



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Annual Report Constitutional year 2007/8

**AGM
Friday May 9th 2008**

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Introduction

The role of Merseyside Black Police Association is to:

- Provide support for Black and Racial Minority (BRM) staff within Merseyside Police and achieve equality of opportunity and a safe working environment for all staff.
- Assist Merseyside Police to deliver an equitable service to our BRM communities.

It has been another challenging year, as race continues to be debated, discussed, wrestled with and often misunderstood.

The purpose of this report is intended to reflect upon MBPA activities over the last 12 months since our last AGM (May 18th 2007) and to demonstrate and encapsulate how the Association satisfied its obligations as laid out in the MBPA constitution. We believe it is important to provide detail and context, particularly when looking to influence a debate or to answer our critics. This is the basis for the content of the report. In addition, we have also included numerous photographs to further illustrate the report.

The aforementioned AGM saw us initially receive 9 nominations for 5 Executive (non-role) Committee member positions. However, 2 nominees, namely Adishina Abayomi and Saied Mostaghel withdrew their nominations prior to the election. We thank them for their interest.

There were no nominations received for the roles of Treasurer or General Secretary, but it was anticipated the administrator that the Force had agreed to fund would take up most if not all of the responsibilities of General Secretary. However we have been unable to appoint on a point of contention, which we continue to research. Filling the post will be a post AGM priority. Therefore the two positions remained vacant and the constitutional year began with a compliment of 7 executive members in total, 2 short of a full compliment of 9, thus:

Comms. Officer Vinny Tomlinson	Chair
D/Inspector Irene Afful	Deputy Chair
VACANT	General Secretary
VACANT	Treasurer
Sgt. Osman Dualeh	Executive Committee member
PCSO Norma Ali	Executive Committee member
PC Amanda Thomas	Executive Committee member
PCSO Vijay Singh	Executive Committee member
Sgt. Karen Griffiths	Executive Committee member

Three executive members resigned prior to completing the last constitutional year. PCSO Singh resigned and was later dismissed from service. Both PC Amanda

Thomas and PCSO Norma Ali resigned with mutual consent. PC Thomas secured an attachment to an outside organisation and PCSO Ali was successful in her application to become a Constable. We congratulate Norma and wish her every success. Both remain in touch and full members of MBPA, committed to our cause.

In order to fill the three vacant executive members positions an election was held in November 2007. We received nominations from Constable Jade Wright, Constable Nathan Smeda and Constable Julie King, a former Executive Committee member and MBPA stalwart who stood down at the end of 2006/7 due to some of the frustrations of associated with 'speaking out'. However she had managed to recharge her batteries and was once again, raring to 'represent' on the issues.

All three were elected, however Constable Smeda resigned almost immediately. He remains a member of MBPA and committed to our cause. The Treasurer and General Secretary positions remained vacant then and still are, to date. This has meant that certain aspects of our output have either been compromised or curtailed.

The issue of MBPA Executive Committee Members being able to combine their core roles with being a MBPA Executive Committee member continues to have a major debilitating impact on our ability to perform our role efficiently and effectively. MBPA have and continue to lobby Chief Officers to formally recognise staff who perform this and other diversity roles in addition to their core role. Messages of support from Chief Officers, whilst welcome, are not good enough. The pro-rata equivalent responsibility should be removed from their core role. Regardless of whether that is as an MBPA Executive Committee member, Equality Champion or Disability Support Network representative etc.

For as long as colleagues are expected to perform their core roles **in full** and the aforementioned roles **in addition**, then either those additional roles will not be performed or else they will be performed badly, because of the pressure to prioritise one of the roles. Whenever faced with this choice, most colleagues will not prioritise the additional role, to the detriment of their core role and so those diversity issues being represented will continue to take second place.

Where the roles are being performed well, it is often as a result of a good working relationship between the colleague in question and their line manager &/or the colleague having to perform their additional role in their own time. A very common and unacceptable phenomenon. This will continue to ensure that diversity is a peripheral subject that will never be mainstreamed. This will ensure that the aspiration to ensure diversity as a 'golden thread', running through all of our business, will remain an aspiration and never actually achieved.

Membership

As the below table illustrates, membership numbers continue to grow. However, the last year saw an unprecedented level of growth of more than 24% overall!

This was remarkable considering the losses that were incurred due to the natural wastage such as resignations, dismissals etc. We know that at least 5 full members left the force in the last constitutional year and yet the increase was our biggest yet. This rise can be primarily attributed to our membership pursuit in the summer of 2007. We

wrote to BRM staff who are currently not members of MBPA. We believe this would have been even more productive had we not been put in the impractical situation of our Personnel department continually refusing to provide us with the details of BRM staff, but instead opt to write to them on our behalf. It has been stated that said details cannot be provided to us for reasons related to Data Protection legislation. The background to this subject including our response to this is covered in more detail, under 'Data Protection'.

It should also be noted that at least 3 of our newest members, joined as a direct result of having first come to us for support as non-members. Despite only being constitutionally obliged to support full members, these 3 and several other non-members were afforded our full support.

Historic & Current Membership

YEAR	FULL	+/- %	ASSOC.	+/- %	TOTAL	+/- %
May 2005	32		26		58	
May 2006	37	+ 15.6%	30	+ 15.3%	67	+ 15.5%
May 2007	37	0%	32	+ 6.6%	69	+ 2.9%
May 2008	48	+29.7%	38	+18.7	86	+24.6 %

Activities 2007/8

Below is a list of various activities that the MBPA have either carried out or contributed towards or overseen during the last year, in order to achieve our aims and objectives. Whilst the list is far from exhaustive it would be impractical and far too onerous to cover everything, so the below list is in addition to the topics singled out for specific attention, covered further on in this report. They are in no particular order:

- Our school visits were initiated by EMTAS (Ethnic Minority & Traveller Achievement Service) in 2004 as part of their 'Black Achievers project' to present positive black role models from within the community and the visits have continued in that spirit. MBPA Executives had visited some of the schools on more than one occasion. The schools visited were:
 - Windsor Street Primary school
 - St Hugh Primary School (see below photos)



MBPA Dep. Chair, D/I Irene Afful assisting a St Hughs pupil



MBPA Chair, Vinny Tomlinson taking questions from pupils



Vinny Tomlinson explaining the MBPA quiz



The next Chief Constable?

- We were also invited to Holly Lodge Girls School in September 2007 to help the Teachers prepare for the new term (we had already visited the school in October 2006 to help them celebrate Black History Month and were more than happy to return). This was specifically to help them plan for the delivery of their new Personal, Social & Health modules, to equip their pupils with the necessary skills and ideas they will need to go on to become productive, successful and compassionate members of society.

We were specifically asked to discuss the issues around racism and also discuss what it means to live in a multicultural society. We were also asked to talk about the criminal implications of bullying and harassment etc The project coordinator, October Wright described the day as a "...huge success...", stating she had received internal emails from staff, "...excited..." at the prospect of delivering the information disseminated to them, to their pupils.

- Attendance and participation in the Professional Standards Department's Consultative forum.
- Media contributions/appearances and included:
 - Radio Merseyside
 - City Talk Radio
 - Daily Post
 - Daily Post web blog
 - Liverpool Echo
 - The Voice
 - Homotopia
 - Smaart Talent magazine
 - Smaart Talent website
 - BBC News 24
 - Granada TV News
 - Granada web news
 - Open culture (SKY channel 167)
 - Yorkshireconservatives.com
 - Ecu.ac.uk (Equality Challenge Unit)
 - Ljmu.ac.uk (Liverpool John Moores University)

We were also asked to appear on the BBC 'Big Question', a live Sunday morning TV debate hosted by Nicky Campbell. Unfortunately we were unable to take advantage of this opportunity, but the invite was a testament to the success of our marketing principles and an example of the fact that we are 'known'.

- Attendance and contribution to various National Black Police Association forums.
- Monthly presentations to student- officers.
- Progressed BPA Fair-play awards
- Internal and external comment and consultation on various race/equality-related subject.
- Supported aggrieved members and non-members to deal with various work related challenges and issues (including acting as a ‘friend’).
- Advised and supported members of the public seeking redress to perceived Police injustice.
- Invited to have lunch and listen to the Reverend Jessie Jackson during his promotion tour of ‘Equanomics’, an initiative aimed at harnessing and maximising the BRM contribution to ensure racial justice. This was held at the Philharmonic Hall in Liverpool. This was organised by the L8 Law Centre and Michelle Charters of the Kumba Immani centre.



