that not all engagement work had been formally recorded. We believe that by recording such work and introducing further monitoring procedures management should find it easier to assess achievement of objectives. We make a suggestion that consideration should be given to investing in a software package to formalise the process to analyse, plan, monitor, evaluate and record engagement, however, this needs to be considered against budget and resource availability and other priorities.

Results from our focus groups indicate that in general the public and some agencies are not familiar with the role of the Procurator Fiscal or where its responsibilities lie within the whole legal system. Our review showed that efforts are made by Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service to ensure that services available are advertised through media, use of websites and the newly launched customer feedback policy. However, we suggest that in order to improve on this consideration should be given to introducing social media eg Twitter and that increased use could be made of the media. This should further promote the work of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

We were also advised at our focus groups that communities would like feedback on outcomes and achievements. Again greater use should be made of media etc to get this information across.

We discuss that due to tighter budgets it is expected that staff will need to be redeployed to core business thus activities relating to engaging with communities may take a back seat. However, we argue that in such times it is important to make sure that the right services are being delivered and that there may be opportunities to save money through partnership working and by reducing duplication of work.

We acknowledge that staff are committed to community engagement and some do so in their own time. Providing feedback and recognition through awards helps motivate them to do a good job. If need is identified we consider it may be of benefit investing in specific community engagement training.

Feedback from our focus groups indicated that liaison and engagement is worthwhile and well received. Some comments on staff were excellent and as a

¹ The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service is broken down into 11 Fiscal Areas

result of work done a member of staff was made an honorary member of an Association. There are some gaps however that can be acted upon especially in relation to community groups supporting women, gender and learning disabilities.

Through representation on working groups and community planning partnerships we found that all Fiscal Areas play a key role in working with partners to engage the wider public to address priorities and concerns. Feedback from our focus groups in this respect was very good.

We feel that more could be done to monitor and analyse results and outcomes of engagement activities to allow management to determine success and effectiveness. This should ultimately lead to improvement.

It is clear that through various practices, for example, the introduction of the accessible information policy, the links with diverse groups and the involvement of the Equality Advisory Group in providing advice on policy and practice that diversity within communities is recognised by the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service. However, there will always remain a need to continue to be mindful of how best to engage with different communities with different needs.

Throughout the review we found good practice that could be replicated throughout the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service. For example, working jointly with partners to identify customer needs and priorities and offering training/talks/liason at organised events such as 'Diversity Weeks'. Finally we consider it good practice to examine outcomes to identify benefits, lessons learned and future action required.

Conclusion

A commitment was made in the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Strategic Plan 2009/12 under 'Justice in the Community' that:

'Procurators Fiscal will know their community and be known in the community'

and a priority for 2010/11 as stated in the business plan was to:

'engage further with local communities, and to work with and influence local partners, in order to increase understanding of the role of the public prosecutor and to improve public perception of Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service'

Results of this review have shown that the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service is committed to engaging with communities. Work is carried out both corporately and in each Fiscal Area to address the points above.

However, we consider that in order to fully meet the commitments and ultimately to improve the services being delivered some adjustments in responsibilities and process should be made along with introduction of new methods of engagement, for example, social networking and improved recording, measurement and assessment of outcomes.

We consider that with these changes the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service will take steps closer to meeting the Scottish Government national

outcomes, in particular: 'Improved life chances'; 'Making us safer'; 'Creating stronger and more supportive communities'; and 'Ensuring better public services'.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That specific responsibilities and targets to be achieved in relation to Community Engagement, in particular those relating to Area Procurator Fiscals and the Portfolio Owner, should be identified, written down and made available in order that future staff will know what their responsibilities are.
2. That Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service adopts in some form the Scottish Government standards for Community Engagement as a model of good practice. This should be made known to staff and the public and a process introduced to assess whether standards are met.
3. That guidance relating to Community Engagement is created. This could incorporate a revised Area Diversity Pack. It would be of benefit to include in this guidance links to the Scottish Government National Standards on Community Engagement and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Competency Framework (particularly the competencies relating to 'Customer Focus' and 'Effective Communication') and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service 'Accessibility Policy'.
4. That staff should be reminded to complete Community Engagement and Media Planners (if their use continues) on a regular basis and a system of formally monitoring activity including a measurement of success/benefits should be introduced and maintained.
5. That Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service consider whether it would be of benefit to the organisation in using the VOiCE software package to help plan, monitor, evaluate and record their community engagement.
6. That the existing central repository of standard presentations should be further developed and also that a main list of contacts is established and maintained.
7. That consideration is always given to getting messages across to the public through the media where it is thought to be appropriate and there may be opportunities to be had in liaising with Councils to place articles such as outcomes and achievements in local community newsletters.
8. That consideration is given to introducing social networking as a medium to help improve making contact, providing information and obtaining feedback from the public and also in promoting the work of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.
9. That given the current economic climate Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service should identify opportunities to reduce costs such as reducing duplication of work, increased partnership working and making use of technology such as information networks or online pop-up surveys.
10. That in order to ensure that staff are properly prepared for and can deliver communications in a confident, effective and efficient manner Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service should identify whether there is a need to invest in training for staff involved in community engagement.

11. That Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service update their list on the intranet detailing current working groups and committees.
12. That all Fiscal Areas in the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service consider liaising with partners such as Police and Councils to identify whether there is an opportunity to be included in community/public surveys or consultations.
13. That where engagement has taken place outcomes should always be recorded either using an in house approach or through a package such as VOiCE to allow management to measure success against strategic objectives and identify lessons to be learned.
14. That Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service consider the suggestions for improvement made by community members as referred to in this report at page 44.

CHAPTER 1

LEADERSHIP

9. Leadership is a way of being accountable, motivating and encouraging others to contribute to the success of the organisation and being committed in what is to be achieved.

Ministerial

10. Community Engagement is a topic of considerable interest to the Lord Advocate, Elish Angiolini, who has encouraged Procurators Fiscal to engage with the communities they serve. In particular she and the Solicitor General attend many community events and she introduced in 2010 a special award for Community Engagement to the annual Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Excellence Awards.

National

11. In the foreword to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Strategic Plan 2009/12 the then Crown Agent stated the following:

- *'Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service is committed to playing its part in making Scotland a safe place to live ... listening to the concerns of local communities.....'*

He also stated that:

- *'All elements of our Strategic Plan reflect our strategic aim to serve the public interest at all times, and to prosecute cases independently, fairly and effectively.'*

12. With regard specifically to engaging with the community one of the stated aims of the Strategic Plan is to:

- *'engage with local communities and respond to their needs and priorities'*

13. Further to this one of the five values that Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service observe in carrying out its work states that the needs of the public will be *'recognised'*.

14. The above statements make clear the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service intention to listen to local communities and to serve in the public interest both of which are at the heart of the organisation in making Scotland a safer place.

15. The corporate lead (Portfolio Owner) for community engagement lies with one of the Area Procurator Fiscals². This responsibility was established in 2009 and the role is to take the lead and act as champion in this respect. It involves liaising with other portfolio owners where common interests arise and report on work being undertaken. This post holder identified a need for a specific

² The person responsible changed during this review

strategy to ensure that all Fiscal Areas³ were working to the same goal. This is further discussed in Chapter 2.

16. All Area Procurators Fiscal signed up to the community engagement strategy and to encourage staff within the offices for which they are responsible to engage with the community although there is no specific document detailing these responsibilities.
17. District Procurators Fiscal have a standard objective relating to community engagement which includes arranging for the office to participate in events and to capture all work on the Area's Community Engagement Planner. All other staff have a standard objective to participate in community engagement work when given the opportunity to do so. Further details on these responsibilities are discussed in Chapter 5.
18. In addition to this there is an established structure in place relating to 'Equality and Diversity'⁴. The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service is part of the Scottish Government's Equality Scheme and has an Equality Action Plan 2008/11⁵ in place.
19. This plan states a commitment to promoting equality and tackling inequality and there are certain criteria to be achieved. With a specific reference to the Community Engagement there are three actions to be met one of which relates to giving a senior member of staff the responsibility of a recognised role with specific responsibilities to undertake and targets to achieve. Although these specific responsibilities have been allocated they are not yet written down.

Recommendation 1

That specific responsibilities and targets to be achieved in relation to Community Engagement, in particular those relating to Area Procurators Fiscal and the Portfolio Owner, should be identified, written down and made available in order that future staff will know what their responsibilities are.

