

***‘RACE AND POLICING: AN INSPECTION OF RACE DISPARITY IN POLICE CRIMINAL JUSTICE
DECISION-MAKING’***

**PUBLISHED BY HMICFRS ON 25TH AUGUST 2023
AVON & SOMERSET PCC RESPONSE DATED 20TH OCTOBER 2023**

My Police and Crime Plan aims to deliver safer communities for *all*. The emphasis is on “all” because policing should be equitable and not discriminate based on personal characteristics. With this in mind, one of the areas of focus within my plan is *inequality and disproportionality*. This is particularly aimed at disproportionately based on race/ethnicity.

While I accept there are broader societal issues around race inequality there is more that the police can do to eliminate disproportionality in the service they provide.

I welcome the recommendations from this report, of which there are four for Chief Constables. These are set out below with the initial response to these after each of them.

It should be noted that I have a legal duty to respond to inspection reports within eight weeks of their publication. However, you will see the Constabulary have many more months to fully complete these recommendations: that’s why the responses are still a work in progress. With the support of my office, I oversee recommendations from the inspectorate on a continual basis to help ensure they are completed and will see the results of the audits mentioned.

Recommendation 6

By 30 September 2024, chief constables should make sure that forces carry out comprehensive analysis of race disparity in police criminal justice decision making. Where this analysis indicates that people from ethnic minority backgrounds are disproportionately affected, police forces should explain, or revise, their ways of working.

Response

The [Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice System](#) (CJS) – published in February 2022 – provided a broad analysis of racial inequality in the local CJS. This report made over 80 recommendations and half of these related to the police.

A multi-agency working group is now in place to progress this work and to respond to the required recommendations in the report. A data and insights sub-group has recently been set up to provide further analysis across each of the agencies to better understand racial disparities within particular areas.

The Constabulary are also building a disproportionality dashboard within their data visualisation software (Qlik) which will enable them to identify racial disparities across multiple themes.

The analysis and evidence already undertaken is what led Chief Constable Sarah Crew to recently declare that Avon and Somerset Police are Institutionally Racist. This declaration has enabled better engagement with local communities and feeds into their Race Matters programme of work which has an explain or reform approach. This programme incorporates work against the national [Police Race Action Plan](#).

Recommendation 8

By 30 September 2024, chief constables should make sure that information from the Youth Justice Board summary disproportionality toolkit relevant to the force area is included in their force's analysis of police criminal justice disparity.

Response

The Youth Justice Board summary disproportionality toolkit was used as part of the research in writing the [Identifying Disproportionality in the Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice System](#). Recommendation 22 from this report states that the *"The Youth Justice Board 'Case Level toolkit' must be used by all YOTs in Avon and Somerset to ensure local level ethnicity data collection, analysis, reporting to ensure proactive tackling of disproportionality"*. This recommendation will be taken forward by the data and insights sub-group (see above).

Recommendation 10

By 30 September 2024, chief constables should make sure that work takes place with communities, police and crime commissioners, and other agencies to establish or build on arrangements for the scrutiny of police criminal justice disparity.

Response

The multi-agency work discussed in response to recommendation 6 will be overseen by an Independent Scrutiny Board. My office took the lead role in establishing this Board to help

bring independence right from the start. Now that it has been set up it will be chaired by an independent member from the local community.

The Constabulary are also looking to develop a scrutiny and advisory function to sit alongside the broader Race Matters work within the police. An influential community lead has been appointed to help co-create this function over a six-month period.

Recommendation 11

By 30 September 2024, chief constables should make sure that information about criminal justice disparity is published on force websites, or that force websites clearly link to other websites where this information can be found. Published information should include any explanations for identified disparity and actions forces will take to address it.

Response

The Constabulary website has a page on [equality and diversity](#) and this has links to various reports and plans: included those talked about in response to recommendation 6. There are also separate reports on the use of [Stop and Search](#) which include data on disproportionality.

The Constabulary are developing how they communicate and engage with the community as part of their Race Matters work and this will include use of their website.

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