

Introduction: -

APPENDIX D

Hampshire Police Authority with the support of PRENO (Portsmouth Race Equality Network Organisation) facilitated a number of focus group sessions with members of the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities who reside within Portsmouth. The sessions were held at PRENO's offices in Portsmouth over 4 days in June 2011.

The results of this engagement are provided within the body of this report.

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.

The Police Authority has a statutory duty to engage with the public. By listening to the views 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 2011/12 are fed into the Policing Plan process.

Objectives: -

To engage with members of Portsmouth's BME community, to understand and ascertain their key policing issues and concerns. To raise awareness within the BME community of the role and responsibilities of the Police Authority.

Methodology: -

To engage informally with members of the BME community through 4 focus group sessions. To ask all the participants within the focus groups a set of pre designed questions relating to their policing experiences and policing priorities.

PRENO recruited the participants on behalf of the Police Authority through an open invitation sent out to its network of contacts within Portsmouth.

Response Rate: -

The 4 focus groups were of various sizes; in total 36 members of the BME community attended the sessions. The demand to attend the sessions was high.

1 session was made up exclusively of BME women whilst the remaining 3 sessions were a mixture of individuals from various ethnic backgrounds, sexes and ages.

Background: -

BME communities are well established in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and are predominately concentrated in the north and south of the county of Hampshire. Historically BME communities have been hard to reach groups therefore it has been difficult to ascertain with certainty what their policing views and priorities are. Members of the BME community are much more likely to be victims of hate crime but are highly unlikely to report these crimes to the police.

The Police Authority approached PRENO¹, to help it organise and run the sessions in Portsmouth. PRENO helped to recruit the participants for the sessions and provided their offices as a neutral venue for the Authority to hold the sessions at.

Summary of Issues: -

- Disparity of service between BME & white communities
- Perception of police stereotyping
- Poor police intelligence (in relation to stop and search)
- Senior officers need to return to the frontline for a reality check
- BME communities do not report crimes due to a lack of confidence in the police
- Police follow up to reported crimes / incidents is poor
- Reporting crimes / incidents to the police is too bureaucratic
- Frontline line lack basic engagement skills
- BME communities need to reconsider their expectations of the police
- BME Communities want increased communication from the police

Main Report: -

Hampshire Police Authority with the help and support of PRENO organised and facilitated 4 focus group sessions in June 2011 with members of BME community living in Portsmouth. Individuals from various BME communities were invited to the focus group sessions to share their experiences of policing

¹PRENO's seeks to promote race equality in Portsmouth and South East Hampshire by empowering minority communities to have an effective voice and promoting good practice among service providers.

The organisation act as a representative forum for black and minority ethnic communities. To present common issues to and work with service providers to improve their work on race equality and faith issues, particularly to ensure both jobs and services are fully accessible to members of the local black and minority ethnic community.

in Portsmouth and their policing priorities. This engagement activity is part of the Police Authority's community engagement programme for 2011/12.

We asked the participants in each group the same set of pre designed questions that we'd prepared in advance. The responses to the questions are found below. The complete list of questions can be found attached to this report in the appendices.

- Q1). When you hear the word "police" what does this mean to you?

The participants response to this question were mixed

- I feel fear when I hear the police
- Authority
- Police represents the state
- Safety, they look after people any problems they try to resolve them
- Trouble, the police come to sort out problem
- The police are there to prevent crime
- Dread
- Someone I should be careful with
- Erratic in the delivery of service
- The police are there to keep law and order
- Waste of time

The majority of responses tendered to be more negative than positive. The participants were asked an additional question (not within the original set of pre prepared questions) to clarify why they had chosen to answer the way they did. Some of the common themes are listed below.

Many participants felt that initially when they heard the word "police" they would be in fear however they'd quickly realised that the police were there to help, by resolving community issues, acting as trouble shooters and trying to prevent crimes from occurring.

Some individuals felt fear because they didn't know what was going to happen; they felt that they were in a bad situation or that something was wrong.

"From a personal point of view when hearing the word police, I feel fear because it means I live in a troubled area. On a public point of view they associate the police in an area as being bad"

"Trouble, police come to sort out the problem, they are trouble shooters"

"The police are there to prevent crime to make sure crime is not committed"

The opinions of some participants (who were from abroad) had been formed due to their experiences of policing in other countries, they felt that they would

be treated in the same manner as the police would treat them in their counties of origin therefore they were fearful of the police.