The Rev. Jessie Jackson with Michelle Charters



The Rev. Jackson during his speech

- Consulted on the development of internal policies and practices.
- Attended and contributed to the Force’s DSG (Diversity Steering Group).
- Attended to support the launch of ‘Riverforce’ (Merseyside Police Christian Police Association).
- Agreed to support Merseyside Police’s Positive Action Team at community recruitment seminars.
- Chaired 11 monthly statutory BPA Executive committee meetings.
- Chaired quarterly open meetings for all members and invited guests.
- Attended Strategic Leaders Forum meetings.
- Attended various slavery abolition events, including slavery remembrance day in August



A gathering for the libation ceremony performed at Otterspool Promenade as part of Slavery Remembrance Day

- Attended the opening of the International Slavery Museum at the Albert Dock.



A Klu Klux Klan display at the International Slavery Museum



A Slavery Museum display. Plantation 'workers' with 'Merry Xmas' painted on their bodies



A Slavery Museum display. A Merseyside Police riot helmet and headline from 1981.

- Attended a meeting at the Crime Academy, which led to the formation of Merseyside Police branch of BAWP (British Association of Women in Policing) as part of the Force TRUE (Trust, Respect, Understating, Empathy) project and Positive Action.
- Met with Probation Service to discuss their Black Mentoring project.
- Met with higher education students to discuss Institutional racism, to aid their study.
- Significant planning for MBPA AGM 2008 to ensure AGM and the Open Conference were successful. The two events in one day have required the synchronisation of many variables, with limited resources.
- Attended the book launch of 'Liverpool Black Pioneers' written by Ray Costello (MBPA Deputy Chair, Irene Afful features in the book).
- Home visit to support an MBPA member.
- Attended NBPA NEC meetings
- Attended a CAPITA stop/search conference in London
- Attended and were active participants at the Crosby Community Cinema 'Bend it like Beckham' event which used the film as a basis for workshops designed to address racial and gender stereotyping, plus peer pressure versus parental and family loyalty. We addressed a group of 13/14 year olds. During his presentation, MBPA Chair Vinny Tomlinson partially disrobed to reveal his LFC allegiances (see below). This caused some excitement amongst the children and certainly got their attention.

Part of the aim of the day was to show young people that our similarities are bigger than our differences. The LFC documentary 'Gayle Force' was also shown, which depicted the background of Liverpool FC's first black player Howard Gayle, including how he dealt with racism in the 1970s/80s. MBPA were able to ensure Howard attended and also participated. Project coordinator, Christine Physick stated she had unsuccessfully attempted to do this previously and was grateful for our assistance. Our participation on the

day was well received by the children, based on subsequent feedback received from them.



Former LFC footballer Howie Gayle & MBPA Chair Vinny Tomlinson at Crosby Plaza



Vinny Tomlinson assisting pupils to devise positive football chants.

- Regular attendance at full TRUE meetings
- Regular attendance at staff associations/support networks TRUE meetings
- Attended a GLSN (Gay & Lesbian support network) meeting Chaired by Supt. Rowley Moore.
- Attended the dissemination of the TRUE survey results at the Crime Faculty.
- Regular attendance and participation of the (LBLF) Liverpool Black Leaders Forum. This forum is a gathering of conscientious, prominent black professionals from across Liverpool, performing various responsibilities within Merseyside. The remit is a broad one, centered on the issues of racism, discrimination and exclusion.
- Attended and participated the Bluecoat debate on success/failure of Multiculturalism in Liverpool at St Francis of Assisi Academy, Kensington.
- Attended a meeting with Personnel and other support networks regarding arbitration.
- Attended Whalley Range High School (based in a South Manchester BRM community) and spoke at a Greater Manchester Youth Leadership Programme event aimed at Yr 12 BME students (16/17 yr olds) drawn from a number of schools in the GMP area. We were invited to do this by our BPA counter parts from GMP. The majority of students were Asian females though there were some male students invited. Naseem Malik from the IPCC also attended. We talked about leadership, personal journeys in the police, and issues of race encountered and overcome. We also spoke on personal motivation and responsibility.
- Our opinion sought by various members of the public, colleagues and departments including our Professional Standards Department (PSD).
- Invited to attend an Ethnic Minority Business Forum Meeting. We were subsequently elected to the board, as a result of our input. Our Chair, Vinny Tomlinson now sits on the board as an observer. The EMBF sits within the North West Development Agency (NWDA) and was set up in January 2005 to provide strategic leadership and strategic policy advice to the NWDA and other key regional decision makers and stakeholders in order to empower BRM businesses to maximise their full potential for the benefit of the region's economy.

Ethnic Minority Business Forum



MBPA Chair, Vinny Tomlinson (2nd left)

- Participated to the Force's 'Team TV' video to talk about the value of mentoring.
- Provided 1st contact support.
- Attended an art display at Blackburne House as part of International Women's Day in 2008



MBPA Dep. Chair D/I Irene Afful (left) & MBPA member D/C Sarbjit Kaur at Blackburne House

- Held an EGM in relation to the dismissal of an MBPA member.
- Continued to wrangle to clarify our budget!
- Interviewed for and appeared on the documentary entitled 'Crossing the Line', produced by Urbeatz. This was a music documentary, which concentrated upon the perceived race and religion lines of division that exist between the youth in the city of Liverpool. This was also shown on Sky channel 167 for several days.
- Attended the launch of 'Crossing the line' documentary.
- Contributed towards the development of and attended the launch of 'Senseless'. A play about the senselessness of bullying and racism etc. This was part of the 'It's not ok' scheme, worked on by various partner stakeholders, which included Merseyside Police.
- Invited to speak at the North West Business in the Communities Awards as one of several eminent guest speakers from the world of business and sport to be held at the Crowne Plaza, Liverpool later this year.
- Attended the NBPA Annual Conference in Bristol. The theme was entitled 'Our journey, abolition 200' and reflected that 2007 was the 200th anniversary of the abolition of slavery act, to reflect the role that Bristol played during slavery. We challenged Policing Minister the Rt. Hon. Tony McNulty in relation to how diversity is being funded nationally within the Police service. We attended various workshops and took place in the 'Solidarity March' through the streets of Bristol (A write up of the event by attendees is available upon request. This includes the individual perception of our 3 attendees-below).

MBPA attendees at the NBPA AGM Bristol 2007



left to right; MBPA Dep. Chair D/I Irene Afful, MBPA Chair Vinny Tomlinson & Exec. Committee member Sgt. Karen Griffiths

- Accepted an invitation to participate in a Liverpool John Moores University Black History Month event, entitled 'Black Voices in Public Life'. We addressed a mixed audience of diversity practitioners and JMU staff/students. We gave a brief history of the BPA movement, why we were formed and what we do: some defining moments in Police race relations: defined institutional racism and gave some examples and spoke on the difference between this and bigotry; spoke about the racial disproportionality within the Criminal Justice System and society; the prognosis and possible solutions to eliminate discrimination and inequality, for example, placing a far greater emphasis on education.

Participants to 'Black Voices in Public Life'

(MBPA Chair, Vinny Tomlinson, 3rd right)



- Sponsored and attended the black achiever awards ceremony at the Crowne Plaza Hotel Liverpool, as part of the Liverpool Black History Month celebrations. MBPA sponsored the Community Award and MBPA Chair Vinny Tomlinson presented this to respected community member Herbie Higgins MBE on behalf of worthy winner, Judith Cummings who was unable to attend on the night. Our Chair Vinny Tomlinson went on to win the Public Sector award (see 'Awards – received', below).
- Attended a 'Kick Racism out of Football' event at HQ, organised by the Home Office staff support group 'The Network', aimed at local Home Office Borders & Immigration staff. We participated in the subsequent debates and discussions.
- Interface guest participants at the Force Race Awareness courses.
- Met with 4 full members who were leaving, to discuss their reasons for doing so to establish if there were any issues of note. We found out about them leaving by chance (the Force automatically providing MBPA with the details of 'black' leavers/starters continues to be an issue, see - 'Data Protection' and continues to refuse to do so). This represents a 100% response to our request to BRM leavers to participate in our exit discussions.
- Participated in a two-hour live debate and discussion on Radio Merseyside on the subject of policing black communities. Supt. Rowley Moore also attended this in company with Ch. Supt. Andy Cooke and several prominent

community members. It should be noted that Ch. Supt. Cooke stated it was his personal opinion that race bias is likely to be a contributor towards the racial disproportionality in stop/search (for relevance see stop/search p.22). Various other issues were discussed, with stop/search being a prominent one. Aside from the obvious marketing opportunity (see 'Marketing' below for rationale) this was also an ideal opportunity to influence and clarify on various issues, the nuances of which are often misunderstood.