20. The Equality Action Plan currently relates to three particular strands of diversity (Race, Disability and Gender)⁶. There appears to be duplication of responsibilities given that Crown Office Policy Division's Diversity Team monitor achievement towards engagement with the community in this respect and in a wider context the Community Engagement Portfolio Owner also monitors through Community Engagement Planners. A review of the Area Diversity Team equality reports sent to Policy Division detail similar information to those in the Community Engagement Planners.
21. Further to this additional responsibilities were established in relation to the WSREC⁷ contract which was set up in 2008 for two years and extended in 2010

³ The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service is broken down into 11 Areas

⁴ We touch on Diversity as a part of community engagement given the diverse nature of our communities but this is not our main focus

⁵ To be reviewed end 2010

⁶ This will be extended in 2011 to take account of the duties under the Equality Act 2010

⁷ WSREC (West of Scotland Regional Equality Council) - The purpose of the contract in brief is to: deliver guidance on diversity issues; assist in staff learning, establish links in communities, etc. Detailed delivery descriptors are included in the contract.

for another year but will finish April 2011. This contract was for the provision of services to the four Strathclyde Fiscal Areas (Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Argyll and Clyde and Ayrshire) and a member of staff was appointed to monitor this contract which again included provision of evidence of work undertaken in relation to community engagement. Quarterly reports on progress are produced.

22. Given that Diversity is part of a wider community engagement strategy it is inevitable that there will be an overlap⁸.

Conclusion

23. Overall we consider that the above statements, aims, values and responsibilities show there is commitment to engaging with the community from the very top tier of management in Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and although there is some degree of duplication of responsibilities there appears to be a universal belief in the importance of engaging with the communities in order to provide a service that meets the needs of the public.

24. This is verified in the Crown Agent's statement in the Strategic Plan 2009/12 on the future:

- *'All our staff appreciate the important role that a prosecution service plays in any civilised society. In this plan we have set out how we aim to better serve the communities of Scotland. We believe that Scotland has a prosecution service it can be proud of. However, we will always strive to improve the service we provide and continue to work together with communities and other criminal justice agencies to be the best.'*

25. We also consider that through this commitment the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service are taking steps to address Scottish Government national outcomes, in particular: 'Improved life chances'; 'Making us safer'; 'Creating stronger and more supportive communities'; and 'Ensuring better public services'.

⁸ NB: Glasgow Area also engaged a member of staff as a Community Engagement Manager to co-ordinate activity but this role ceased to exist in October 2010

CHAPTER 2

POLICY and STRATEGY

26. In this chapter we examine the policies and strategies relating to community engagement, whether they are clearly communicated and in later chapters in this report the extent to which it has been implemented.

27. The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Strategic Plan 2009/12 stated:

- *'We are committed to understanding the public that we serve'*
- *'We will listen to the people of Scotland and respond to their needs'*
- *'We will continue to work with other criminal justice agencies to make communities safer, help them thrive, and improve people's lives'*
- *'We will adopt an outcome focussed approach when dealing with cases, asking always which course of action is in the best interests of victims, witnesses and communities which give back to the community and can reduce re-offending'*
- *'We aim to give communities a prosecution service that they can have confidence in. We will listen so that we can better understand the diverse nature and needs of the communities we serve; and we will demonstrate publicly what we are doing to deliver local justice and what communities can expect from us'*

28. It further stated that each Procurator Fiscal will know their community and be known in their community through:

- *'Playing a key part of Local Criminal Justice Boards, Criminal Justice Authorities, and Community Planning Partnerships in finding local solutions for the improvement of the justice system'*
- *'Meeting local communities to explain our work and listen directly to their concerns about offending'*
- *'Responding to the problem of persistent offending'*
- *'Working with community councils and local voluntary groups'*
- *'Working with schools, including offering job shadowing to school staff'*
- *'Better informing the public through the local media'*

29. The Business Plan 2010/11 details the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service's five key objectives and their supporting 10 priorities. The key objective relating to engagement with the community:

- *'To work with police, local communities and others to solve problems caused by localised offending, targeting persistent offenders and helping people live their lives free from crime, disorder and danger'*

30. The priority relating to this is:

- *'Engage further with local communities, and to work with and influence local partners, in order to increase understanding of the role of the public prosecutor and to improve public perception of Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service'*

31. The strategic and business plans are the strategies to which all members of staff should work towards and they are available on the intranet which all staff can access. The 2010 staff survey showed that 91% of responses from staff indicated that they have a clear understanding of Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service's purpose and 86% have an understanding of Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service's objectives.
32. These plans are also available to the public on the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service website.
33. The Crown Agent in the foreword to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Strategic Plan 2009/12 stated specifically referring to engaging the community that a strategy is being developed to:
- *'engage proactively with the local community, in order to listen to the needs of individuals and communities, and receive feedback about the quality of our work from those directly affected by it.'*⁹
34. This strategy (also known as the Community Engagement Planner) was set up in 2009 by the Portfolio Owner in consultation with Area Procurators Fiscal. All Fiscal Areas therefore work to the same strategy. It details four specific objectives:
- *'To maintain/obtain the trust and confidence of the people in Scotland'*
 - *'To allow communities to advise Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service as to their local concerns and priorities to allow Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service to be responsive to communities needs'*
 - *'To educate others in order to promote citizenship, prevent disaffection, minimise harm or minimise offending behaviour'*
 - *'To assist in recruitment and ensure that our staff are representative of the communities we serve'*
35. Equality impact assessments should be carried out on all new and reviewed policies and plans. Their purpose is to help when policies and practices are developed in ensuring that there is no discrimination and that, wherever possible, equality is promoted and diversity celebrated. The requirement to carry out this assessment did not come into force until after the Community Engagement Strategy was put in place therefore an assessment has not been done.
36. The Community Engagement Planner is available on the shared drive of the computer system and can be accessed by staff to insert details of work undertaken in relation to the four objectives. It is linked to a media planner¹⁰ with the purpose being that management can see at a glance what work has been done and if there is any media coverage connected to it both of which will help increase awareness of the services provided. The Portfolio Owner is responsible for monitoring the planners (see Chapter 3).

⁹ An assessment on the receipt of feedback is made at Chapter 7

¹⁰ Note: we have been advised that given there is a section in the Community Engagement Planners for media, use of media planners may cease

37. In addition the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Equality Action Plan which was assessed and amended on advice from the Equality Advisory Group¹¹ sets out five equality objectives the first of which is to ensure that:
- *‘Scotland’s diverse communities are engaged, involved and participating in the development of our policies and good practice’*
38. In connection to this objective there are specific actions relating to community engagement:
- *‘collating details of all local and national initiatives intended to engage diverse communities’*
 - *‘giving overarching responsibility for the consideration and progression of community engagement to a senior member of staff as a recognised role with specific responsibilities to undertake and targets to achieve’*
 - *‘Developing and distributing a template for evaluating community engagement’*
39. As described previously the actions have been met with the exception of written detail of the specific responsibilities of the COPFS lead on Community Engagement.
40. Achievement towards the Equality Action Plan is monitored by the Crown Office Policy Division’s Diversity Team and reviewed by the Area Fiscals Group¹², Equality and Diversity Strategy Group and the Equality and Diversity Strategic Working Group.
41. Furthermore the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service introduced an ‘Accessible Information Policy’ in March 2010 with the purpose of ensuring that:
- ‘Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service information, documents and publications are accessible to all people in Scotland and to set out transparent and consistent criteria for making decisions on the languages and other formats to be made available’
42. The policy intends to benefit:
- People whose first language is not English
 - People who are Deaf and use British Sign Language (BSL) as their first language
 - People who have a hearing impairment
 - People who have a speech impairment
 - People who have difficulty reading because they have either a visual impairment, a learning disability, are a BSL user or a low level of literacy
43. These steps should increase public access to Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service by adopting approved accessible standards. The standards

¹¹ The Equality Advisory Group includes members of Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service staff and external members each with a special interest in areas of equality and diversity – age, disability, gender and gender identity, race, religion and belief, and sexual orientation. **Remit:** "To provide independent and informed advice to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service in relation to the impact of existing and future policies and practices on diversity and the promotion of equality and fairness in service delivery and employment."

¹² Area Fiscals Group - remit is to: ‘review operational performance, delivery and practice and to consider specific corporate objectives and priorities across the quarterly meetings, reviewing practice in each Area, and sharing best practice’

should be applied to all Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service templates, IT systems; documents; training and publications. The accessibility policy is fairly new to the organisation and only limited monitoring has taken place in this regard.

44. At our focus groups we found little evidence of local community involvement and influence in the creation of policy and strategy within the Fiscal Areas we reviewed. Policy tends to be set centrally therefore there is little scope for the separate Fiscal Areas to engage in this respect. It is more likely that feedback is given after policy is put into practice through connections with local groups such as Hate Crime Action Groups etc.

Conclusion

45. It is our opinion that Crown Office and the Procurator Fiscal Service make it clear to staff and the public through policy and plans where the organisation stands in relation to engaging with the community. These show an intention to consider the needs and priorities of individuals and communities that will help ensure delivery of a customer focussed service.
46. The involvement of the Equality Advisory Group is key in ensuring the fairness and inclusiveness in policy, strategy and practice although feedback received indicated that this group would prefer to be more integrated into the process of making policy and strategy as opposed to being reviewers of end products.
47. The extent to whether these policies and strategies are implemented is discussed in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 3

PROCESSES

48. It was apparent that there is a lot of important work being carried out to engage with communities throughout the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service. As described earlier the Community Engagement Planners act as a plan of action for staff to follow and the Equality Action Plan sets criteria relating to engaging with diverse communities. However, certain aspects of the process in achieving these plans are not clear.

