# Engaging Better to Improve Confidence

The Beat The Bournville and Oldmixon beat in Weston-super-Mare is a densely populated residential area with significantly higher levels of deprivation when compared to other areas within the county. Nearly 100%[1] of residents are in the 'deprived' or 'aspiring' social groups (compared to 37% for the rest of North Somerset), and over 64% are entitled to free school meals[2]. The beat also has a reputation locally as being a hotspot for crime, which is supported by crime statistics, where 1644 crimes were recorded on the beat in 2017[3].

[1] North Somerset Council
[2] Weston Mercury
[3] Avon and Somerset Police
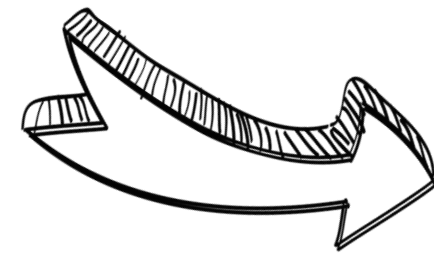
The Problem Along with the local reputation, there was a general mistrust in the police – many of the local residents didn't want to get involved with or talk to the police for fear of being labelled a 'grass'. Adding to this, local stakeholders didn't know what we were doing as we weren't communicating our results or sharing knowledge effectively. *In order to build confidence, we had to engage better.*
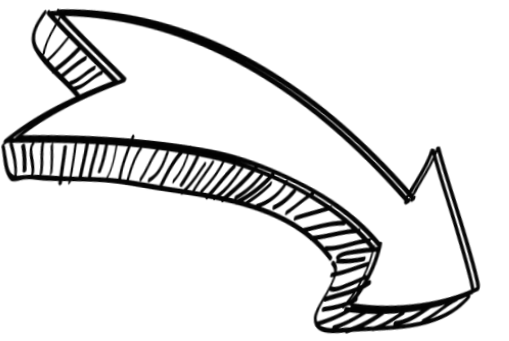
Scanning and Analysis The Metropolitan Police provided the Confidence Model which details drivers for public confidence in policing. This recognises that where the police *effectively deal with crime*, *provide a visible presence* and *are committed to and engaged with the community*, confidence in policing will increase. I believed that although the local police team and my One Team multiagency group were doing lots of proactive and reactive work, we weren't communicating the results effectively which was detrimental to public confidence
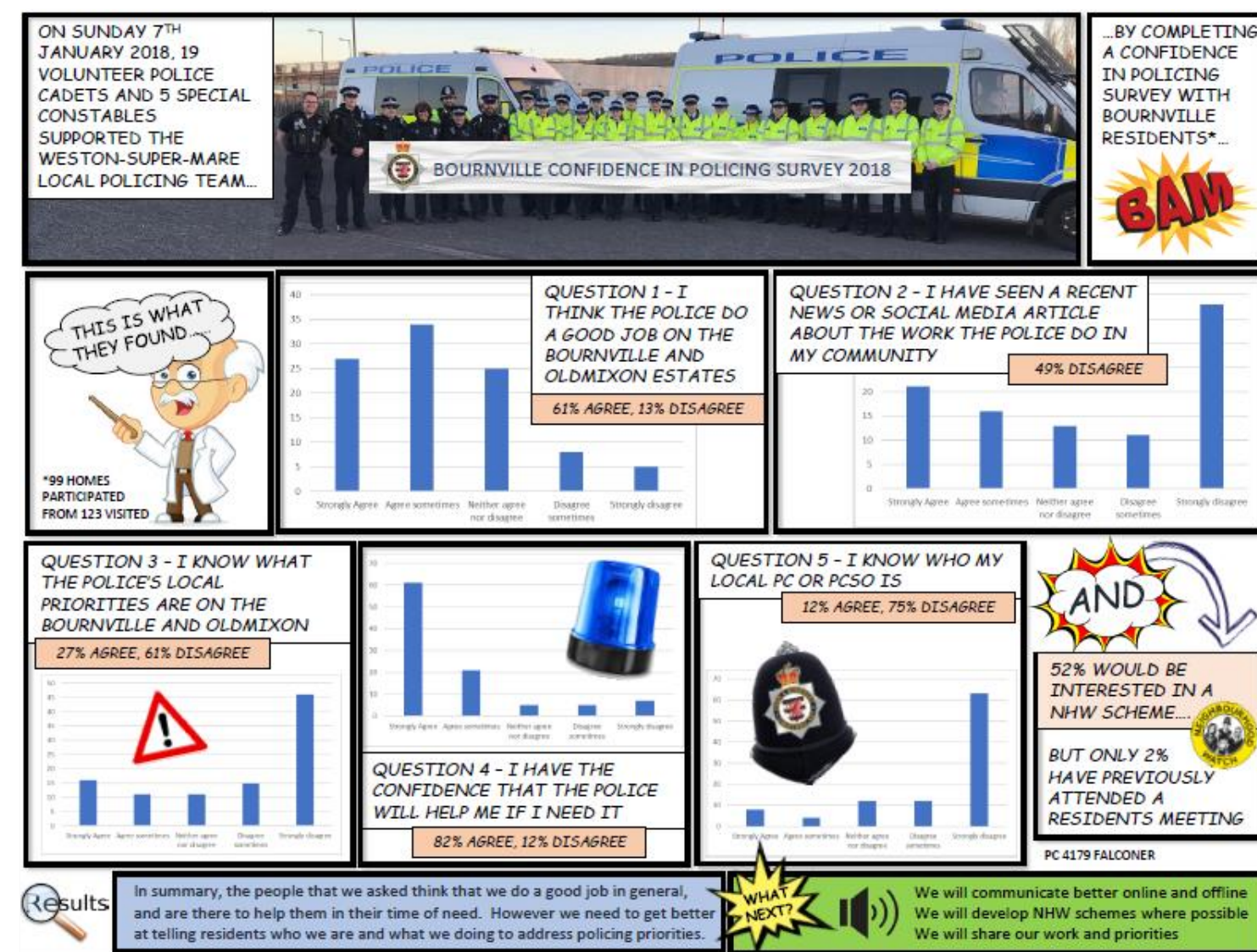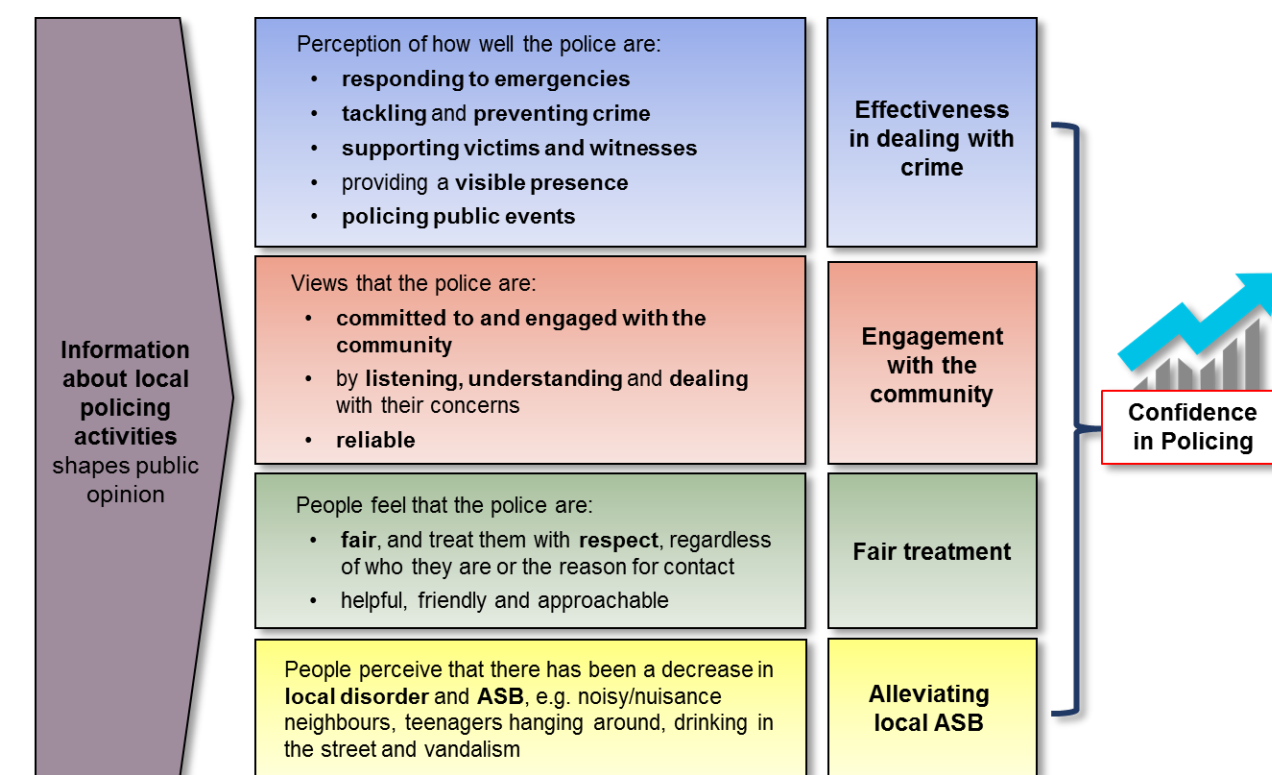
I completed research using Police Cadets to see what the local community thought about policing. The results gave some surprising findings (<) which gave me focus on what to focus on. I then spoke to local councillors and businesses to seek their views. I realised we had to work to improve communication within the community and with stakeholders