- Supported and participated at a support network event organised by the Disability Support Network
- Representation at every phase two seminar held at the Devonshire House Hotel (see below picture) with attendance on at least one day of every two day seminar.



The MBPA stand at the Devonshire House Hotel 2007, containing our merchandise for the distribution and dissemination to TRUE attendees.

- Attended GMP BAPA (Black & Asian Police Association) AGM and participated in the subsequent discussions.
- Held second election to replace 2 Executive Committee members who resigned (see 'membership'). This included pre-discussions/correspondence to clarify the role of a MBPA Committee member, prior to nomination.
- Held other non-statutory meetings to address and progress specific issues, programmes of work etc.
- Attended and participated at Diversity Steering Group meetings.
- Encouraged potential BRM community members to become Police Officers/PCSOs with Merseyside Police in various forums.
- Attended a Sefton LJCC meeting.
- Accepted the invite from GLSN (Gay & Lesbian Support Network) and attended a 'Homotopia' Holocaust memorial event. This event was to commemorate and remember how homosexuals were persecuted and murdered by the Nazis. This was an ideal opportunity to show our support for colleagues and community members also engaged in a struggle for equality. We also participated with media activity on the day. This event formed part of several events leading up to Holocaust Memorial Day and subsequent feedback indicated our attendance was well received.
- Provided feedback to the Force Estates review team. The review was concerned with the Forces' future estate needs. Our particular emphasis was on where MBPA might be located in the future and also ensuring that consideration is given to the provision of prayer/quiet rooms, which could be multi-functional and need not necessarily just serve a religious/faith purpose.
- Attended an LJCC meeting in Liverpool South.

- Regular contact with and agreed to continue to support the Force positive action team, particularly at recruitment events geared towards addressing the under-representation of 'black' staff.
- Agreed (in principle) to support the inaugural meeting and subsequent meetings of the Wirral BRM group, organised by the Community engagement team of Bebington CVS, once they overcome their teething problems.
- Agreed to be interviewed and met with an LJMU student to assist her with her dissertation. This was centered on Policing BRM communities and the subject of institutional racism.
- Met with National NBPA Co-ordinator to discuss various issues.
- Agreed to be interviewed by Jay Yung (an interdisciplinary artist) for her video installation project 'Paradise stories'; defining what paradise is and looks like and what can be done to achieve it. Naturally we spoke of eradicating racism and other forms of discrimination.
- Attended the showing of the above exhibition to view the completed work.
- Attended various NBPA meetings including NEC and the election of the cabinet in London in January 2008.
- Attended a meeting and event in support the L8 Law Centre remaining open.
- Attended a 'Modernising Policing' conference in London. The catalyst for this being the independent review of policing carried out by Sir Ronnie Flanagan, published in February 2008. The Chair of this event was Jan Berry, Chair of the Police Federation of England & Wales. Sir Ronnie was also in attendance as the key note speaker. This event was supported by the NPIA (National Policing Improvement Agency) and their Chief People Officer, Angela O'Connor also gave a talk. She made several pertinent points, but amongst them included her comment that the police service still has a, "...very, very long way to go..." in relation to positive action and ensuring the Police service is representative of our communities. She went on to state, "...females and BRM officers are still leaving (the Police service) at a much higher rate than white males".
- Attended an inaugural meeting in Sefton to support and assist the local council to organise a cross public sector BRM staff support network. We gave a presentation to highlight why BPAs were formed and how we go about our business to assist Merseyside Police. We talked about the benefits the existence of a network could bring to their respective employers and also some of the pitfalls to be aware of and avoid whenever possible. We remained to the end of the event, which included participation in a questions and answer session.
- Visited full members home to support them whilst they were off sick.
- Met with Insp. Helen Corcoran to assist the Force review of our internal support networks. We gave an overview of our activity and role.
- Sponsored and participated at the Asian Jewel Awards (North) in Manchester. MBPA Chair, Vinny Tomlinson presented the public service award to Baroness Sayeeda Warsi. The event was covered by Granada TV, BBC News 24 and Star TV, which has a UK audience of 2.8 million. The event was also expected to be reported across India and South Asia and is due to be screened on Star plus on May 18th, 9pm. The was the sixth year of what has become a very prestigious event, which received support from the Prime Minister Gordon Brown who stated:

“Recognising entrepreneurial achievement since 2003, this is the biggest gathering of A-list Asian entrepreneurs and professionals in Britain”.

(The Prime Minister, AJA Event brochure)

The organisers stated that there was also a waiting list of over 20 tables (which equates to 200 people) such is the popularity of the event and yet our attendance was specifically requested by the organisers. Again this is a testament to having achieved some of our marketing aims (see below). This was also an ideal opportunity to address a wide Asian audience to let them know we exist and care.

A previous AJA brochure submission:

“MBPA is proud to support the Asian Jewel Awards, of Northern Britain. The Merseyside Black Police Association (MBPA) definition of ‘Black’ is a generic one that emphasises the common experience and determination of people of African, African-Caribbean, Middle-Eastern, Asian or Asian sub-continent origin to oppose racism, victimisation and its effects.

Our society is made up of various cultures and yet the positive contribution that minority cultures make, often go unsaid. The Asian Jewel Awards not only promotes positive contributions from the Asian community, but also serves to counter the negativity that is prevalent in society, where disproportionate responsibility is attributed to Black & Racial Minority (BRM) communities for societal ills. For example, in recent times we have seen the growth of the demonisation of the Muslim community as they suffer an onslaught of negative racial and religious stereotyping both in society and the media because of so called Muslim terrorism.

Without the contributions of Asian people, a number of institutions, both in the private and public sector, would simply grind to a halt. The Asian Jewel Awards is a celebration of this and so much more and MBPA are pleased to be able to provide our support to such a laudable event.

The Police Service strives towards ensuring that we are representative of the communities we serve. Merseyside BPA works in partnership with Merseyside Police to achieve this. We support our Black & Racial Minority (BRM) Staff to achieve their full potential and tackle the issues, which can impact on this. We assist the Force to deliver a quality service to all of our communities.

Merseyside Police aims to be the best Police Force in the country. Merseyside BPA shares this vision, by assisting the Force to ensure that all of our staff & communities are valued.

*Vinny Tomlinson
Chair, Merseyside Black Police Association
www.merseysidebpa.org.uk”*



All winners of the Asian Jewel Awards 2008



MBPA Executive Committee Members Constables' Jade Wright (left) and Julie King at the Asian Jewel Awards.



MBPA Chair, Vinny Tomlinson presents Baroness Sayeeda Warsi with the AJA 'Public Service Excellence Award'

- Worked to ensure the prizes promised by LFC & EFC were delivered to the respective winners of the Fair-play awards (see 'MBPA Fair-play awards').
- Significant preparation for our AGM and open annual conference entitled 'Our role, our contribution'.
- We have carried out research and submitted a number of reports and feedback in relation to various matters, some of which are specifically addressed within this report.

Marketing

Every interaction is a potential opportunity to market MBPA. As can be seen from the above 'Activities 2007/8' there were ample opportunities to market the MBPA.

Marketing is important;

- To inform those who do not know MBPA exist, colleagues and community alike.
- To enlighten those who know MBPA exist but may have an inaccurate preconceived idea about the Association.
- To reassure those who know what MBPA stands for, that we are active and working towards achieving the association's constitutional aims and objectives.

Consistently engaging in this will serve to encourage new members to join, particularly from current BRM staff who would benefit from the support of the Association. It will also counter the often negative and cynical views espoused by some colleagues and members of the public.

Marketing is very much an ongoing and necessary task in an organisation of approximately 7000. Many are still unaware of the existence of MBPA or our activities.

Executives issue MBPA merchandise (mouse-mats, pens, leaflets, posters etc) as they engage with people both internally and externally. Our media activity contributes towards assisting MBPA to deliver key messages and achieve some of the above marketing aims.

All external and some internal emails contain MBPA web address as part of a standard ‘sign off’. The original email recipient may forward MBPA emails to others, (particularly the external).

