



## **Hate Crime Scrutiny by District IPAGs.**

### **1.0 Introduction**

The key role of the Independent Police Advisory Group (IPAG) is to:

- Be a critical friend to Kent Police
- Challenge conventional thinking
- Improve how the Police deliver their services
- Engage with our communities

Hate crime is a regular theme for the IPAGs:

- One of the recommendations from the 2018 IPAG Hate Crime report was to review a hate crime from reporting to its closure and providing feedback, especially involving the victim's journey.
- It is a regular agenda item at the District's quarterly meetings
- Elaine Bolton, the County Vice Chair sits on Kent Police's Hate Crime Forum
- Elaine as well as District IPAG Chairs, Hilary Cooke (Chair of Maidstone IPAG) and Sue Groves MBE (Chair of Medway IPAG) regularly speak at local and national conferences on hate crime.

Hate crime is defined as '*Any incident, that may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim, or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice, based on a personal characteristic*' which include disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation and gender identity.

Hate Crime remains a priority for Kent Police and their mission is to provide a first class service, protecting and serving the People of Kent and their number one priority is always to put victims and witnesses at the heart of all they do.

As part of the National Hate Crime Awareness Week, 10-17 October 2020, District IPAGs reviewed two real hate crime cases and gave their views on how well they felt the cases were managed by Kent Police and identified areas of development. IPAG members were able to use their knowledge, expertise and lived experiences around communities of place and communities of interest.

We would like to thank Kulbir Pasricha, Community Engagement and Hate Crime Manager for co-ordinating the review, members of the District IPAGs who gave their views and advice and Police officers and staff, especially the Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) who helped to facilitate the reviews.



## **2.0 Methodology**

The following took place:

- Two concluded hate crime investigations were randomly chosen by one of Kent Police's Hate Crime Champions and the same two were reviewed across the County. Any forms of identification were removed, to ensure confidentiality and GDPR. The examples included:
  - A female who experienced racial/religious hate crime
  - A male who experienced racial hate crime
- A feedback form with questions was developed to support the scrutiny by Kent Police. (Appendix A)
- Guidance was provided which highlighted the role of IPAG members and the police with the scrutiny of the investigations. (Appendix B)
- The two hate crime cases and the feedback form were used at the County IPAG held on MS Teams on 6 October 2020 to test out the scrutiny process.
- The learning/best practice from this scrutiny at County IPAG was shared with District IPAG Chairs, CLOs, Community Safety Units (CSUs) and Hate Crime Champions.
- Each District then carried out scrutiny of two real hate crimes – the two reviewed at the County IPAG and/or local examples. The Chairs led the discussion based on the questions on the feedback form and to ensure inclusivity and accessibility feedback was given through discussion, the 'Chat' facility and completion of the feedback forms. The feedback forms were completed and sent to Kulbir Pasricha and Elaine Bolton for collation.

## **3.0 Key findings**

### **3.1 Responses**

Nine District IPAGs carried out the scrutiny of the hate crimes: Ashford, Dartford and Gravesham, Dover and Canterbury, Folkestone and Hythe, Maidstone, Medway, Swale, Thanet, Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling. Unfortunately two Districts didn't submit a feedback form. In addition Dartford and Gravesham and Medway used a local redacted hate crime and Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling reviewed a hate crime experienced by a gay male. Between six and 12 IPAG members attended each District meeting, representing a wide range of communities: race, religion and belief, LGBT+, age and gender.

Here are some examples of from the feedback forms:

- **What are your thoughts on Kent Police initial response?** (*Consider method of contact, timescale, consideration of victim needs, how it could be improved etc.*)

'The police made contact swiftly as they were in the area' (*Ashford*)

'Kent Police responded in a timely manner, recognising that this was a hate crime. They provided the victim with support, contact details and offered positive action' (Swale)

'The severity of the incident should have had an officer visiting i.e. immediate response ....As this was a series of incidents there should have been more support to the victim and updates' (Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling)

'The record didn't have a timeline, so it was difficult to tell when the actions in the record took place' (Maidstone)

- **What are your thoughts on the initial investigation?** (Consider victim needs / wishes, time scales, activity undertaken, standard of service, what could be better; what was done well, what would be your expectations?)

'Respected victim's wishes, considered who and which service's supports them. They attended the crime scene and spoke to the victim who did not want to report the matter. They also conducted house to house enquiries looking for witnesses and as a result captured mobile phone footage of the offence occurring' (Ashford)

'Although the victim didn't wish to take any action, the officers should have indicated any other help or support' (Maidstone)

'Time from reporting and first statement taken from Victim was efficient and within a few days, witness statements taken soon after incident, CCTV at premises viewed, regular contact with V from various officers' (Dover and Canterbury)

'Speak to the friend to gather further information ... More updates should be given by the OIC to the victim' (Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling)

'Was Domestic abuse an issue?' (Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling)

'As domestic violence was mentioned. Was it appropriate to close the case?' (Medway)

'Report had been transferred between too many people; resulting in a delay before any contact was actually made with the victim' (Medway)

'The lack of an investigation plan could lead to missed steps in the investigation, especially where more than one officer is involved' (Maidstone)

- **Communication – was sufficient and appropriate communication given to the victim during the investigation?** (Consider method, victim needs, timeliness, your expectations)

'The officer engaged with the victim and tried to obtain evidence, the officer provided re assurance for the victim with their goals for the suspect, e.g. banning him from the city centre. Kept communication with victim and informed of progress of investigation' (Ashford)

'Victim didn't want repercussions, had he had on-going/previous incidents with the suspect and their associates, which could continue' (*Dover and Canterbury*)

*'It is apparent from the record that the CLO may not have been made aware of the crime'* (*Maidstone*)

'Time delay - victim would have expected a quicker follow up' (*Medway*)

'A positive that it was identified that the alleged perpetrator had mental health issues' (*Medway*)

*'... taken into consideration the victim and where relevant the needs of the alleged perpetrator ... the police appear to have been sensitive and patient...regular communication ...'* (*Medway*)

'Members stated the contact with victim was reassuring, victim was supported, dealt with in a timely manner, considerate to the victim's wishes and needs' (*Swale*)

'Unknown but explanation of court process and CPS process needs to be explained fully as the threshold for CPS decision is very high and a lot of people do not understand this, they see it that the police aren't bothered' (*Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling*)

'The family were considered well, as well as the staff at the hospital' (*Dartford and Gravesham*)

- **Were there any lines of enquiry, victim contact or other activity that as a victim of crime you would expect that were not undertaken?**

'There's no evidence that the officer had provided any signposting or other interventions. *Something that might not always be reflected in a crime report'* (*Ashford*)

'Victim still declined - was reassurance given to help him feel confident in supporting?' (*Dover and Canterbury*)

*'No other activity identified'* (*Dartford and Gravesham*)

- **Was police activity outside of the investigation undertaken that was appropriate or should there have been more?** (*Consider community impact, communications, wider impact, cultural or diversity considerations*)

'Nothing referred to' (*Ashford*)

*'The VSS should be involved in all hate crime incidents, even if the victim doesn't want to take further action, in case they need support later on'* (*Maidstone*)

'Possibility of using community resolution' (*Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling*)



'The members reviewing this is really helpful as it gives us an informed, real life situation, especially with the mental health issue' (*Dartford and Gravesham*)

- **Any other opinions, advice or thoughts on the hate crime, the response and the investigation?** (Include what was done well, what could improve, personal perspectives and if you were the victim what you would expect)

'It is not clear whether or not there was follow up support as the Investigation plan did not support a prosecution' (*Thanet*)

*'It is good to know that even where victims do not wish to proceed with action the case is still investigated with a view to prosecution on the evidence gathered'* (*Maidstone*)

'Is this a bigger problem with BAME businesses in the area/district/county, how can this be addressed?' (*Dover and Canterbury*)

'All members accepted the fact that the racial abuse had been shouted out by a person who was experiencing a MH episode and not directed at any one person. Timeliness – good, communication – good, identification of a hate crime – good, Support to victims and witnesses – not fully explained on crime report' (*Dartford and Gravesham*)

'A witness was found; He was spoken to and provided enough evidence and a statement to proceed with a prosecution. Due to the victim not wanting to give a statement I believe this to be a good job as it wouldn't have been resolved otherwise' (*Ashford*)

'More education on hate crime e.g. going into schools and speaking to suspects' (*Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling*)

*'The victim to be asked what damage it had caused his/her morale/mindset'* (*Medway*)

