

Thematic Report on Community Engagement

Follow-up

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Chief Inspector's Foreword

The thematic report on Community Engagement was published by the Inspectorate of Prosecution in Scotland (the Inspectorate) in June 2011.

It examined the arrangements that Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) had in place to engage with communities and the extent that community engagement impacted on COPFS policy, planning and service delivery.

As the sole prosecutor of crime in Scotland, it is imperative that COPFS is seen to be representative of and responsive towards the diverse needs of all protected groups in Scotland.

The report found that there was a high level of commitment in COPFS to engaging with communities and that the diverse needs of different communities were recognised by COPFS. It made recommendations designed to improve the recording and outcomes of engagement activities and make more use of media and social networking to engage with communities.

Since the publication of the thematic report, there have been significant changes in COPFS that have impacted on the relevance and applicability of some of our recommendations.

In April 2012, COPFS introduced a new Federation structure, which markedly changed the work profile of prosecutors and the structure of COPFS. There are three geographical Federations – East, West and North – and a National Federation comprising of a number of specialist units. The Federations replaced the former Area structure. Each Federation has moved to functional working in “hubs” with some offices dealing solely with a particular work stream, such as initial decision-making or Sheriff and Jury business.

Duties imposed by equalities legislation¹ also influenced the approach taken by public authorities to mainstreaming equality and diversity. To meet the general and specific equality duties, COPFS incorporated community engagement into a more comprehensive equalities' strategy.

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a general equality duty² that required Scottish public authorities to pay “due regard” to the need to:

Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;

¹ Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

² Introduced on 5 April 2011.

Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic³ and those who do not;
Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

To meet these duties, public authorities are required to publish a set of equality outcomes based on evidence and informed by reasonable involvement of equality groups.

In April 2013, COPFS set out a series of equality outcomes.⁴ There were two outcomes specifically aimed to enhance and improve community engagement:

Equality Outcome 1

Members of the public and representatives of equality groups have an improved understanding of COPFS role and responsibilities within the Scottish criminal justice system and the COPFS commitment to advance equality in service provision.

Members of the public and representatives from equality groups know how to contact COPFS and that their enquiries will be handled with respect and individual differences are taken into account.

Equality Outcome 3

People have equal opportunity to avail themselves of COPFS services within the criminal justice system.

People have COPFS information made available in a format appropriate to their needs.

We have taken account of these developments and in assessing whether the recommendations have been implemented, we have focused on whether the intention behind the recommendation has been fulfilled.

Michelle Macleod.

Michelle Macleod
HM Chief Inspector

³ The protected characteristics include: age, civil partnership & marriage, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

⁴ Equality Outcomes Report (2013-2017), published 30 April 2013. 26 different groups and organisations were consulted and the COPFS Equality Advisory Group (EAG) provided input.

Part 1: Introduction and Background

1. It is the practice of the Inspectorate to conduct follow-up inspections in order to promote improvement and assess the effectiveness of recommendations and their outcomes.
2. This report details the findings of the Inspectorate's follow-up inspection of the Community Engagement Thematic Report, published in June 2011.
3. The Thematic Report examined the arrangements that COPFS had in place to engage with community and the extent that community engagement impacted on COPFS policy, planning and service delivery.
4. The aim of this follow-up review is to assess and report on the progress that has been made against our recommendations.
5. To ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010, improve community engagement and provide a strategic approach to delivering equalities outcomes, COPFS set up the Equality Act Implementation Project in 2011. The Project has been ongoing for four years and has delivered 37 diverse products.

Methodology

- Interviews with key personnel;
- Review of guidance, practices, procedures and systems, protocols and policy;
- Review of diversity and equality products;
- Attendance at COPFS conferences on Hate Crime and Investigating Deaths;
- Attendance as an observer at Equality Advisory Group (EAG) meetings.

Part 2: Progress against Recommendations

6. The Inspectorate's report on Community Engagement was published in June 2011. The report made 14 recommendations.
7. We have rated the COPFS response to each recommendation, taking account of the different landscape that currently applies, as follows:

Achieved – COPFS has completed what was required.

Substantial Progress – COPFS has made significant progress in taking forward the recommendation.

In Progress – COPFS has taken some action to take forward the recommendation and there is ongoing work aimed at achieving the recommendation.

Not Progressed – COPFS cannot demonstrate any progress.