There were some mixed feelings about the police, participants felt that there were some officers who were there to protect them whilst others who misused their powers and position.

“There are police who protect us and there are police who use their powers for evil”

Service delivery and trouble were key reasons behind some of the answers to question 1. Some individuals felt that the service response was disproportionate depending on the type of incident.

“Some big problems take 24 hours to attend with small problems there is a quick response time”

“The word police means erratic in delivery of service to me”

Others felt that the police were trouble and a waste of time.

“The reason I said trouble I came here in 1974 and on the street we used to see lots of police, now a days the police come and see you again and again the result is nothing, it is a waste of time”

It is quite evident that for a majority of the participants their views on the police have been formed by their experiences in this country and abroad and that initially participants have a negative view of the police but digging further it is clear that participants realise that the police have an important role in serving and protecting the community however experiences of the service by members of the BME community is varied.

- Q2). How do you feel about the police?

We asked the participants to reflect on their answers to question 1 and to let us know what they actually felt about the police. Below are some of the common themes that came out of the discussions.

Some participants felt that the police in Portsmouth are helpful and friendly that they are approachable and doing their jobs however if they explained their actions, the public would understand and appreciate that they have a tough job to keep communities safe.

“A car was stolen from a member of the BME community, it was reported to the police and was found 20 minutes later, this was seen as good service”

Other participants felt that the initial service provided by the police was good and the follow up actions such as reassurance visits backs, call backs, letters

providing details of who to contact if further help is needed as well as ensuring that victims / witnesses are o.k. were regarded as excellent.

But the majority of participants felt that the police treated them unequally due to their race and class status. The perception was that the police stereotyped members of the BME community and within that BME sexes were treated unequally also by the police.

“The police judge you by the way you dress, if English isn’t your first language they stereotype you as an immigrant. It was felt that if you are born in this country and know the law you can challenge the police and often that they back down but if you aren’t from this country the police take advantage of your lack of knowledge by asking numerous questions about your immigration status, why do the police do that?”

“If you’re BME but are British born and you have a bit about you, you know what your rights are. They know that the police can’t get away with some of the stuff and the respect level drops down and then again it goes if you’re dressed ethnically again a judgement is made”

The general consensus was that the police treat BME communities unequally compared to how they treat white communities .The way the police ask questions made some participants feel as if they shouldn’t be in this country, it made individuals feel scared as if they’d done something wrong.

“I don’t feel like we are respected by the police regardless of our immigration status”

“Some people are racist if they know you are an immigrant they don’t respect you”

Within all the groups the unanimous feeling was that numerous events had occurred in the past from which the police service should have learnt (e.g. the death of black men in custody suites), yet the police haven’t learnt anything from these experiences.

Other individuals from the 4 groups had mixed feelings about the police, some have good experiences some have had bad experiences. Feelings about the police depend on each situation. A lot of people felt that if you call the police about minor issues like ASB they are quick to respond however if you call them about serious issues they ignore you, they don’t turn up or turn up after a considerable amount of time has elapsed.

“Some officers that come to mosque are good and others are not so good, they ask silly questions when we report crime which we don’t get response from, if they had looked they would have seen we have had many incidents happened before”.

“Some times the police ask strange questions and we think why bother reporting crime especially as the process of reporting crime seems bureaucratic, sometimes it seems complicated. We have both positive and negative views of the police.”

“On one occasion the mosque was attacked by someone and some officer came quickly and on some occasions they just ignore it”

One individual explained her mixed experiences with the police, a negative experience was being stopped by the police in her vehicle. The officer asked if she had been drinking and she replied no, they asked her to produce her papers but she recently had her bag stolen from her vehicle which contained all her papers. She explained this to the officer who instructed her to produce her papers within 7 days at a police station or pay a penalty. She contacted the various authorities to ask for new papers and got a copy of everything apart from the driving licence which she was informed would take more than 7 days to process. She arrived at the police station and had to wait for a period of time before she was seen but even after she explained the situation received a lot of hassle from the officers at the station. .

On another occasion, it was late and she was driving home with her children and she was flashed by the police to stop but didn't feel comfortable doing so, so she acknowledged the police and drove home. She explained to the officer that she felt unsafe stopping in an unknown part of town, the officer was happy with her explanation. The officer asked her for her papers which she couldn't find, the officer said that was o.k. and checked all her details over the radio.

The individual felt that in the last few years the police have become much more approachable and helpful and wasn't sure whether this was due to training. Previously she was hesitant to talk to the police.