- **On reviewing this hate crime would you be confident to report a hate crime to Kent Police with confidence?** (Include why you would, or why you would not)

'Police need to be more proactive and not just reactive to issues and incidents' (*Dover and Canterbury*)

'Reporting is not always an option for people; may affect livelihood, family, wider community, taboo to report/engage with police' (*Dover and Canterbury*)

'11 of the 12 members agreed they were confident to report a hate crime to Kent Police having reviewed this investigation' (*Dartford and Gravesham*)



‘Yes. The response was timely, thoughtful and took into consideration the bigger picture. Great policing privileged to see this side of it, and the effective behind the scenes work!’ (*Dartford and Gravesham*)

‘The group all agreed they would be confident to report a hate crime to Kent Police (*Swale*)’

*‘... Concerned that hate incident/crimes may be missed not recognised if they are not flagged as a possible hate crime early on in the investigation. If CLOs are not informed then the enhanced service may not be given and the lack of VSS being recorded as offered to the victim is another concern’ (*Maidstone*)*

*‘Confidence to report if the issues are ongoing and victim persistently targeted. If a one off incident, there may not be any CCTV, witnesses and unknown suspect, you know the report will not go very far and is maybe not worth your time reporting it’ (*Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling*)*

### **3.2 Areas of strength from the cases**

- Quick response from Kent Police
- Reassurance given to the victim by Kent Police
- Visiting the victim, especially as English may not have been their first language
- Carrying out further investigation to identify witnesses and mobile phone footage captured
- The majority of IPAG members felt confident about reporting a hate crime to Kent Police as a result of reviewing the real cases

### **3.3 Areas for development from the cases**

- The importance of keeping the victim updated on the progress of the investigation
- Victims are signposted to support/interventions e.g. Victim support
- Cultural sensitivity e.g. a female and/or Asian from Kent Police visiting
- An officer/PSE visiting and not wearing a uniform
- Having the name of an office or police staff as a single point of contact
- Ensure plain English is used, without jargon
- Ensure the CLO is involved and records updated
- Reasons for the victim not wanting to pursue a prosecution – poor experience of the police, repercussions
- Examples of community engagement taken as a result of the incident/crime – to gain more understanding of the community, encourage reporting, understand the barriers to reporting and building confidence and relations with the police
- Use as an opportunity to promote the IPAG
- Alternatives discussed with victim e.g. community resolution
- Having a documented investigation plan
- Crime to be flagged early as a hate crime



- Communication between investigating officers to be recorded

### **3.4 Feedback on the scrutiny of the hate crimes cases**

Chairs and members of the IPAGs felt that this had been a beneficial exercise:

- *'Us reviewing this is really helpful as it gives us an informed, real life situation, especially with the mental health issue, '... privileged to see this side of it and the effective behind the scenes work' (Dartford and Gravesham)*
- Understanding of what is involved in the investigation of a hate crime
- Understanding of some of the reasons why victims do not wish to progress action against the perpetrator

### **4.0 Recommendations**

1. This report is presented at a future Hate Crime Forum by Elaine Bolton, the County Vice Chair and learning and recommendations are included in Kent Police's Hate Crime Action Plan, with its annual review
2. This report is shared with District Commanders and CLOs
3. A programme of cultural awareness initiatives for police officers and staff
4. CLOS to be involved in hate crimes and their action recorded
5. An investigation plan to be completed to ensure there are no steps missed and where more than one officer is involved, communication is recorded
6. Police officers and staff aware of who to signpost the victim to and inform the victim of these contacts
7. Police officers and staff to ensure they adhere to the Victim Code
8. Scrutiny of real hate crimes is carried out on an annual basis by the District IPAGs as part of Hate Crime Awareness week in October, with the option of setting up Hate Crime sub groups locally where there is interest.
9. Future scrutiny by the IPAG to include:
  - One hate crime to be reviewed by all Districts to see feedback themes
  - Time lines
  - The cases to be summarised into a word document /easy to read documents
  - Whether the victim was a repeat victim



- Body worn video footage – hearing encouragement and empathy, reassurance, signposting for instance. Balance between the victim not wanting to take further action and the alleged perpetrator requiring education/judicial action
- Adherence to the Victim code and victim satisfaction
- Feedback on community engagement
- Feedback on education and training on hate crime in the communities e.g. schools
- Feedback on training and cultural awareness of officers and staff