8. The table below sets out the recommendations and the actions taken by COPFS.

No.	Recommendations	Progress
1	That specific responsibilities and targets to be achieved in relation to Community Engagement, in particular those relating to Area Procurator Fiscals and the Portfolio Owner, should be identified, written down and made available in order that future staff will know what their responsibilities are.	
	<p>There is a clear governance structure aimed at supporting and mainstreaming equalities in COPFS and engaging with communities throughout Scotland.</p> <p>The 2015-2018 COPFS Strategic Plan⁵ includes an objective to provide to all “a level of service which takes account of individual needs and characteristics”.</p> <p>Within the new Federation structure, the strategic direction for equality and diversity is set by the Equality and Diversity Strategy Group, chaired by the Lord Advocate.</p> <p>To deliver the duties specified in the Equality Act 2010, COPFS established the Equality Act (2010) Implementation Team, headed by an Equality Champion. The Implementation Team reports, on a quarterly basis, to a project board, chaired by the Crown Agent.</p> <p>Community engagement responsibilities were transferred to Federation Equality Networks (the</p>	Achieved

⁵ Published in February 2015.

	<p>networks) under the direction of the COPFS Implementation Team. The networks include staff at all grades.</p> <p>The networks remit includes: “undertaking activities to support the achievement of the equality objectives and to promote the effective engagement and involvement of local community groups”.</p> <p>The networks play a vital role in developing links with communities and promoting inclusiveness. They have organised and delivered a significant number of events and products aimed at raising awareness of COPFS’ role, responsibilities and commitment to the promotion and advancement of equality in the Scottish criminal justice sector. A comprehensive list of such events is set out at Annex A.</p> <p>COPFS has also appointed a team of Equality Ambassadors to represent all of the protected characteristics. The Equality Ambassadors engage with a variety of external groups throughout Scotland, and provide advice to COPFS staff.</p> <p>COPFS has also established two staff networks: the Disability Advisory Group and Proud in COPFS, a network supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) staff.</p> <p>There is an annual conference held for all COPFS staff involved in the equality networks to promote awareness of equality and inclusion and discuss the strategic direction for the forthcoming year.</p> <p>COPFS has an Equality Advisory Group (EAG). It consists of COPFS staff and external members with professional experience of equality issues. The remit of the EAG is “to provide independent and informed advice to COPFS on the impact of existing and future policies and practices on diversity and the promotion of equality and fairness in service delivery and employment”.</p>	
2	<p>That Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service adopts in some form the Scottish Government standards for Community Engagement as a model of good practice. This should be made known to staff and the public and a process introduced to assess whether standards are met.</p>	
Action Taken	<p>The purpose of the Scottish Government standards for Community Engagement was to set out best practice for engagement between communities and public organisations, providing key principles, behaviours and</p>	Achieved

	<p>practical measures that underpin effective engagement.</p> <p>As part of the establishment of the networks, a comprehensive briefing pack was created to support staff to fulfil equality responsibilities including community engagement activities. The pack includes guidance on a wide range of issues and includes a checklist of best practice for organising community engagement events. Specifically, the checklist provides guidance on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role and responsibilities of the networks and Equality Ambassadors; • Identifying people/groups; • Preparing briefing and sharing information; • Preparation and planning including assessing the suitability of venues, requirements for speakers, food, etc; • Use of technology; • Debriefs to identify any lessons learned, benefits and outcomes. <p>The “Diversity Resources Booklet”, which is accessible to all COPFS staff, provides a link to the Scottish Government equalities guidance which includes practical advice on a variety of subjects including accessible accommodation, disability and cultural considerations.</p> <p>A comprehensive summary of all COPFS equalities activities and the role and responsibilities of the networks and Equality Ambassadors is available on the COPFS internet site.⁶</p>	
3	<p>That guidance relating to Community Engagement is created. This could incorporate a revised Area Diversity Pack. It would be of benefit to include in this guidance links to the Scottish Government National Standards on Community Engagement and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service Competency Framework (particularly the competencies relating to “Customer Focus” and “Effective Communication”) and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service ‘Accessibility Policy’.</p>	
Action Taken	<p>As noted above, a comprehensive briefing pack was created for the networks. The briefing pack includes guidance on legal obligations, Equality Impact</p>	Achieved

⁶ Equality Outcomes Report 2015.