Responding From my previous experience as a project manager for a multinational supermarket, I realised that stakeholder management was fundamental to our aim of improving local confidence in policing. I therefore devised a *local engagement plan* consisting of three strands, with some examples of work from each strand listed below:

Strengthening local relationships
- I implemented a monthly contact sessions with my local councillors. This has resulted in a pre-arranged meeting with councillors where we discuss issues and explain police priorities so that this can be communicated to residents to ensure a consistent message.
- I recently organised an event where over 100 local professionals attended to hear from Paul Hannaford. My intention was for the police to be seen at the forefront of community action and for organisations to fund future talks. I was particularly happy with getting 100 people (including the High Sheriff of Somerset!) into one place to focus on an important topic and lead community action on a large scale.

Sharing good news stories
- I have built a working relationship which a local news journalist which has resulted in me sending news articles directly for publication in the printed press and online. Some examples of these stories below.

Building online presence
- I have started to build my online footprint by establishing my Twitter page, @ASP4179, which now has around 110 followers.

Impact
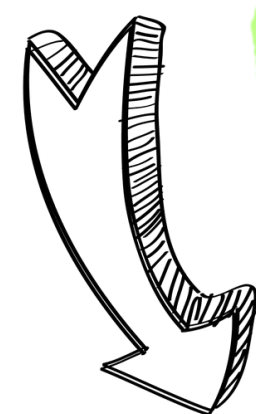
Building online presence

One Tweet was used by The Sun and the Daily Mail which got over 11,000 hits!

Sharing good news stories

2 Community Information Events

Strengthening local relationships

Next Steps

- Over the past 100 days I have made efforts to identify key stakeholders and establish longer-term ways of working.
- My intention is to continue focusing on the three strands of engagement and continue to build on the work so far.
- I intend to complete another confidence survey to obtain quantitative data in a few months time to review any differences

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