

Written evidence submitted by National Black Police Association (MEM0018)

**Northern Ireland Affairs Committee**  
**The Experience of Minority Ethnic and Migrant People in Northern Ireland**

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The NBPA is grateful to the Committee for the opportunity to be able to present its submission to the Experience of Minority Ethnic and Migrant people in Northern Ireland inquiry.

1.2 The Metropolitan Black Police Association was formed in 1997 and the NBPA was formed the following year. We currently have approximately 5000 members including Police Officers, Police Community Safety Officers (PCSOs) Police Staff and civil servants. The aim of the NBPA is to promote good race relations and equality of opportunity within the police services of the United Kingdom and the wider community. Our objectives are to:

- Advise, consult and intervene on matters of racism nationally, which have negative effects on communities.
- Work towards improving relationships between the Police and Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities within the United Kingdom.
- Influence the direction of policies nationally and in line with equality issues and anti-discrimination.
- Work towards improving the recruitment, retention and progression of officers and police staff members within the police service.

1.3 By way of background, as President of the National Black Police Association. I am also a serving PSNI Inspector with 21 years-service and also Vice Chair of the EMPA. Therefore, on behalf of the EMPA and Minority Ethnic Communities in NI as President of the NPBA I welcome this inquiry; in the hope that it is able to finally bring to centre stage the issues facing minority ethnic communities in NI which have been shamefully neglected for so long. This submission outlines the concerns of the NBPA which includes our Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) members (Ethnic Minority Police Association, EMPA) and is underpinned by the terms of reference helpfully set out by the Inquiry.

**2. Context**

2.1 Whilst Black and Minority Ethnic people have lived in NI since the 1930s<sup>1</sup>. NI has sadly been excluded from British race equality legislation due to repeated assertions from NI Home Secretaries from the 1960s onwards that in Ulster '*racial discrimination does not, in fact, exist*'<sup>2</sup>. As such, whilst the UK enacted the 1965 and 1976 Race Relations Acts, NI policy makers in effect segregated the region from the development of the British race relations discourse<sup>3</sup>. This has meant that there has been a historic and continued neglect of race issues within NI. The result of which, has been a continual denial of protection, societal prejudice and state neglect<sup>4</sup>.

2.2 The NBPA and the EMPA believe that the continued neglect of race issues, has facilitated the discriminatory and poor outcomes faced by Black and Minority Ethnic Communities. As such the

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<sup>1</sup> Crangle, J (2018) 'Left to Fend for Themselves': Immigration, Race Relations and the State in Twentieth Century Northern Ireland, *Immigrants & Minorities*, 36:1, 20-44,

<sup>2</sup> R.W.B. McConnell, "Memorandum for the Cabinet by the Minister of Home Affairs on the Proposed Westminster Bill on Racial Discrimination and Incitement to Racial Hatred," March 4 1965 (PRONI HA/8/1950).

<sup>3</sup> Crangle, J (2018) 'Left to Fend for Themselves': Immigration, Race Relations and the State in Twentieth Century Northern Ireland, *Immigrants & Minorities*, 36:1, 20-44,

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*

NBPA and the EMPA echo the view of Geraldine McGahey, Chief Commissioner of the NI Equality Commission, that,

*“The Covid 19 pandemic has highlighted that data disaggregated by race to inform changes to law, policy or service provision is currently limited. We need better data on race, collected and kept separately so that we can identify and address inequalities in fields such as health and social care and also education, housing, employment and participation in public life”<sup>5</sup>.*

2.3 Through listening to and working with diverse communities in NI, we understand their lived experiences as those lived experiences are shared by ourselves as Black and Minority Ethnic police officers and staff working in NI.

2.4 We have been so concerned about the slow pace of change in relation to race issues in NI and the concerns and fears of Black and Minority Ethnic Communities. That we are currently working together with community groups and a civil society organisation to look at how we can collectively, bring change to encourage positive attitudes to difference in order to tackle prejudice and institutional racism to ensure that all people who visit, live and work in NI feel valued, safe and protected. The NBPA and EMPA hope that this overdue inquiry into the experiences of Ethnic and migrant people in NI facilitates much needed transformational change.

### 3. Issues

#### **Ethnicity in NI**

3.1 In 2001, for the first time, the Northern Ireland census contained a question on ethnicity. This revealed, that, of a total population of 1.685,267 (1.685 million) 99.2% were white and 0.8% belonged to minority ethnic groups<sup>6</sup>(0.2% Chinese, 0.2% mixed ethnic groups; 0.1% Indian and 0.1% were Irish Traveller). The 2011<sup>7</sup> census presented a number of changes to the demography of Northern Ireland, an increase in the total population from 1.685 million to 1.811 million. Of which 98.21% were white; and 1.8% (32,400) of the population were from minority ethnic groups (0.35% Chinese; 0.34% Indian; and 0.07% Irish Traveller<sup>8</sup>). This was more than double the proportion in 2001. Since 2004, Northern Ireland, like other parts of the UK, has seen an increase in immigration from Eastern European countries. This has been coupled with an increase in its small but growing community of people from Black Minority Ethnic Backgrounds, specifically Asian and African Muslims. The 2014-15 European Refugee crisis coincided with an increase in anti-immigrant sentiment were recorded in NI, UK and Europe (Doebler et al 2017:2<sup>9</sup>)

#### **Sectarian and Racial Hate incidents**

3.2 In approaching and understanding racism in Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Government in its Race Equality Strategy 2015-2025, identified the link between sectarianism and racism;

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<sup>5</sup> Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (17<sup>th</sup> June 2020) Northern Ireland – What can we do about racism

<sup>6</sup> Northern Ireland statistics and research agency (19 December 2002) Northern Ireland Census 2001 Key Statics Report, Press release, pp5.

<sup>7</sup> Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (11 December 2012) Census 2011, Key Statistics, Statistics Press Notice.

<sup>8</sup> Northern Ireland Census 2011 Key Statistics Summary Report (2014) Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency pp40.

<sup>9</sup> Doeber, S., McAreavey, R and Shortall, S. (2017) Is racism the new sectarianism? Negativity towards immigrants and ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland from 2004-2015, Ethnic and Racial Studies, 2017, Routledge.

We must bear in mind, however, that racism in our society is shaped by sectarianism and while there is much to learn from other jurisdictions about in addressing racism, the context for racism here is different to that in Great Britain or the Republic of Ireland. The conflict here has created patterns and attitudes – such as residential segregation and heightened territorial awareness – that now impact upon minority ethnic communities. We acknowledge the link between sectarianism and racism and that we cannot hope to tackle one without the other<sup>10</sup>.

3.3 There is no statutory definition of ‘hate crime’<sup>11</sup> in Northern Ireland’. Latest published data 2021<sup>12</sup> reveals that a decline in racist incidents and crimes between the periods 2009/10 and 2011/2012 has been replaced by annual increases between the periods 2011/12 and 2014/15, 2018/19 and 2020/21. With the period 2020/21 recording the seventh highest number of crimes and the eighth highest number of incidents in the data series<sup>13</sup>.

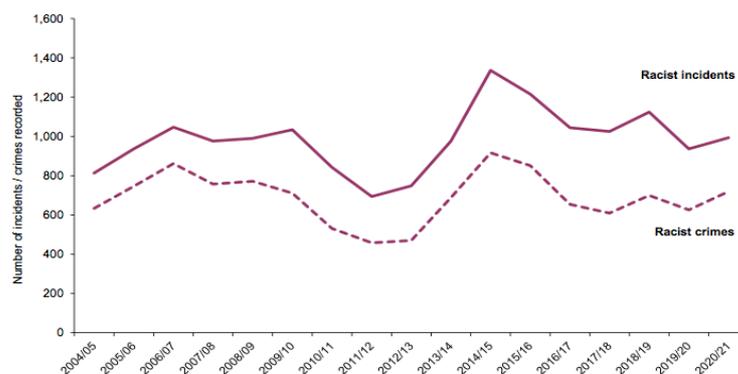


Fig 1

Trends in racist incidents and crimes recorded by the police since 2004/05

Source: PSNI Statistics Branch (14 May 2021) Incidents and Crimes with a Hate Motivation recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland Update to 31 March 2021 p5

