

RESPONSE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER OF DEVON, CORNWALL AND THE ISLES OF SCILLY TO HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES' REPORT

INSPECTION OF THE HANDLING OF CASES INVOLVING DISABILITY HATE CRIME

Chief Constable's comments

The Chief Constable welcomes the finding of this inspection, led by the HMCPSP, and delivered jointly with HMICFRS. We welcome joint inspection which looks at how services are delivered across the Criminal Justice System. Whilst Devon and Cornwall was not inspected, we are progressing the issues with the CPS to ensure we provide the best possible response to hate crimes. Much of this activity was already underway as part of our response to the PEEL 2017 inspection. The required actions are being progressed alongside wider work on our investigative approach.

The following issues need to be addressed by the police:

1 Chief constables should ensure that the system used to transfer information to the CPS regarding the request for charging advice clearly identifies cases where, in accordance with the definition, the police consider a case to be a hate crime. Supt Jim Gale – Head of CJ& Force Lead for Hate Crime

2 Chief constables should ensure that all cases involving disability hate crime are accurately flagged in accordance with the Home Office counting rules for recorded crime. Supt Jim Gale – Head of CJ& Force Lead for Hate Crime (Progress has already been made on this as part of the response to the Crime Data Integrity Inspection)

3 Chief constables should ensure that there is effective supervision of all disability hate crime cases, to assure themselves that investigations and subsequent case file submissions to the CPS have been completed to an appropriate standard. Supt Jim Gale – Head of CJ& Force Lead for Hate Crime (This recommendation is already being progressed as part of the response to the PEEL Effectiveness Inspection)

4 Chief constables should ensure that victims are offered an opportunity to make personal statements in all relevant cases, and that, when appropriate, these statements are taken and provided to the CPS. Supt Jim Gale – Head of CJ& Force Lead for Hate Crime

Police and Crime Commissioner's comments

The PCC notes the Chief Constable's comments and the attention given by the Force to the areas identified in the report that need to be addressed.

Last year HMICFRS rated Devon and Cornwall Police as 'Good' for its effectiveness in reporting crime. This assessment demonstrated that the police have made good progress in improving the crime recording practices and the PCC echoes the Inspectorate's view that the police have been providing a considerably better service to victims of crime.

The PCC has made it clear in her Police and Crime Plan that reporting crime is an area of priority for Devon and Cornwall. In particular it is essential that victims of the most serious crimes such as those crimes that are generally under-reported such as hate crime have the confidence that the police will take their matter seriously. The public must feel sure that the courage of a victim to report a crime will be met with the correct response by the police in regards to accurate, timely crime recording processes.



Alison Hernandez
Police and Crime Commissioner
Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly