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

Minutes

4pm Thursday 6th July, 2023
Online meeting

Attending Members

Mike Ainsworth - Chair
Robina Shah
Sue Sanders
Mike Whine
Dr Mark Brookes OBE
A representative of the charity,
Community Security Trust
Ivy Manning
A representative of the charity, Tell
MAMA
Mark Healey

In attendance

Paul Giannasi (Secretariat)
Claire Perrin NPCC

1. Welcome and introductions

Chair MA welcomed members to the meeting and congratulated RS on being made a Dame in the recent Honours list.

2. Minutes of meeting 10th January, 2023

The minutes of the meeting were agreed.

Action - PG to post a redacted version onto the IAG's page on True Vision

2. Police Race Action Plan

CP outlined the background and establishment to the Police Race Action Plan which is in place to improve the standards of service to the black communities of the UK. Her role is to oversee the engagement with key stakeholders, forces and communities, to ensure the needs of the diverse sections of communities are understood and addressed.

A core purpose of the plan is to ensure that black people choose the direction and drive the work rather than others doing what they think is needed.

CP mentioned that she is particularly aware that the black communities are themselves diverse and as well as the ethnic diversities, the experiences of black people who are LGB, female or disabled etc must also be heard. This was welcomed by members.

She is keen to establish links with and learn from the Hate Crime IAG. She said that she was shocked to find that this IAG had not been involved in the development of the plan to date and she was keen to hear the views of the group.

MA mentioned the issues seen in France and how they highlight the importance of this work to build confidence and prevent community tensions.

SS mentioned the importance of effective work in schools and gave an example of how a bullying instance had been resolved poorly with poor coordination between the school and police which left the victim and perpetrator in the same place.

RS asked if health professionals were involved in consultation. CP didn't know of a direct link and a discussion followed about how that would be an important link.

Action RS to consider who may be a useful link to the PRAP and will forward details to CP

MB talked of working on an e-learning package about policing in an easy-read format and this stressed the importance of e-learning which may be valuable for this work. He offered to support any work to include services to minority communities with learning disabilities.

Drag Queen Story Hour

MH gave a background to the event at [Redacted] in London that had staged a number of Drag Queen Story events. This had received a lot of adverse attention and protest activity with a counter-protest opposition to the initial protest. It had

become hateful and violent in early events. MH noted that the policing of the events appeared to have learned from early events and had been better at separating the groups.

MH said that there were public debates that officers on early marches had been wearing the 'Thin-blue line' badges which are seen as some in communities as being divisive and even racist since a similar badges had been used in the the USA during FR events. He mentioned that this issue had been escalated with political figures and media outlets joining the debate following a MPS decision to stop officers wearing the badge.

PG gave background to the badge saying that its purpose was to expose the risk that officers face in their work and a perceived lack of support that exacerbates risk and as even contributed to officers losing their lives in their duties. This had been raised as an issue in 2020 in the wake of the Murder of George Floyd in the USA.

MH raised the question of what is the arrest threshold for such events and whether the threshold was equitable given the arrests at the Coronation. PG explained some of the considerations for police event commanders and it may be that tactics dictate that immediate arrests are not made where it is perceived this would increase tensions, in such instances the police will often use evidence gathering teams and consider retrospective action. He recognised that sometimes this can be viewed a passive acceptance of illegal behaviour but said the ultimate decision is with the event command to make in real-time.

There was a general discussion about how difficult protest interventions decisions can be but that it is vital that such intervention is equitable it was said that lots of people had drawn comparisons between perceived inactivity in early events and the early arrest policy at the Kings Coronation.

MA asked if those who were arrested had been charged with hate crimes where appropriate.

RS said the group should give thoughts to messaging surrounding events like this

ACTIONS:

MA to convene a sub-meeting of IAG members to inform collective views that can feed into meetings with the police

PG to circulate the earlier draft document with consideration of the thin Blue Line badges for IAG re-consideration.

PG to share details of the conversation with the MPS hate crime lead.

Non-Crime Hate Incidents

MA outlined the Home Secretary's Action Plan has now come into effect and outlined that he had written to the Home Secretary to express the concerns of the IAG and a fear that it may prevent early interventions to avoid escalations to more serious or even critical events.

There was a particular concern around incidents in schools where there is a extra risk given that matters are being left with schools who may not be equipped or skilled to respond.

There was a discussion about how we might influence schools to be better equipped to deal with incidents given their enhanced responsibility presented by the Code

Actions

MA and SS to write to Head Teachers and teaching unions.

MA to share the letter sent to the Home Secretary with Regional Mayors given their influence over education in their areas.

Hate Crime Action Plan

[Redacted]

AOB

MB updated on meetings with the CPS about special measures and he would update on progress at a future meeting together with an update on his E-Learning work.

MW gave information that the UK is due to face its 'once every 5-year' inspection from the Council of Europe's ECRI committee. Whilst he will not be involved in the forthcoming inspection, he expects that the inspection will consist predominantly of Government-focussed interviews but will also include activity to reach out to civil society structures in the UK. On the last inspection, 6 years there was a plan to include the IAG but this will undoubtedly include some of the members of the IAG if not the group as a whole.

IM raised that, during parliamentary debate a discourse on Travellers led to intolerant language including that parliamentarians had said that 'illegal encampments' were a 'blight on society'. She pointed out that many travellers find it impossible to remain inside the law given the provisions of recent legislation and the lack of 'legal' provisions from local authorities. She said that such language led to violence and hostility from the public and she gave an example of a violent attack on families travelling to Appleby.

MW said that in Europe he had seen evidence of such messages escalating and he encouraged IM to write to the relevant party to complain. IM said they had done many similar interventions but they had not had positive responses to date which caused huge frustrations to her organisation and the community in general.

The IAG condemned such comments and noted that such language can escalate to violence if unchecked. They call on all party-leaders to challenge such language from their politicians and promote positive narratives that challenge rather than encourage hate and hostility.

Date of Next Meeting

4pm Tuesday, 10th October 2023 - Online meeting