Standards:

49. Standards help to ensure that consistent approaches and styles are applied and that there is an accepted framework to follow. We were advised that there are no specific standards for community engagement in Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

50. There are, however, detailed 'customer focus' and 'effective communication' competencies specified in the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Competency Framework (see Appendix 1 for more details). These describe ranges of behaviours expected of staff at all grades and levels and provide guidance on the levels of skills and behaviours expected throughout the appraisal year. There is an e-learning course relating to these competences that all staff can access.

51. The 'customer focus' competency covers behaviours from respecting customers and understanding their needs to making informed recommendations to modify or improve delivery of policy. The 'effective communication' competency covers behaviours from communicating clearly and avoiding use of unnecessary jargon to promoting cross cultural communications with the communities it serves and communicating in a way that inspires all colleagues. These competencies should be linked to objectives and performance can be assessed against them during the appraisal period.

52. In May 2005 the Scottish Government launched National Standards for Community Engagement¹³. The standards were developed with the involvement of over 500 people from communities and agencies through out Scotland. They are widely used in many areas of government eg Local Authorities, National Health Service (NHS), Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS) and the voluntary sector. They have been recommended by Audit Scotland as good practice and a good resource but are not compulsory. In fact in their review of the impact of these standards in the Regeneration process in 2008, Audit Scotland found that the standards 'contributed to a culture change in how community engagement is perceived'.

53. The principles and standards are reproduced at Appendix 2. The standards in brief are:

- Involvement
- Support

¹³ to address requirements of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 S 15(1) which requires councils to engage with community bodies and other bodies or persons as is appropriate in community planning

- Planning
- Methods
- Working Together
- Sharing Information
- Working With Others
- Improvement
- Feedback
- Monitoring and Evaluation

54. These standards help organisations have a structured approach to ensuring that public concerns or priorities are heard and taken account of in the planning and delivery of services. They also provide a framework for communities to assess their experiences against.

Recommendation 2

That Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service adopts in some form the Scottish Government standards for Community Engagement as a model of good practice. This should be made known to staff and the public and a process introduced to assess whether standards are met.

Guidance:

55. We were advised that there is no specific guidance for staff on the processes relating to engaging with communities, however, we found that in relation to 'Diversity' there is an Area Diversity Guidance Pack. This provides suggestions and advice including:

- planning events
- suggestions of things to do
- ideas for inclusion in speeches/talks
- samples of commonly asked questions with suggested answers
- what to do with school work experience pupils
- diversity issues
- budget advice, etc

56. There was a suggestion that staff may not be familiar with this guidance. The pack was set up in 2003 when the Diversity Strategy was being established and we consider this to be a good resource with examples of sound advice, however, it does require to be updated.

57. Other Government Departments¹⁴ have established guidance and toolkits relating to efficient and effective community engagement including practical ways to engage with your community and some methods and techniques on how to engage communities as reproduced in Appendix 3. These can be adapted to particular situations to aid consultation and participation. It may therefore be beneficial to examine these with a view to inclusion in some formal guidance pack.

¹⁴ For example - Communities Scotland, Regeneration, Improvement and Development Agency, Audit Scotland, Audit Commission, Councils

58. We acknowledge that given the geographical spread of the organisation especially for those Fiscal Areas that cover far reaching places eg Highlands and Islands and the current demographics of each Fiscal Area, there may not be the opportunity to engage with certain types of communities or it may be difficult to reach certain places therefore different approaches may apply. This should be taken account of in any guidance that is created.

Recommendation 3

That guidance relating to Community Engagement is created. This could incorporate a revised Area Diversity Pack. It would be of benefit to include in this guidance links to the Scottish Government National Standards on Community Engagement and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Competency Framework (particularly the competencies relating to 'Customer Focus' and 'Effective Communication') and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service 'Accessibility Policy'.

Monitoring achievement of objectives:

59. Indicator 1 relating to Monitoring and Evaluation from the Scottish Government standards of Community Engagement states that:
- The engagement process and its effects are continually evaluated to measure progress, develop skills and refine practices
60. The Portfolio Owner for Community Engagement is responsible for monitoring achievement of the community engagement strategy. The Portfolio Owner indicated that reports are occasionally given to the Area Fiscals Group. This group meets quarterly. Reports may also be put to the Management Board¹⁵ which meets on a monthly basis. The Inspectorate reviewed Area Fiscal Group minutes from 05/05/10 to 01/09/10 but none had mention of any matters relating to community engagement. Similarly there was no mention either in Management Board minutes¹⁶ reviewed. We were advised by the Portfolio Owner that further work has still to be done to establish this responsibility (see recommendation at Chapter 1) although we note that there is already a lot of this work already covered in the six monthly equality reports.
61. In order to determine whether community engagement commitments and objectives are being met we carried out a review¹⁷ of the Community Engagement Planners. The findings showed that some of the Fiscal Areas appear to have done more work in relation to engaging communities than others. The main findings are as follows:
- Some Fiscal Areas detailed very good evidence of activity carried out with details of dates, groups seen and on occasion whether it was thought to be successful

¹⁵ Management Board – remit is to: 'ensure that the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service is organised and managed in the most effective way and to provide visible and accountable leadership to staff – setting the strategic direction for the organisation, monitoring and stimulating its performance, ensuring that decisions on priorities and ways of working are informed by contacts with the wider world and managing its people and resources to best effect'.

¹⁶ Minutes from 15/09/10 to 16/03/11 were reviewed

¹⁷ Review was carried out in October 2010

- Four of the 11 Fiscal Areas provided only brief details for some of the activity
- Two Fiscal Areas didn't show activity for some of the objectives¹⁸
- Two Fiscal Areas had not completed the Planner for 2010/11
- Three Fiscal Areas had not completed the media planner¹⁹ although all three did mention media coverage in their Community Engagement Planners

62. Examples of activity described in the Community Engagement Planners include:

- Meetings with a variety of minority groups
- Contact with Schools, Colleges, Universities, Youth Clubs, Scouts/Guides groups
- Attendance at career fairs
- Participation in Mini Trials events/Court open days/workshops
- Involvement in enterprise initiatives for secondary pupils
- Involvement in projects targeted at specific groups eg New Horizons Project – aimed at 12 years olds; Operation Youth Advantage aimed at 15 -17 years olds; Stay Safe Project aimed at older people; Choices for Life – targeted at primary 7 pupils; Do the Right Thing aimed at Secondary school children and covers Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences; Another Way Project – aimed at drug users and street sex workers; Galloway Boy Racers Initiative – aimed at young drivers
- Contact with Women's Centres eg Women's Aid, Rape Crisis
- Liaison with groups relating to deaths eg People Experiencing Trauma and Loss (PETAL)
- Manning information stands in shopping centres
- Participation in monitoring pilot of work order programmes
- Involvement in large events such as Highlands R Us with local councils, police, NHS, etc – its aim was to take stock of positive aspects of the diverse community and included workshops, seminars, information stalls and activities such music, dancing, stage acts, etc
- Sponsoring eg competitions for art work, youth challenges eg Global Rock Challenge, etc
- Supporting charity events through fundraising²⁰
- Attendance at community planning events/forums and representation on Community Safety Partnerships and Community Safety Co-ordinating Groups, Community Advisory Groups
- Speaking at or attending conferences eg Hate Crime; Violence Against Women
- Liaison and co-ordinated work with criminal justice partners in targeting particular problems eg drugs and drugs deaths, antisocial behaviour, housebreaking, disorder, child protection, repeat offenders programmes, etc
- Involvement in multi agency groups eg Multi Agency Discriminatory Incident Monitoring Group (MADIM), Racist Attacks and Harassment Multi

¹⁸ One Area didn't have details of activity for objectives 2 & 4 for 2010/11, another didn't have details for objective 4 2009/10 or objective 3 for 2010/11

¹⁹ We have been advised that staff prefer to insert details of media coverage in the Community Engagement Planners for which there is a section

²⁰ eg proceeds given to SW Scotland RnR, cancer charities, sport relief, etc. In addition to this staff get involved in charity work such as volunteering for Radio Lollipop (a charity based at Yorkhill Children's Hospital in Glasgow).