MBPA submitted an article for SMAART* magazine. The Web version of this was published in 2007 and the magazine version has been published in time for Spring 2008. (*careers magazine for black and minority ethnic students published in conjunction with the Windsor Fellowship). The web version can be viewed at:

[http://smaarttalent.com/index.php/news/Merseyside Black Police Association & career within Merseyside Police](http://smaarttalent.com/index.php/news/Merseyside%20Black%20Police%20Association%20&%20career%20within%20Merseyside%20Police)

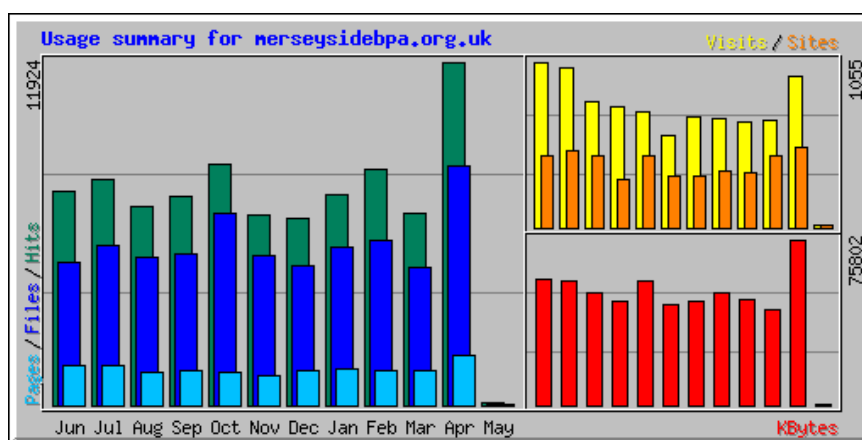
Website

Our website has proved to be a successful investment and is the Association’s most significant marketing tool. Since its inception the website usage has continued to rise. There continues to be a notable correlation between media contributions and an increase in website activity, thus providing evidence of some marketing success. Our annual report of 2006 stated that,

“From 195 (visits) in August 2005, we now average over 700 visits to our website per month”.

The average visit per month is currently 802, which equates to 9,634 visits in a constitutional year (May to May). Our record number of visits in a month continues to be 1275 in October 2006, a result of our ‘Apartheid’ comments first published in the Voice Newspaper.

The table below is a summary of activity up to & including the 30th April 2008. The ‘visits’ referred to earlier, are in yellow.



The website also contains numerous links to related informative and useful websites. MBPA continues to receive positive feedback regarding the resources available on the website layout.

The links are,

- **Merseyside Police:** the Force website.
- **BLINK:** Black Information Link. The 1990 trust's independent community interactive site for Black Communities.
- **British Born Chinese:** a forum in which British Born Chinese people can share experiences, ideas and thoughts.
- **EHCR** Equality and Human Rights Commission (an amalgamation of the Commission for Racial Equality, Disability Rights Commission and Equal Opportunities Commission formed in October 2007).
- **National Black Police Association:** the NBPA website.
- **Liverpool Black History Month:** BHM activities during October each year.
- **Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust:** invests in young people whose aspirations and life chances are constrained by economic, cultural and social hardship. Broadens access to the architectural, planning and associated professions. Promotes equality, diversity and social cohesion
- **Red Hot Curry:** an Asian lifestyle and shopping portal.
- **Judaism 101:** an encyclopaedia of Judaism.
- **Middle East Information Centre:** history, analysis, news and discussion of Middle Eastern Issues.
- **Black Women's directory:** health, wellbeing, marriage and motherhood issues and more.
- **The Voice:** Britain's most prominent black newspaper.
- **Encyclopaedia on Racism:** Nationmaster.com.
- **MIND:** the needs and ambitions of people with mental health problems, with a race and culture emphasis.
- **Black Britain:** daily news and information for BRM communities.
- **The Auschwitz album:** emotive images of The Holocaust.
- **Middle East & Islamic Studies Collection (CUL):** women and gender issues.
- **Liverpool Slavery Tour:** find out how to get on the tour, describing Liverpool's role in the slave trade.
- **Project Implicit:** an interactive test that can demonstrates the conscious-unconscious divergence & bias within us all. Dare you to take the test?

The website also contain various information pertaining to MBPA business from profiles of the current Executive Committee (update pending) to our meeting dates, policies, the latest annual report. We have received complimentary feedback from other BPAs in relation to our website and some of our ideas have been copied and adopted by them, with our blessing.

MBPA Fair-Play Awards

Supported by



The scheme ran for the whole of the football season 2006/7. The intention was to facilitate community engagement, with a particular child/youth emphasis. MBPA agreed to work with nine football teams ran by Kingsley United FC.

The aim of the scheme was:

- 1/ To develop and build effective and positive relationships between the community, MBPA and ultimately, Merseyside Police.
- 2/ To help and contribute towards shaping the children of today and adults of tomorrow: to contribute towards delivering both overt and subliminal positive messages about the Police and how the children should conduct themselves.
- 3/ To encourage and reward good conduct associated with fair play to demonstrate that they are important, are appreciated and can reap reward.
- 4/ To facilitate participation in diversionary activity to encourage children to channel their energies into lawful, positive and constructive activities.
- 5/ To present positive BRM role models who work for Merseyside Police to dispel the myths that the two are incompatible.

Criteria players were judged on

- 1/ Encourages team- mates to do well, particularly if they make a mistake. Not overly critical.
- 2/ Good disciplinary record. Few or no bookings. Rarely comes to the attention of the referee.
- 3/ Shows humility & modesty.
- 4/ Is punctual & generally reliable.
- 5/ Tries to make amends for mistakes rather than sulk.

Prizes

1st Prize

- Winner will receive “**The Ollie Solaru Memorial Award**” trophy.
- A certificate.
- A club shirt of their choice, signed by a current club player of their choice provided by LFC or EFC.
- A Trip to the training ground of **both** EFC & LFC and a photo taken with their award and player/s (TBA).

2nd Prize

- Two match tickets to a category B home fixture of either EFC **or** LFC (fixture to be decided by the club for season 06/07).

- A certificate.

3rd Prize

- A private tour of either Goodison Park or Anfield for up to 6 people.
- A certificate.

The finalists (winners from each team) were as follows:

Verdell Nze	KUFC u8s
Usen Jones	KUFC u9s
Aaron Talent	KUFC u10s
Nabeel Salem	KUFC u 15s
Martin Foy	KUFC u16s
Ryham Fontenot	KUFC u18s

All six are to be congratulated for achieving the most points within their respective teams over the season! This was a magnificent achievement and the players should, as should their parents/guardians, be very proud.

Liverpool Football Club very kindly agreed to allow us the use of one of their suites to hold the presentation and this took place on Friday 10th August 2007 6pm. The KUFC staff tell us when some of the children were told the presentation would be held at Anfield, it had to be explained to them it was **the** Anfield. All of the children were given a ‘goodie-bag’ prepared by MBPA, some 100 or so in total. Each bag contained healthy snacks, a MBPA fair-play t/shirt, MBPA baseball cap and EFC & LFC merchandise.

Representatives from KUFC, MBPA, LFC & EFC had previously judged the written submissions presented by the respective coaches of the eventual finalists and they awarded the prizes thus:

1st Prize winner	Nabeel Salem KUFC u15s
2nd Prize winner	Usen Jones KUFC u9s
3rd Prize winner	Ryham Fontenot KUFC

MBPA had previously sought the permission of the Solaru family, prior to the inception of the memorial award and Ollie’s widow, Hilary granted this. In addition, the family very kindly agreed to attend on the night to support the event at the request of MBPA Chair, Vinny Tomlinson. He presented all bar on, of the awards which included a certificate, a personally engraved trophy &/or medal. Ollie’s son Chris presented the ‘Ollie Solaru Memorial Award’ to 1st prizewinner Nabeel Salem. We are grateful to the family for assisting us to make the event a night to remember, particularly for the children.

Overall we would regard the scheme as a success. We achieved the above listed aims to a greater or lesser extent. We made positive contact with both the players and adults associated with KUFC and many of these relationships remain to date. The efforts of MBPA and the evening in general, were very well received. The staff of KUFC enthusiastically voiced their appreciation to our Chair, Vinny Tomlinson after the event.

At the MBPA open meeting on 28th November 2007, our Chair expressed his disappointment at the absence of male MBPA members on the night and believed this was a missed opportunity to present positive black male role models, employed by Merseyside Police to a large group of multi-racial youth. Vinny Tomlinson went on to pay particular tribute to members Helen Roberts, Julie King, Irene Afful, Norma Ali & Amanda Thomas who assisted on the night. He would also like to thank his wife, Suzanna who assisted with the very onerous task of filling the goodie-bags.

We reported on many of the issues in relation to the scheme in last years report, so will not duplicate them here, however the task of securing the prizes proved to be quite a challenge and at the time of this report going to press, the prize promised by EFC remains outstanding. We continue to work to secure this.