The perception of the majority of participants is that the BME community get a lesser service than the white community, when the police are called nothing happens. Individuals stated that they do not have the time to continually call and wait for the police to turn up.

An example was provided to illustrate the disparity of service provided by the police. Two neighbours a black man and a white woman believed that their post was being stolen, the black man went to the police to report this. The man was informed he needed to contact the post office as this wasn't the responsibility of the police. The women went to the same police station and front desk where her details and complaint were taken and investigated by the police who liaised with the post office to find out what was happening with her post.

“There are many areas in Portsmouth where there aren’t BME people. If a white man phones the police to report there is a black man wondering around they will be there in 10 seconds but if a black man reports a white man wondering around they will be there in 30 minutes. There is a different police service for different communities”.

“There was a demonstration outside the mosque and that day they were fantastic they took control of it. But minor trouble I have called quite a few times I spent some time with the officer then they keep coming back and still nothing happened because of the time because the police are very busy I had to give them another call but the end result is nothing”.

An individual who was a victim of a racist hate crime, contacted the police, it took them 15 – 20 minutes to attend. The individual was so shaken by the incident that they had to be escorted home by a PCSO, the police couldn’t find the perpetrator and affected their confidence in the police.

“I feel not very good because I personally don’t feel I can trust them to come when I need them. I don’t think that they necessarily believe people with colour readily as opposed to people who aren’t”

Some individuals felt that due to the distance between the police and BME communities they couldn’t trust the police to come to their aid or believe the police are treating them fairly. They unanimously agreed that the police lack basic knowledge about the BME communities that they serve.

“I don’t feel very good about the police, I can’t trust them to come when I call them. I distrust the way they treat you”

“black communities wherever you are from I don’t think they feel safe”

“Personally I just don’t like the whole policing system. When it is 6 pm I have to be in the house, I do not like getting out either walking or driving. I just don’t feel safe. I fear that somebody will attack me and when that happens the police aren’t helpful. So I lock myself in my house”.

The manner by which the police conducts its business has a big impact on how the public perceive them to be. An individual recalled an experience of his friend who was a community leader. His friend was stopped by armed police in his vehicle was forced to the ground and cuffed in front of numerous members of the public. His friend was taken to the police station and after an hour was released because the police realised that they’d made a mistake. This particular individual ended up leaving Portsmouth, he couldn’t live in the city because of the shame he felt of being arrested in front of his community members, even though he was innocent and the police apologised.

Numerous other examples were provided by the participants where the level of service they had received was in their opinion of a low or poor standard,

examples included incidents where the victim has alleged that the police had asked them to go and find the suspects themselves and then bring them to the attention of the police otherwise they'd close the case (victim care?), examples where the police had failed to bring crucial evidence to court cases, victims not being updated about cases therefore being left in the dark about their situations, failure of police officers and PCSOs to get back into contact with victims or keep pre arranged appointments.

Participants weren't aware that they could or how to complain about the service that they received from the police. The participants felt it was important that BME communities be educated about what their rights are so that communities know how to make complaints. Many BME communities overly respected the police because they believed they couldn't complain.

The majority of participants felt that the police didn't provide them with a good service some participants felt that communities need to look at the pressures on the police and reassess their own expectations of the police. It was generally agreed that police resources are shrinking whilst the demands on the police service are increasing, communities needed to balance their expectations as many participants felt that BME communities expected far too much from the police compared with white communities.

- Q3). In the past have you had any interaction with the police? If so what type of interaction was it?

Almost all the participants had had some form of interaction with the police service in the past, this included interactions with police in Hampshire, outside of Hampshire and abroad. We asked participants to solely focus on their interactions with Hampshire constabulary. On balance the majority of the interactions were negative, there were some participants who'd had positive interactions but these were significantly out weighted by those who hadn't.

The majority of interactions relate to being stopped by the police on the streets, in vehicles or calling the police for help. Several examples were provided by participants many of whom felt that they had been unfairly targeted by the police. An extreme example provided was of a man being stopped and jumped on by a group of police officers. One of the officers recognised the individual from the day before as he had received diversity training from him and the individual was released, it was an apparent case of mistaken identity.

An individual had finished work late one evening and was approached by two white individuals offering to sell him drugs which he declined. He saw two police officers and informed them that he'd just be offered drugs to purchase. He pointed the individuals out to the officers and was happy to be a witness and make a statement, the officers turned around and walked the other way, the individual was surprised by this as he felt he was doing the right thing.