Agency Strategy (RAHMAS), Multi Agency Racial Incident Monitoring (MARIM), Grampian Racial Equality Council (GREC), Hate Crime Operational Groups, Anti-social Behaviour Groups

- Involvement in community strategic responses eg Critical Services Oversight Group
- Staff study visits to places of worship or resource centres²¹ to increase understanding of community issues
- Giving talks on role of the Procurator Fiscal to various groups and institutions eg elderly, women's groups, minority groups, refugee centres, church guilds, neighbourhood watch, Scouts, hospitals and general practitioners
- Presentations to groups on a variety of subjects eg knife crime, wildlife crime
- Correspondence with MSPs
- Work placements
- Invitations for representatives of groups (eg religion, race, disability, mental health) to address staff at training to raise awareness eg on Diversity Awareness training and own local Diversity events
- Input to training of Police Officers, Justice of the Peace, etc
- Participation in multi agency biannual consultation exercise
- Press releases and liaison with representatives from the press
- Radio interviews

63. This list is not exhaustive, there are details in the planners of many more activities that have taken place. All of the above are examples of good practice.

64. We also were given examples of Law Officers attending events and speaking at conferences, eg the Solicitor General attended a 'Stonewall' event run by the Royal Bank of Scotland where he liaised with leaders of communities and he also co-hosted a conference on Hate Crime where there were over 140 delegates from a range of organisations.

65. Further to this there were many examples given to us in connection with work relating to the WSREC contract covering the four Strathclyde Fiscal Areas (some of which are included in the above list).

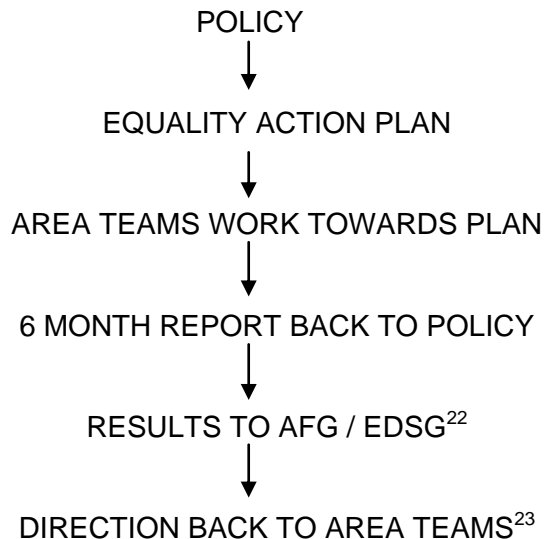
66. We did not have the resources in this review to inquire further for the two Fiscal Areas that had not completed the Planner for 2010/11. However, further evidence of activity was brought to our attention. It is therefore important that all activity in respect of community engagement is detailed so that credit can be given for work done. There is a requirement to ensure that all Community Engagement work is fully captured in Community Engagement Planners. Linking this to media coverage demonstrates to the public that Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service are interested and want to address concerns and priorities. It also increases awareness of the work of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

²¹ disability, elderly, women's centres

Recommendation 4

That staff should be reminded to complete Community Engagement and Media Planners (if their use continues) on a regular basis and a system of formally monitoring activity including a measurement of success/benefits should be introduced and maintained.

67. With regard to the Equality Action Plan we note that there is a more established process in place. The following diagram shows the work flow in relation to this:



68. Achievement of the Equality Action Plan is monitored by Crown Office Policy Division's Diversity Team. All 11 Fiscal Areas (through the Area Diversity Teams) are required to provide a six monthly report describing the work carried out to address the requirements of the plan.
69. Copies of reports from nine Fiscal Areas were provided for review and the reports are available on the intranet under 'Area Information' in the Diversity Guidance. We were advised that as a result of monitoring it was discovered that there is little contact with gender groups. Action will be taken to address this. See Chapter 7 – 'Results of Our Focus Groups'.
70. We were further advised that as a result of monitoring it became apparent at the Equality and Diversity Strategic Group that there was a gap between policy and practice and as a result the Equality and Diversity Strategy Working Group was set up to develop strategy and roll it out across the Service. There are representatives from the three federations²⁴ and it is chaired by the 'Diversity' Portfolio Owner. Part of the agenda relates to reports by Area Diversity Teams which are reviewed at the meetings.
71. We reviewed a sample of papers from Area Diversity Team Reports. In relation to community engagement these showed details similar to those in the Community Engagement Planners.

²² AFG – Area Fiscal Group; EDSG – Equality and Diversity Strategy Group (chaired by Solicitor General)

²³ Summary report from all Area reports circulated to all Areas to allow them to see what is going on in other Areas

²⁴ Three federation groupings are: **Northern** – Grampian, Highlands and Islands, Tayside; **West** - Argyll and Clyde, Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Glasgow, Lanarkshire; **East** - Central, Fife, Lothian and Borders

72. We are satisfied that in respect of the engaging with 'diverse' communities adequate monitoring is taking place. There may, however, be an overlap/duplication of work in relation to this between Policy Division and the Community Engagement Portfolio Owner as described in Chapter 1.

Toolkits

73. As described above, Community Engagement Planners are available for staff to record activity relating to community engagement. From this the Portfolio Owner can monitor what is being done, who is doing it and when it is being done but it currently does not allow for recording outcomes or lessons learned.

74. In 2007 as a result of the introduction of the National Standards in Community Engagement, the Scottish Government commissioned the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) to develop a database toolkit for planning, monitoring and evaluating community engagement.

75. A software package called VOiCE²⁵ (Visioning Outcome in Community Engagement) was developed and allows users (whether individuals, organisations or partnerships) to apply a standard system to analyse, plan, monitor, evaluate and record their community engagement. It invites you to address questions under each of the headings and assists in the identification of the appropriate level of engagement but does not prescribe particular methods. According to the literature it can support you to:

- Reflect on what you are trying to achieve
- Develop plans that relate to your purpose
- Monitor progress in implementing your plan
- Evaluate the process and outcomes
- Learn lessons for future activity

76. We consider that the current procedure in place in the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service does not yet meet all the points above. It may therefore be of benefit to look at this package with a view to considering whether there are benefits in its use to help formalise the community engagement process particularly in relation to monitoring and evaluating outcomes.

77. VOiCE literature makes reference to other resources such as the 'people and participation' website. This website 'helps people who work in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors and who need to involve a wider group of people in their work'. The site 'provides information, advice, case studies and opportunities to share experiences with others'²⁶. It also describes different methods of participation.

²⁵ VOiCE 2 was launched in 2010

²⁶ Extract from website

Recommendation 5

That Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service consider whether it would be of benefit to the organisation in using the VOiCE software package to help plan, monitor, evaluate and record their community engagement.

Co-ordination and Sharing Best Practice:

78. In relation to the community engagement strategy, practice can be shared through access to the 'Community Engagement Planners'. Staff can see what has been done in other Fiscal Areas and if need be can make contact with them to ask for details.
79. In relation to engaging with 'diverse' communities (as described in the Equality Action Plan) there is sharing of best practice through:
- Circulation of summary diversity reports to all Fiscal Areas
 - Area Diversity Reports on intranet pages²⁷
 - Area Fiscals Group meetings where summary diversity reports are considered
 - Area Diversity Training Weeks/Days
 - Liaison between staff appointed as responsible for certain categories²⁸ of diversity
80. We noted that 8 from 11 Fiscal Areas did not have details of engagements or practice in their own intranet diversity pages as they were under construction at the time of the review. However, we found the latest Diversity Reports²⁹ for 9 out of 11 Fiscal Areas on the 'Diversity Guidance' link under 'Area Information'.
81. Sharing also takes place between the four Strathclyde Fiscal Areas as part of the WSREC contract³⁰. The Diversity Advisor from WSREC and the Strathclyde Diversity Co-ordinator attend the Equality and Diversity Strategic Working Group meetings and discuss what has been delivered. There is also a contacts list, established as part of the contract, on the intranet to which all staff have access.
82. The Policy Division's Diversity Team are on hand to provide advice on links that can be made with communities.
83. Information can also be shared through connections to other work eg Domestic Abuse, Sexual Offences, etc from other portfolio owners in matters of common interest. In this instance contacts with specific groups and work ongoing can be shared.
84. Although there is co-ordination of practice as described above, we note that when delivering talks etc, eg relating to the role of the Procurator Fiscal, or relating to specific notes of interest eg serious crime, staff may create their own presentations. As a result there may be duplication of effort if one already

²⁷ All staff have access to the intranet and can therefore find out what is happening in other Areas

²⁸ For example, race, disability, age, etc

²⁹ September 2010

³⁰ See Chapter 1 for details

exists. We consider that it would be beneficial to further develop the central repository of standard presentations which can be modified to meet local circumstances and managed in a way that the same message is communicated.

85. Similarly we note that there are different lists of contacts. There are those retained by the Fiscal Area, those by Strathclyde Diversity Co-ordinator (for the four Strathclyde Fiscal Areas only) and also a suggested contacts lists on the Diversity pages of the intranet under 'Diversity Contacts Data Bank'. We found that those retained by the Fiscal Area were not always up to date as we had a bit of difficulty obtaining contact names and addresses during our review.

Recommendation 6

That the existing central repository of standard presentations should be further developed and also that a main list of contacts is established and maintained.

