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Mr Michael Lane  
Police and Crime Commissioner for  
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(by email)

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Dear Mr Lane,

### **Hampshire Police and Crime Panel's Proactive Scrutiny of Hate Crime**

At the 13 April meeting, Members of the Hampshire Police and Crime Panel reviewed the evidence received from yourself and other organisations in relation to Hate Crime within the Hampshire policing area.

This review aimed to scrutinise and support you in your role as Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in your intention to prevent and tackle hate crime across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. This scrutiny considered how well you, in your role as PCC had listened to and engaged partners, community associations and members of the public across the two counties in efforts to enhance outcomes for victims and to encourage them to come forward to report their concerns. The review also considered how effectively you have held the Chief Constable to account for policing strategy focussed upon tackling and preventing hate crime.

The review looked at the following key questions:

- 1) Since the publication of the Police and Crime Plan in 2016, how successful do you feel the PCC has been in his pledge to address hate crime? What changes have you observed, since this time, in the approach to supporting victims and those vulnerable to hate crime within our communities?
- 2) Are you aware of the current strategic approach to policing hate crime? Can you identify any areas where the policing provision, within Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, in response to hate crime could be improved?
- 3) How effective do you feel the PCC and his office have been in engaging with partners to enhance the approach to preventing hate crime and to encourage greater community cohesion? What opportunities do you feel exist for greater engagement?

- 4) What engagement is currently being undertaken with local residents and victim support groups to better understand their concerns regarding hate crime? How could the PCC support or improve the current approach?
- 5) What do you think should be the priorities for action to address hate crime and enhance community cohesion within Hampshire and the Isle of Wight? What challenges exist which could prevent or delay these actions from being delivered?
- 6) Are there any examples of successful approaches in tackling, and supporting victims of hate crime which you or your organisation are aware of, either within Hampshire and the Isle of Wight or in other areas?
- 7) Is there anything further that you can provide to the Panel that will assist us with our proactive scrutiny of this topic?

Following a review of the evidence received, the Panel have outlined their findings below for your consideration.

### *Findings*

Members of the Panel noted that evidence received to the scrutiny had demonstrated that the PCC had taken an active role in addressing hate crime across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight:

- It was recognised through the evidence that Hate Crime prevention was a key element within the PCC's Police and Crime Plan, as well as being a priority for Hampshire Constabulary.
- The conviction rate for Hate Crime had increased from 89.6% in 2016 to 92.4% in 2017, with Hampshire and the IOW being the fourth best performing police force nationally in 2017. In addition the number of cases processed through the Crown Prosecution Service in the same period had increased from 418 to 431.
- A number of organisations including Age UK IOW, Awazz FM and Citizens Advice Hampshire commented upon the support provided by the OPCC in relation to activities to prevent and support victims of hate crime.
- Others expressed a desire for greater engagement including the Muslim Council of Southampton and KROMA, presenting an opportunity for the PCC and his office to work more closely with the communities these organisations support.
- The OPCC has sought to enhance engagement with partners through the introduction, in 2015, of a Hate Crime Working Group. This group brings together a multi-sector group of agencies to focus on challenging the prejudices that fuel hate crime and to enhance community cohesion and victims confidence.

- Awareness amongst partners was generally high, however concerns were identified through this report, which were not previously recognised, about the lack of awareness and engagement in many rural areas.
- A focus for the PCC has been to increase the number of Third Party Reporting Centres (TPRC's) across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. A grant was awarded, by the PCC, to Citizens' Advice Hampshire to set up their bureaux to function as TPRC's. With these and a number of independent TPRC's being created the total number increased from 3, in March 2017, to 48 in March 2018. It was recognised by partners that this was a positive approach but greater signposting was needed to enhance awareness of the existence of the TPRC's.

