

# Partnership working

This page is from APP, the official source of professional practice for policing.

First published 20 October 2020 Updated 15 May 2023

Written by College of Policing

7 mins read

Chief officers, alongside their police and crime commissioners (PCCs), can use their influence to build effective partnership working, particularly with individuals and groups who have influence within communities.

Statutory partnerships are at the core of joint working. Statutory organisations share the same legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, section 149, which states that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

See also:

- [Strategic leadership](#)
- [Supervision and oversight](#)

## Benefits

Statutory partnerships can:

- facilitate information and intelligence sharing, helping to quantify hate crime geographically or within a specific section of a local population
- prompt agencies with community safety responsibilities to develop and deliver a coordinated safety package for actual and potential victims of hate crime

- prevent duplication of service delivery by different agencies
- produce a consolidated approach to accessing additional resources

## Practice example – Partnership working

Some police forces and partners have established a public protection partnership similar to the domestic abuse multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) process, so that partners can work together to share information, assess risk and agree actions to reduce the risk associated with serious or repeat hate crime. This structure can be especially useful in responding to repeat victims, high-risk individuals or emerging trends in hate crimes.

Because of the nature of hate crime, particularly in serious cases, a swifter, more flexible approach may be needed than in other areas of crime reduction. Formally scheduled meetings may be too infrequent to be effective and not responsive to risks. Partnerships meetings are, however, still valuable, but may need flexibility to facilitate early intervention.

Police should seek to create partnership links with all communities in their areas. The key to this is involving a spread of partners, including groups and individuals that other agencies cannot reach.

This will help to achieve:

- sustainable relationships between the police and minority communities to work together to address local hate crime problems
- ongoing dialogue to increase community confidence and generate a flow of community intelligence
- openness and transparency, providing the police with a better understanding of the impact hate crime has on the community. It also helps the community to understand the constraints and legal requirements within which the police are required to work
- joint ownership of problems and solutions, providing an opportunity for partners to share hate crime initiatives, promoting further collaborative effort

Joint training and secondment opportunities can enhance understanding of all stakeholders and improve the effectiveness of the police response to hate crime. Internal staff support networks can also offer a valuable link between the police and the local communities they live in.

The [\*\*True Vision website\*\*](#) has a range of downloadable tools (based on practice developed across policing) that can assist in developing partnerships. These products include guidance on how non-statutory groups can be engaged to establish effective partnerships.

## **Working with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)**

As well as routine contact with the CPS to support case building and charging decisions, police forces and the CPS should work together on hate crime.

At force level, this includes regular dialogue between chief constables and chief crown prosecutors. Force hate crime leads regularly engaging with CPS Area Hate Crime Coordinators; and force leads attending CPS Area Local Scrutiny and Involvement Panels. Nationally, the CPS attends the Hate Crime Group of force regional chairs led by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) hate crime lead.

### **Practice example – ‘Punish a Muslim’ letters**

In March 2018, a spate of letters that promoted a national day of extreme violence against Muslim citizens, encouraging like-minded offenders to join in, were posted on social media and received significant media coverage.

A multi-agency ‘Gold Group’ was established to address the potential harms caused by the letters. The Gold Group included partners, such as Tell MAMA, academics and the national Independent Advisory Group, as well as government and law enforcement representatives.

The Group determined that the most significant risk was that an unknown individual would be motivated by the letters and would commit an act of violence. It was recognised that normal mass communications seeking to reassure the Muslim community may increase the risk, and undermine the investigation to identify the perpetrator.

Drawing on advice from partners, the national lead agreed a number of actions. These included a specialist media strategy that targeted only affected communities, reducing the risk of wider media coverage. This was supported by the use of existing local police networks and community coordinators to distribute messages to affected local communities, seeking to reassure communities that the police were taking the matter seriously.

Community tension and fear was high, but using partners to shape the policing response helped to mitigate the risk and fear of harm. Subsequently the perpetrator was identified, convicted and received a lengthy prison sentence.

## Problem solving in partnerships

The police need to tackle hate crime and non-crime hate incidents by seeking to address the underlying problem. Partnership approaches to the reduction of hate crime lend themselves to problem-solving methods.

### Scan analysis response assessment

The scan analysis response assessment (SARA) approach is one method used for problem solving in the police service. Applying this will help to ensure that hate crime problems are effectively identified and tackled without wasting time and resources. Its use should be explained to partners to help them work with the police to tackle local problems.

The use of intelligence can inform effective problem solving, see [Intelligence](#).

For further information see [College of Policing \(2013\) The effects of problem-oriented policing on crime and disorder](#) and [College of Policing \(2018\) Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines](#)

### Specialist advice

Officers and staff should establish and build professional relationships with those organisations and individuals who have comprehensive knowledge and expertise concerning specific aspects of the monitored or non-monitored strands relevant to their area, or even subsets of particular monitored strands, for example, autism as opposed to physical disabilities.

Setting up, for example, a disability independent advisory group at force or agency level, or having disability representation on independent advisory groups at basic command unit or borough level should be considered.

Local user-led organisations or voluntary sector groups can also offer expertise and independent advice.

See also [Community engagement and tension](#).

# Tags

Hate crime