Use of Media

86. Making use of the media is vital to getting information across to the public and communities and is a means by which organisations can provide evidence of work done to address concerns. It allows for details of new initiatives, current work, statistics, etc to be made available. Information can include impact of new practices eg work orders, fiscal fines or it can provide information about events taking place eg diversity weeks or details of results of targeted areas such as street drinking and knife crime or of high profile cases such as murders.
87. Examples of the type of communications found in the Community Engagement Planners include:
- Set up of new units eg Ultimus Haeres, Domestic Abuse Unit, Health and Safety Units
 - Joint press release with partners (eg Police) on operations to tackle particular problems
 - Specific statistics eg knife crime
 - New policy and procedures eg Summary Justice Reforms
 - Prosecution results eg convictions in proceeds of crime, drug trafficking, murders
 - Certain campaigns eg Christmas drink driving
 - Responses to articles in newspapers
 - Proactive work eg training to help reduce drug related deaths
88. There was also evidence of staff attending radio interviews and attending media events along with examples of regular meetings with editors of local papers.
89. Results of our focus groups showed that it was felt there could be better provision of information relating to outcomes and achievements and that these could easily be included in leaflets, community papers, website, etc. It also showed that people felt the Fiscal should be proactive in providing reasons for

decisions particularly where charges have been dropped. This issue will be addressed in our ongoing Victims Thematic.

90. As detailed earlier a review of media planners showed that three Fiscal Areas did not detail media communications although when this was checked against the corresponding Community Engagement Planners there was evidence that there had been communications. Making use of media is an easy way to get messages across, therefore, we consider it important to exploit opportunities in this respect. Providing feedback to communities demonstrates to the public that the organisation is responding effectively to their needs.

Recommendation 7

That consideration is always given to getting messages across to the public through the media where it is thought to be appropriate and there may be opportunities to be had in liaising with Councils to place articles such as outcomes and achievements in local community newsletters.

Website

91. The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service website provides information to the public on a variety of matters and is another method of engaging with the communities. There are welcome messages in different languages with links to further information.

92. The website provides information on:

- The role of the Procurator Fiscal
- Investigation of deaths
- Statistics
- Parliamentary questions
- Latest information eg implications of rulings for example HMA V Cadder³¹
- Hot topics eg review of sexual offences
- Links to publications
- Information for witnesses and victims, and
- Links to vacancies

93. There may also be advantages in looking into use of technology for example information network sites such as Twitter³². Many people especially the young use this type of medium and it would provide for a quick and easy way to make contact, provide information and obtain feedback from the public. The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service currently do not use this form of communication. However, many other government departments already provide this facility (eg the Scottish Government use Twitter, YouTube, Podcast and Flickr³³ and the Crown Prosecution Service use Twitter and blogs). Some also make use of on-line pop-up surveys as people access the intranet site.

³¹ The Court decided that police interviewing detained persons in a police station without allowing them access to legal advice was incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights

³² Twitter is a real-time information network that connects you to the latest information. For example, the Crown Prosecution Service upload information on decisions and outcomes, etc. This network is used by the many government departments including Downing Street, Scottish Government, Councils, Crown Prosecution Service, law firms, etc.

³³ Flickr is an online photo management and sharing application

94. Results of our focus group showed a general consensus that the public are not very familiar with the work of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and where it fits into the legal process. This is especially so for those with different cultural backgrounds. The main point of contact tends to be with the police. We noted in all focus groups that people find the language used (eg jargon, terminology) to be difficult and one person suggested it can be 'intimidating' (see Chapter 7). Members of the focus groups indicated that the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service could promote itself better and explain its role in the legal system through better use of communications eg technology, community papers, etc and also through practical ways such as providing mock courts to anyone and not just children.
95. Introduction of social media would need careful consideration of the benefits and clear strategies put in place to minimise risk and ensure best use is made of its potential (See also Recommendation 9 in Chapter 4). However, it does promote openness and transparency.

Recommendation 8

That consideration is given to introducing social networking as a medium to help improve making contact, providing information and obtaining feedback from the public and also in promoting the work of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

Customer Feedback

96. The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service launched its revised Customer Feedback Policy on 1 November 2010. This was a result of a project relating to complaints handling and its aim is to address issues identified relating to lack of staff awareness and use of the process and to capture not only complaints and concerns but also compliments.
97. Feedback can be provided through telephone calls, letters or the 'Complaints' or 'Have Your Say' links both of which can be easily accessed by the public on the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service website. There are specific targets that have to be met and responsibilities have been established to derive analyses and feed back to the Management Board on 'Lessons Learned and Delivering a Better Service'. However, we were advised that this process is still in its infancy and no results are available yet.

Conclusion

98. We consider that the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service make real efforts to engage with communities and the general public, however, some Fiscal Areas appear to do more in this respect. This may be a result of not recording all activity. We do acknowledge that the geographical spread of the organisation and the current demographics of each Fiscal Area will effect how practice is carried out.
99. Overall it is our opinion that with minor changes to processes and the introduction of new methods a 'Customer Focus' approach to service delivery will be maintained which will help ensure that the specific objectives of the

community engagement strategy and those in the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Strategic Plan 2009/12 will be achieved.

CHAPTER 4

FINANCE

100. In recent years there has been a greater emphasis on engaging with communities to ensure that priorities and concerns are taken on board and addressed in policy and practice. In order to achieve this there is a requirement for resources both in terms of time and money to be available. Staffing resources are discussed in Chapter 5.

Costs:

101. We were unable to determine a cost for 'Community Engagement' given that there is no system in place to attribute costs in this way. We were advised that there is not a specific cost code for expenditure relating to community engagement and that expenses can be attached to various cost codes within budgets eg one code would be used for purchase of a trophy and another would be used for provision of lunch. As a result there is no method of pulling figures for community engagement expenditure alone.

Impact of the Current Financial Climate:

102. Tighter budgets may have effects on recruitment, funding for work placements, sponsorships, staff being redeployed to core business and communications eg publications, advertisements. If community engagement is not seen as adding value then activities relating to this will be reduced as a way to cutting costs.

103. Managers we spoke to were concerned that in the current economic climate there will need to be a focus on core business and as a result staff may not be able to find the time to be involved in engagement exercises. There are also concerns that this will have an impact on the work that is already done.

104. We consider that in such stringent times there are opportunities to be seized in reducing or sharing costs. Highlands and Islands Area provided us with examples of work already done in this respect, in particular, they work closely with Northern Constabulary and other partners in relation to the biannual community consultation exercise which is used to help inform priorities and strategies. The last exercise was conducted in 2009 through a research company and the costs were split between the partners. The partners involved looked at ways of reducing costs for the 2011 survey and we have since been advised that the Area's contribution has been reduced this year. There will be questionnaires issued to approximately 9,000 households. Argyll and Clyde also contribute to questions in Council Citizen Panels and feedback of results is given to the Fiscal in this respect. A few other Fiscal Areas have considered use of surveys in this way, however, not to any great extent.

105. Another means of reducing costs is to reduce duplication of work. One example, as described in Chapter 3 (a central repository of standard presentations) can save staff time and ultimately money.

106. As stated earlier a quick and easy way to make contact, provide information and obtain feedback from the public is use of social media such as Twitter.

This facility is free and taking into account the resources required for its management it may be found to be a cost effective method of engaging with the public.

Recommendation 9

That given the current economic climate Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service should identify opportunities to reduce costs such as reducing duplication of work, increased partnership working and making use of technology such as information networks or online pop-up surveys.

107. Results of our focus groups showed that there was a general consensus that with tighter budgets and reduced resources that the good relations already in place and engagement activities should not diminish although there is an acceptance that all agencies need to be smarter in how communication takes place eg use of video conference, technology, etc but more importantly there is still a need to be mindful of the different communication needs of different communities.

Conclusion

108. In the current economic climate we consider it important to continue to engage and receive feedback from the public and communities particularly when budgets are tight to ensure that the right services are being delivered efficiently and effectively and at the right time. It is therefore an appropriate time to identify opportunities to reduce costs such as those described above.

CHAPTER 5

PEOPLE

Responsibilities:

109. We have already detailed in Chapter 1 that an Area Fiscal has been allocated as the 'lead' or 'Portfolio Owner' on Community Engagement. All other Area Fiscals signed up to the community engagement strategy and District Fiscals have a standard objective to:

- 'arrange for the office to participate in events designed to promote engagement with the local community

110. This objective also requires all work to be fully captured on the Community Engagement Planner and to identify media opportunities to advise and reassure communities. All other staff have a standard objective to 'participate in community engagement work when given the opportunity to do so'.

111. We comment on the extent to which this objective is being met in Chapter 3.

Staffing Resources

112. It is not compulsory for all staff to get involved in work relating to engagement with communities. However, senior staff are generally required to represent the organisation at events, conferences, etc.

113. We were advised that in general staff tend to volunteer as they may already have an interest in a particular area or are already 'champions' in certain categories of work eg disability, wildlife, race, etc.

