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DYFED-POWYS
POLICE AND CRIME
COMMISSIONER

**Police and Crime
Commissioner for Dyfed-Powys**

**Scrutiny Panel
Dip Sampling Exercise**

Review of 2017/18 Quarter 4 (January - March 2018)

**Hate Crime Cases
Stop and Search Input
Panel Members' Findings & Feedback**

April 2018

Contents

1.0 Overview	2
2.0 What is a Hate Crime?	2
3.0 Hate Crime Data.....	2
4.0 Quality Assurance Panel Findings.....	4
4.1 Safeguarding the Vulnerable	4
4.2 Supporting Victims.	4
4.3 Strong Leadership	5
5.0 General Comments	5
5.1 Dyfed-Powys Hate Crime Incidents Strategic Lead Comments.....	5

1.0 Overview

At the fifth meeting of the Commissioner's Quality Assurance Panel held on 30th April 2018, Members received a training input on Hate Crime and incidents. The Panel were given an overview of what a Hate Crime Incident is and the processes which are in place when recording such incidents. The Panel were then given a small dip-sample of cases to review. As this was mainly a training exercise the Panel considered a total of 6 cases on this occasion.

During the afternoon session the Panel received a training input on Stop and Search, this was to prepare the Panel for their next meeting in June, where they will be carrying out a review of Stop and Search cases.

This meeting consisted mainly of training inputs, to equip the panel with the appropriate skills and knowledge to carry out their future scrutiny exercises on the specific topics.

2.0 What is a Hate Crime?

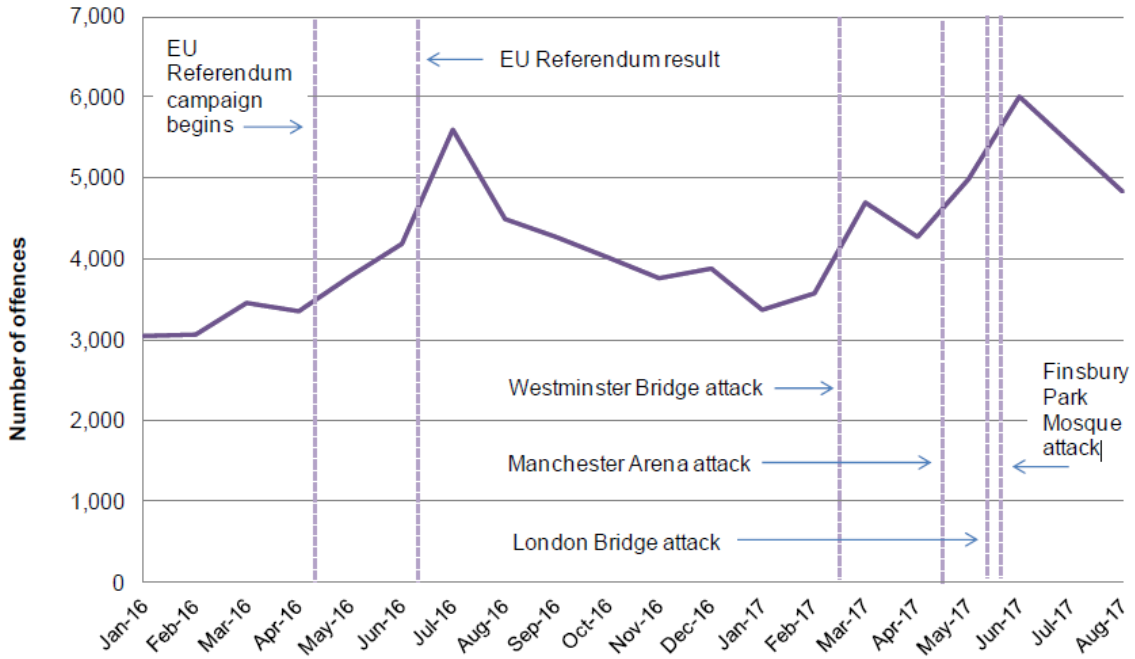
"Any incident, which may or may not constitute a criminal offence, which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate."