Many of the other participants in the group felt that if the people selling the drugs were black then the police would have intervened.

Another example of interaction was provided by an individual who contacted the police after his bike was stolen. The police arrived to take details and said that they would return the following day to take a full statement. The individual alleges the police returned 6-7 months later to take his statement.

“Did I get this response because I am part of the BME community? Also what are the police going to do after 6 months? What evidence are they going to get after 6 months?”

- Q4). How do you contact the police if you need them?

The majority of participants would contact the police by telephone, calling 999. We informed them that for non emergencies they should call either 101 or 0845 045 45 45. If a police station was close by then participants would speak to some one in person but no body would contact them by e-mail.

- Q5). Has anybody ever been stopped by the police?
- Q6). How would you describe your experience / treatment by the police?

The responses to questions 5 & 6 have been grouped together.

Numerous participants from all the groups had been stopped by the police and they shared their experience with us, these do not include experiences shared before in this report.

An individual who had been stopped and breathalysed claimed she felt angry and patronised by the officer dealing with her; he gave her the plastic tube that she blew into as part of the test as a souvenir. Another lady felt bad after being stopped in her vehicle with her husband, she didn't know why nor was informed why they'd been stopped.

“I feel scared of the police. I have been here for more than 23 years and I still don't feel very secure”

Another individual stated that they felt embarrassed at being stopped and searched by the police, they felt humiliated as everyone on their estate was looking at him being searched. A man who was stopped in an affluent part of the city stated that after he'd been stopped the police made him feel that because of his colour he shouldn't be in that part of the city.

A lot of the participants stated that the police had informed them that a number of black people were coming from London to sell drugs in Portsmouth, that's why they had been stopped. The participants felt that the

argument from the police, they are looking for a black person selling drugs isn't a good enough reason to base a stop on.

"My son and two of his friends were searched, they were thrust to the floor and had guns pointed at their heads for nothing and then released. At the best the explanation we get is that we thought you were drug dealers from London"

The police need to recognise that there are many shades of black and their intelligence needs to be a lot better, e.g., what is the person wearing, what height are they, what is their build etc. Call handlers need to ask more questions when taking down detailed descriptions of suspects, this needs to be built into their training. Their needs to be a greater focus on intelligence led policing.

"If a white person is causing a disturbance are the police going to stop and arrest 70 white people walking down Fratton Road because one white person is causing a disturbance?" No they are going to look for the white man who's description they have, why can't they do the same when it comes to dealing with black people?"

The belief is that the police treat BME communities poorly, examples of this were provided. A BME man was chased and arrested by the police, he had his car impounded and spent a day in a cell. The police let the individual go because they realised they made a mistake however the individual had to pay a release fee to have his car released; he couldn't as he didn't have the money, and he subsequently lost his job because he couldn't get to work.

It was felt that training didn't make a difference when it came to the attitude of the police towards many BME communities, it was seen as just a tick box exercise and that nothing changes as a result of the training.

A number of the participants had met senior police officers before but were fed up with their excuses in relation to how their frontline officers were treating BME communities. It was felt that all senior officers do is either apologise or say I'm new in post, some participants did sympathise with senior officers as it was impossible for them to check on all their officers.

"you find at senior level they will say my police officers are not racist but you get people who are racist and have different prejudices in all different occupations and all different communities. So you may have this goodwill at a senior level but its how it filters through to frontline officers. We might have inspectors saying that there is no racism in this police force and we don't tolerate it but how is this filtering through and what kind of training. The senior officers need to get out onto the streets and look at what their officers are doing. Why don't the police employ mystery shoppers?"

"My only hope is that probably things will get better if we have minority police officers"

- Q7). Do you know what a hate crime is?
- Q8). Has anybody been a victim of a hate crime?
- Q9). Do you know how to report a hate crime?

The responses to questions 7 – 9 have been grouped together.

Virtually everyone knew what a hate crime² was and that they could report such crimes to the police, only a few of the participants knew that they could also report hate crimes to other agencies, such as the council, crime stoppers and victim support. The majority of people had suffered some form of hate crime in the past. Individuals shared their experiences of hate crime with us.

“My wife was walking along the street when two white men threw stones at her and my daughter. We called the police but no one turned up to see us. When I saw my wife she was so upset that my daughter ended up telling me what had happened”.