114. When working on engagements staff are normally afforded time to do this during work hours or overtime is offered if outside working hours. We were advised, however, that many staff see this as an essential part of their job and are happy to do this type of work in their own time eg attending events or meetings in evenings/weekends.

115. We acknowledge that due to the geographical dispersion of Fiscal Offices in Scotland there will be differing needs and a mix of resources available, for example, in Highlands and Islands offices there may only be one or two members of staff available to engage compared with larger more central offices such as Glasgow that will be able to provide a larger contribution. However, there are concerns that with tighter budgets there may be an impact on staff availability to get involved due to finite staffing resources and demands on core business.

116. Results of our focus group showed that staff are responsive to requests to attend meetings (when pressure of business allows this) and are willing to meet community groups to explain the role of the Procurator Fiscal although some indicated that personalities do come into play in terms of how willing. It was also recognised that Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service rely on the goodwill of staff to get involved especially out of hours.

Keeping staff informed:

117. There are various mediums through which staff can be kept informed of work relating to community engagement including:

- The Bulletin³⁴
- 'What's New' page on the intranet
- Update³⁵
- Area Newsletters
- Area Diversity pages on the intranet
- Events, Conferences and Diversity Weeks
- Team Briefings³⁶
- Training eg mandatory 'Diversity' and 'Hate Crime' courses

118. One Fiscal Area has specifically added 'Community Engagement' as an item on the agenda of their management meetings.

119. A review of Bulletins issued from June to October 2010 did not detail anything specific to community engagement except for information relating to the accessibility policy (see Chapter 2 relating to this policy). A further review of Bulletins from November 2010 to January 2011 revealed that information was provided to staff on the Customer Feedback Policy but again there was nothing specific to community engagement.

120. We noted that there is instruction that local information can be added when carrying out team briefings. This, we were advised, is where community engagement matters can be discussed within the teams particularly under the 'Liaison' section at team briefings. We did not review notes from individual team briefings.

121. Area pages on the intranet also provide details of 'Diversity' work including community engagement events. All staff can access these pages, however, when examined during the review, only 3 Fiscal Areas had details listed. The pages relating to the remaining 8 Fiscal Areas were either under construction or did not detail anything.

122. A review of Area newsletters³⁷, particularly Lanarkshire and Glasgow, showed that information is provided in this respect. The 'Update' newsletter provides information on a variety of issues from involvement in raising funds for charity to raising awareness of diversity such as Ramadan.

123. Finally, another method of keeping staff informed is through staff study visits. Prior to attendance information sheets are issued so that staff can learn about the community, cultures, traditions, terminology, etc. Examples include visits to Vajrayana Buddhist Centre, Red Road Family Centre and Renfrewshire Disability Resource Centre.

³⁴ Bulletin - contains information which may be of interest to staff throughout the department, including a summary of key relevant points from Management Board and Area Fiscals Group

³⁵ Update – Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service quarterly newsletter

³⁶ Team briefing involves managers and supervisors talking to their teams about what is happening in the workplace, and taking note of their concerns or suggestions. The Bulletin should be used as the starting point for preparing a local team briefing.

³⁷ Only three Areas appear to have Newsletters (Lanarkshire, Glasgow and Ayrshire)

Training:

124. The Scottish Prosecution College offer a 'Presentation Skills' course targeted at staff who need to learn how to make more effective presentations. It is described as a 'basic introduction to the theory and practical skills involved' and staff who make presentations at Senior Civil Service level are advised to look at alternative courses provided through the National School for Government. In addition, if there is enough interest, the College can arrange for a 'Presenting with Impact' course which is run externally.
125. We found that there are other externally run courses specifically designed for community engagement. Examples include:
- Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) offer training courses on Community Engagement ½ or 1 day course on the National Standards for Community Engagement.
 - Skills for Justice offer learning on how to 'establish and manage links with wider communities'. Skills developed will include: communicating; negotiating; consulting; planning; reviewing; networking; analysing; monitoring; decision making; prioritising; influencing and persuading
 - Skills for Business offer training on 'Deliver community engagement for a creative and cultural organisation'
126. Given the importance attached to community engagement as stated in the aims and objectives of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Strategic Plan 2009/12 and in ensuring that staff make the right impression when delivering communications it may be worthwhile liaising with providers such as those mentioned above to arrange appropriate training. If it is found that there is a need all requests for training should be put through the Scottish Prosecution College.

Recommendation 10

That in order to ensure that staff are properly prepared for and can deliver communications in a confident, effective and efficient manner Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service should identify whether there is a need to invest in training for staff involved in community engagement.

Staff Recognition:

127. In 2009 the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service excellence award for 'Diversity' went to the Area Diversity Team in Glasgow. In 2010 a new category was established for 'Community Engagement'³⁸. There were 10 nominations in this category and the three finalists were:
- Argyll and Clyde - Bringing Learning to Life
 - Dumfries and Galloway - "Do the Right Thing"
 - Glasgow - Communications and Community Engagement

³⁸ A new "Community Engagement" category was added to celebrate the excellent work being done by individuals, offices and areas engaging with local communities, increasing understanding of the role of the public prosecutor and the public perception of Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service

128. The winner was the team from Glasgow who devised a strategy to communicate through:

- TV for high profile cases
- Print media eg tabloids
- Meeting people eg at shopping centres, schools, clubs
- Local radio
- Links with Diversity Team to forge new links with diverse partners

129. The 2010 award for 'Diversity' went to the Lanarkshire Area Diversity Action Group who developed a new model of working where each member has a clear responsibility for a certain strand of diversity. This model has since been copied by two other Fiscal Areas.

130. More recently the 2011 Excellence Award for the 'Community Engagement' category went to the Rosepark Fatal Accident Inquiry Team in Lanarkshire Area and the 'Equality and Diversity' Award went to Lothian and Borders Area Diversity team.

Conclusion

131. It is clear from evidence obtained that where involved staff are committed to engaging with communities and they see this as part of the services provided of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service. Recognising work done through providing feedback and rewards helps to motivate staff to become more involved and to do a good job.

132. If need is identified we believe that it may be worthwhile investing in specific community engagement training for staff however this needs to be considered against budget and resource availability and other priorities.

CHAPTER 6

PARTNERSHIPS

133. Although partnerships were not a main focus of this review we acknowledge that joint working is imperative to delivering communications especially with hard to reach groups with whom other agencies may have connections. It also ensures that common concerns can be addressed, information can be shared and it saves duplication of consultation. We did not speak with criminal justice partners as part of this review as we regarded that as not being community engagement.

Corporate Working Groups and Committees

134. An aim³⁹ of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service is to 'work closely with other agencies in the criminal justice system to make Scotland a safer place'. In relation to partnerships the Strategic Plan 2009/12 states that Procurators Fiscal will:

- *Play a key part of Local Criminal Justice Boards, Criminal Justice Authorities, and Community Planning Partnerships in finding local solutions for the improvement of the justice system*
- *Meet local communities to explain our work and listen directly to their concerns about offending*
- *Work with community councils and local voluntary groups*
- *Work with schools, including offering job shadowing to school staff*

135. Through a link in the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service intranet details can be found of corporate working groups and committees including those relating to Children and Youth, Deaths, Diversity, Environment, Victims and Vulnerable Witnesses, etc. The majority of these groups are externally led and are made up of members from partnership agencies including the Police, Court, Councils, Scottish Government, NHS along with representatives from other agencies representing the young, old, disabled, vulnerable persons, etc.

136. Representation on these groups helps in providing feedback which in turn helps inform policy and practice. Examples are as follows:

- Equality Advisory Group - includes members of Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service staff and external members each with a special interest in areas of equality and diversity. It meets on a quarterly basis. The remit of this group is to 'provide independent and informed advice to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service in relation to the impact of existing and future policies and practices on diversity and the promotion of equality and fairness in service delivery and employment'.
- Working Group on Interpreting and Translation (WGIT) - includes members of Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and criminal justice partners including Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS), Scottish Court Service, Law Society of Scotland and Scottish Legal Aid Board. The remit of the group is to 'work towards common standards'.

³⁹ As stated in the Strategic Plan 2009/12

- Age Related Products Enforcement Working Group – includes members of Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and external members including Councils, Alcohol Focus Scotland, Scottish Grocers federation, Young Scot, Tobacco Control Team, etc. The remit of this group is to ‘develop policy and guidance in relation to and co-ordinate the launch of test purchasing of age restricted products’.
- Wildlife and Habitats Crime Prosecution Forum - includes members of Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and Scottish Government representatives and the Police along with wildlife groups such as RSPB, SSPCA, SNH. The remit is to consider issues and work towards necessary improvements in law and practice, etc.⁴⁰

137. The above groups provide independent input into policy and practice and in fact the Inspectorate is an observer on WGIT, the Equality Advisory Group and the ACPOS/COPFS Standing Group on Diversity and Race. We have witnessed the discussion of policy, sharing of ideas and provision of advice which is considered by Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

138. A review of the groups still listed in the intranet found that some no longer existed or have not met for sometime. Given that this is a resource which staff can access for guidance/contacts it should be kept up to date.