It was explained that a hate crime usually consists of a crime committed against someone because of their race, religion, sexuality, disability or gender. The Inspector explained to the Panel that when a hate crime is recorded, the officer has a list of 12 actions and responsibilities that they work against. Each victim should be assigned a trained Hate Crime Support Officer (HCSO) within 48 hours of the incident and the HCSO must meet with the victim within 7 days of the incident being reported. One of the responsibilities of the HCSO is to record the victims' individual needs and to clarify whether additional support is needed.

3.0 Hate Crime Data

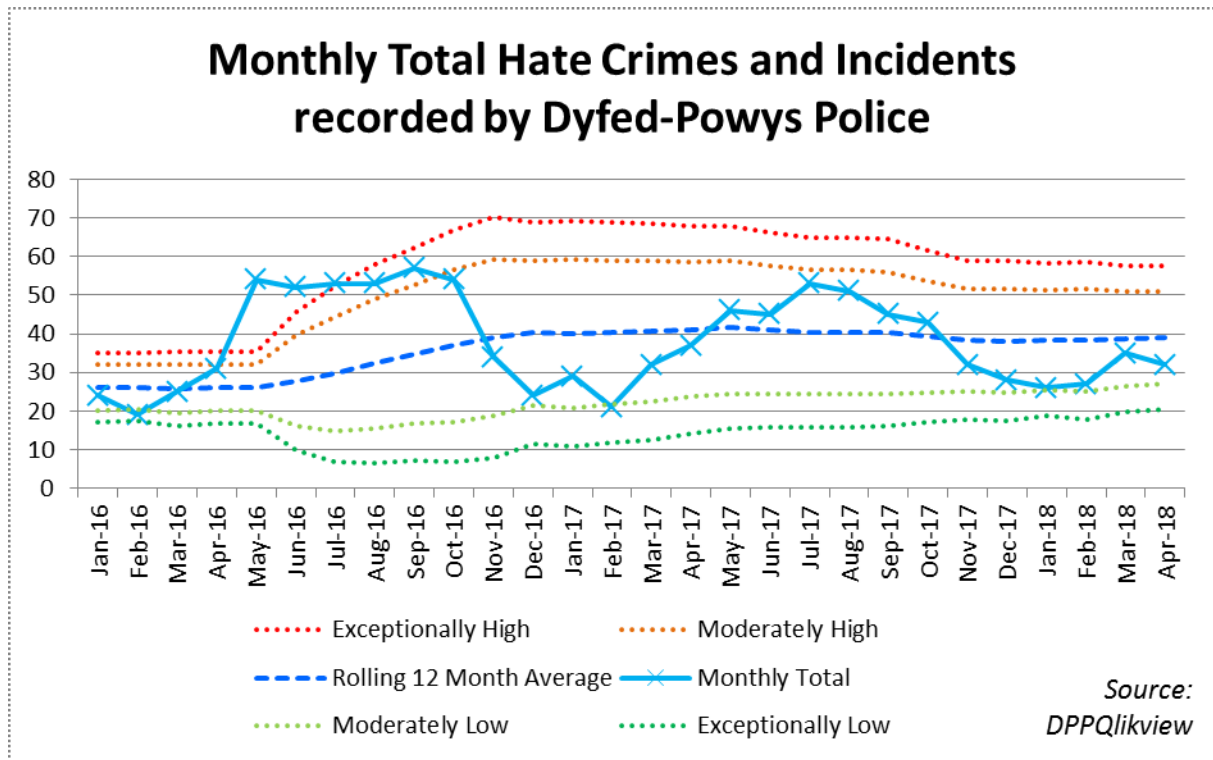
The graph below has been taken from the Hate Crime, England and Wales Statistical Bulletin 16/17, showing the national data for racially or religiously aggravated offences recorded by England and Wales police forces during 2016 and 2017.

Figure A1: Number of racially or religiously aggravated offences recorded by the police, January 2016 to August 2017



Source: Provisional police recorded crime, Home Office

The following graph shows Dyfed-Powys’ hate offences (all strands) for the same period and beyond. Although steady increases appear to follow the national incidents, the Dyfed-Powys data does not show the same dramatic rises and falls as the national data.



Source: DPPQlikview

4.0 Quality Assurance Panel Findings

Following their training input on hate crime and incidents, the Quality Assurance Panel were split into small groups and given a small dip-sample of cases to review. During the morning the Panel looked at six different case files. The Panel were asked to answer a series of questions which focused their scrutiny on Safeguarding the Vulnerable, Supporting Victims and Strong Leadership.

4.1 Safeguarding the Vulnerable

In 2 of cases the Panel found no evidence that victim support services had been offered to the victims even though they were deemed as vulnerable, however, the Panel recognised that this may be a recording issue. In one particular case it was found that the call handler assessed a victim as vulnerable, but within the hate crime report section the victim was recorded as not vulnerable, without any evidence of why this had been changed. In a few of the cases it was found that a number of the 12 initial actions that are used as a checklist appear to be incomplete, which, the Panel again recognised may have been due to poor recording rather than poor service delivery.

It was felt by the Panel that it was evident that there was an effective process in place, with the list of 12 Initial Actions acting as a checklist for the Officers and Supervisor, which if used in each report would ensure a consistent approach to each case.

4.2 Supporting Victims

Within this section the Panel looked at whether a victim contract had been created i.e. consideration given to how the victim would like to be communicated with and supported throughout the investigation. From the sample of 6 cases it was found that a contract had been created within two, with the other four cases having no evidence that one had been agreed or created. For example, within one particular case, there was no evidence of a log being created; however the victim did receive updates from the HCSO.

The Panel found that as the agreed victim contract was not always recorded, it was difficult to review whether the victim has received updates in line with their agreed contract.

It was found that in around half of the cases reviewed there was evidence recorded that the HCSO had been in contact with the victim within 48 hours of the incident being recorded.

When looking at the role description of the HCSO, the Panel felt that it had clearly been formed with the victim at the centre, with a focus on providing support for each individual person and case. Within the training it was also noted that the Neighbourhood Policing Team play a significant role in helping to deal with hate crime incidents, considering: local knowledge of those involved and any known vulnerabilities, the wider community impact and preventative opportunities that may be available from a neighbourhood perspective. The Panel recognised that having these links and process in place contribute positively to the support that the victims and the communities receive in relation to hate crime and incidents.

4.3 Strong Leadership

It was found that within the majority of the cases the Supervisor had endorsed the log and had provided updates within the report; however these were not always completed within the Force's own target of 7 days.

5.0 General Comments

- Within one case Panel Members queried whether the correct victim priority code was given to the individual.
- A question was raised regarding the template where it asks –'Have Victim Support Services been offered? Yes or No'. Panel Members asked whether this meant offered and / or accepted or rejected. It was felt that this question could possibly be misinterpreted, as it was not clear if the offer had been accepted or declined.
- In one particular case there was no evidence of the case being closed; therefore Members were unable to fully assess the effectiveness of the support to the victim throughout the investigation.

5.1 Dyfed-Powys Hate Crime Incidents Strategic Lead Comments

This is a true reflection of the review undertaken and the panel were able to identify the shortfalls with a number of crimes.

I am able to clear-up the following query: *A question was raised regarding the template where it asks –'Have Victim Support Services been offered? Yes or No'. Panel Members asked whether this meant offered and / or accepted or rejected. It was felt that this question could possibly be misinterpreted, as it was not clear*

if the offer had been accepted or declined. This has since been replaced with 'Is the victim aware that their contact details will be passed to support services? There remains to be an answer of yes and no. If no, there is a further prompt asking for a reason why.

The findings are and will form part of new guidance being issued to all staff, to improve the quality of investigation and service.

The DPP Hate Crime Policy is being updated and the panel has been instrumental in providing feedback which will influence change within the new Policy.

Many of the development areas identified by the panel are also replicated across other crime categories. A considerable amount of work has been undertaken over the last 2 years to provide a far greater service for victims, but we have further to go.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Panel for their feedback and we would welcome further input in the future once our new operational guidance is in place.