



LPA IAG Meeting Minutes

DATE: Wednesday 18th October 2023

TIME: 6pm-7.30pm

LOCATION: The Point, Central Milton Keynes

Initials	Position
AK	Chair
EB	TVP
NS	TVP
EBr	TVP
SB	IAG Member
TSC	Guest representing JS (IAG Member)
KM	IAG Member
AA	IAG Member
HS	IAG Member
TR	IAG Member
JS	IAG Member
RRK	IAG Member
ZM	IAG Member
NR	IAG Member
NA	IAG Member
AKt	Minutes
Apologies	
LP	IAG Member
JS	IAG Member
TJ	IAG Member
AK	IAG Member
TG	IAG Member

1. Welcome & Introductions: IAG Chair

AK welcomed those present, introductions were made and apologies given.

2. Previous minutes were ratified All

3. IAG Chairs Report: AK

The Cost of Living and the impact of Burglary was intended to be the main topic on the Agenda and was touched upon later in the meeting. However, due to events in the Middle East there was a change to the planned agenda and the main topic of the evening was Hate Crime, leading into the impact events in the Middle East are having in our local communities.

NS reminded everyone it is Hate Crime Awareness Week and Black History Month. TVP have been out in communities this week spreading awareness and sharing how to report a hate crime. There was a visit to the Inter-Faith café the previous weekend and MK College in conjunction with MK Council, talking about the Race Action Plan and Community Safety. There was a lot of footfall with a diverse attendance including Ukrainian, Russian and Polish. A visit to Wolverton Mosque, a coffee meeting in the LGBTQ+ Community and a planned event for Navratri at Broughton Temple and at Middleton Hall for Black History Month expand a busy week for TVP on this subject.

National Hate Crime Awareness Week online has a link where events can be shared and publicised. If anyone has any events planned locally they feel would benefit from Police attendance, please speak to NS.

EBr talked about how Hate Crime is dealt with giving an example of an occurrence earlier that day where a carer, who had attended a service user's home, was then racially abused by them, leading to Police being called. EBr described how the call was dealt with and the job allocated. EB informed the meeting that in a city of c. 300,000 people TVP typically has 3-4 Hate Crime reports a day and these usually stem from road rage or neighbourly disputes. Such crimes need attendance on the day and are reviewed daily.

There are nine protected characteristics, (age, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, sex/gender, marriage and civil partnership, religion or belief). If any of these are an aggravating factor in an offence, it is flagged as Hate Crime.

EBr went on to speak about a colleague who has had to deal with many incidents of racial abuse over the last three years and yet, despite this repeated hate, continues to come to work. EBr went on to talk about the support available in the Force for those suffering hate crime, including a new 24/7 hotline Oscar Kilo, due to be launched soon.

EBr talked about OP TARLAC and how the advice is if Officers are called to any incidents they are to remain neutral and avoid debate.

There is a clear commitment from TVP to deal with Hate Crime properly and thoroughly.

AK asked what steps are taken to train/update Officers on the 9 protected characteristics? EB explained that training is not periodic but rather ongoing and continual with Diversity and Ethics as ever present threads upon joining, promotion or transfer, in regular safety training, leadership training and as a career constant with regular CADO inputs.

AK asked if new recruits are allocated a mentor and EB informed the meeting that yes, all new recruits have a tutor for at least ten weeks who guides and supports them. In the past new Officers learned from experienced older Officers but we have a young in service force at present and this scenario is less likely nowadays, as in other public sector areas.

AK requested that new recruits visit the IAG and meet with the group.

AK asked the meeting if, in this cost of living crisis, anyone had noticed an increase in Burglaries or Fraud?

EB responded regarding a series of commercial burglaries in Wolverton and also dwelling burglaries in the East of MK recently. Since April 2023 there have been very few elderly victims in MK.

TR expressed frustration around the time taken to obtain CCTV footage following a commercial burglary and asked why so many CCTV cameras are not working.

EB replied that nationwide, there has been little investment in CCTV as responsibility for CCTV often falls down between the Police and Local Authorities, due to austerity.

JS explained that there is a CCTV Upgrade project across Thames Valley, starting in Oxford followed by MK. The Home Office periodically open bidding windows for Mosques to bid for extra security. This has been extended to Synagogues given the Israel/Palestine situation.

NS explained that Wolverton Mosque was awarded recently.

JS said CMK was a priority area but proper 24 hr monitored CCTV would be available to all MK.

TR asked that if there is an area of high crime, this should be prioritised. If a crime occurs, CCTV should be secured promptly.

EB made the meeting aware there are also 'crime wave' cameras available as opposed to only public space cameras.

TSC shared that the Gurdwara had benefitted hugely from Home Office funding for security last year including fencing and CCTV. Reporting all crime helped build a case for the application.

JS said bids are themed according to threat level.

