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Office of the
**Police & Crime
Commissioner**
West Yorkshire

My Reference: OPCC/MBW/WS

Your Reference:

6 September 2018

The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP
Home Secretary
Home Office
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DP

Dear Home Secretary

HMICFRS Response: Understanding the Difference; the initial response to hate crime

I am writing in response to receipt of the HMICFRS inspection report on the national response to hate crime incidents provided by our police services.

For this inspection, West Yorkshire Police were one of the six forces in which HMICFRS carried out in-depth fieldwork, and I was pleased to see in the final report that West Yorkshire Police's partnership work and engagement with local communities were cited as examples of good practice.

Here in West Yorkshire our police service records roughly 4,500 hate incidents per year, with a repeat victimisation rate of 16%. Roughly three-quarters of hate incidents are related to race, with faith-related incidents the next most frequent category. With BAME members of our community representing 18% of the total population of West Yorkshire, hate crime is an issue which has to be addressed, and I continue to identify it as one of the 16 priorities in my Police & Crime Plan 2016-21.

Hate crime goes beyond race and faith, and in the recent past I have met with a number of different community based groups to discuss their concerns, including LGBT communities, the local Gypsy and Travellers advocacy group, and members of our Polish community, and I continue to help support local organisations working with the victims of hate crime through my Safer Communities Fund.

Since 2015, we have run a prominent campaign with West Yorkshire Police ('Hate Hurts') to raise awareness of what hate crime and hate incidents are, and to encourage communities to report issues when they take place, and last year, successful joint working with the OPCC, the Home Office, and Leeds and British Transport Police resulted in the publishing of hate crime information materials in the languages of the Eastern European, asylum seeker and refugee communities living in West Yorkshire.

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Within West Yorkshire Police, each of our five policing districts have a Hate Co-ordinator post, who provides subject matter expertise to investigating officers, maintains contact with local partners, and proactively raises awareness within local communities. Regular practitioner workshops also provide a forum for police officer development, such as a perspective on Anti-Muslim Hate Crime delivered by the Chair of the Force Association of Muslim Police, or through a CPS Prosecutor delivering a workshop on Social Media and Hate Crime.

Other specific areas of activity include Leeds district police's regular Community Forum meetings with CST (Community Security Trust), to jointly monitor anti-Semitic hate crimes and incidents, and the force's information sharing agreement with Tell MAMA (Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks), which is an independent organisation supporting victims of anti-Muslim hatred.

In conjunction with our West Yorkshire local authorities, hate crime reporting centres are established in communities, offering places where victims and witnesses of hate can report incidents to the police through local intermediaries. I have also supported the development of the West Yorkshire 'Safer Places Scheme', which offers people with learning disabilities, autism, or dementia a safe haven in our towns and cities should they find themselves in any difficulty.

At my recent quarterly performance meeting with the Chief Constable, I requested a full report on progress made addressing the recommendations identified following the HMICFRS report. This is a matter I will review through our normal bilateral arrangements in the weeks ahead. The provisional feedback from the force's HMICFRS Liaison Team is that:

- Contact is being made with the force training school to clarify their approach in respect to the use of the hate crime flag, and contact with the Force Crime Registrar will take place to ensure the correct practice in the flagging hate incidents is promoted.
- District Hate Crime Co-ordinators and the inspection team did point out that roles and responsibilities differed somewhat between Districts, and that this may reduce West Yorkshire Police's effectiveness in preventing vulnerable people from being targeted repeatedly. A clear role and responsibilities profile will be centrally developed and circulated – this will also reaffirm the force's relationship with key partner agencies.
- Advice will be given to our Customer Contact Centre Manager with a view to amending the training package for new recruits, and for an update to the question set of the Command and Control system to ask a victim to assess whether they feel a hate incident has taken place; and finally,
- On victim support and referral, the current process will be reviewed by the Force Hate Crime Co-ordinator. West Yorkshire Police's current review of investigative practice (following last year's PEEL Effectiveness report) is already developing improvements to the way officers and staff keep victims updated and informed regarding their investigations. This work is supported by the police's and my campaign work to encourage victims to report hate crimes and follow signposting to victim support partners.

In recent years, much work has been done in West Yorkshire to build our communities' understanding of hate crime and how to report it. Real progress has been made in

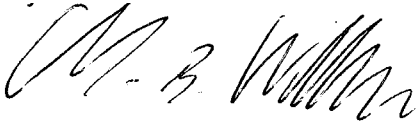
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developing our response to hate crime, but there is always more work which can be done. West Yorkshire Police and I will continue to promote the message that we will not tolerate hate incidents, and through revisiting the police's approach to hate through the recommendations of this latest HMICFRS report, I am confident that we will strengthen our recording of, and response to, hate crimes in West Yorkshire.

Yours sincerely



Mark Burns-Williamson
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire