Independent Advisory Group
Meeting Minutes

Berkshire East Local Command Unit

DATE **22 September 2025**

TIME: **18:00 – 20:15**

Attendees	**Initials**	**Position and Area**
Chief Superintendent Steve Raffield	SR	LCU Commander
Supt Louise Warbrick	LW	
Sam Banfield	SB	Minute taker
AJ	AJ	IAG Chair
CF	CF	IAG member
HC	HC	IAG member
SA	SA	IAG member
PD	PD	IAG member
MS	MS	IAG member
JH	JH	IAG member
MB	MB	IAG member
JJ	JJ	IAG member
Apologies		
DL	DL	IAG member
AN	AN	IAG member
RB	RB	IAG member

Operational Update – Donald Trump Visit

- The recent Trump visit was managed under a separate command structure and represented the largest policing operation in Thames Valley Police (TVP) history, and nationally.
- Despite high demand and complex challenges, the operation was successful.
- A notable incident involved a projection onto the castle, which was premeditated but swiftly addressed.

- An officer engaged with an individual regarding a Trump-related post. A previous similar incident had escalated due to social media, drawing policing into debates around free speech.

Non-Crime Hate Incidents

- Louise Warbrick is reviewing the allocation and classification of non-crime hate incidents.
- National policing is considering its approach to these incidents, with a focus on balancing freedom of speech and public safety.
- Government criticism suggests a need for a common-sense approach, avoiding police involvement in minor online comments.
- LW is seeking legal advice this week to determine whether certain incidents qualify as crimes, particularly in relation to criminal records and data barring.
- A potential pilot with MET and Greater Manchester Police may explore recording intelligence rather than classifying these incidents as crimes.
- A central team currently assesses these incidents and decides on data collection. Transitioning to an intelligence-based system should still encourage public reporting.

Online Commentary and Public Perception

- A vocal online group continues to comment on the Grange Hotel, raising questions about the boundary between reasonable and unreasonable criticism.
- JH welcomed the collaborative approach with other forces and suggested public communication to raise awareness of police sensitivity to these issues.

Section 60 – Slough Incident

- A Section 60 order was issued in July following a stabbing in Slough.
- A scrutiny panel will review the rationale and impact of the order, especially where no outcomes were found.
- Improvements are underway to ensure Body Worn Video (BWV) footage is available for review. The last recorded use was in March, with five searches noted.

Clear, Hold, Build (CHB) Strategy

- Positive initial results in Langley have started to decline.
- Community feedback indicates a perception that improvements are temporary.
- Communication with the community needs enhancement.
- A Gold Group chaired by SR and the Chief Executive of Slough Borough Council is in place to monitor and respond.

- JH queried council resources; SR confirmed limited capacity but continuity from phase one is promising.
- CHB aims to disrupt organised crime and rebuild communities. However, broader issues like deprivation may require external funding (e.g. lottery, private sector).
- Collaboration with SBC and Children First is ongoing to support vulnerable families.

Local Command Unit (LCU) Update

- Initial transition period showed minimal change; however, summer demand increased demand.
- Frontline teams faced challenges due to leave and major operations (Henley, Ascot, State visits).
- Performance dipped as expected but is now stabilising.
- Rising costs (insurance, energy, salaries) are affecting service delivery.
- Bracknell station has become more proactive, with increased visibility attributed to LCU changes rather than the Grange Hotel.
- NH policing teams are encouraged to communicate these changes locally.
- Importance noted in maintaining focus on local-level incidents.

Action: Neil to provide updates on Safer Streets and Safer Langley initiatives.

Ride-Along Scheme

- AJ recommended participation to gain insight into officers' daily work and dedication.

Action: Share ride-along scheme link post-meeting.

Community Respect and Engagement

- MB expressed concern over declining respect for public services, even among young children.

Race Action Plan – Louise Warbrick

- A three-year plan is underway to strengthen scrutiny panels and community engagement.
- Focus areas include stop and search, use of powers, and transparency.
- Ethnicity recording and hate crime classification are key priorities.
- Data quality issues persist; improvements are needed in recording race, nationality, and crime type.

- New toolkits will support better reporting and monitoring.
- Scrutiny panels have conducted 320 reviews; target is 150 reviews per month.
- BWV footage will be used to assess officer-community interactions.
- Scrutiny panels for Out of Court Resolutions (OOCR) include youth and adult panels to evaluate outcomes and decision-making.
- Monitoring will include demographic trends and thematic areas (e.g. Domestic abuse, knife crime, hate crime).
- Internal focus includes complaints, recruitment, and retention.

Action: Neil to feed scrutiny panel outcomes into the next meeting.

LCU Scrutiny Priorities

- Embedding scrutiny work within LCU is a priority.
- BWV analysis will support narrative development and community engagement.
- Acknowledgement of areas for improvement alongside recognition of good practice.

Hate Crime Performance Overview

- Officers are to be reminded to select the correct qualifiers when recording hate crimes.
- A significant increase in the "disablist" indicator was noted, likely due to incorrect recording practices.
- Neurodiversity is currently captured under care data rather than crime data.

Action: LW to speak with AIU regarding the correct recording of qualifiers.

Underreporting of Hate Crime

- There is a recognised lack of confidence in police responses, contributing to underreporting.
- Nationally, it is accepted that hate crime figures are lower than actual incidents due to this underreporting.
- Communities may have developed a tolerance to certain types of hate crime, leading to normalisation.
- Given current social tensions, figures should be rising; the fact they are not may further indicate underreporting.

Independent Reporting Line

- Discussions are ongoing regarding funding from the ACC and Town Council to establish a dedicated reporting line.
- The aim is to provide a safe and accessible way for individuals to report incidents and feel heard.
- An independent reporting line has already been set up and is receiving a high volume of reports.
- Buckinghamshire has implemented a similar initiative, previously funded by a charity (OPCC), and collaboration may be possible.

Recent Events and Community Tensions

- Concerns raised regarding flags and symbols appearing in the community, causing discomfort.
- A WhatsApp group has circulated information about national movements (e.g., Reform, Unite the Union), contributing to fear and suspicion.
- Over 100,000 people attended a recent march in London, with some expressing anti-immigration views.
- Community members are questioning police response to these developments.

SR Update

- Community tensions are monitored both centrally and locally.
- Protest policing is managed under a separate structure and is risk assessed.
- Police involvement in flag-related incidents will only occur if the situation escalates into a criminal offence (e.g., racial abuse or threats).
- The police maintain an apolitical stance.
- Positive signs include community members self-policing and removing flags themselves.
- Although the focus is on immigration, other communities are also feeling the impact.
- Social media is contributing to the spread of misinformation and anonymity, increasing community anxiety.

Encouraging Reporting

- Communities are encouraged to report all incidents, regardless of severity, and allow police to determine appropriate action.
- Alternative reporting channels suggested include national helplines, religious institutions (churches, mosques, temples), which can relay information to the police.

Action: LW to share training details on hate crime reporting at Langley Pavilion.

Action: KB (CADO) to review and share available literature on different ways to report hate crime.

Vice Chair Appointment

- Members are invited to email AJ with expressions of interest in the Vice Chair role.