4. LPA Commander's Update

EB

The LPA Commander's Update focused on the situation in Gaza. EB made clear that in the UK there is no hierarchy of any race or religion and there is no 'divide and rule' philosophy. Those present re-affirmed that we stand together against all forms of hatred. Boundaries from a Policing Perspective were discussed including distinguishing between the offence of parading a proscribed terrorist organisation flag (Hamas) and national flags (Israel and Palestine) that is not an offence. Any celebration of death or terrorism is not tolerated, nor is inciting violence. Policing a protest is challenging but there is a balance to be struck between the human rights of all.

In multi-cultural MK there is valuable community cohesion between faiths and reports of hate crime have not increased since the start of the recent conflict. However, in other cities it is a different picture. We must try and maintain the cohesion here.

AK agreed we are cohesive in MK. There are differences and we have some difficult conversations but we deal with those through partnership making us stronger. Both the Muslim and Jewish Communities have the same feelings and rights and we ought to dampen the hate. We must stand together to keep the dialogue going.

SB explained that the Synagogue Council hadn't been approached for an update around any issues but that, on the contrary, since the conflict began, they had experienced nothing but cohesion. Other faiths had been in touch to express empathy with no sign of any hate crime. The feeling of all being in this together and wanted to calm things down was mutual. Flowers

and messages of support online are much appreciated. This is what Milton Keynes does, we all get on and long may it continue.

AK concurred that on the IAG we feel comfortable to reach out to other faith communities. This is the partnership and indicative of the trust we have in each other.

We all have similar concerns about our legacy. What about our young generation?

Bad feeling and radicalisation can breed and we need to navigate those hard conversations and maintain our collective cohesion.

SB said we have individual responsibility but we also have a responsibility to our future generations, to teach them what is right.

JS spoke of the power of the internet and how hard it is for young people to know what information is correct. Consumption of online material can lead to radicalisation and absorption of dangerous information. JS gave an example of one person who had changed remarkably after contact with the Prevent Board. Early, often hard conversations need to take place. The Home Office 'Act Early' campaign is a great resource. Anyone can refer to Prevent, it is free, voluntary and no criminal record arises from referral. If you are concerned about children in your communities, get the referral in.

NR reminded everyone about the facility of self-referring to Talking Therapies as a source of support.

ZM remarked that the opinion of the family unit is most significant on children. Dialogue between faiths is essential. Open days at Mosques and the Synagogue are vital. The local organisation, 'Abrahamic Women' focuses on similarities within faith and friendships.

Is there a Palestinian community in MK?

AK: There are individual families here, linked to different mosques but no stand-alone community.

NS to seek links to the Palestinian families to provide reassurance

NA: All organisations are concerned with supporting staff with family overseas e.g. the NHS Intranet. Hard to find people as they keep themselves to themselves.

NS: Email regarding a Community Vigil at MK Rose for Muslim and Jewish Communities. Police can attend for engagement purposes but not to talk. Thoughts from IAG members were canvassed.

AK: There is also a meeting at Wolverton Mosque organised by AK, SB and TR

ZM: Middle East Community need to be included in the Vigil.

EB warned about too many people being at the meeting at Wolverton Mosque.

TR explained that it was important to get people together to air feelings around the frustration and helplessness being experienced. Talking is great but must be kept within certain parameters. You can express condolences and sympathies but support for historic injustice should not translate into anti-semitism. Combatting the misinformation on social media is vital to fight radicalisation and hate. Making a difference locally is very important so getting all Mosques together to talk about this is needed so we can reassure communities, including the Jewish Community. We need to get across that we want the cohesion to continue. People can protest, but there must be no vigilantism. Misrepresentation of the support for Palestine and the absence of the UN are not helping.

AK compared the situation to the Irish Conflict that took decades to get to the table.

All faiths coming together and co-existing is the way forward.

EB: Police will offer an impartial and proportionate response.

SB: Appreciation for the way TVP immediately made contact and showed support.

EB: Tell TVP, via AK, if anything brewing - we need to know please.

5. **Stop & Search Data:** nothing to report – to be carried over **EB**

6. **AOB** **All**

NA spoke about blood transfusion.

NR: Attended the Black Maternal Mental Health event at TG Church at the end of September which went very well. Much discussion was generated. That community will now be included in our Mental Health Awareness. A powerful and amazing event reinforcing the importance of partnership working; reminding and encouraging all present to contact NR to arrange discussions to raise awareness of mental health in communities.

RRK: Re: Force Review and restructure, Congratulations to EB on her promotion. Re: Neighbourhood Engagement Conference: MK came across exceptionally well. Congratulations to EL and CADO on an excellent presentation.

JS: Safer Streets Project has now launched. Bystander posters shared, 'You're right – that's wrong' designed to encourage night time economy users to call out the negative behaviours of their friends around sexual harassment. JS talked about the training package available.

Those present were reminded about the Black History exhibition at CMK on the 21st October.

AK – Thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 1925 hrs.

7. **Next Meeting date – Wednesday 13th December at 6pm** **Chair**

The meeting will be held at Wolverton Mosque.