First prize winner, Nabeel Salem attended Melwood (the training ground of LFC) on Thursday 17th April 2008, and was accompanied by our Chair, Vinny Tomlinson and a KUFC staff member. The club escort for the visit was former player Brain Hall. LFC had previously supplied MBPA with a home LFC shirt, signed by Nabeel's favourite player Steven Gerrard which MBPA had professionally framed. Nabeel met with all of his favourite players, from Fernando Torres to Peter Crouch and had his photograph taken with them all. This included with Steven Gerrard, who congratulated him on having won the Fair play scheme. Nabeel managed to collect numerous autographs and will have memories and mementoes that will last a lifetime. MBPA are grateful to LFC for supporting us in our quest to positively influence young minds. Below is a sample of some of the players Nabeel met on the day. Alex Foreman (KUFC) and MBPA Chair Vinny Tomlinson also accompany him:



Jamie Carragher



Fernando Torres



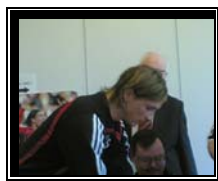
Peter Crouch



Steven Gerrard



Nabeel Salem with LFC manager Rafa Benitez



Fernando Torres signs his autograph for Nabeel



The autograph reads 'To Nabeel, best wishes Steven Gerrard'

Second prizewinner, Usen Jones attended the Liverpool v Blackburn Rovers fixture on Sunday 13th April 2008 and the feedback from Usen's father to KUFC staff was that of appreciation.



Usen Jones (left) with his friend (right) and LFC midfielder Damien Plessis presenting the two tickets won by Usen on the Anfield pitch.

The prize promised by EFC to third place winner Rhyam Fontenot (a tour of EFC), remains outstanding, despite numerous attempts by MBPA to secure it.

Data Protection

MBPA face several obstacles and one of the biggest is being refused basic details of BRM staff employed within Merseyside Police. We would like to be formally notified when a BRM member of staff commences or leaves the employ of Merseyside Police. The below emails were sent in December 2007 and are the latest exchange to one of many refusals to provide MBPA directly with the aforementioned information. The first e-mail is the response to our request. The second is the response from our Chair, Vinny Tomlinson. The first one has been amended slightly to prevent the identification of certain individuals. The nature of this report is not recriminatory, but rather an attempt to bring pressure to bear to challenge and change force culture and highlight some of the preconceived ideas held about us and how they impact on the decision makers within the Force.

“...Further to our telephone conversations I forward the following.

*You asked if your department could provide employee information to the Black Police Association. The Data Protection Act 1998 states that information relating to an individuals racial or ethnic origin is one of the 8 classes of sensitive information. Additionally the processing of personal information **must** comply with **each** of the 8 principles contained in the Act. Although all processing of personal data must comply with **each** of the 8 principles I suggest the most relevant ones in this case are the:*

***1st principle** which requires personal information to be processed **fairly** and **lawfully** and be **legitimised** by meeting at least one schedule 2 condition and because the process will identify an individuals racial / ethnic origin must also meet at least one schedule 3 condition. You will see from the following attachment that apart from obtaining the consent of each individual the other relevant conditions contain the phrase "the processing is necessary.....". I suggest, that it may not be necessary to disclose such information because there is an alternative way of providing the information to relevant individuals, ie by Mr Tomlinson providing literature to your department for you to forward on to the identified individuals.*

Regarding the fairness element when collecting personal information the DPA requires the force to

- advise individuals at the earliest opportunity that the force is collecting their data,*
- for which purpose(s) and*

- *anything else deemed necessary to make the processing fair, eg who will have sight of the personal information provided. Is the BPOA included in the force fair processing notice?*

I ask whether an individual selected in this scenario would expect their personal information to be disclosed to the Black Police Officers Association?.

3rd principle - requires personal information to be adequate, relevant and not excessive. Although I have not been advised as to the information requested compliance with this principle may come into play if excessive amounts of information are requested.

I suggest two possible ways forward:

- *the BPOA forward their literature to you for onward transmission to identified individuals. It is then up to the individual whether they communicate with the BPOA. At the same time Vince may wish to publish a Merlin article referring to the personnel dept's mailshot.*
- *the personnel dept contacts the individuals selected explaining the purpose of the communication and advising that individuals can contact BPOA to obtain further information.*

I hope this letter provides sufficient information. Please do not hesitate to contact me again if further clarification is required.....”

Further details omitted to prevent identification of sender

The below is the MBPA response to the above to ACC Personnel on 18th December 2007:

“Sir,

Further to the last DSG above and the issues I raised in relation to exit interviews and the continued data protection obstacles being put before MBPA, please find below the response you asked me to send to you.

*To reiterate, I raised the subject matter (again) at the last TRUE meeting with the Chief Constable (19.10.07) and he actioned ***** to explain why certain information, namely the details of BRM starters/leavers, cannot be automatically provided to MBPA? The below response from ***** represents the result of that action.*

It might be useful for me to first of all state why we would want such information and how we intend to use it.

- *We would like details of all BRM staff and new starters to be automatically provided to us to allow us to make **direct** contact with them, to introduce ourselves to explain our support role and invite membership. **If someone stated they were not interested and made a categorical request to be left alone, in most cases we would do so** (we are constitutionally obliged to our full, ie 'black' members only and I would not wish to waste too much time on people who state they were not interested in being involved with us).*

- We would like details of BRM leavers to make **direct** contact with them to establish the real reasons why they are leaving, as opposed to the generic and often uninformative reasons published as part of the DSG papers.

It is not desirable for Personnel or anyone else to speak on our behalf. We (MBPA) are the best people to explain who we are and what we are about. For example, we are often referred to as an 'independent' organisation, including sometimes by our Personnel dept. . We are autonomous and control and direct our business, but we are not independent. We are 'employees' of Merseyside Police and constrained by and subordinate to many Force policies.

The Chief Constable has previously pledged to "...work alongside us to eradicate racism...", and both MPA and the Home Office formally recognise us and state they support us. Our role is further endorsed as we appear in various authoritative report and research recommendations. Our own RES states we "...are an integral part of the Force and fully supported by the Chief Constable...". With that in my mind, my concerns with the below response is as follows:

1/ The mindset is clearly weighted towards establishing reasons why we should not be given information, rather than reasons why we should or even could be.

2/ Is our role known by those who judge us? If not (I suspect not) how can we be judged as to whether or not we satisfy the nuances of the various schedules? For example, we are the BPA not BPOA. This may appear pedantic but it demonstrates ignorance of us on a fundamental level. This is particularly relevant when interpreting the nuances of DP legislation.

*3/ It is suggested that "...it may not be necessary to disclose (to MBPA) such information because there is an alternative way of providing the information...". I beg to differ. **Direct** contact with a subject is far more effective, particularly when a person is leaving, who may be feeling a tad disgruntled or disillusioned etc. We exist to provide empathetic **direct** support. This does not work if someone else does this on our behalf. Therefore, in order for us to make **direct** contact, there is no alternative. Point '2' above, provides a simple illustration of how we can be unwittingly misrepresented.*

4/ It is stated, "I ask whether an individual selected in this scenario would expect their personnel information to be disclosed the the Black Police Officers Association (sic)?" I believes this response reflects how we are viewed as not part of 'proper policing' and highlights a cultural, subjective and negative opinion of MBPA that is not uncommon.

This comes under 'Fair processing':

"Personal data must be obtained and further processed 'fairly'.

Put simply, any data subject should not be 'surprised' by the police's use of their personal data. However, the potential for such surprise will be affected by the data subject's legitimate expectations.

Therefore it is likely that those working for the police would find it reasonable and unsurprising for the police as their employer to use their personal data for staff administration, payroll, training, and supervision purposes."
(Data Protection, ACPO Manual of guidance 2006)

I have already stated how we would intend to use such information.

If I applied to an employer for employment, I expect them to do something with their racial monitoring form, particularly if they are a public body, bearing in mind their RR(A)A 2000/RES obligations. Would passing this information on to an internal support network whose remit is centered around race be so outlandish and unexpected? An organisation, "fully supported" and regarded as an "integral" part of the Force. Of course not! Why else does the Force request, record and monitor ethnicity?

Regarding 'Lawful processing'. This is "Any duty or responsibility of the police arising from common or statute law" (DP, ACPO, MOG, 2006). RES forms part of a Force statutory duty and as already stated, the Force regards us as "integral" to it.

It is also noted that the below respondent accepts he has no knowledge of what information we require yet warns against providing us with excessive information. We have never requested excessive information and the information we would like to be furnished with has always been consistent. What motivates someone to suspect us of making excessive requests in the absence of evidence? A prejudicial view and an unwitting cultural, subjective and negative view of MBPA, that is not uncommon!