3.4 In the 12 months from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31 March 2021, **993** racist incidents were recorded by PSNI which was **57** more incidents than the previous 12 months. There were also **719** racist crimes recorded by PSNI an increase of **93** recorded cases from the previous 12 months.

3.5 Whilst the proportion of racist crimes where the victims are in the 18-29 age category has fallen. There has been a rise in the proportion of victims in the age category 30 and over<sup>14</sup>. Furthermore, since 2007/08 there has been a general increase in the proportion of racist crimes where the victims are female from 30% in 2007/08 to 41% in 2017/2018 for the period 2019/20 the proportion of female victims of racist crimes has been 39%<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, (2015) Racial Equality Strategy 2015-2025 pp11

<sup>11</sup> In England and Wales a hate crime is defined as ‘any incident which constitutes a criminal offence, perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by hostility or prejudice’ Home Office, 2017, Hate Crime England and Wales 2016/2017 .

<sup>12</sup> PSNI Statistics Branch (14 May 2021) Incidents and Crimes with a Hate Motivation recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland Update to 31 March 2021

<sup>13</sup> Ibid pp5

<sup>14</sup> PSNI Trends in Hate Motivated incidents and crimes recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland 2004/05 to 2019/20 p14

<sup>15</sup> Ibid

Motivation	Total number of incidents recorded			Total number of crimes recorded		
	Apr'19 to Mar'20	Apr'20 to Mar'21	change	Apr'19 to Mar'20	Apr'20 to Mar'21	change
Racist	936	993	57	626	719	93
Homophobic	272	366	94	195	246	51
Sectarian	888	934	46	639	674	35
Disability	99	90	-9	72	58	-14
Faith/Religion	41	39	-2	15	26	11
Transphobic	64	71	7	34	34	0

Fig 2

Overall summary of hate motivated incidents and crimes

Source: PSNI Statistics Branch (14 May 2021) Incidents and Crimes with a Hate Motivation recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland Update to 31 March 2021 p4

3.6 Whilst there is an increase in race hate crime, it is the outcomes of race hate crime which are concerning. Changes to the evidential standard following the establishment of the Public Prosecution Service and restrictions in the use of disposal methods has resulted in a fall in the outcome rate for racist crime from 20.5% in 2005/06 to 11.4% in 2007/08<sup>16</sup>. Worryingly, outcomes for crimes with a racist motivation are lower than the outcomes for **all** crimes recorded by the police notwithstanding crime types (Fig 5). Since 2006/07 charge/summons outcomes constituted between 74% and 87% of all sanction outcomes<sup>17</sup>.

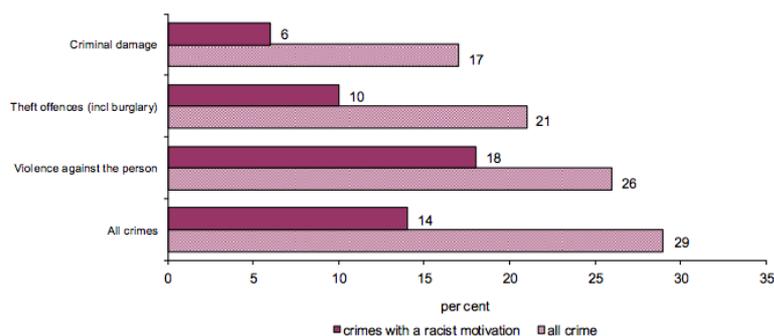


Fig 5

Outcome rates by crime type, racist motivated crimes and all outcomes related by the Police, 2019/20.