	Assessments, COPFS engagement with National Equality Initiatives, a directory of relevant contacts and a detailed list of resources available to the networks, including DVDs, PowerPoint presentations, booklets and leaflets.	
4	That staff should be reminded to complete Community Engagement and Media Planners (if their use continues) on a regular basis and a system of formally monitoring activity including a measurement of success/benefits should be introduced and maintained.	
Action Taken	<p>The Community Engagement template and Media Planner have been replaced by quarterly reports submitted to the Equality and Diversity Strategy Group, chaired by the Lord Advocate. Each Federation network provides a report on all equalities work and activities which have been undertaken since the previous meeting. The quarterly reports are collated and maintained to provide evidence of actions taken to meet the equality outcomes.</p> <p>The evaluation of such activities is discussed at recommendation 5.</p>	Achieved
5	That Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service consider whether it would be of benefit to the organisation in using the VOiCE ⁷ software package to help plan, monitor, evaluate and record their community engagement.	
	<p>Community engagement has been subsumed into a wider equalities strategy that has been overseen and implemented by the Equality Act (2010) Implementation Project that was established in 2011. The project has been managed in accordance with project management principles.</p> <p>The Implementation Team has overseen and monitored all community engagement initiatives and products. Thirty-eight products designed to embed equality and inclusion into COPFS policies, processes, and practices were identified by the Implementation Team.</p> <p>The products included the production of a community newsletter, delivering conferences on tackling offensive behaviour, the investigation of deaths and diversity, updating the COPFS website, the compilation of a deaths booklet and the production of various DVDs.</p>	Achieved

⁷ Visioning Outcomes in Community Engagement (VOiCE) is a software package that facilitates planning, recording and evaluating community engagement activity.

	<p>Each product was subject to a rigorous quality assurance process including consultation with relevant stakeholders and the EAG.</p> <p>All events and initiatives were recorded and evaluated. Evaluation was primarily obtained through feedback questionnaires and consultation with relevant stakeholders.</p>	
6	That the existing central repository of standard presentations should be further developed and also that a main list of contacts is established and maintained.	
Action Taken	<p>A community contacts register has been created and is used by Policy Division and network staff to support community engagement activities and equality impact assessment work.</p> <p>There is a wealth of material available to assist with the delivery of equalities work. A compilation of presentations, guides and booklets are available on the COPFS Knowledge Bank.⁸</p> <p>A number of key information documents have been converted into easy read format to enable people with learning disabilities to access information about their rights and COPFS services to support them. These include the Deaths Booklet, Access to Information for Victims and Witnesses and a series of booklets on the Scottish criminal justice system.</p> <p>There are a number of DVDs that are also accessible to support different aspects of COPFS work.</p> <p>The Diversity Resources Booklet also contains a wealth of resources including links to Scottish Government, Home Office and the Equality and Human Rights Commission diversity guidance and a wide range of equalities organisations.</p>	Achieved
7	That consideration is always given to getting messages across to the public through the media where it is thought to be appropriate and there may be opportunities to be had in liaising with councils to place articles such as outcomes and achievements in local community newsletters.	
Action Taken	COPFS created and distributed, two community newsletters – ‘Outreach Equality for All’ – both electronically and in print format. The newsletters provided updates on community initiatives and	Achieved

⁸ COPFS information database containing legal and non-legal guidance.

	<p>engagement. They were published on the COPFS internet site⁹ and available in 11 languages.¹⁰</p> <p>COPFS has also produced a DVD – ‘Our Role in your Community’ – to explain the role of the Procurator Fiscal to the public. It was launched in September 2014 and can be viewed on the COPFS internet site. It is used at community events. The DVD is subtitled and a British Sign Language (BSL) version has been commissioned.</p> <p>COPFS works in collaboration with members of the Scottish Government Justice Board¹¹ and Community Planning Partnerships.</p> <p>COPFS regularly uses the media to publicise any equality and diversity initiatives and prosecution policies that impact on the protected characteristics. A recent example was the publication of figures which showed a continued reduction overall in hate crime in Scotland.</p>	
8	That consideration is given to introducing social networking as a medium to help improve making contact, providing information and obtaining feedback from the public and also in promoting the work of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.	
	<p>The COPFS internet site was launched in 2013. It uses Twitter¹² feed updates and allows for subscription to a COPFS RSS feed¹³ providing latest news.</p> <p>The COPFS internet site provides information in an accessible and user-friendly format. Software has been utilised to enable translation of materials. It contains news, FAQs and links to a range of publications including guidance on the investigation of deaths and information about being involved in a case for victims, witnesses and accused persons. There is a facility to provide online feedback.</p>	Achieved
9	That given the current economic climate Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service should identify opportunities to reduce costs such as reducing	

⁹ Published in 2012 and 2013.

