



Safe to Share? Liberty and Southall Black Sisters' super-complaint on policing and immigration status

Response from The Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire to recommendations 5 and 6 made to Police and Crime Commissioners. Submitted to HMICFRS 3rd December 2021.

Recommendation 5.

To chief constables and police and crime commissioners (or equivalents) With reference to recommendation 1, pending the developments outlined in other recommendations, and in consultation/collaboration with local or national specialist organisations, chief constables and police and crime commissioners should take steps, through the appropriate channels, to promote migrant victims' and witnesses' confidence in reporting crimes to the police through safe reporting pathways, without fear of prioritised immigration control.

Response:

Lincolnshire Constabulary will release communications based on the NPCC guidance on information sharing with the Home Office where a victim or witness of crime is a suspected immigration offender. There will be a specific focus on the following extract of the guidance:

When an individual reports to the police that they have been a victim/ witness of crime the focus of the police will always be:

- *To investigate the allegation the victim/witness has reported; and*
- *To put in place such reasonable measures as are necessary to protect the victim / witness from harm.*

Officers will not routinely search police databases for the purpose of establishing the immigration status of a victim/witness or routinely seek proof of their entitlement to reside in the UK.

When a victim/witness is suspected by an officer of being an immigration offender, their status as a victim/witness does not change. The focus of the police will remain to investigate the allegation the victim/witness has reported and to put in place such reasonable measures as are necessary to protect them.

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner will support the force with their communication strategy internally and externally.

Recommendation 6.

To police and crime commissioners (or equivalents) Conduct an assessment of local access to specialist victim support organisations or networks and take any necessary steps to build up such networks.

Response:

- The Police and Crime Commissioner leads on commissioning support for victims of crime in the county. A review of all services has been completed to ensure there are links with services who provide support to migrant victims of crime. A county wide victim needs assessment will commence in January 2022 to inform the future re commissioning of the Outreach Support Service. The assessment will include a review all referral pathways and a further review of accessibility to support services.
- In response to the identified themes and issues identified in the Ministry of Justice guidance to commissioners on supporting BAME victims the OPCC is undertaking a range of



activity. Although originally focussed on racial disparity, the principles have been extended to address disparity experienced by individuals with other protected characteristics.

- The OPCC have recruited a 'Safer Together' Team who are based within communities; a specific part of their remit is to engage with individuals, groups and organisations who we have historically called 'hard to reach' to build trust, better understand the community issues and raise awareness of the services and support available to them.
- The OPCC are consciously seeking to engage with those who may be under-represented in our engagement/consultation activity by using a variety of comms channels and linking with community leaders and groups to share messaging about services. Critical to this is making sure communications are representative/culturally appropriate
- The OPCC hold victim support providers to account in terms of who is accessing their support through review of demographic data; age, gender, race, disability etc. in contract meetings
- The OPCC chairs a quarterly Service Provider Network which brings together key individuals from organisations who support victims of crime in Lincolnshire (regardless of commissioning arrangements) The Network encourages collaborative working between organisations, sharing of best practice and raises awareness of support services