Source: PSNI Trends in Hate Motivated incidents and crimes recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland 2004/05 to 2019/20 p17

3.7 Latest published data for the period, 2019/ 2020, **936** incidents recorded with a racial motivation, of which, **384** did not involve a crime and the remaining 552 consisting of one or more crimes. Furthermore, two of every five incidents recorded in 2019/20 did not result in a crime being recorded<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>16</sup>Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, Police Service Northern Ireland, Trends in Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland 2004/05 to 2016/17, Annual Bulletin published 12 January 2018 ,pp16

<sup>17</sup> Source: PSNI Trends in Hate Motivated incidents and crimes recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland 2004/05 to 2019/20 p15

<sup>18</sup> PSNI (November 2020) Trends in Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland 2004/05 to 2019/20. Pp11.

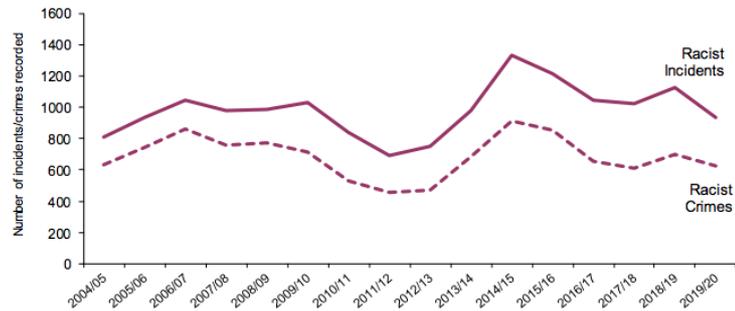


Fig 6

Trends in racist motivated incidents and crime, 2004/05 to 2019/20

Source: PSNI Trends in Hate Motivated incidents and crimes recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland 2004/05 to 2019/20 p7

#### 4. Northern Ireland Legislative Framework – Differences in Legislation between NI and the UK

4.1 The NI legislative framework on hate crime is complex and not comparable to the UK<sup>19</sup>. In England and Wales the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) led to introduction of racially aggravated offences; assaults, criminal damage, public order offences and harassment. The amendment of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998); led to the introduction of the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act (2001) and the inclusion of religiously aggravated offences<sup>20</sup>. These offences are additional to provisions within the Criminal Justice Act (2003) which provide for enhanced sentencing for protected characteristics e.g. race; religion and the Public Order Act (1986) which creates offences whereby *'conduct that is likely to stir up hatred'* on grounds of race and religion.

4.2 The main differences between the NI and the UK are centred on the fact that the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act (1998) do **not** apply. Therefore, there are no racially aggravated offences added to assaults, criminal damage, harassment or public order offences. In the UK, The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 made these offences **stand alone** and chargeable offences when a racial or religiously aggravated motivation was present. This differs from Northern Ireland in that similar offences are **only** looked with aggravating factors during sentencing and **cannot** be charged or proceeded with as a racially aggravated offence.

4.3 Furthermore, there are no public order offences, which cover threatening, abusive or insulting words with an intent to stir up racial hatred. Disorderly behaviour is an option when racially abusive words are used in public places. The offence concerns behaviour, which is not orderly. However, whether it meets the threshold of being an arrestable offence or proceeded with by the criminal justice system is **dependent** on the individual officer or prosecutor. Even when disorderly behaviour is proceeded with; there is **no** offence for a police officer to arrest when racially threatening or abusive words are used in private places, **unlike** the rest of the UK, where Section 4, 4A and 5 of the Public Order Act bridges this gap in the rest of the UK. **It is this legislation that is required to deal effectively with race hate crime and other occasions when abusive or threatening words are used in private places in Northern Ireland.**

4.4 There is growing national and international recognition of the need to deal more effectively with race hate crime in NI, Amnesty International<sup>21</sup> (2016); Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland<sup>22</sup> (2017) Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission<sup>23</sup> (2016) UNCERD<sup>24</sup> (2016).

