

Introduction: -

APPENDIX C

In March 2011 Hampshire Police Authority attended the “Stop Disability Hate Crime Road Show” event held at the Sembal House Day Services Centre in Southampton. The event is part of a series of planned road shows taking place across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight that have been organised by Hampshire Constabulary and other partner agencies.

Aim: -

The overarching aim of Police Authority Community Engagement is to ensure policing by consent by reflecting the views of local people in the setting of policing priorities for the Constabulary.

The Police Authority has a statutory duty to engage with the public. By listening to the views and opinions of residents across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, the Authority can ensure that policies on policing reflect the services people want, and to this end, the results of engagement exercises undertaken in 2010/11 are fed into the policing plan process.

Objectives: -

To engage with disabled people to both understand and ascertain their key policing issues. To raise awareness within the disabled community of the role and responsibilities of the Police Authority.

The Authority sought to also raise awareness of and encourage Hate Crime reporting amongst the disabled community.

Methodology: -

To engage with disabled people informally at the “Stop Disability Hate Crime Road Show” event being held at Sembal House in Southampton through the provision of a stand at the event which provided information on the Authority, its work and Hate Crime reporting.

Response Rate: -

The event was attended by a number of people from the disabled community and their carers. We were able to engage with the community members informally through discussions and obtained a good selection of views and opinions about Hate Crime and policing in general in Southampton.

Background: -

Hampshire Police Authority provided Hampshire Constabulary with a crime prevention grant (from the Community Engagement Committee) of £3,000 to

organise a number of disability Hate crime road shows to take place across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Hate crime within Hampshire is broken down into the following 5 categories, race, sexual orientation, faith / religion, honour based violence and disability.

The numbers of recorded Hate Crimes against members of the disabled community are very low, this may be because disabled people are either unable to or unwilling to come forward and report any form of Hate Crime (or general crime) that they are a victim of.

This event seeks to encourage disabled people to report any form of Hate Crime that they are a victim of and to instil confidence within the community that the police will take them seriously and investigate any crime including hate crimes that they report.

To date there have been 5 Hate Crime road shows across the Constabulary area.

Executive Summary: -

- Encourage Hate Crime reporting
- Barriers to reporting Hate Crimes
- Police treatment of victims of Hate Crime
- Public intimidation

Main Report: -

Hampshire Police Authority attended the “Stop Disability Hate Crime Road Show” organised by Hampshire Constabulary at the Sembal House Day Services Centre, in Southampton. The event was part of the Police Authority’s Community Engagement programme for 2010 / 11. The event was also attended by a number of other partner agencies including Southampton City Council, Mencap and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The event is part of a series of planned Hate Crime road shows being organised by Hampshire Constabulary across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The Police Authority has provided the Constabulary with a £3,000 crime prevention grant to deliver these events.

At the event we spoke with a number of people (in excess of 50, including service users and their carers), and provided them with information on Hate Crime reporting, the autism alert card, how to make crime prevention grant applications and on the role of the Authority.

The aim of the event was to encourage Hate Crime reporting, we informed members of the disabled community and their carers that the police regarded disability Hate Crime as a big priority for themselves and were extremely interested in all reported incidents. For the police and other agencies to get a

clear understanding of disability Hate Crime and effectively deploy their resources it was essential that victims reported all incidents to help build up a clear picture of the problem within the community.

We informed them that if members of the community felt uncomfortable reporting disability Hate Crimes to the police there were other ways they could report, such as through local councils, anonymously or through a third person.

One disabled gentlemen at the event stated he did not want police officers coming to his home as his neighbours might watch and this made him feel uncomfortable. He was advised to go through other agencies to report hate crimes but didn't feel comfortable about this as he felt a third party may not be able to accurately report his concerns, he preferred face to face contact. The gentleman was advised that the new Southampton OCU HQ had new public friendly suites to report crimes and that his statement could be electronically captured using cameras.

A disabled lady that was a member of the Constabulary's IAG (Independent Advisory Group) felt that the number of Hate Crimes would be on the rise following the potential closure of day centres like Sembal House across the county due to the financial constraints of local councils.

The lady informed us that in her opinion the IAG's were working and that there was a drive to bring more community issues to the group but felt that the local police in Millbrook (Southampton) were appalling. She felt that older police officers with longer service records were much better than their younger counterparts with shorter service records, as the younger officers appear either not to care or be bothered about the community that they serve.

The lady recounted her own experience of the police when she was a victim of a Hate Crime. The lady stated that she'd been attacked in a disabled toilet by another woman, the initial officer in charge of her case was excellent however the case was then moved to another officer and that's when she began to encounter problems. She alleged that the officer never kept her informed and when she rang in for updates and had to argue just to speak to somebody.

Another disabled gentlemen from Bitterne explained that he'd had trouble for over 7 years with teenagers where he lived. He blamed the teenagers for anti social behaviour and criminal damage that he'd suffered, he alleged that teenagers had knocked down one of his fences which cost him £1600 to repair.

The gentlemen felt that disability Hate Crime was a low priority for the police as they would usually turn up the following day after he'd report an incident.

Anti social behaviour is a big problem where I live. He felt that the police were overly stretched on Friday and Saturday nights with policing the late night economy to be able to respond quickly to community issues.

“The teenagers are aware of this, they realise that they have 2-3 hours before the police usually turn up so just walk away before they do. If the police did manage to arrest them they’d just let them go”.

Another lady (who was a carer) commented how intimidated she felt when she parked her vehicle at a car park and attempted to purchase a ticket. A man stood by the ticket machine asking people for loose change she felt any vulnerable person would feel threatened.

Follow-Up Action (If Required):

- 1). To forward a copy of the report and its findings to the OCU Commander.
- 2). Thank you letter to Sembal House for hosting the event.
- 3). To forward a copy of the report to the Community Safety Manager.