An individual was racially abused by two girls at a job centre, she reported this to the centre manager, who called the police. The manager provided the police with a description of the girls and luckily there was CCTV footage. The officers dealt with the two girls and bent over backwards for the individual.

“I would say 10 years ago if somebody had called me names in the street I wouldn't have bothered to report it. You just think by the time you get to the police station by the time you get seen by somebody or is available to take a statement to be then be told was there any witnesses? No. Did you know who did it? No. Can you identify them? No. They just said it and walked on. You think my time is also important to me. I know how important it is to report hate crime as it is part of my job. I know the importance of reporting it, it is about the police and statutory services knowing actually there is a problem and we need to put some resources to make sure this doesn't happen. But that's just through my job. 10 years ago I wouldn't have bothered”

Another individual had her house and car windows smashed and her car spat upon several times, she reported this to the police who did come out but stated they couldn't do anything.

One participant stated that she knew many black males who'd been victims of hate crime (both verbal and physical attacks), however the males would never report it to the police because they don't like the police, they have a very low

² Any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate, based on a person's race, religious belief, sexual orientation, disability or transgender, or a persons perceived race, religious belief, sexual orientation, disability or transgender.

regard for the police and don't believe anything will happen as a result of making a complaint.

The participants realised that police resources are stretched and are going to get even further stretched in the future due to government cuts. When the police have to deal with all the incidents that accompany a Friday or Saturday night they are unlikely to be able to send an officer to see you if you're a victim of hate crime was the opinion of one participant.

The participants felt that Portsmouth was very insular and unlike other major cities with minority communities, lacked resources and was in the bottom quartile for everything from employment to education nationally, therefore challenging the mentality of people was much more difficult.

Some of the participants felt that the local council inadvertently fuelled hate crime by placing communities into predominately white areas without any help which causes resentment within the host community.

One participant felt that Portsmouth as a city wasn't ideologically racist but had a casual form of racism which appeared to be acceptable, this low level form of racism is fuelled by politicians and national newspapers because the country is in a recession.

Educating young people at a young age about diversity and multiculturalism was seen as a positive method of challenging hate crime.

- Q10). How satisfied are you with the policing service provided by Hampshire Constabulary?

Satisfaction levels varied between the groups but the majority of participants weren't satisfied.

Of those who claimed that they were satisfied the reasons behind this were, their general experience of the police had been good and often they'd see officers at community meetings informing the public how to be safe, a lot of individuals felt that the police were doing a good job and acknowledged that there were bad apples in every profession but that the overwhelming number of police officers were good.

"I am generally satisfied with the police service as we have good relationship with the police in my community. Although we are not saying the police are perfect. When we have had to deal with the police it has been a good thing".

"Police in Portsmouth do a good job. There are many people who come into Portsmouth so I understand that they need to know who's who".

But the majority of people weren't satisfied with the service, reasons for this were, if you need immediate help from the police they don't arrive quickly, the

initial police response is good but the follow up is bad. The individuals strongly perceived there was a disparity of service between communities.

One individual stated that "if you have a problem in the night the police don't come out, they say they will come out the next day. The police don't respond or communicate with you when you make an enquiry. The person doesn't complain because he doesn't have the time to complain, if he had the time then yes he would complain. The police promise you that they are coming but you wait and wait and no one turns up".

An individual asked how long do you play the game of complaining to the police, it takes a lot of time and money, they felt that if you complain then in the future the police would mark you down as a complainer and if you needed their help the police wouldn't help you. The individual ended by saying that if they tell the police their job title they get a quicker response.

Religious institutions are the centre of a community and one individual felt that the police should give these places priority if they are being attacked. When the Mosque is attacked and we don't get the service that we expect it has a negative impact on the Muslim congregation. The individual felt that if the police got a call from a church they would respond.

"The people in my community think that they get a poor service from the police because of their ethnicity and religious background".

"I am satisfied with the response but unsatisfied with the follow up because you call the police they come out and someone takes your details and off they go to investigate and then that's it, you end up chasing them what's happening with my case? Where are we? Is it going to court? Has an arrest been made? They say yeah some one will come round and give you an update no one phoned. Now I appreciate they are busy and they have other jobs to go to, something comes up unexpected, all it takes is a 5 second phone call to say I'm not going to come so please don't waste your time waiting in for me. Something as simple as that".

Some participants had mixed levels of satisfaction with the service. One individual felt that the police could use a bit more discretion and some times overstepped the mark but on the whole was satisfied with them. Another individual felt that the service was good but needed to be more reflective of the community that it served.