<sup>19</sup> Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (December 2017) Hate Crime: An Inspection of the criminal justice systems response to hate crime in Northern Ireland, pp18.

<sup>20</sup> College of Policing (2014) Hate Crime Operational Guidance, pp 11

<sup>21</sup> Amnesty International UK (2016) Tackling hate crime in the UK – A background briefing paper from Amnesty International UK

<sup>22</sup> Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (December 2017) Hate Crime: An Inspection of the criminal justice systems response to hate crime in Northern Ireland

4.5 The Criminal Justice Inspectorate Northern Ireland (2017) review of Hate crime<sup>25</sup> made a series of recommendations; of which the most pertinent (in relation to this submission) are as follows;

- The Department of Justice (DoJ) should as soon as possible conduct a review of the existing legislative response to hate crime to provide clarity. Any review should include consideration of the statutory aggravated offences model that already exists in England and Wales.
- The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) should use hate crime specific scenarios when training officers on interviewing victims and witnesses to improve their understanding of the barriers and how these may be overcome in pursuit of achieving best evidence.
- The PSNI and the PPS should continue to closely monitor hate crime file quality and work together to ensure that where evidence from victims and witnesses is available, it is collected and presented effectively.

4.6 In its concluding observations, the UN Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2016) made the following recommendations to the UK Government including the Government of NI in relation to racist hate speech and hate crimes,

(a) Investigate all reported acts of racist hate crimes, prosecute and punish the perpetrators with sanctions commensurate with the gravity of the offence, and provide effective remedies to victims;

(b) Systematically collect disaggregated data on hate crimes, ensure that measures to combat racist hate crimes are developed with the meaningful participation of affected groups, and undertake a thorough impact assessment of the measures adopted to ensure their continued effectiveness;

(c) Adopt concrete measures, in consultation with affected groups, to increase the reporting of racist hate crimes by ensuring that the reporting mechanism is transparent and accessible, and that victims have trust in the police and the justice system;

(d) Taking into account the Committee's general recommendation No. 35 (2013) on combating racist hate speech, adopt comprehensive measures to combat racist hate speech and xenophobic political discourse, including on the Internet, particularly with regard to the application of appropriate sanctions, and ensure that public officials not only refrain from such speech but also formally reject hate speech and condemn the hateful ideas expressed so as to promote a culture of tolerance and respect<sup>26</sup>.

4.7 In its response to the UNCERD, the Northern Ireland Government<sup>27</sup> in 2017 made clear its commitment to review the legislation on racially motivated crime with a view to strengthening the law, including online hate speech.

**4.8 We therefore eagerly await the NI Government's response to the Independent Review on Hate Crime Legislation in NI<sup>28</sup> which concluded in December 2020 and the implementation of its**

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<sup>23</sup> Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (July 2016) Submission to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Parallel Report on the 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> Periodic Reports of the United Kingdom under the International Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination.

<sup>24</sup> United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (26 August 2016) Concluding observations on the twenty-first to twenty-third periodic reports of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland CERD/C/GBR/CO/21-23

<sup>25</sup> Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (December 2017) Hate Crime: An Inspection of the criminal justice systems response to hate crime in Northern Ireland, pp9-10.

<sup>26</sup> United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (26 August 2016) Concluding observations on the twenty-first to twenty-third periodic reports of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland CERD/C/GBR/CO/ pp2-3

<sup>27</sup> Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration (2017) United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD) Ireland's combined 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> periodic Report pp16

<sup>28</sup> Marrinan, D. (December 2020) Hate Crime Legislation in Northern Ireland

## recommendations.

4.9 Whilst Northern Ireland has a Race Equality Strategy 2015-2025 there are longstanding concerns from political parties, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and communities of the slow pace of change and most importantly the **lack of a review** on progress. The debate in the Northern Ireland Assembly on 7th July 2020 echoes this point,

