
NATIONAL INDEPENDENT ADVISORY GROUP ON HATE CRIME FOR POLICING AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Minutes

4pm Monday 4th December, 2023
Online meeting

Attending Members

Mike Ainsworth - Chair
Sue Sanders
Two representatives of the
unincorporated Charity, CARG
Julie Miller
A representative of the charity, Tell
MAMA
Mark Healey
Ivy Manning
Iqbal Bhana

In attendance

Paul Giannasi (Secretariat)
Richard Denham APPC

1. Welcome and introductions

MA welcomed everyone to the meeting and welcomed [Redacted] from CARG who had been elected to join the IAG in an out of meeting poll.

2. CARG

The process for CARG's inclusion included introducing the organization, followed by a question-answer session, and a secret vote.

PT and AH shared the group's journey in tackling hate crimes against the Chinese community. Formed in 2020, initially as a COVID-19 anti-racism group, CARG has expanded its focus to promote social cohesion, diversity, and inclusivity. They have

collaborated with public authorities, organisations, and community groups to address hate crimes and racism. They have also advocated for policy changes in the UK criminal justice system and the education system, and are working on the impact of racism on mental health. CARG became a charity with a constitution. Their team has expanded to include new members and trustees.

[Redacted] led a discussion about social media and responded to questions. MA expressed concern about the underreporting of racism in the Chinese and East Asian community and asked about the former Prime Minister's comments that had been challenged, as well as the presence of hate crimes within the community. [Redacted] confirmed the underreporting and shared an incident of the impact of a child experiencing a racial slur.

[Redacted] discussed the significant issue of underreported hate crimes within the Asian community. They shared that the community had secured national lottery funding in early 2021 to address this issue, including training programs to understand and report hate crimes. They highlighted the difficulties faced by marginalised communities, particularly in addressing and reporting racism and discrimination. IB and JM echoed these sentiments, drawing parallels with the experiences of the UK's Black and trans communities.

JM proposed quantifying the cost of mental health to convince the government to take action, citing a figure of 6 billion pounds for transphobia based on Mental Health Foundation data. [Redacted] highlighted the shortage of mental health services in the Chinese community and the stigma surrounding mental health within the East Asian community. They concluded that the National Health Service (NHS) needs to provide more support instead of relying on charities. The discussion also revolved around the challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community, the lack of trust and understanding regarding reporting and communication with local authorities, and the role of CARG in advocating for the community.

MA suggested forming a group discussion with JM [Redacted] and RS to consider the issue of NHS staff abuse and develop a proposal for the IAG. [Redacted] also discussed the experiences of East Asian healthcare professionals during the Covid-19 pandemic and mentioned a current National Lottery Fund project to document these experiences.

3. Middle East Conflict

MA then provided an update on the situation in the Middle East, noting a significant increase in hate crimes and also underreporting of anti-Muslim hate crimes. He highlighted the lasting damage to community cohesion caused by a recent crisis, the need for government investment to address it, and the lack of coordination due to the absence of the Government Strategy Board.

MA also pointed out the police's struggle to deal with hate incidents that don't cross the criminal justice threshold and an increase in hate crime within Asian and refugee communities.

The group discussed the importance of preventing escalating violence and the challenges posed by community divisions. Paul shared a document detailing data and concerns from the Gold group, emphasising the need for a recovery programme and the importance of universal human rights. MA raised concerns about the fear of reporting hate crimes within the Muslim community. JM suggested updating a database of hate symbols, slurs, and slogans. Iman discussed ongoing antisemitic, anti-Muslim, and anti-migrant incidents in London, noting their complexity and the importance of accurate data from groups like Tell Mama. They also mentioned incidents in Paris and Germany, indicating the issue is not isolated to the UK.

MA, Paul, Julie, and [Redacted] discussed the importance of preventing critical incidents here and the challenges posed by community divisions. Paul shared a document detailing data and concerns from the Gold group, emphasising the need for a recovery programme and the importance of universal human rights. MA raised concerns about the fear of reporting hate crimes from some victims within the Muslim community. [Redacted] discussed ongoing antisemitic, anti-Muslim, and anti-migrant incidents in London, noting their complexity and the importance of accurate data from groups like Tell Mama. She also mentioned incidents in Paris and Germany, indicating the issue is not isolated to the UK.

There was a discussion about the Home Office's approach to hate crime, with members expressing hope for a change in perspective. There were discussions about the need to establish a positive relationship with the new and future Home Secretaries particularly relating to the Code on recording non-crime hate incidents.

Concerns were raised about the threshold for prosecuting hate crimes, with JM suggesting engagement with the Crown Prosecution Service. MA confirmed communication with the CPS and clarified that the code should not affect instances of malicious communications or public order offences.

MA discussed the importance of their hate crime declaration how it could be a public demonstration of the group's universal right ideals.

The group also discussed its value when recruiting to the IAG alongside the importance of due diligence and research when considering new members. The final decision was that the process would be determined by a secret ballot of members currently requiring a two-thirds majority.

MH discussed the findings from a review of Council Websites across London, noting inconsistencies in the use of gender identity versus transgender identity on hate crime pages, suggesting this could be a nationwide issue. He mentioned an upcoming meeting of the London Hate Crime Stakeholder Reference Group, where ideas for manifesto pledges would be discussed. The status of the No to Hate Crime Awards was also discussed, with [Redacted] confirming that the conflict had meant that they had been postponed to 2024 due to current circumstances.

Actions

- MA will set up a discussion with JM, [Redacted] and RS to discuss how the IAG can approach the NHS.
- MA will work on setting up an independent IAG webpage over the next few weeks.
- MA will re-examine and amend the Race For Justice declaration based the discussions

Date of Next Meeting

4pm Wednesday, 10th January 2024 - Online meeting