Suggestions

*To allow us to be furnished with the information as requested
or*

*The Force to assist MBPA financially, to seek **independent** legal advice on this matter
(Not the Force solicitor).*

According to the last DSG meeting (14.12.07) the alarming figure of 10 BRM people left the Force in the 10 month period stated and only 1 agreed to an exit interview. What was clear from the recent DSG meeting is that the take up of people returning their exit form was low and of those who did, very few agreed to be interviewed. However, I recently found out (by chance) that two BRM staff were leaving and both agreed to meet me to discuss their reasons for leaving. A 100% success rate is a good reason to seriously consider our request. We currently pay Aston Zoraster £12,000 and the exit process is currently not fit for purpose, national standard or otherwise.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Regards

*Vinny Tomlinson
Chair, Merseyside Black Police Association
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0774 005 1721
www.merseysidebpa.org.uk*

The above situation largely remains. Exit interview questionnaires have been adjusted to ask leavers for their permission to allow our Personnel dept. to provide their details to MBPA, but the valid point raised by our Chair, have not been addressed. MBPA continue to challenge this (it should also be noted that the 10 BRM leavers figure referred to above was subsequently corrected at the next DSG meeting, to a lesser number).

Stop and Search/Account

Stop and search is a vital tool in the detection of offences and the apprehension offenders/. BRM communities generally welcome stop and search provided it is applied fairly.

“When used fairly and effectively, stop and stop/search can,

- *Help the prevention and detection of crime*
- *Increase public trust and confidence in the police*
- *Enhance police/community relations*
- *Provide vital intelligence to combat local crime patterns”.* (Source - Merlin).

There is still a marked contrast in Police interaction with white and BRM people on Merseyside. Disproportionality still exists between the two groups in stop search. On Merseyside, you are currently 3.4 times more likely to be stopped by the Police if you are black, then if you are white (DSG meeting 26.3.08). This is below the national average of 7 times (source: Statistics on race and the criminal justice system, Ministry of Justice, October 2007 - S95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991). This reduction reflects a current local downward trend.

Force – Stop Search – Per 1000 of Ethnicity (Self) 5+1 – April to December 2007

(source: DSG meeting 26.3.08).

April to December	Asian	Black	Mixed	Other	White	Searches per 1000 total population
2007	44.7	128.1	37.1	40.3	37.4	38.5
2006	24.8	144.2	38.1	24.7	26.9	27.9

It should also be noted that being 3.4 times more likely to be stopped relates to black people only and this figure has not had the stopping of ‘Asian’, ‘mixed’ and ‘other’ people factored in. The above table also shows there has been an 80% increase in the stopping of Asian people when compared to the same period last year.

The stop search disproportionality amongst BRM communities is very concerning. This has been acknowledged in various reports such as McPherson (1999). MBPA is not suggesting that officers are stopping BRM people in disproportionate numbers solely because they have hate in their hearts, but it is worth re-stating the ‘McPherson’ definition of institutional racism:

“The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate & professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance and thoughtless racist stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people”.

Furthermore, all specified public authorities (including Merseyside Police) are bound by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 to,

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people from different racial groups.

There are a number of legitimate operational, logistical and technical factors in addition to cultural and socio-economic factors, which can contribute towards disproportionality. However Merseyside Police must start to **publicly** acknowledge and state that institutional racism will also play a part and contribute towards disproportionality. Such an acknowledgement would come as no surprise to BRM communities and would serve to reassure BRM communities who already know this.

Whilst MBPA is aware of the efforts being made to address this, people may consider that once the Force acknowledge the issue, it can be dealt with it effectively. Until then, the Police will remain in an apparent state of denial and/or avoidance.

At the August 2006 NBPA International conference in Manchester, IPCC Regional director (S. East region) Judy Clement OBE gave a keynote speech on Racial Profiling. She stated,

“There is proof that BME communities are still being singled out (by the Police) due to discrimination...the evidence of police bias (in stop search) is incontrovertible”.

At the same event, Metropolitan Police Assistant. Commissioner Tariq Ghauffur spoke of how Muslims are now viewed, demeaned in society and negatively stereotyped in the media (particularly post 9/11 & 7/7). He spoke of discriminatory practices against Muslims by the Police Service and how the Police Service “..risk the retreat...” of the Muslim and wider BRM communities, if this continued.

Merseyside Police has formed a stop/search working group, chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) responsible for Operations. The inaugural meeting was held in November 2007. During this, MBPA asked that the following question be recorded and put to the ACC who was not present, for operational reasons: Is the Force prepared to publicly acknowledge that race bias is a contributing factor towards the disproportionate stopping of black people? At the second meeting of the working group in February 2008, the answer given to us by the ACC to this question was “no”.

MBPA had previously decided that if that was to be the answer then we withdraw our support and commitment to this group and leave the meeting prior to its conclusion and this we duly did. It should also be borne in mind that time was taken at the time by our Chair, Vinny Tomlinson to explain why to the group, prior to leaving. Below is an e-mail that we then sent out by us on 15.2.08 to attendees of the group and other interested parties as part of our rationale for this action.:

“Dear all,

You have received this as an attendee the stop search forum or an interested party whom MBPA believes would value the information.

I would like to provide some clarity and context in relation to the decision I made on Tuesday (12.2.08) to walk out of the stop search meeting early. I would also like to reiterate some of my input and respond to some of the comments aimed at me during my, albeit brief, presence.

At the meeting it was stated that the BRM community were "100% behind us (Merseyside Police) with stop search", it was also stated that I was "headline grabbing" and that we "should get around the table". One attendee also stated that they would like to think they were not working for a "racist organisation".

*I do not know which black people the Force talks to or what it has been reading on this, but the racial disproportionality of stop/search causes significant consternation amongst black communities and the people that I meet, both locally and nationally. I attend community meetings, lectures, conferences etc and that concern is consistently replicated throughout, as echoed by fellow meeting attendee *****_***** (censored to prevent identification) who stated this is also the anecdotal feedback she is aware of. For example, the purported comments of the then NBPA President Keith Jarret in October last year on stop/search, caused a significant outcry. I also sit on the Liverpool Black Leaders Forum where similar views were conveyed to me. In both cases I moved to reassure the forum and the many black people who vocally rose en-masse to protest, that MBPA will use our influence to ensure a 'fishing net' mentality will not be adopted by the Police service (**as was the concern**), but that we will seek to ensure that stop search in black communities is intelligence led and not based solely on the colour of a person's skin (**as was the concern**). I also stated I would be very surprised if such a tactic were adopted by any Police Force! The BRM community supports Merseyside Police to be fair, effective and efficient.*

To accuse me of "headline grabbing" is offensive and a typical ploy of those who are dismissive of any protest or a view that contradicts the party line. If I wanted to create headlines, I know how to do this and could do so quite easily, particularly in light of the negative behaviours that I am aware of which take place within this organisation, that some of you may not be aware of. This is the first meeting I have walked out of in my almost 3 years as MBPA Chair!

We have been getting, "...around the table" on this and many other subjects for years. I sometimes wonder if those that criticise are ever listening to what we say. To reiterate what I said at Tuesdays meeting, we have been 'around the table' before I became MBPA Chair in 2005, but since I have been Chair I have protested about this with the Chief Constable, then DCC John Murphy, MPA Chair, Bill Weightman, DCC Lawson, Supt Rowley Moore, Ch. Insp Pam Foster and Insp. Saied Mostaghel to name but a few.

*Our understanding of what constitutes a "racist organisation" clearly differs. I am not suggesting that our colleagues come to work to conspire the downfall of black people, and institutional racism is not about this (**I also never rule myself out of contributing***

towards institutional racism, or even being racist). A racist is not necessarily a bigot and whilst we do know they exist within the Force, we are talking about the Force admitting race bias, as opposed to bigotry, contributing towards the racial disproportionality in stop search. I sometimes wonder if McPherson ever happened or was understood or even accepted then or now.

The report declared the Police service to be 'Institutionally Racist' and our then Chief Constable accepted at the time that this included Merseyside Police. If the Force now feels this has been eradicated, then MBPA missed the dissemination of when this major milestone was reached!. In addition the report entitled "Assessing the impact of the Stephen Lawrence Enquiry" (Home Office 2005) stated that we have not eradicated it and still have a long way to go before we do, despite ACC Byrne making reference to fact the McPherson evidence is now almost 9 years old, implying it was obsolete or becoming so.

