

Engagement to influence riots: The role of social media

Athens, May 2014

Serving our communities, protecting them from harm
www.west-midlands.police.uk



“To jaw-jaw is always better than to war-war.” June 26, 1954

Winston Churchill (1874 - 1965)





“The police are the public and the public are the police.”

Robert Peel (1778 - 1850)





Community Engagement

Participatory democracy? =
listening to “Voices” of concern &
responding



Before, during, & after riots

Building social capital & credibility

- Daily engagement face to face with neighbourhood cops / PCSO's
- Strategic engagement of senior cops with community 'influencers' / those who can message and mobilise / articulate 'the voice'
- Public meetings & newsletters
- Social Media – web 2 – 'new' engagement
- 'Critical Incident' responses / CTS / command structures



9 principles of public engagement

1. Participants should join those organising the process in setting terms of reference for the whole exercise, and framing the questions that they will discuss.
2. The group organising, or in overall control of, the process should be broad based, including stakeholders with different interests on the subject being discussed.
3. There should be a diversity of information sources and perspectives available to participants.
4. There should be space for the perspectives of those participants who lack specialist knowledge of the area concerned to engage in a two-way exchange with those possessing specialist knowledge.
5. There should be complete transparency of the activities carried out within the process to those both inside and outside it.
6. Those without a voice in policy-making should be enabled to use the consultation process as a tool for positive political change. This should be embedded in the process by sufficient funds being made available for follow-up work after their initial conclusions have been reached.
7. The process should contain safeguards against decision-makers using a process to legitimise existing assumptions or policies.
8. All groups involved in the process should be given the opportunity to identify possible strategies for longer-term learning, development and change on a range of issues relating to their conclusions.
9. The group organising, or in overall control of, the process should develop an audit trail through the process, to explain whether policies were changed, what was taken into account, what criteria were applied when weighing up the evidence from the process, and therefore how the views of those involved in the participatory process may have made a difference. This should be explored together with as many those involved in all levels of the process as possible.



Social Media? Why bother?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0eUeL3n7fDs>



Social Media

Useful for rioters?

Useful for law enforcement?

Intelligence monitor – COSAIN

Quell myths / engage / reassure

– Walsall police station on fire /

IMAN group

Allows the 'voices' to be heard

and responded to in live time –

a more responsive policing style



At about 17:30 BST on 6 August 2011, Duggan's relatives and local residents marched from Broadwater Farm to Tottenham Police Station. The demonstrators chanted "we want answers" and requested information from police about the circumstances of Duggan's death. They also made broader demands for "Justice", seeking to publicise **on-going poor relations with police in their community.**

A chief inspector **spoke with the demonstrators, who demanded to see a higher-ranking officer.** About 20:00 BST, a 16-year-old girl approached them and may have thrown a leaflet or a stone. Police swarmed the girl with shields and batons, allegedly causing head injuries. At about 20:20 BST, members of the waiting crowd attacked two nearby police cars, setting them on fire.

According to Metropolitan Police Commander Adrian Hanstock, the violence was started by "certain elements, who were not involved with the vigil". Other observers state that **the rally began peacefully but was incited by the police attack.**

Rioting, arson and looting spread to other parts of London, and to elsewhere in England. Rioters expressed mixed motivations for rioting, including policing issues, poverty, and racial tension with police.

Duggan's family condemned the disorder. His older brother said, "We're not condoning any kind of actions like that at all." While Duggan's shooting was perhaps the trigger for the violence, several other causes of the rioting have been suggested. British Prime Minister David Cameron rejected a causal relationship between the death of Mark Duggan and the subsequent looting.



The father of murdered teenager Stephen Lawrence claims police are "still not **listening**" about how to build bridges with the black community.

Speaking to members of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) conference in Manchester, Neville Lawrence said **respect was crucial**.

Mr Lawrence said stereotyping people as "thieves and robbers" backfired when officers needed information. BBC News 15th April 2014



Disorders Avoided By Engaging, Listening & Responding?

Op Springfield

Death of KB

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