¹⁰ Arabic, Cantonese, Farsi, French, Punjabi, Kurdish Surani, Mandarin, Polish, Russian, Urdu, Scottish Gaelic.

¹¹ Members include: Police, COPFS, Prison, Scottish Legal Aid Board, Law Society, Scottish Court Service, Fire, Justice, Scottish Children’s Reporter and the Judicial Institute for Scotland.

¹² Twitter is a real-time information network.

¹³ Subscribing to a website RSS removes the need for the user to manually check the website for new content. Instead, their browser constantly monitors the site and informs the user of any updates.

	duplication of work, increased partnership working and making use of technology such as information networks or online pop-up surveys.	
Action Taken	<p>COPFS works collaboratively with a number of organisations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The COPFS Equality Champion chairs the Scottish Government Justice Board Equality and Diversity Sub-Group. The purpose of the sub-group is to work collaboratively across criminal justice organisations to deliver equality, with an initial focus on disability and gender. It is being delivered with partners across the justice system, including COPFS, Scottish Court Service, Scottish Legal Aid Board and the Police. • COPFS is represented at the Working Group on Interpreting and Translation (WGIT)¹⁴ where members aim to establish common standards for interpreting and translation. • COPFS also chairs the cross Criminal Justice Disability Project which examines access to justice across seven criminal justice organisations. <p>COPFS engages and works with a number of other organisations and equality groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COPFS became a member of the Stonewall Diversity Champion Programme in 2001. The programme encourages employers to promote diversity and improve the working environment for gay, lesbian and bisexual staff. • COPFS is a member of Happy to Translate (HTT). As an HTT member, the service displays the logo and is provided with tools which relevant members of staff are trained to use to help identify a service user's language. • COPFS works with Epilepsy Scotland to improve understanding of the condition. ▪ In partnership with North Lanarkshire Council, COPFS has embraced the use of technology and produced an anti-sectarian DVD 'Them and Us' and a hate crime DVD 'Just a Laugh?' with associated teaching packs which are available for secondary schools to access through a 	Achieved

¹⁴ Members include the Scottish Police Service, Scottish Court Service, COPFS, Scottish Legal Aid Board and the Law Society of Scotland.

	<p>dedicated video website – ‘Intolerance Scotland’.</p> <p>COPFS has used technology to promote their work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COPFS has produced a DVD on the role of COPFS which is accessible on the COPFS internet site and available for use at community events. • The new COPFS internet website and Twitter account is used to publicise attendance at events and latest news. <p>There have been a number of collaborative initiatives taken forward with schools including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A National Public Speaking Competition, which aims to raise the level of public debate in secondary schools on equality and diversity issues; • Participation with mini trials with local schools at sheriff courts across Scotland; • Outreach visits to schools, held in collaboration with the Scottish Prison Service and Police Scotland, aimed at educating pupils on the consequences of hate and knife crime; • An art competition with schools in South Lanarkshire designed to promote equality through art and educate school pupils on hate crime. <p>Staff regularly attend career fairs to promote working in COPFS and encourage applicants from a wide demographic.</p>	
10	<p>That in order to ensure that staff are properly prepared for and can deliver communications in a confident, effective and efficient manner Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service should identify whether there is a need to invest in training for staff involved in community engagement.</p>	
	<p>All staff must complete the Civil Service Learning Equality and Diversity training.</p> <p>This is complemented by a suite of e-learning packages including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Equality and Diversity Essentials; ➤ Disability Awareness; ➤ Becoming a dementia friend; 	Achieved

