

The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP
Home Secretary
2 Marsham Street
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23 November 2018

Dear Home Secretary

HMICFRS Thematic Inspection: Understanding the difference – the initial police response to hate crime

In line with my statutory responsibilities I am writing in formal response to the HMICFRS Thematic inspection report 'Understanding the difference – the initial police response to hate crime' published on 19 July 2018. Please accept my apologies for the delay in formally responding. However, this has afforded me the opportunity to provide a more considered response now that Dorset Police have had time to fully consider the report recommendations and associated action required.

Firstly, I can advise that in preparation for the HMICFRS inspection the then Dorset Police lead officer for hate crime commissioned an internal audit of hate crime from which an action plan has been developed and is currently being implemented. This review identified similar themes to those that HMICFRS identified in their thematic inspection and the HMICFRS findings have therefore been incorporated into a single hate crime action plan. The Force Strategic Performance Board, of which I and my Chief Executive are standing members, provides the governance and oversight of the delivery of this action plan and is due to review progress in March 2019. This Board is structured to align with Force Management Statement requirements and allows strong visibility and understanding of the challenge of our priority performance areas, including hate crime and incidents.

In terms of progress against the specific recommendations identified by HMICFRS, I would update as follows:

- 1. We recommend that, within three months, chief constables make sure hate crimes are correctly flagged, and that forces have good enough processes in place to make sure this done.***
- 2. We recommend that, within three months, chief constables make sure that the Home Office cyber-enabled flag is consistently applied, and that forces have adequate systems in place to make sure that this is done.***

The Force Hate Crime Policy and Procedure has been reviewed along with the associated hate crime toolkit. Work has also focused on awareness raising through training packages; defining and clarifying roles and responsibilities throughout the reporting and investigation process; implementing checklists for key roles/staff (eg Force Command Centre, Investigating

Officer etc); reviewing the Force deployment strategy; delivering compliance training; developing briefing sheets and awareness packages; and developing an internal communications strategy for hate crime.

Existing internal crime recording audit processes will continue to regularly check and monitor compliance, reporting exceptions through the Strategic Performance Board, where issues can be identified and remedial action advised on as appropriate.

3. ***We recommend that, within six months, chief constables adopt a system of risk assessment for vulnerable victims of hate crime. The NPCC lead for hate crime and the College of Policing should give chief constables advice about how best to do this.***
4. ***We recommend that, within six months, chief constables incorporate risk management into a risk assessment process for vulnerable victims of hate crime. The NPCC lead for hate crime and the College of Policing should give chief constables advice about how best to do this.***
5. ***We recommend that, within six months, chief constables work with partner organisations to adopt a system of risk management for vulnerable victims of hate crime. The NPCC lead for hate crime and the College of Policing should give chief constables advice about how best to do this. They should also consider whether the principles of the multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC) process are a good way to manage the risks to hate crime victims.***

The Chief Constable and I welcome further national advice on the assessment of vulnerable victims of hate crime. In the interim, the Force Hate Crime Policy and Procedure includes a section on risk considerations and the potential for cases to be escalated or identified as higher priority for resolution. The clarification of specific roles and responsibilities also incorporate risk considerations.

A specific risk assessment tool will be developed for the Force Command Centre, following the replacement of the current Command and Control system. A new system has been procured, meaning the Strategic Alliance will utilise the same system, and this will be one of the considerations for implementation.

The Force continues to work closely with community safety and criminal justice partners over shared hate crime priorities, including the ongoing development of appropriate and proportionate risk management processes.

6. ***We recommend that, following the review, any agreed minimum standard of response for forces should be monitored by force governance processes, including external scrutiny.***

The Confidence and Equality Board provides the necessary internal monitoring and governance of hate crime and incident responses and also reports into the Strategic Performance Board. I am represented on both of these Boards.

As PCC, I continue to explore best practice from elsewhere and my office is also in the process of establishing a Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel. This will provide additional scrutiny by partners

and independent members and will complement the work of a partnership organisation I am a member of, Prejudice Free Dorset, which seeks to challenge prejudice in the county.

7. We recommend that chief constables make sure officers know it is important to find and record more intelligence about hate crime and use it to inform the police response.

See response to 1 & 2 above. Much of the Force focus has been on awareness raising and training of all relevant staff to improve the understanding and recording of hate crime and associated information and intelligence. An internal operational group will regularly review and inform the Force response and will report up through the appropriate strategic boards as appropriate.

I can confirm that I have consulted with the Chief Constable in formulating this response and trust that this provides you with the necessary reassurance around action being taken locally by Dorset Police in response to the relevant HMIC report recommendations.

Yours sincerely



Martyn Underhill
Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner

Copy Chief Constable James Vaughan, Dorset Police