



## Executive Summary of Social Media survey results

March 2021

This document provides a brief summary of the results of the social media survey conducted nationally, it was publicised on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram receiving 25k+ responses from followers of police social media accounts representing 43 Force areas.

Link to the PDF - [http://www.surrey.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/surrey/stats-and-data/NPCC\\_SMSurvey\\_2018.pdf](http://www.surrey.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/surrey/stats-and-data/NPCC_SMSurvey_2018.pdf)

### Validity of survey

- The survey ran on Facebook , Twitter, Instagram
- It was translated into Welsh for accessibility and so Welsh colleagues could take part
- All 43 Forces took part with 25k+ responses from followers of police accounts
- The survey has been run twice previously ensuring that data could be benchmarked
- Response rate:
  - Two thirds of responses came from Facebook
  - One third of responses came from Twitter
    - Despite identifying over 4000 policing accounts on Twitter only 8k responses came from users of the platform
  - 0.5% or responses came from Instagram – so a negligible input in 2018 but it should be noted that the influence of Instagram has of course grown in last 3 years
- Expectation that we will be rerunning the survey this summer

It should be noted that the vast majority (80%) of respondents to the survey on Facebook and Twitter have no connection to policing.

### Facebook

- 75% of respondents wanted to receive updates on incidents
- Just under 20% wanted insights into police work
  - There will be an internal drive however for forces to do more of this content in order to support effective recruitment in particular for retention purposes
- People will share updates on incidents and appeals (crime and missing persons)
- Just over 10% will share content related to insights into policing
- Followers want curated, professional content - relevancy, recency, grammar and spelling are also important
- Expectation is that accounts listen AND respond – this builds confidence if we do, but damages confidence if we fail

### Twitter

- 73% of respondents wanted to receive updates on incidents

- Slightly more respondents wanted to see insights into police work - 25%
- People will again share updates on incidents and appeals (crime and missing persons)

### **Public-centred communication**

UK policing needs to focus on the audience that it is trying to reach – understanding the purposes of the accounts in order to maximise the accounts’ potentials and delivering an effective service to the public. Respondents who don't have any connection to policing mostly say they are not interested in conversations about policing – whether that is seen as being self-congratulatory, or internal communication being undertaken in a public forum.

- The national project has identified over 4000 obviously policing-related accounts on Twitter - that number is likely to be soft
- Many of the free text comments from "non-police family" respondents are along the lines of:
  - "It's not supposed to be public backslapping contest between certain senior officers."
  - "Reduce the number of accounts - no need for individual officers to have their own accounts."
  - "It should be a platform for sharing news and concerns regarding criminal activity."
  - "The accounts have become too personal"
- 1 in 5 people now believe that content on Twitter is irrelevant to them – UK policing is in danger of losing focus, in particular on Twitter.

### **Legislation change**

- The European Emergency Communication Code – needed to be transposed into UK Law by 21 December 2020 which is why Forces have been making changes to their social media landscape since 2018.
- The Department for Culture, Media and Sport – have taken the lead on this and have transposed the EECC into national law by way of statutory instrument ahead of the 21 December deadline. There is now a slight delay in its implementation due to Ofcom’s decision to provide industry with more time to implement the measures given the need to focus on the Covid-19 response.
- This will mean that accounts will need to be able to take calls for assistance over social media, and contact centres need to be able to triage contact based on THREAT, HARM and RISK.

### **Officers losing their accounts**

- Fundamentally officers are not being banned from using social media in order to serve the public, we are ensuring that our activity is public-led and responding to how they wish to engage with police forces.
- There are ways of being able to bring named accounts into internal processes using social media auditing software for contact colleagues to triage content for THREAT, HARM and RISK.
- Forces will make decisions ultimately that work for their public – and the desire is that all content creators are able to use digital communications as an effective tactical option in day to day policing.