Safer Neighbourhood Teams officers are regarded as excellent, they make an effort to get to know communities and build bridges but fast response officers are regarded as individuals who undo all the good work and need to work on their approach to dealing with BME communities.

- Q11). What crimes do you think the police should prioritise?

The police should prioritise the following crimes:

All forms of violent crime, hate crimes, drugs, drink driving however it was felt that the police should also focus on low level high volume crimes and incidents that affect a person / community every day. These are regarded as slow burning issues but have a major impact on a person / community (such as anti social behaviour).

The police should focus their resources where there is a problem in the community, if 20 people complain about hate crime on Fratton road the police should divert more resources there.

- Q12). What can be done to improve the relationship between the police and BME communities in Portsmouth?

A number of options were put forward by all the participants which they felt would help to improve the relationship between BME communities and the police in Portsmouth.

The participants felt that greater transparency and accountability from the police would be beneficial. If the police make mistakes they should be honest and admit those mistakes and try to learn from them. Police officers initial training / induction programmes should be revisited, diversity shouldn't be a single workshop or something that is looked at years later in an officer's career. Diversity training should have a larger segment of initial training for officers. Officers should be instructed to continually refresh their skills about BME communities, this includes senior officers who need to know what's happening on the frontline.

Police officers appear to be getting younger and younger however these officers lack the basic skills to effectively engage with or understand the BME communities that they serve. Officers shouldn't attempt to misguide people when it comes to their rights, officers shouldn't use the excuse that it takes too long to write out a C12³ as a reason for not providing an individual with a copy of the form.

The police should try to improve their response times to incidents and their and keep victims informed. The police should provide some clear details of how long it will take to respond to non emergency calls. The police should also inform people within two days of reporting an incident either by telephone, letter or in person if they are going to investigate a complaint or not. With emergency calls the police should attend as quickly as they can, even if the police can't do anything a quick response would provide community reassurance and boost confidence.

³ If the police stop and search a member of the public they must write out record of the stop and provide a copy to the person stopped, this is know as a C12 form.

The police should provide greater emphasis on prioritising crimes that affect BME communities such as hate crime because the effect on a person's mental and physical health as a result of being a victim is immense. Officers should engage with and talk to BME communities a lot more, officers are often seen in two's or three's but they don't make eye contact with BME people or make an active effort to interact with them.

The participants felt that BME communities had to lower their own expectations of the police, communities need to realise that government cuts will also affect the police service but the police also need to be honest with the communities, if they can't come quickly to an incident or can't do anything for an individual they need to be upfront about this.

Senior police officers need to be honest with communities. BME communities will not be impressed by power point presentations from senior officers about how the service respect BME people, respects cultural differences, respects diversity and welcomes engagement with the whole community when senior officers know that frontline officers don't deliver this.

"Get your frontline staff to deliver or get the senior management to stop talking rubbish because that's what is causing the friction and tension".

It was felt if the police could improve their communication with BME communities by only 10% this would make a big difference, individuals or victims of crime shouldn't have to chase the police to find out what is happening with their complaint, the police should have an effective system to update people. The police should embrace new forms of technology to communicate with people, talking to communities not only BME communities is a positive that the police should embrace.

Participants felt that more people from BME communities should apply to become police officers, this could help bridge the gap between BME communities and the police, as the service would be more reflective of the community that it serves. However BME people should only be recruited on merit not because they are part of an ethnic community.

The police need better intelligence if they intend to stop a BME person, for the police to say that they are looking for a black person isn't good enough, they need further details, what shade of colour is a person, height, weight, clothes any distinctive characteristics. If you were looking for a white person from London selling drugs the police wouldn't stop every white person that got off the train?

Community confidence suffers when well established community police officers are moved. Good officers should be left where they are (if they choose to remain) rather than be moved.

Community members should be encouraged to patrol with frontline officers or visit the force control room to experience policing so that they can understand the pressures and challenges that the police service faces.

Educating young people about multiculturalism and diversity, especially BME children so that they have the confidence to approach the police for help and not view them with suspicion.

Follow-Up Action (If Required):

- 1). To forward a copy of the report and its findings to ACC TO.
- 2). To forward a copy of the report to PRENO.
- 3). To forward a copy of the report to the area C/Supt, Supt & C/I.
- 4). To forward a copy of the report to the Community Safety manager.

“It would be better to see more of them on the streets and more reflective of the communities that they serve”