' It is pointless for the police service to try to justify the disparity in these (stop/search) figures purely or mainly in terms of the other factors which are identified. The majority of police officers who testified before us accepted that an element of the disparity was the result of discrimination. This must be the focus of their efforts for the future. Attempts to justify the disparities through the identification of other factors, whilst not being seen vigorously to address the discrimination which is evident, simply exacerbates the climate of distrust'. (McPherson 1999)

Despite the aforementioned quote stating "...this must the focus of their efforts for the future...", Merseyside Police cannot even publicly acknowledge race bias as a contributory factor, let alone '...focus their efforts...'. The Force policy on stop search states, "The Chief Constable must ensure that:...e) The Force is able to explain to local communities any reasons for disproportionality". Do you honestly think the current Force denial that race bias contributes to disproportionality will reassure black communities? Such denials hark back to the bad old days and is counter productive. There is already a lesser expectation from BRM communities when dealing with service providers as the many surveys and research will evidence. Admitting race bias plays a part will not come as surprise to black communities who already suspect this and have done so for decades. Such an admission would go some way towards providing reassurance, as it is generally assumed that once you admit a shortcoming, you can then take the next step of doing something about it.

We have long stated that the reasons for race disproportionality are varied and there is no one reason for it, but for as long as this Force refuses to acknowledge that race bias contributes towards disproportionality, yet acknowledges everything else that does, then MBPA can no longer participate in a steering group that is significantly and fundamentally flawed and in effect, refuses to accept the findings of the McPherson report on this. At the meeting on Tiesday, ACC Byrne stated he would refuse to publicly admit race bias as a contributory factor to disproportionality. I would reverse the implied question he put to me to produce evidence to justify this stance by asking where is ACC Byrne's evidence to dismiss the findings of the McPherson report on this matter?

Despite me making robust representations at the inaugural meeting of the stop search group, most of this was not captured or recorded in the minutes, despite me stating we

need an answer to the particular question that I posed at the time. That is not an uncommon phenomena when we "get around the table".

Please understand that the decision to leave Tuesdays meeting early was not mine alone nor was it a knee jerk response to years of intransigence, but rather a measured, response of the MBPA Executive Committee, who feel we were left with no choice and had exhausted all other avenues to protest our dissatisfaction. We had anticipated this.

We will not be part of a talking shop, were we feel we are patronised or ignored. We would rather not participate. We would rather spend our time doing something more productive.

Please feel free to share the content of this email as you see fit.

Thank you.

Regards

*Vinny Tomlinson
Chair, Merseyside Black Police Association
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If Merseyside Police continues with its current stance, it risks eroding the trust, faith and confidence not to mention the bridges built with BRM communities. This could negatively impact upon community cohesion and possibly result in a reduction in co-operation to lessen the cooperation and information we receive from said communities. We do not believe it to be an exaggeration to state this could increase the potential for unrest. Therefore, there is a clear operational imperative to recognise causation and counter this with early intervention and other pro-active measures. If you do not see a problem, there is no problem to solve.

MBPA acknowledges the various factors that can create disproportionality in stop search from cultural to socio-economic. MBPA continues to implore the Force to publicly acknowledge that an aspect of institutional racism and ‘race bias’ also plays a part. The Force cannot work towards solutions without acknowledging **all of the causation factors**. Until then, how can the Force truly work towards finding solutions to a problem it says does not exist?

Awards (presented)

Our 2007 AGM (May 18th) saw the inaugural presentation of our Community & Staff Awards.

The MBPA Executive Committee felt it was appropriate to formally acknowledge and reward a person &/or organisation from the community and an employee &/or

department of Merseyside Police who have exemplified the ethos of the MBPA constitution over the preceding 12 months.

Several worthy nominations were put forward. The MBPA Committee cogitated, discussed and debated the merits of each before finalising the two winners, the details of which is below.

Community Award presented to Mr Eric Lynch

Eric Lynch is a senior black scouser and honorary Ghanaian Chief. He left school at the age of 14 and couldn't read and write because in those days it was judged that black people didn't need such skills. Within a few years however, he had taught himself to read and write, partly because of his fascination for the history of Liverpool. He needed to know how things had come about. Such was his curiosity that he travelled all over Liverpool, unafraid of the racial divisions encompassed by the geography of North and South sides of the city. However this did not come without risk and there were one or two occasions when he was abused and chased because of the colour of his skin.

His need to know even led him to unsuccessfully stow away on a ship bound for Barbados, but discovered before the sailing he was unceremoniously thrown back to the Liverpool shore. And so Eric learnt about Liverpool life and its history. He worked on the docks and later in the council's direct building labour organisation. Slavery, racism and Liverpool seem for many to ring together.

It fitting that someone who has moved around the city, explored it's history and worked in bastions of white employment should now be the slavery tour guide in Liverpool (see home page 'Liverpool Slavery Tour'). In a way it shows that despite everything, the barriers of racism were always there to be broken down and Eric, with his imposing stature, confidently moving between the communities and explaining their histories, seems to be a natural ambassador.

Our Chair, Vinny Tomlinson first met Eric several years ago at a meeting in Toxteth. Eric wasted no time in establishing Vinny's motivation by robustly questioning where he was from, what I knew about the area generally. Though slightly perturbed, (primarily because he assumed his track record of what he represented went before him). However, he welcomed the opportunity to clarify the role of MBPA and what he stood for.

Vinny also welcomed Eric's questioning because the community needs people to act as guardians, who are prepared to ask such questions. Eric's motivation was to establish that the person sat at the table wearing a Police uniform, knew the history of the area and was not just a tokenistic public servant with little connection to the area or the ability to understand and acknowledge the impact of racism and the many ways in which it manifests itself.

Vinny stated, "I attend various events and meetings and whenever Eric is present he almost always 'represents' on the issues surrounding race discrimination, in his own inimitable and sometimes uncompromising style".

The Merseyside Police Diversity Training Team have been working with Eric since taking them on his internationally renowned Slavery Walk from Liverpool's Maritime

Museum in August 2006. He has worked on the Force's Race Awareness module from the beginning and has been invaluable during the consultation phase and throughout as an interface guest.

It isn't easy to be an Interface Guest and it is part of Eric's skills as a facilitator and orator that he helps people to understand the issues faced by people from Black and Racial Minorities in Liverpool, both in a historical context and also the present perspective.

Staff Award presented to Inspector Helen Corcoran

Inspector Corcoran is currently an Inspector in the Strategic Development Department of Merseyside Police. She has written a number of papers in relation to Diversity. She has organised focus groups in relation to Promotion procedure, Gender Agenda 2, High Potential Development scheme/promotion and is heavily involved in the formal discussions pertaining to the proposal to establish a diversity directorate within Merseyside Police.

At every stage of that paper she consulted with Staff associations et al. This included the TRUE (Trust, Respect, Understanding, Empathy) project team. Her language is always inclusive and nothing is ever done simply to tick a box or evidence her extensive portfolio.

She makes herself available to discuss issues in relation to minority groups. Inspector Corcoran has been working on a number of projects over and has carried out various roles within the Force. One of her projects included research into why certain minority groups were underrepresented in certain promotional exams.

Inspector Corcoran is very committed to diversity and is genuinely concerned with seeing and making change happen.

The Presentation

Eric gave an impassioned and moving acceptance speech, much of which was related to his own experiences. He dedicated his award to his late mother who, as a white mother of black children in Liverpool, suffered significant racism. Clearly she was an inspiration to him and clearly his racist experiences had had a profound impact on him.

Inspector Corcoran was surprised and somewhat taken aback, but during her acceptance speech she pledged to continue to speak out and challenge discrimination and inequality whenever she comes across it. Both were unaware they were going to receive their awards and yet despite this, they were present at our AGM, when they were not obliged to be.

Their presence was a testament to their desire to immerse themselves in the issues centered on racism & discrimination. MBPA were proud to acknowledge such conscientiousness and sincerity, a rare commodity in itself.

Meeting attendance of MBPA Executive Committee members

As previously stated in last years report by MBPA Chair, Vinny Tomlinson apathy amongst the membership will ultimately be our undoing. To try and counter this he decided to record and publish the attendance performance of MBPA Executive Committee. He believes this had a positive impact, as performance became a topic of consideration and discussion amongst the committee.

UP TO & INCL 16.4.08

	Ex. 18/7/07		Ex. 15/8/07		Ex. 19/9/07		Op. 8/8/07		Ex. 17/10/07		Ex. 21/11/07		Op. 28/11/07		Ex. 19.12.07	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
OD	X	/	X	/	X	X	X	X	/	n/a	X	/	/	n/a	X	/
VT	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a
IA	X	/	/	n/a	X	/	/	n/a	/	n/a	X	/	X	/	/	n/a
AT	/	n/a	X	X	/	n/a	X	/	X	/	R		R		R	
NA	/	n/a	X	X	X	X	/	n/a	/	n/a	R		R		R	
KG	X	/	X	/	/	n/a	X	/	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a
JK		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A	X	/
JW		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A	X	/
NS		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A	X	X

	Ex. 16/1/08		Op. 13.2.08		Ex. 27.2.08		Ex. 19.3.08		Ex. 16.4.08	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
OD	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a
VT	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a
IA	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a	X	/
AT		R		R		R		R		R
NA		R		R		R		R		R
KG	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a	/	n/a
JK	/	n/a	X	/	X	/	X	/	X	/
JW	X	X	/	n/a	/	n/a	X	/	X	/
NS		R		R		R		R		R

Ex. = Executive Committee meetings

Op. = Open Meetings

1 = Attended?

