

Managing Media Relationships: Guidance

Introduction

Norfolk and Suffolk have strong media networks – and, in broad terms, they are supportive of the police's efforts to keep the local community safe. The relationship between the police and the media is important as both rely on each other to discharge their duties to the local people they serve. The relationship is important on two levels: firstly, at the level of chief/senior officers, so the police can communicate their strategic aims; secondly, at an operational level so that the police can engage with local people, via the media, to ask for their help in solving crime – and keep them informed of initiatives to keep them safe.

Meeting the media

Information can be given to the media – and should only be withheld if there is a valid operational reason, or if the information is confidential or its release would breach legislation, such as the Data Protection Act. Officers/staff issuing information and well-reasoned comments in good faith have the support of senior and chief officers.

Our relationship with the media must be transparent and professional at all times.

The following guidelines should be followed by all officers and staff:

- All officers and staff should seek guidance from Corporate Communications staff on any media policy matters.
- Officers/staff should inform the Corporate News Team of any interview requests they receive from the local media – or requests for meetings with media representatives. Corporate Communications will keep a log of all such meetings, which will include the date, time, place and purpose.
- After the meeting, the log should be updated with information about what was discussed and any decisions. Any hospitality received should also be recorded on the log. It is the responsibility of the officer/staff member meeting with the media representative to ensure that this information is sent to Corporate Communications.
- Senior officers should be accompanied to interviews by a member of Corporate Communications.
- Everyone in our organisation has a duty to report corrupt, dishonest or unethical behaviour by officers or staff to Professional Standards. Anyone with information about officers/staff failing to heed these guidelines can report it, in confidence, via the on-line confidential reporting section on the Intranet.

There are no circumstances under which unauthorised information should be disclosed. It is a disciplinary offence.

For more information, contact Corporate Communications Manager (local news and digital media) Beth Durham on ext 5558 (Wymondham); or Corporate Communications Manager (Corporate News and Change) Simon Stevens on ext 2721 (Martlesham).