Recommendation 11

That Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service update their list on the intranet detailing current working groups and committees.

139. In addition to these corporate working groups and committees we found from our review of Community Engagement Planners that each of the Fiscal Areas are engaged in working groups or forums. These detail partnership working with other criminal justice agencies, councils with regard to community planning⁴¹ and safety, schools and voluntary groups, etc and also internal colleagues such as communications division and various staff forums.

140. Examples, broken down by Fiscal Area, are as follows:

141. **Argyll & Clyde**

- Involvement in the Community Planning Events with Renfrewshire Council and Community Safety Partnerships
- Taking the lead with criminal justice partners in development of a DVD - ‘A Guide to Court Interpreting in the Scottish Criminal Justice System’
- Participation in West Dunbartonshire Multi Agency Racial Incident Monitoring (MARIM) Group

⁴⁰ See our thematic report on Wildlife Crime published April 2008

⁴¹ Councils are required under section 15 (1) of the Local Government Scotland Act 2003 to engage with community bodies in the community planning process

142. **Ayrshire**

- Involvement in multi agency groups including South Ayrshire Community Safety Partnership, East Ayrshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership, North Ayrshire Child Protection Committee and many others
- Representation on Multi Agency Discriminatory Incident Monitoring Group
- Involvement in Strathclyde Diversity Forum

143. **Central**

- Representation on the Forth Valley RAHMAS (Racist Attacks and Harassment Multi Agency Strategy). This has involved chairing conferences involving a particular family who have been subject to abuse
- Involvement in the Falkirk Multi Agency Domestic Abuse Forum
- Attendance at multi agency conferences and forums

144. **Dumfries and Galloway**

- Participation in multi agency groups such as Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, Youth Justice Strategy Group
- Chairing of the local Diversity Group
- Involvement in various initiatives with criminal justice partners eg drugs deaths, young drivers, etc

145. **Fife**

- Joint training with police
- Involvement in various groups eg Fife Child Protection Group, Safety Partnership Group, etc
- Attendance at conferences

146. **Glasgow**

- Attendance at Community Council meetings
- Representation on various groups such as Serious Crime Group, Archway Steering Group, Child Protection Committee
- Involvement in multi agency contingency planning eg impact on low level trains
- Attendance at local MARIM (Multi Agency Racial Incident Monitoring) Group

147. **Grampian**

- Participation in various multi agency groups such as Aberdeen Community Safety Partnership and Community Council, Sex Crime Working Group, Youth Offending Reduction Group, etc
- Representation on the local Ethnic Minority Forum and Grampian Racial Equality Council (GREC)
- Involvement in Grampian Employee Network
- Consulted in relation to Community Strategic Response to disaster such as fire, flood, bomb threats, etc and participation in Mass Fatality Group meetings

148. **Highlands and Islands**

- Working with Crown Office Communications and Northern Constabulary communications to ensure that the public are kept advised of initiatives, results and developments in criminal justice
- Representation on Northern Constabulary's Community Advisory Group⁴²
- Involvement with the Highland Muslim Education Association (HMEA) along with Northern Constabulary and Highland Council
- Involvement in Highlands R Us event. This event was held in a focal place to capture as many people passing through and included performing arts, information stalls, seminars and workshops. An aim of the event was to showcase Highland diversity.

149. **Lanarkshire**

- Attendance at Multi Agency Racial Incident Monitoring (MARIM) meetings
- Participation in Local Community Justice Authority
- First Fiscal Area to hold a 'Diversity Week' which included presentations and awareness sessions from various interested diversity groups
- Attendance at conferences eg Hate Crime

150. **Lothian and Borders**

- Representation on various multi agency groups such as Violence Against Women, Child & Adult Protection Committees, Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), etc
- Involvement in Community Safety Forums and Community Safety Co-ordinating Group
- Participation in Critical Services Oversight Group designed by Scottish Borders Council in relation to protection issues
- Representation in a Prevention Steering Group aimed at working on projects to prevent crime

151. **Tayside**

- Participation in Tayside Police Strategic Community Advisory Group
- Involvement in Dundee Community Safety Partnership
- Participation in various other multi agency groups such as Angus Public Protection Forum, Dundee Adult Protection Committee, Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee, Tayside Criminal Justice Board, Tayside Mass Fatalities Working Group, etc

152. In addition to the above all Fiscal Areas work with schools and universities to offer placements, provide talks to pupils, present mock trials and facilitate or contribute to court visits/open doors days.

153. It was noted that some Fiscal Areas appear to be more proactive than others in this respect although we acknowledge that needs may be different due to the composition of Areas involved and availability of partner agencies.

⁴² The purpose of this group is for the force to engage with equality groups at strategic level and for local interest or communities to have their input into long term planning of services that most affect their communities

Also as discussed in Chapter 3 we note that some activity may not have been recorded in the Community Engagement Planners.

154. As indicated in earlier chapters there is further partnership working through the WSREC contract⁴³. This contract will not be renewed after April 2011 however it is hoped that good relations will be maintained. Feedback given to us by staff relating to the services provided show that WSREC have been very effective and helpful in making contact with hard to reach communities and facilitating meetings. Feedback given by a WSREC representative indicated that Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service has greatly improved in its engagement activities, however, there are worries that due to financial constraints the foot will be taken off the pedal.
155. Results of our focus groups showed that some group members questioned the effectiveness of the Procurator Fiscal attending strategic community meetings and it was thought that attending task group meetings may be a better use of the Procurator Fiscal's time.
156. We discuss in Chapter 4 where effective partnership working can help reduce or share costs in the current economical climate.

Conclusion

157. It is obvious from the representation on working groups, community partnerships and liaison with voluntary groups, agencies, schools, etc that Fiscal Areas do take seriously their role in working with partners with a view to engage with communities in order to make Scotland a safer place. However some Fiscal Areas appear to be more proactive than others.

⁴³ See Chapter 1 for its purpose

CHAPTER 7

RESULTS

158. A major part of Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service aims and objectives is to listen to communities and understand their needs and priorities. The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Strategic Plan 2009/12 stated its intention to:

- *‘engage proactively with the local community, in order to listen to the needs of individuals and communities, and receive feedback about the quality of our work from those directly affected by it.’*

159. This can be done by obtaining information through engagements, surveys, feedback systems, etc.

160. To evaluate success there needs to be a system to analyse results eg ranking priorities, identifying patterns in complaints/concerns, assessing success of involvement, etc.

161. The Scottish Government National Standards for Community Engagement describes specific indicators relating to the standards. These refer to having a method where *‘progress is evaluated against intended results’* and *‘providing feedback to participants and the wider community’*.

Obtaining Feedback

162. One method of obtaining feedback from communities and the wider public is through Customer Feedback Policy (as described in Chapter 3). This was re-launched on 1 November 2010 and at that time the method of measuring/evaluating feedback was still in its infancy and further work was necessary to make formal assessments of feedback received.

163. Another method of obtaining feedback is through multi agency working groups and surveys, examples are as follows:

- Lothian & Borders - Easter Road anti-social behaviour group – involves representation from approx 150 members of the public
- Highlands and Islands – involvement in Northern Constabulary’s biannual community consultation exercise – where results are categorised and prioritised and action is taken to address results⁴⁴
- Scottish Crime and Justice Survey – which includes analyses of awareness of the role and work of the Procurator Fiscal⁴⁵

164. Although all Fiscal Areas do already engage with partners (as described in Chapter 6) it would be a worthwhile undertaking to look into involvement in exercises with partners such as local and national government surveys and consultation exercises.

⁴⁴ Two other Areas are currently considering such work

⁴⁵ The 2009 survey showed that 91% of respondents had heard of the Procurator Fiscal, however, when probed further only 59% correctly identified the role of the procurator Fiscal and 81% did not know much or anything at all about the work of the Procurator Fiscal. 63% of adults who had been in contact with the Procurator Fiscal were very satisfied or quite satisfied with their contact.

Recommendation 12

That all Fiscal Areas in the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service consider liaising with partners such as Police, local Councils and Government to identify whether there is an opportunity to be included in community/public surveys or consultations.