2 = Apologies sent?

/ = Yes

X = No

R = Resigned

Excluding MBPA Chair, Vinny Tomlinson, the below table provides an 'at-a -glance' view of current meeting attendance performance (up to and including 16.4.08). Caution should be exercised when comparing performance, as various factors contribute to making such comparisons potentially unfair, such as illness, opportunity, length of tenure, operational exigencies etc. However, this table has afforded the Executive Committee the information required to measure and improve their performance, were necessary.

Name	Attendance	Attendance %	Apologies sent	Apologies sent %	Position (Attendance only)
Karen Griffiths	10/13	76.9	3/3	100	1st
Irene Afful	8/13	61.5	5/5	100	2nd
Norma Ali R	3/5	60	0	0	3rd

Os Dualeh	7/13	53.8	4/6	66.6	4th
Amanda Thomas R	2/5	40	2/3	66.6	5th
Jade Wright	2/6	33.3	3/4	75	6th
Julie King	1/6	16.6	5/5	100	7th
Nathan Smeda R	0/1	0	0	0	8th

MBPA Awards (received)

MBPA would like to congratulate our Deputy Chair, Detective Inspector Irene Afful for winning the 'Public Affairs' award at the Merseyside Women of the Year Awards held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Liverpool in June 2007. This was a magnificent achievement and a testament to her personal achievements and her dedication and commitment to Merseyside Police and MBPA.

Irene was joined by members of her family, who must have been very proud of her. The event was covered by the Liverpool Daily Post and their website tribute to Irene reads thus;

"PUBLIC AFFAIRS: Irene Afful(Highly Commended: Ruth Gould, North West Disability Arts Forum)

FOUR years ago, Irene became the first black female inspector in Merseyside Police. She has now reached the rank of detective inspector and is deputy chair of the Merseyside Black Police Association.

Although academically gifted, Irene decided to support her family rather than take A-Levels. Later, She passed the police entrance exam with top marks, was top of her class in the training centre and was given an award for being the fittest female on her course, often beating many of the men.



Jean Gadsby of Gadsby Associates presents Irene with her award



Irene with Mum Tina & sister Thomasina

Our Chair, Vinny Tomlinson stated, *"Irene is an MBPA ever-present and has been a consistent part of the association, as others have come and gone. Without the contributions of Irene over the years, MBPA would be far poorer. She is one of the few prepared to speak out on behalf of our members' concerns and the award is thoroughly deserved. I value her counsel and she does not hold back in letting me know her views, whether or not they concur with mine. This input is vital and I am grateful for it. I would like thank you and to her and say well done for earning this thoroughly deserved recognition!"*

Irene also featured in the book released last year entitled 'Liverpool Black Pioneers', by Dr Ray Costello. This is a biography of the Liverpool Black Community and records a number of eminent achievers who, in some cases, were the first of their race to occupy roles previously closed to them through the prevalent racism of their time. Congratulations to Irene on yet another piece of significant recognition.

Our Chair Vinny Tomlinson won the Liverpool Black History Month 'Public Sector' Award, presented to him at the Liverpool Black Achievers awards ceremony, held at the Crowne Plaza, as part of Black History Month celebrations. He stated, "*I was surprised, proud and flattered, when I found out I had won this award...it is a testament to the reassuring work and role of the Black Police Association.* He further stated, "*...such an acknowledgement was only ever likely to come from the black community*".



Vinny Tomlinson being presented with his award by Andrew Nembhard, Head of Liverpool City Council Equal Opportunities Dept. (award sponsors)

MBPA Charity work

There is concern regarding the under-representation of blood and bone marrow donors from BRM backgrounds. BRM people are at a disadvantage because of this. Depending on the blood related illness, racial origin can play a part in whether or not a suitable donor can be found and therefore chances of success are generally much higher for white people.

"Currently only 5% of the eligible population donate blood. Only 1% of blood donors are of African or African-Caribbean descent. A white person could have a 1 in 5 chance of finding a donor. For black people, the chances could be reduced to 1 in 100,000" (source: www.blood.co.uk 'Are you my type?').

MBPA has adopted the African Caribbean Leukaemia Trust (ACLT) as its charity and would encourage all people, irrespective of ethnic background but particularly those from a BRM background to donate blood and register on the central bone marrow registry (see www.blood.co.uk/pages/marrow_info.html) or other related organisations such as the Anthony Nolan Trust (www.anthonynolan.org.uk). This is the main central register for bone marrow donors.

MBPA assisted to publicise two campaigns: the ongoing campaign of two children, Ella (5 years) and Sam Wright (3 years) who were in need of a bone marrow transplant. MBPA Executives appeared in the Liverpool Echo to encourage people to register on the Anthony Nolan Trust, particularly to make the connection with BRM readers to address BRM under-representation.

MBPA campaigned and appealed for donors on behalf of Jeannette Crizzle, a lady of Mediterranean origin who required a bone marrow transplant. She sadly died in October 2006 as a result of her illness. It was particularly sad because a matching donor was found but Jeanette's condition had deteriorated before the transplant could take place. Time is always of the essence. MBPA have been in contact with her husband Adam Crizzle who has set up The Jeanette Crizzle Trust (www.jeanettecrizzletrust.org) and he, along with a number of organisations, campaigns to raise awareness and encourage people to register as potential donors.

Our social event held at the Alima Centre on Friday May 18th raised £400, which we donated to the ACLT (www.aclt.org). ACLT thanked us for our contribution and stated it, "...will contribute towards our search for potential bone marrow donors and the work incurred in broadening our campaign".

Please take the time to visit one of the websites mentioned to see how you could save a life.

PLEASE COME FORWARD AND REGISTER.

SAVE A LIFE!



Registered charity 1058739

www.aclt.org

Conclusion

It has been another 12 months of tenacious work. We have worked to support our members but this support also extended to non-members, as we often do. We have advised both colleagues and members of the community and we have challenged when necessary. We have endeavoured to bring influence to bear in a number of forums and will continue to do so.

MBPA's role and contributions are necessary and yet are often still misunderstood or unknown by many. This was a primary motivating factor for the theme of our open conference this year, *'Our role, our contribution'*.

It is clear that MBPA is not averse to challenging inappropriate behaviour or processes within the Police Service, as this report demonstrates, but it is sometimes necessary to comment and challenge racism in society even if, to many, there is no

apparent link to the Police Service. The report is a demonstrable illustration of MBPA doing this and so much more.

“An injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere” (Martin Luther King)

Racism anywhere is a threat to all of us everywhere.

The Chair often defends Merseyside Police to those that say the Police service is racist, implying racism does not occur elsewhere. The Police Service does not recruit from within a vacuum but from society. There is no line of demarcation when someone expresses racist or bigoted views. Racism in society is a matter for everyone. Those that think racism and discrimination is someone else’s problem, are effectively contributing towards the problem.

The primary role of MBPA is to provide a voice for BRM Police officers and staff, who would otherwise go unheard. MBPA provides empathetic psychological strength, which assists members to challenge inappropriate culture and conduct; to remain employed within the Police Service and realise their full potential. This report reflects some of what that activity looks like.

As our Chair continues to state, apathy at all levels of membership continues to be a major concern. This could ultimately lead to the undoing of MBPA. Chief Officers must ensure that willing participants are formally and appropriately facilitated. If members care about MBPA, they **must** get involved. Please attend our meetings and make yourself available!

If you feel you can support MBPA, wish to become a member or if you wish to provide the Association with feedback, then please do so. Whether you want to get involved or are just seeking clarification just then please feel free to make contact using the details on the front cover. We are approachable and encourage dialogue.

MBPA is only as strong as its weakest link and the strength of the movement comes from the collective endeavours of the membership and our supporters.

Vinny Tomlinson
Chair, Merseyside Black Police Association

The MBPA Executive Committee has approved this annual report for publication. Every effort has been made to ensure the contents are accurate. The contents are believed to be correct up to and including 30th April 2008. Should you spot any anomalies within this document, please contact the MBPA Chair, using the details on the front cover.