Through this evidence it was further recognised that:

- Nationally, hate crime is significantly underreported by victims and therefore enhancing the confidence of victims to come forward and report crimes was identified as the key priority in efforts to reduce hate crime.
- Evidence received highlighted that underreporting of hate crime targeted towards those with a disability is of particular concern, as its estimated that only 1 in 34 incidents are reported to police.
- A confidence gap between victims and the police still existed in some areas, and was being impacted by concerns around the correct identification of hate crime at the initial report. It was however noted that when officers attended a report, that victims had regarded the service as excellent and that further work was being undertaken to enhance awareness of hate crime within the force.
- Both traditional and social media had been used to generate and fuel hate crime, but was also a tool for spreading positive and preventative messages.
- Education was a key element in preventing hate crime. Education and awareness should not just focus upon young people, but also those in their wider family and communities where prejudices may exist.
- Community cohesion and hate crime go hand in hand and that without greater sense of togetherness and tolerance then hate crime will continue to fracture communities.
- Both the PCC and Hampshire Constabulary had sought to enhance engagement with ethnically diverse and BME communities, recognising that ethnicity is one of the core characteristic targeted by hate crime. It was felt that working with the leaders within these communities and delivering communications in languages other than English could further enhance engagement and give victims greater confidence in coming forward.
- With anti-Semitic crime increasing nationally it was recognised that the OPCC needed to increase their engagement within the Jewish communities of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, to gain a better understanding of local concerns.

Evidence received to the scrutiny had drawn forth a number of examples demonstrating a positive approach to addressing hate crime, including:

- Age UK IOW have run a number of schemes where hate crime prevention is a key element including the Good Neighbour Scheme and LGBT Domestic Abuse and Hate Crime projects. Through the Good Neighbour Scheme in particular it was heard that a safe environment had been created where individuals felt comfortable to disclose hate crime concerns.
- Wessex Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) hold a quarterly Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel. Through this scrutiny the CPS have highlighted an opportunity for Hampshire Constabulary to attend this meeting, and have noted a keenness to engage regularly with the OPCC to share the recommendations and learning outcomes from each meeting.

### *Recommendations*

In reviewing the evidence received, Members brought forth a number of recommendations, which they wish to raise for your consideration:

- a. That the PCC should continue to develop and lead partnership working with other organisations that have a shared interest in addressing hate crime. An initial focus should be to bring partners together agree a consistent approach in supporting and encouraging victims and witnesses to report incidents of hate crime. Longer terms aspirations should seek to enhance community cohesion, through enabling the wider community to identify and understand the impact of hate crime.
- b. The PCC and his office should devise a coherent action plan, through engagement with partners including town and parish councils, to enhance the understanding and awareness of hate crime within rural communities. Consideration should be given to helping residents to identify what hate crime is, and how this profile may vary from that seen in urban conurbations. In devising this approach, regard should be paid to the successes of the Good Neighbour Scheme, recently introduced in the IOW.
- c. Following his pledge to address hate crime, that the PCC continues to enhance support services for victims. Ongoing consideration should be given to ensuring victims are aware of and able to access the services available, and that regard is given to how best to support those victims targeted as a result of multiple characteristics.
- d. That the PCC and his office continue to encourage the growth of third party reporting centres to deliver geographically balanced access pan Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Following evidence received to this review the PCC should seek to enable these centres to be in the heart of the communities they serve and encourage all unitary, district and borough councils to become third party reporting centres.

- e. Where possible, the PCC and his office should seek to support and encourage schemes which provide education to children and young people focussed on understanding and preventing hate crime. Such schemes should not only focus on children, but on the family and community environment and look to challenge long seated beliefs that might be promoting harmful attitudes.
- f. Following a lack of evidence received to this review, that the PCC engages with and demonstrates his commitment to preventing anti-Semitic hate crime and that targeted towards those with disabilities.
- g. That the PCC should, through his role in holding the Chief Constable to account, seek a resolution to concerns raised regarding the initial recording of hate crime incidents and look to bridge any gap in confidence for victims. The PCC should also support the Chief Constable in aligning operation priorities, with his strategic priorities for hate crime and look to encourage the future integration of hate crime into mainstream policing.

We look forward to receiving, in due course, your response to the recommendations outlined above, including consideration as to how the recommendations made will be incorporated into related activities within your Delivery Plan.

Yours Sincerely,

**Chair, Hampshire Police and Crime Panel**