

Tension meetings to monitor and mitigate community tensions

Implementing daily tension meetings using the experienced, evidenced and potential (EEP) model to improve the identification, assessment and management of community tensions.

First published

7 September 2026

Key details

Stage of practice	Untested
Purpose	Organisational
Topic	Hate crime Community engagement Special operations
Organisation	Greater Manchester Police
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Region	North West
Partners	Police Community safety partnership Local authority
Stage of implementation	The practice is implemented.
Start date	January 2026

Key details

Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Communities

Aim

The aim of the initiative is to identify and assess tensions across the force area, mitigate risks, and ensure relevant information is shared both internally and with national partners.

Intended outcome

The intended outcomes of the initiative are to:

- improve the approach to tension scoring
- improve the workforce's understanding of force-wide tensions
- improve district-level situational awareness of tensions across other areas
- improve the ability to identify and mitigate tensions at the earliest opportunity

Description

Greater Manchester Police (GMP) identified a need to provide updates on community and policing tensions at force-level planning meetings and through reporting to the national community tension team (NCTT). The force had systems in place to monitor hate incidents, intelligence, community feedback, and serious incidents. However, these issues were often managed locally by individual districts and not routinely escalated or assessed at a force-wide level. GMP also identified an increase in protest activity relating to a range of issues, including migration and international events.

In response, GMP established a daily tension meeting on Microsoft Teams, which is attended by district leads at chief inspector and inspector rank. The meeting is led by the force prevention branch and coordinated by the Operation Wildstone team, which oversees additional funding to support the protection of Jewish communities.

Each meeting has a set agenda to discuss:

- hate crimes
- tensions
- protests
- incidents of note
- new community impact assessments

GMP may include specific agenda items in response to national or international events that have the potential to impact the force area.

During the meetings, the force uses the experienced, evidenced and potential (EEP) model to assess tensions within each district using the following criteria:

- experienced – focuses on historical context, local knowledge and ongoing community engagement to understand existing local dynamics and any previous grievances.
- evidenced – uses force data, official reports and intelligence to assess tensions within each district
- potential – considers what may occur in the future based on upcoming events, planned protests or longer-term developments, such as regeneration projects

Once each district has been assessed, the data is recorded on the force's crime management system. The daily tension meetings provide attendees with an understanding of tensions across each district, improving situational awareness and providing a force-wide overview. By bringing together representatives from all districts, the meetings help identify tension patterns that cross geographical boundaries and recognise common themes in community concerns and disturbances.

The assessment from each district is reported through Operation Element, a national initiative managed by the NCTT to monitor and assess local community tensions, hate crime, and risks affecting vulnerable faith communities. Force-level updates are also shared through other briefing forums, including the weekly protest meeting.

Cost and resources

There have been no additional costs associated with the development and implementation of the daily tension meetings. Attendees are required to contribute approximately 15 minutes each day.

Overall impact

GMP has observed an improvement in the quality of submissions and contributions to protest planning meetings. The daily tension meetings have supported more informed decision-making in relation to operational activity and responding to protests.

The initiative has also been expanded to include local authorities and the combined authority, providing a broader overview of tensions and enhancing situational awareness across each district.

Feedback from the workforce has been positive, with many welcoming the use of the EEP model to inform planning and decision-making. Further feedback from districts has highlighted increased awareness of issues across the force area and provided a mechanism for seeking support and sharing good practice.

Learning

- Once the daily tension meetings had been established and were regularly attended by district chief inspectors or inspectors, it became easier for the force to maintain consistency in the assessment process and improve the understanding of community tensions. Where a representative is being replaced, they will often shadow their predecessor to gain an understanding of the role and meeting requirements.
- It is recommended that tension meetings are held as frequently as required by the force. GMP currently holds meetings on weekdays, with the option to reduce the frequency to a weekly basis if appropriate.

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