

# Summary of MEND's Police Crime Commissioner Manifesto 2016



[www.mend.org.uk](http://www.mend.org.uk)

**mend**

# Summary of MEND's Police Crime Commissioner Manifesto 2016

**This document is a summary of the key points in MEND's recently published Police and Crime Commissioner Manifesto. The full manifesto can be viewed at:**

**[www.mend.org.uk/pcc-manifesto-2016](http://www.mend.org.uk/pcc-manifesto-2016)**

**A list of MEND's pledges for PCCs is contained in Appendix 1**

## **A. So what is actually happening in May?**

On Thursday 5 May, the electorate in England and Wales will go to the polls to elect 41 Police and Crime Commissioners. The elected post, first contested in November 2012, will give local communities the opportunity to have their say on the delivery of policing services in their local area.

## **B. What do Police Crime Commissioners (PCCs) actually do?**

Police and Crime Commissioners are responsible for delivering an efficient and effective police force in their constabulary region. They have powers to appoint or dismiss Chief Constables, are responsible for the creation and delivery of a local police and crime plan and for the allocation of a police force budget. They are there to ensure that community needs are met as effectively as possible by working in partnership with a range of agencies at the local and national level to prevent and reduce crime.

## **C. What matters to British Muslims when it comes to PCCs?**

MEND's PCC manifesto covers 3 key areas of concerns to British Muslims. They are:

**1. Tackling Islamophobia** – This covers the need for proper recording of Islamophobia; the importance of individuals reporting Islamophobic hate crime to the police to address the problem of under-reporting; training for police officers to record hate crimes and support victims; the necessity of providing victims third party reporting centres that are accessible and known; and appointing 'specialist' officers to work with victim groups affected by faith-based hostility.

**2. Community policing** – This covers the impact of security measures such as 'stop and search' and 'Schedule 7' on British Muslims as well diversity and recruitment drives by police forces and Muslim representation on Independent Advisory Groups, which work with constabularies to address the impact of all of these issues on local communities.

**3. PREVENT and Channel** – This largely covers the PREVENT programme and the new statutory duty on authorities to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism;" referrals to the Channel programme (part of PREVENT) and the frustrations of British Muslims on matters related to this aspect of the counter-terrorism strategy.



## D. A brief overview of the key issues in the manifesto

### 1. Tackling Islamophobia

MEND's analysis of data published by police forces, the Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW), amongst other data sets, reveals that data collection on anti-Muslim hate crime is inadequate and fails to reflect the true scale of Islamophobic hate crime occurring in the UK.

The introduction in April 2016 of a new recording process which will see Islamophobia recorded as a separate category of crime, as proposed in our 2012 manifesto, provides a opportunity for all forces to address the issue of hate crime recording systems and accurate data collection on Islamophobia.

Recording anti-Muslim hate crime relies upon **proper training of police officers** to correctly identify the bias motivation and to consider the **victim's perception** of the perpetrator's hostility. The introduction of the new recording system must be coupled with better training for officers.

Third party reporting centres play a vital role in marginalised communities which may struggle to report hate crime incidents directly at their local police station. Our assessment of **third party reporting centres in 41 constabularies** in England and Wales shows that **provisions for Muslim communities** is far from satisfactory. Working with Muslim communities to improve provisions for hate crime reporting must be a priority in all forces' local hate crime strategy.

The announcement by the Prime Minister of **new funding** to be made available for security measures for security at **"faith establishments"** is welcome and local Muslim communities must be supported in funding applications to secure premises such as local mosques and Muslim schools from Islamophobic attacks.

The **far right** continues to present a major threat to Muslim communities with convictions for murder, serious assault and arson serving as a reminder of the criminal actions of individuals motivated by anti-Muslim hostility. Low-level intimidation that accompanies on-street protests by far right groups in town and cities across the country and the drain on police budgets of policing protests is a further area that needs attention by incoming PCCs. In our analysis of annual reports published in the period 2013 - 2015, we found **little evidence** of a local strategy for tackling the far right. From information available under FOI and from open sources (not exhaustive), we found that between 2013 and 2015, constabularies spent **over £9.5million** in costs for policing far right protests.

### 2. Community policing

Despite suggested recommendations on the use of stop and search powers and the threat of statutory legislation to limit its use in a bid to improve stop-to-arrest ratios and curtail disproportionate use against ethnic minorities, stop and search continues to show evidence of 'institutional racism'. Muslim communities continue to face disproportionate use of terrorism stop and search powers, Section 43 (TACT 2000) and Schedule 7 stops and search. The impact on

community policing of stop and search excesses, which fall foul of the 'Best use of stop and search scheme,' will need careful attention to enforce compliance with the Equality Act and, where relevant, the requirement for 'reasonable suspicion' as well as tackle 'unconscious bias'.

The Vision 2020 strategy, which supports BME communities in employment, education, apprenticeships and recruitment to the police force, sets ambitious targets for increasing diversity in police recruitment. Small steps have been taken by some forces to open up recruitment to BME applicants but figures show that the police force remains predominantly White.

Achieving the targets in the Vision 2020 strategy will require a greater drive to increase recruitment and considered attention on the retention and progression of BME officers if they are to be represented better in senior ranks.