Elaine Bolton

County IPAG Vice Chair and Chair of Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge and Malling IPAG

Member of the Hate Crime Forum

16 February 2021





Appendix A

## IPAG – Hate Crime Scrutiny Report

District:	
Person completing:	

1. What are your thoughts on Kent Police initial response?  
*(Consider method of contact, timescale, consideration of victim needs, how it could be improved etc.)*

Response:

2. What are your thoughts on the initial investigation?  
*(Consider victim needs/wishes, time scales, activity undertaken, standard of service, what could be better, what was done well, what would be your expectations?)*

Response:

3. Communication – was sufficient and appropriate communication given to the victim during the investigation?  
*(Consider method, victim needs, timeliness, your expectations)*

Response:

4. Were there any lines of enquiry, victim contact or other activity that as a victim of crime you would expect that were not undertaken?

Response:

5. Was police activity outside of the investigation undertaken that was appropriate or should there have been more?

*(Consider community impact, communications, wider impact, cultural or diversity considerations)*

Response:

6. Any other opinions, advice or thoughts on the hate crime, the response and the investigation?

*(Include what was done well, what could improve, personal perspectives and if you were the victim what you would expect)*

Response:

7. On reviewing this hate crime would you be confident to report a hate crime to Kent Police?

*(Include why you would, or why you would not.)*

Response:



Appendix B

## Redacted Hate Crime Report Scrutiny IPAG Aide Memoire

### **For police personnel:**

- In each District, CLO/Police Staff to identify 2-3 different types of hate crime with the appropriate hate crime classification/motivation marker (Disability/Religion/Sexual Orientation/Transgender/Age). This should be representative of the IPAG members.
- Use the analytical data report for the desired date range and through Athena, undertake a manual search for crime reports with the hate crime classification/motivation marker (Disability/Religion/Sexual Orientation/Transgender/Age).
- Print off the reports and develop into a word document.
- GDPR Rules must apply, importantly, and redact any personal identifiable information relating to the VICTIM/WITNESS/SUSPECT/INJURED PARTIES/OFFICER IN CHARGE OF REPORT/ANY CONTACT DETAILS. If in doubt, please check.
- Consider contents of the crime report. Check the log entries, these may contain sensitive information that is not suitable for viewing within the District IPAG.
- Reports should be reviewed by CSU Inspector for agreement, prior to making the reports available to the IPAG Chair/Vice-chair.
- Redacted reports will be presented to the IPAG Chair/Vice-chair with a checklist as to what to expect when a report is received by Kent Police.

### **For IPAG Vetted/Non-Vetted:**

- IPAG Chair/Vice-chair will select between 1-2 crime reports and copies will be made available for the District IPAG meetings.
- IPAG Chair/Vice-chair/CLO/Police management in attendance at the District IPAG, must reiterate 'CHATHAM HOUSE RULES' to all IPAG attendees. Discussions are strictly for the purpose of the IPAG meeting and should not be discussed outside the police premises with any other party.
- GDPR Rules apply, strictly do not remove any documents from the IPAG meeting, if you wish to circulate information around the room for training such as more than one printed copy, you must take care and responsibility.
- Collect all reports and dispose of them using the 'Shred It' bins, speak to your line manager/local business admin support team, to assist in destroy the crime reports, as they must never leave the Police premises, this would be a breach in GDPR rules.
- If the meeting is online then the IPAG District Chair or Vice Chair can review the crime report/incident and lead the conversation, enabling a discussion point with all members of the meeting.
- All attendees can share their thoughts providing exceptional feedback, such as areas of improvements, best practices.
- The CLO or Police representative will take notes of the discussion.



- After the meeting the feedback/notes/templates will be collated and sent to the IPAG Chair/Vice Chair for checking. This will then be forwarded to PSE Pasricha, Community Engagement and Hate Crime Manager to review key findings and embed individual/wider learning/best practice.
- Once collated The County Vice Chair will present the findings back to the Police via the Hate Crime Forum and the County IPAG.
- Feedback and actions from the Police will be fed back to the County Vice Chair, who will update the County IPAG.

Any queries, please contact PSE Kulbir Pasricha, Community Engagement and Hate Crime Manager, Partnerships and Communities, Kent Police via [Kulbir.pasricha@kent.police.uk](mailto:Kulbir.pasricha@kent.police.uk) or 07772221185.