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ LGBT awareness; ➤ Mental Health awareness; and ➤ Unconscious bias. <p>There is also role specific training for key functions in COPFS including Enquiry Point¹⁵ and Victim Information and Advice staff.</p> <p>Anyone involved in dealing with the media can access other courses including 'Advanced Communication Skills' and 'Media Skills'.</p> <p>The 'Presentations Skills' course aims to provide staff with confidence to "prepare and present effective and professional presentations using the most suitable medium that best communicates the message".</p> <p>The 'Effective Communication', 'Effective Meetings' and 'Train the Trainer' courses also contain elements designed to improve communication skills.</p>	
11	That Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service update their list on the intranet detailing current working groups and committees.	
	A list of all equality and diversity groups in COPFS has been published on the intranet.	Achieved
12	That all Fiscal Areas in the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service consider liaising with partners such as Police and Councils to identify whether there is an opportunity to be included in community/public surveys or consultations.	
	<p>COPFS regularly undertakes consultation with key stakeholders during the formation of prosecution policies, recognising that their expertise is invaluable to the development of informed and applicable policies. Examples include the Older Persons, Prosecution Policy on the Sexual Transmission of Infection, Social Media and Transgender policies.</p> <p>COPFS receives feedback from the Edinburgh and Lothian's Regional Equality Council (ELREC) Hate Crime Survey.</p> <p>At the conclusion of any COPFS event, feedback forms are issued. The feedback from each event is collated, assessed and any lessons learnt circulated. Feedback from the Hate Crime Conference,¹⁶ jointly hosted by</p>	Achieved

¹⁵ COPFS national contact service.

¹⁶ Held in March 2014.

	<p>COPFS and Police Scotland, was extremely positive with 78% of the delegates indicating that, following the conference, they were more confident in COPFS and Police Scotland's ability to understand and meet the diverse needs of Scotland's communities.</p> <p>There is a customer feedback facility available on the COPFS internet site for members of the public to comment on the service provided by COPFS.</p> <p>COPFS recently ran¹⁷ an online customer survey to elicit feedback from a broad range of service users, including any equality issues.</p>	
13	<p>That where engagement has taken place outcomes should always be recorded either using an in-house approach or through a package such as VOiCE to allow management to measure success against strategic objectives and identify lessons to be learned.</p>	
	<p>The quarterly reports prepared by the Federation networks are used as a means of recording and evaluating specific events and initiatives.</p> <p>COPFS guidance emphasises the importance of learning lessons from community engagement events. It advocates that debriefs should be undertaken to identify "what worked" and "what can be improved" to inform future events.</p> <p>Specific initiatives progressed by the Implementation Team such as the development of a DVD are monitored using a project planning tool that tracks target dates and progress on a regular basis.</p> <p>Examples of excellent initiatives and events are celebrated at the COPFS Excellence Awards where there is an award for "Serving Our Diverse Communities".</p>	Achieved
14	<p>That Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service consider the suggestions for improvement made by community members as referred to in this report at pages 49 and 50.</p>	
	<p>COPFS has invested considerable energy in raising awareness of the role of the prosecutor and COPFS. The COPFS website, the publication of community newsletters, the production of DVD on the role of COPFS and the use of social media offer different sources of information for communities.</p>	Achieved

¹⁷ March 2015.

	<p>Consideration has been given to the needs of different populations. There have been a series of initiatives with an equality theme designed to engage young persons, including mock courts/mini trials, public speaking and art competitions. The associated teaching packs which are accessible through the Intolerance Scotland website seek to inform young people on the impact of hate crime, deter future offending of such crimes and raise awareness of behaviour that can constitute a criminal offence.</p> <p>Following consultation COPFS launched an Older Persons prosecution policy and more recently has run an awareness session on cybercrime for a more elderly audience in the North Federation.</p> <p>The introduction of Equality Ambassadors has increased in-house expertise on “protected characteristics”.</p> <p>COPFS has translated a number of key publications into easy read format to assist people with learning difficulties to understand their work and responsibilities.</p> <p>Software has been added to the COPFS internet site to enable verbal translation of displayed materials.</p>	
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Overview

9. COPFS commitment to mainstreaming equality and community engagement is demonstrated by the involvement of senior personnel in key positions. The Lord Advocate chairs the COPFS Equality and Diversity Strategy Group which sets the strategic direction for COPFS on equality and diversity matters. The Crown Agent is the Equality Champion for the Scottish Government Justice Board and the COPFS Equality Champion chairs the Justice Equality and Diversity Sub-Group with other senior members of COPFS on other sub-groups.
10. The restructuring of COPFS, budgetary pressures and the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 prompted a review by COPFS of their approach to community engagement and mainstreaming equalities. Community engagement was incorporated into a wider equalities strategy which took a more focused and targeted approach aimed at raising awareness of the role of COPFS, highlighting the impact of specific crimes and, where appropriate, providing reassurance to communities.
11. There has been a range of events aimed at educating young people on the type of behaviour that can constitute a hate crime and the impact of such crimes. It is hoped that impactful videos such as ‘Them and Us’ will have a deterrent effect on future offending of this nature.