Consultative forums in the form of **Independent Advisory Groups** are a brilliant mechanism to provide forces with 'critical friends' and a broad range of advice during 'critical incidents' but while IAGs are intended to reflect communities in the force area, a **lack of transparency** on composition

renders it difficult to ascertain whether communities are represented, and indeed, by whom. Greater transparency is vital to ensuring IAGs perform effectively in the purpose for which they are designed: a forum for dialogue between a local force and the local community.

### 3. PREVENT and Channel

The introduction of a statutory duty on PREVENT across a range of specified authorities, such as schools, hospitals, prisons, probation services, universities and local authorities has extended the 'securitisation' of relations between police officers and local communities. Interaction is most keenly felt in relation to Channel, the controversial programme which deals with individuals deemed 'at risk' of 'vulnerability to radicalisation'.

We have found that the number of **Channel referrals for children aged 10 and under and 11 to 15 (inc) has increased by 700% and 258%** respectively in the period 2007 - March 2012 and 1 April 2012 - 10 Dec 2015. The number of referrals of children aged 10 and under from two regions with **large Muslim populations, North West and West Midlands, accounted for 51% of all referrals** between April 2012 - 10 Dec 2015. The number of referrals of children aged 11 to 15 (inc) from the North West and West Midlands regions accounted for almost 40% of all referrals between April 2012 - 10 Dec 2015.

Questions about the quality of training provided to agencies and frontline officers to prepare them for the enforcement of the statutory duty and the basis on which referrals to the Channel programme are made have come under sustained scrutiny as stories abound about pupils being spoken to by Prevent officers without parental consent or being referred to the Channel programme for innocent mix ups in spelling or speech.

Data on Channel referrals is frequently denied when requested under Freedom of Information. Data disclosed by the National Police Chiefs Council shows that **only 1 in 5 of those referred to the Channel programme between April 2007 and March 2014 required "supportive interventions."** That means 80% of referrals exited the system at the preliminary assessment stage. This is an unusually high number of unwarranted referrals raising serious questions about training quality and the impact on innocent victims.

The available Channel referral data also reveals the high proportion of referrals that come from the education sector, compared to all other sectors. 75% and 68% of all Channel referrals of children aged 10 and under and 11 - 15 (inc) between April 2012 and 10 Dec 2015, respectively came from the education sector.

Publishing Channel data on constabulary websites on an annual basis can bring much needed transparency to this area of policing and can guard against intrusive inquiries and unjustified referrals to a counter-terrorism intervention programme.

## E. Conclusion

The Government's announcement of Islamophobia being recorded as a separate category of crime is timely, however it just the first step in a long road to better understanding the extent of Islamophobia and therefore, effectively tackling it.

Better training of police officers, the centrality of the victim's perception on bias motivation, 3<sup>rd</sup> party reporting centres serving Muslim communities and a more extensive focus on the far-right are all areas requiring dramatic improvement. We have also highlighted improvements needed with stop-and search and particularly with Schedule 7 which ranks as one of the most despised counter terror measure among British Muslims with little evidence to demonstrate its effectiveness in combatting terrorism. Finally, we looking at the ill-conceived PREVENT programme and referrals to Channel and have called for more transparency in this area, alongside serious consideration about how widely spread yet devoid of detail the PREVENT net is, leading to an extremely high number of unwarranted or unnecessary referrals.

## F. What Next?

MEND working groups across the UK will be hosting community awareness events regarding the PCC election and also hustings with candidates. It is vital you support this endeavour and maximize community participation alongside candidate accountability. More information can be found at MEND's dedicated 'Get Out And Vote' election website [www.getoutandvote.info](http://www.getoutandvote.info).

### APPENDIX 1: Pledges for PCC candidates 2016

#### On Tackling Islamophobia:

- Commit to a training programme for police officers to properly identify and record anti-Muslim hate crime.
- Commit to evaluating third party reporting centres and improve provisions for Muslims to report hate crime in their local area.
- Commit to appointing an officer with speciality training on racial and religious hate crime to work with Muslim communities to improve hate crime reporting, incident investigation and community partnerships.
- Commit to supporting improvements to security at Islamic places of worship and Muslim schools.
- Commit to addressing the threat posed by far right groups and right wing extremism, including on- street protests and social media forums that foment anti-Muslim prejudice.

#### On Community policing:

- Commit to enforcing the 10 recommendations proposed by HMIC on improving the use of stop and search and compliance with the 'Best use of stop and search scheme'.
- Commit to train officers in detecting 'unconscious bias' to improve stop and search 'hit rates' and consistently demonstrate grounds for 'reasonable suspicion'
- Commit to increasing recruitment, retention and promotion of BME officers with clear plans to improve diversity at senior rank.
- Commit to improving Muslim participation in consultative forums including in Independent Advisory Groups.

#### On Crime and security:

- Commit to publishing comprehensive data on Channel referrals annually on the constabulary and [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk) websites.
- Commit to holding regular public meetings with local communities in order to dispel the lack of transparency about Prevent delivery and enhance on trust and confidence in police roles in programme delivery.
- Commit to consulting with local Muslim communities on local crime and policing strategy.



# mend

Bow Business Centre    Tel. 020 8980 4591  
153-159 Bow Road        email: [info@mend.org.uk](mailto:info@mend.org.uk)  
London E3 2SE             [www.mend.org.uk](http://www.mend.org.uk)



Find out more. Visit our website or  
join our online community and  
add to the discussion.



[/mendcommunity](https://www.youtube.com/mendcommunity)