*"Does the deputy First Minister appreciate that the failure to progress the review of the racial equality strategy does little to dispel the notion that equality is not a priority for the Executive Office and that, particularly given the over-zealous approach by police to the Black Lives Matter protest and the inconsistency of that with their approach to other recent mass gatherings, institutional racism exists here?"<sup>29</sup> **Justin McNulty Social Democratic and Labour Party***

*"We all have a job to do to make sure that we stamp out racism in society. We all have a job to do everything that we can. That is the responsibility of us all as political representatives. The fact is that the racial equality strategy covers the period from 2015 to 2025, and, as is acknowledged in the strategy, we are under no illusion about the size of the challenge that is in front of us in tackling racial inequalities. That will require time, effort and resource. The racial equality subgroup has been appointed, along with the racial equality champions in each Department. Obviously, that is good. We continue to work closely with them to implement the key actions in the strategy. In addition, a review of the Race Relations Order 1997 and relevant aspects of other legislation is under way. A review of the delivery model of the minority ethnic development fund is nearing completion. Work is ongoing again with the Department of Education to identify ways in which we can tackle racist bullying in schools. In the coming months, we plan to consult on a draft refugee integration strategy. We are also considering proposals for ethnic monitoring to help to identify potential inequalities and any underlying causes. I am happy to take on board any concerns that the Member has. I am happy to receive them at any time with regard to how we can improve things and do all that we can collectively to stamp out racial inequality". **Michelle O'Neil, Sinn Fein**<sup>30</sup>*

4.10 In 2014, the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in 2014<sup>31</sup> outlined recommendations for changes to the race equality legislation. **To the present date, there is still scant information on progress.**

4.11 There have been widespread community and civil liberty concerns around the inconsistent and disproportionate handling of Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests in Northern Ireland (NI) on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2020 compared to that of Cenotaph Protection groups who assembled outside City Hall on 13 June 2020. The concerns are rooted in the fact that there are longstanding issues on the approach of Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) to race hate crime as exemplified by the fact that it has not recommended legislative change which was confirmed to the Northern Ireland (NI) Department of Justice (DoJ) during consultations in 2016. Enforcement was used to deal with BLM with little restraint resulting in over 70 Community Resolution Notices (CRN) and COVID 19 FPN being issued. BLM organisers were cautioned under the Serious Crime Act (SCA) 2007; legislation used to deal with organised criminal gangs who cause the most serious harm to communities. This was in sharp contrast to Cenotaph Protection protests where **no** COVID 19 FPN's were issued and the organisers were not cautioned under the SCA 2007. This stark

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<sup>29</sup> Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (August 2014) Race Equality Law Reform: Strengthening Legal Protection (Key Point Briefing)

<sup>30</sup> Ibid

<sup>31</sup> Northern Ireland Assembly Debate (7 July 2020) Racial Equality Strategy 2015-2025

disproportionality caused anger and upset amongst communities. The events resulted in reports by the NI Policing Board and the Police Ombudsman.

4.12 The Policing Board report into the policing response to Covid-19 on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020 identified that the policing of the protests was unlawful, damaging to community relations and recommended the establishment of an IAG on protests<sup>32</sup>. In response to the Policing Board Report, the PSNI Chief Constable on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020 outlined plans to establish a Community Relations Taskforce to inform policing style and operational approach and consisting of members of communities, staff networks etc. In response to the PSNI Chief Constable's plan to establish a Community Relations Taskforce, a public letter from Community Groups was submitted to the Chair of the NI Policing Board. In the letter, the community groups stated,

*'until the Chief Constable and his colleagues are prepared to acknowledge the problem of PSNI's racism and its unequal treatment of Black and Minority Ethnic people there is no point in us participating in any such group or taskforce. We need to start with a clear acknowledgement of the problems that have arisen from the 6 June BLM protests which we have articulated at the meetings held on the 9 June and 30 June 2020 if we are to work together'*<sup>33</sup>.