12. Raising awareness to prevent offending was also an important element of the cybercrime awareness event that was recently delivered to a more elderly audience.
13. The Equality Act Implementation Team has been a key driver in delivering the equalities strategy. It has employed a strategic and creative approach to communicating with the public using the COPFS website, social media and various DVDs to reach a wide audience. It has delivered a wide-ranging group of high quality products and forged many collaborative and fruitful relationships. The networks and ambassadors have been pivotal to the success of many strands of the equalities strategy.
14. The role of the Implementation Team in promoting equalities and inclusiveness has been publicly acknowledged by the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (enei) with the presentation of their Team of the Year Award 2015 to the COPFS Implementation Team for “outstanding contribution to delivering change within the field of equality and inclusion, and the positive impact this had on organisational success”.
15. COPFS has also retained their position for the third consecutive year as the Top Scottish Public Employer of the Year in the 2015 Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and Proud in COPFS received the title of the 2015 Scottish Network Group of the Year.
16. The receipt of such awards recognises the tremendous effort that has been undertaken by COPFS to promote equalities and deliver a service to communities which takes account of individual needs and characteristics.
17. Clear direction from the top of the Service, supported by a framework of Equality networks, ambassadors and staff networks, has generated momentum in promoting and mainstreaming equalities and produced visible and positive outcomes. Moving forward, COPFS has a strong platform on which to consolidate existing relationships and explore new channels of engagement.

ANNEX A

A number of DVDs have been produced to explain the role of the Procurator Fiscal in Scotland and also to highlight issues around hate crime. These include:

- *Our Role in Your Community*¹⁸. The DVD highlights the work of the prosecution service, the role of COPFS in investigating deaths, COPFS' specialist functions and services for victims and witnesses.
- *Them and Us*¹⁹. The DVD is an anti-sectarian short film – which was created in partnership with North Lanarkshire secondary students. The DVD has been made available to education authorities and other youth groups across Scotland. A teaching pack supports this DVD and is used as part of the Curriculum for Excellence in Scottish schools.
- *Just a Laugh?* A short film produced in association with North Lanarkshire Council. It highlights racism, homophobia and disability hate crime. Groups including Autism Scotland, Respect Me and Stonewall Scotland were consulted in the compilation of teaching notes to accompany the film.
- *National Public Speaking Competition DVD*. The DVD highlighted a national public speaking competition in secondary schools on equality and diversity issues culminating in a national final. It was designed to encourage interested schools to participate in the competition. The number of schools participating rose from 12 in 2014 to over 50 in 2015.

Other events

- *The Keep Safe Initiative*: COPFS took part in this initiative promoted by Police Scotland. The scheme involves local shops and businesses creating safe places for disabled, vulnerable and older people to go if someone is lost, scared or a victim of crime without fear of abuse, intimidation and harassment. Those taking part are provided with a Keep Safe card that includes contact details and information about their health. Keep Safe premises are identified by a window sticker.
- *Mini Trials*: Supported by COPFS, a number of schools took part in mini trials at the sheriff courts across Scotland.
- *Outreach visits to schools*: These were held in collaboration with the Scottish Prison Service and Police Scotland and aimed at educating pupils about the consequences of hate and knife crime.

¹⁸ Accessible on COPFS website.

¹⁹ Accessible on COPFS website.

- *Art competition:* Schools in South Lanarkshire took part in an art competition designed to promote equality through art and educate school pupils about hate crime.

A range of community interactions including:

- COPFS took part in the launch of the South West of Scotland Sectarian Project;
- A project offering advice on the dangers of cyber scamming to over-60s;
- Attended Pride events across Scotland and the United Nations in Scotland celebration day, which was intended to raise awareness of asylum seekers and refugees in local communities in Glasgow;
- COPFS co-hosted the Tackling Prejudice Conference with Police Scotland;
- Regular meetings with representatives of Scotland's diverse communities, such as the Pakistani Welfare Association and the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC).

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