

DYFED-POWYS POLICE AUTHORITY
AWDURDOD HEDDLU DYFED-POWYS

MEDIA RELATIONS STRATEGY 2003 – 2006

Purpose of the Strategy

Dyfed-Powys Police Authority believes that creating an active dialogue with the media is an important part of its service delivery in terms of informing the public and subsequently listening to the public's recommendations, needs and aspirations. It aims to have in place arrangements for effective consultation of a wide range of local and other interests and to create active dialogue through its publications, press work and website.

Dyfed-Powys Police Authority is anxious to promote a culture of continuous improvement, in line with Best Value requirements, to include better communication with the public via the media.

As a rural area with a widespread population and difficulties in communication, it is important to develop ways of informing people, particularly the "hard-to-reach" sections of the community, such as young people, disadvantaged or excluded groups, ethnic minorities, elderly and disabled people.

The Authority aim to respond quickly and accurately to all press enquiries and to foster a good working relationship with the local press and the Force's own Press Office.

Strategic Aim

To recognise the value of the media as a means of communicating information to the public and to always be open, honest and proactive in our dealings with them. The policy of “openness” promotes a positive and caring image to the community and a level of mutual understanding.

Key Principles

- To forge strong, professional links with local media outlets.
- To respect the right of the media to represent all views on any given issue.
- To establish and maintain clear and regular channels of communication with the media and create a positive, informed and clear profile for the Dyfed-Powys Police Authority.

How we will judge our success

- By conducting an annual media survey on our performance that allows us to establish benchmarks for improvement and set firm targets for the future.
- By monitoring and recording the quantity and quality of the media coverage we achieve.

The Authority acknowledges that the public cannot be properly consulted unless they have been informed.

Targets

- To improve media relations by providing regular information about the Authority's activities.
- To increase the percentage of satisfaction level of the quality of service provided by the Dyfed-Powys Police Authority over the next 5 years.

An Action Plan in relation to the Aims and objectives of the police is to be found at Appendix 'A'.

Guidance

Guidance as to the material available for press release and the appropriate method for it to be communicated is set out in Appendix 'B'.

Conclusion

The media have a powerful influence on public opinion and can prove an useful and effective ally in gaining understanding and support. It is important therefore to remember the need for a sensible and professional working relationship with the media in promoting a positive image of the Authority.

ACTION PLAN : MEDIA RELATIONS

ACTIVITY	YEAR ONE 2003/04	YEAR TWO 2004/05	YEAR THREE 2005/06
Media Strategy	Agree	On-going activity	Review and Revise
Establish a mechanism for disseminating information to the media	Agree mechanism	On-going activity	Review
Utilise the media to promote the image of the Authority, highlighting the positive and caring contribution the Authority makes to the efficient and effective running of Dyfed-Powys Police	Inform the public of the Authority's aims and objectives via the media, the Authority's publications and presentations	On-going activity	On-going activity
Maintain a record of and monitor press coverage	On-going activity	On-going activity	
Media Survey	Research and action survey	Evaluate, set targets and repeat survey	Evaluate, set targets and repeat survey
Staff/Member Media Training	Research with Personnel services	Implement	Evaluate and continue
Committee Papers	Ensure content & style are consistent for ease of reference	Review style	On-going activity
Issue quarterly press releases on the Authority's activities	On-going activity	On-going activity	Review
Consult	Inform the Public of the Authority's purpose and activities	Undertake a consultation exercise e.g. through Force's bi-annual survey	Evaluate and take necessary action to address issues

GUIDANCE NOTES

1. Introduction

The Authority's aim is to promote a professional relationship with all sections of the media which is as open and effective as possible, subject to certain restrictions as outlined below:

2. General Limitations

Communication with the media will be subject to the following limitations:

- (a) Restrictions arising from the judicial process in both criminal and disciplinary cases.
- (b) The requirement to observe the individual's right to privacy.
- (c) Those occasions when there is a need to place a restriction on the release of information which might tend to defeat the end of justice.
- (d) Where a specific direction has been given imposing restrictions e.g. confidential and/or exempt information.

3. Specific Limitations

Members of the Authority are NOT permitted to:

- (a) Submit for any form of publication any article on behalf of the Authority without the prior advice of the Clerk. This does not preclude an article in the author's own name being submitted, except where the writer is speaking for the Authority rather than as an individual.
- (b) Supply information to the media on a matter which relates to either confidential internal matters, instructions, procedure or policy or is in any way statutorily prohibited or exempt from publication (e.g. Official Secrets Act and the Police Discipline Code).
- (c) Involve or give any advance information to the media concerning any confidential police operation without the specific authority of the Chief Officer.
- (d) Give media interviews without prior consultation with the Clerk.

4. Press Liaison

The Authority will consult with the Force Press Relations Officer on any matters relating to Police activities. The Clerk will be the main liaison person for any matters relating solely to the work of the Authority and will co-ordinate and monitor media liaison within the Authority. The Clerk will act in an advisory capacity on all matters relating to the media. A Welsh speaking officer should be made available as required.