4.13 Whilst the Police Ombudsman in its investigation into police policy and practice of protests in Northern Ireland 2020 (which included the BLM protests of 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020) identified a number of concerns around the unfair treatment of the BLM protestors. There was a clear reluctance to define the nature of the unfairness. This raises serious questions around **cultural competence** and **understanding** which **has the potential to further erode public trust and confidence in policing and oversight bodies.**

*'The differential treatment by PSNI of protestors on 6<sup>th</sup> June when compared with those attending 'Protect Our Monuments' on 13<sup>th</sup> gave rise to claims of unfairness and discrimination against those persons who organised and attended the 'Black Lives Matters' protests. These concerns are in my view cogent, have substance and are justified in the circumstances. **I believe that this unfairness was not intentional. Neither was it based on race or ethnicity of those who attended the event.** Rather PSNI failed to balance Human Rights with the public health considerations and requirements of the Regulations'.*<sup>34</sup>

4.14 On 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021, there was a fire at Belfast multicultural centre, in the Donegal Pass area. The centre had been the recipient of ongoing hostility and Islamophobia. The fire was later classed as a hate crime by PSNI.<sup>35</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

5.1 The rise in recent years of racial hate crime has been most apparent with the emergence of Britain First in Belfast and the arrest of its leadership over speeches inciting hatred.

5.2 The decrease in large scale public disorder in deprived areas in Northern Ireland has the potential to allow those that may have been involved, to seek other outlets for their hatred.

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<sup>32</sup> NI Policing Board (12 November 2020) Report on the Thematic Review of the Policing Response to COVID-19

<sup>33</sup> Community Groups Representing the Black and Minority (10<sup>th</sup> December 2020) Letter to Northern Ireland Policing Board

<sup>34</sup> Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (22 December 2020) Statutory Report Public Statement by the Police Ombudsman pursuant to Section 62 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998. An investigation into police policy and practice of protests in Northern Ireland pp14

<sup>35</sup> "PSNI treating fire at Belfast multicultural centre as hate crime" Moriarty, G. (15<sup>th</sup> January 2021) *The Irish Times*

This may explain why sectarian hate crime has steadily decreased whilst racist hate crime has increased.

5.3 It is clear, that since 2013 proposals have been made to strengthen the legislative and policy framework around race hate crime in NI. **Sadly, the proposals have been just that.** It is therefore imperative, that the proposals outlined by the various agencies are actioned, developed, implemented and embedded as meaningful interventions aimed at improving the handling and prosecution of race hate crime and the confidence of victims.

5.4 **There is a clear role for the NBPA and the EMPA to play in bringing about change in NI.** We hold a unique position in NI. As a result of our community engagement and outreach work and our successful 2018 Belfast conference, we have increased trust and confidence with Black and Minority Ethnic Communities and civil society organisations in NI. We therefore feel that we are in a strong position to support the important and necessary change needed to protect minority ethnic communities.

## Recommendations

### General

That the Government of NI produces and disseminates a report on the actions and outcomes of its Race Equality Strategy.

That the NI Government publishes its response to the Independent Review on Hate Crime Legislation in NI<sup>36</sup> which concluded in December 2020.

EMPA should be included on strategic boards within The Executive Office as they can give a unique perspective on ethnic minority experiences in Northern Ireland and have a link to the NBPA who have worked on racial equality for over 20 years in England and Wales.

A model similar to Police Scotland's association SEMPER should be adopted locally. SEMPER are funded by the devolved Scottish government to provide independent advice and scrutiny to both the government and police service.

### PSNI Specific

PSNI should use hate crime specific scenarios when training officers on interviewing victims and witnesses to improve their understanding of the barriers and how these may be overcome in pursuit of achieving best evidence.

That EMPA is involved in the development, delivery, of training for PSNI officers on the handling of race hate crime.

That EMPA are actively involved in PSNI governance forums focussed on race hate crime

That EMPA is enabled by PSNI and PPS to monitor hate crime file quality to ensure that where evidence from victims and witnesses is available, it is collected and presented effectively.

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<sup>36</sup> Marrinan, D. (December 2020) Hate Crime Legislation in Northern Ireland

*June 2021*