Success and Outcomes

165. A measure of success can be shown through awards received. These can be internal to the organisation or external. Chapter 5 provides detail of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service internal award scheme. Examples of external awards received are as follows:

- A member of staff in Highlands and Islands is to receive an award in January 2011 from Highland Council relating to 'A Celebration of Business Support for Schools' – this related to the support to schools through work placements
- Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service awarded a Prince Michael International Road Safety Award for the Drink Drive Vehicle Forfeiture Initiative in 2010
- Highlands and Islands won the Judges Award, a Scottish Government Excellence Award, for their outreach work in 2006

166. Work carried out where results and outcomes have been recorded include:

- Reports on study visits to places of interest and local groups, for example, visit to Red Road Family Centre in Glasgow to meet with asylum seeker and refugee community – emerging issues were recorded, staff completed a questionnaire on how they benefited from the visit and follow up work was agreed
- Area Diversity Reports⁴⁶ – a section of the report asks for details of 'What has happened (or will happen) as a result of this action?' but not all Fiscal Areas complete this section. If they were to complete this section management would be able to see at a glance what the effects are and whether involvement was beneficial or not. Where it has been completed there have been actions set such as further workshops, involvement in co-ordinated actions with partnership agencies to a particular group of people, improved links with communities, etc
- Equality Action Plan Annual Reports – these summarise the main activities and evidence of progress during the period. Objective 1 relates specifically to community engagement.
- Area Diversity Weeks – after an event in one Fiscal Area feedback comments were recorded from attendees relating to whether their awareness of the organisation was raised, whether there were any issues they would like to know more about, whether they were content to be involved in future events

167. It is good practice to record outcomes and assess impact/benefits. The findings of our review show that not all outcomes of engagement are recorded

⁴⁶ These reports are considered by the Equality and Diversity Strategy Group

therefore we consider it will be difficult in these circumstances for management to measure success and identify lessons to be learned. As stated earlier in Chapter 3 there are toolkits⁴⁷ available to assist with management and evaluation of engagement and also to help assess engagement activity against strategic objectives.

Recommendation 13

That where engagement has taken place outcomes should always be recorded either using an in house approach or through a package such as VOiCE to allow management to measure success against strategic objectives and identify lessons to be learned.

Providing Feedback

168. A method of providing feedback to communities and the wider public is through media, for example, press coverage, interviews on local radio, etc. Examples of this have already been given in Chapter 3 'Use of Media' although we felt that this medium could be used more and application of it could be better monitored.

169. We also believe that introducing social media such as Twitter would assist in providing feedback to participants. This is also discussed in Chapter 3.

170. Feedback can also be given back to communities at future meetings.

Results of Our Focus Groups

171. We carried out four focus groups during March 2011⁴⁸. We invited a mix of community members including representatives from community safety partnerships, community planning forums, equality councils, youth, elderly, faith, race, disability and gender groups. In addition due to the wide geographical dispersion of Highlands and Islands we wrote to a further 24 community groups from which we received six replies.

172. Our aim was to obtain feedback on how well the Procurator Fiscal responds to local needs and concerns and whether their involvement is considered sufficient and to identify whether it was felt improvements should be made.

173. Overall we received very positive and some extremely complimentary feedback on engagement activities in all three Fiscal Areas with comments such as:

- 'our relationship is exemplar'
- the approach was 'refreshing and forward looking'
- the one to one contact was a 'positive experience'
- the Procurator Fiscal always 'listens to issues'

⁴⁷ For example, VOiCE

⁴⁸ Focus groups - two in Highlands and Islands, one in Lothian and Borders and one in Argyll and Clyde. Note: West Lothian have a different set up due to co-location of partner agencies including West Lothian Council, Lothian and Borders Police and Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service. The Procurator Fiscal is represented on the West Lothian Community Safety Partnership which feeds into task groups which in turn feeds back to each agency.

- he maintains a 'human approach'
- involvement is 'very positive'
- 'very happy with the quality of work and input'

174. There was also positive feedback from those involved in arranging work placements and we were advised that people like the opportunity for local Fiscals to get involved in local issues.

175. We were advised that staff are responsive to requests to attend meetings (when pressure of business allows this) and are willing to meet community groups to explain the role of the Procurator Fiscal.

176. We did, however, receive some negative feedback from some groups where there was 'little' or 'no contact'. Therefore attempts could be made to engage more with these groups (eg representatives from women, gender, and people with learning disabilities). We make reference to liaison with gender groups in Chapter 3 where it has been recognised through monitoring that there is little contact.

177. Also as part of our focus groups we asked whether improvements in engagement could be made. Some suggestions are listed below:

- Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service should do awareness raising of its role
- Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service should explain its role and part in the criminal justice process
- A list of which organisation to contact at certain points in the criminal justice process
- Better information provision – make use of technology, community papers, etc
- Be mindful of different needs of different communities and cultures and how best to get information across eg the young use facebook, however some cultures prefer to learn by ear rather than through technology therefore presentations, talks
- Be more visible in communities
- Procurator Fiscal could be more proactive in providing information about cases eg why charges were dropped
- Mock courts for all groups and adults not just children
- Improvement in the language used (eg jargon, terminology)
- Issue leaflets on what has been achieved, possibly using Council's community magazines
- Increased training on different needs of victims, cultures, etc
- Job shadowing for agency staff to gain a better understanding of Procurator Fiscal work
- Liaise proactively with voluntary sector and agencies for advice and help on decision making
- Replicate Area Diversity Weeks elsewhere in the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service
- Share achievements in Community Engagement Planners with community safety partnerships, etc

178. As described in this report Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service already have procedures in place that address some of the suggestions above (eg training, information on website, etc), however, there is always scope for improvement. Some suggestions reflect what we recommend in the report (eg making use of technology) while others such as mock trial courts for adults/groups and providing better information on how the organisation fits into the whole criminal justice process⁴⁹ will help promote the work of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service. Certainly feedback provided to us from schools shows that mock courts are successful and worthwhile. It allows for a better understanding of the processes involved in the criminal justice system.

Recommendation 14

That Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service consider the suggestions for improvement made by community members as referred to in this report at page 44.

Feedback from staff

179. We liaised with several members of staff in relation to this review. All advised that community engagement provides definite benefits. They indicated that it allows for a greater understanding of communities needs and thus enables better targeting of certain areas of work to deal with real concerns and it also increases awareness of the work of the organisation. There are concerns, however, relating to the resources available in the current economic climate and that contact may become less frequent.

Conclusion

180. It is clear that steps are taken to capture feedback from communities. However, we consider more could be done in the way of formal recording and measurement of outcomes of engagement and identification of lessons to be learned.

181. Introducing further procedures to extend on the good work that is already done will help management evaluate overall effectiveness, lead to better assessment of success and ultimately improvement.

⁴⁹ perhaps through an illustrative diagram

Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service
Competency Framework⁵⁰

Competency levels determine the level that someone would be expected to demonstrate indicative behaviours in the day to day work and interaction with others, these differ by grade levels.

The levels go from level one to level five. It would be assumed that someone performing at level five would be aware of and routinely performing at levels one to four.

Customer Focus Competency Description:

- We recognise that our customers whether they are colleagues, members of the community or one of our many partner organisations are entitled to the highest possible standards of service and professional attention. This competency sets out a range of behaviours that puts our customers at the centre of everything we do. People who demonstrate this competency will understand the needs of our customers and respond accordingly.

Effective Communication Competency Description:

- People who demonstrate this competency understand the importance of communicating effectively, adapting a method of communication where appropriate to ensure that the message is understood by others. Within Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service we recognise the value of open and honest communication between ourselves, partners and our customers.

⁵⁰ Extract from Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Competency Framework

Scottish Government National Standards
Community Engagement

Principles:

- Fairness, equality and inclusion must underpin all aspects of community engagement, and should be reflected in both community engagement policies and the way that everyone involved participates
- Community engagement should have clear and agreed purposes, and methods that achieve these purposes
- Improving the quality of community engagement requires commitment to learning from experience
- Skill must be exercised in order to build communities, to ensure practice in equalities principles, to share ownership of the agenda, and to enable all viewpoints to be reflected
- As all parties to community engagement possess knowledge on study, experience, observation and reflection, effective engagement processes will share and use that knowledge
- All participants should be given the opportunity to build on their knowledge and skills
- Accurate, timely information is crucial for effective engagement

Standards:

- Involvement: we will identify and involve the people and organisations who have an interest in the focus of engagement
- Support: we will identify and overcome any barriers to involvement
- Planning: we will gather evidence of the needs and available resources and use this evidence to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and the actions to be taken
- Methods: we will agree and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose
- Working Together: we will agree and use clear procedures that enable the participants to work with one another effectively and efficiently
- Sharing Information: we will ensure that the necessary information is communicated between the participants
- Working With Others: we will work effectively with others with an interest in the engagement
- Improvement: we will develop actively skills, knowledge and confidence of all the participants
- Feedback: we will feed back the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected
- Monitoring and Evaluation: we will monitor and evaluate whether engagement achieves its purposes and meets the national standards of community engagement

Methods Used in Engaging With Communities

- Group Discussion eg Focus Group, Scenario Planning, Conflict Resolution
- Public Events eg Conferences, Seminars, Open Days
- Survey Techniques eg Opinion Surveys
- Regular Involvement eg Representation on Working Groups, Community Planning
- Partnership Working eg Criminal Justice Partners
- Communications eg Media Coverage, Posters
- Using the Arts eg Mock Trials
- Co-production eg service providers and service users work together
- Reaching the Hard-to-Reach eg young people – using social networking sites
- Citizens' Panels eg research panels (large sample) or standing panels (small membership)



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