



## Questions Handed in at the Hate Crime Awareness Conference

**Q: In terms of the presentation from Kate Crompton, who are the SLA written for?**  
(Answer provided by Inspector Gail Spruce)

*Greater Manchester Police and the CPS in Manchester have teamed up to draft Service Level Agreements in relation to Hate Crime. The Agreements set out the responsibilities for each organisation from the point of reporting to the police through to the point of sentencing for those hate crime cases that are progressed through the criminal courts. Throughout the Agreements, victim and witness care considerations are documented. Whilst the Agreements are still in draft format, it is hoped that these will be ratified in the near future.*

*However, GMP are now liaising with other agencies including Victim Support, HM Prison Service, Probation Service and Youth Offending Teams in order that similar Service Level Agreements can be agreed with those organisations.*

**Why are disabled people treated like children by the police when reporting crime?**  
(Answer provided by Inspector Gail Spruce)

*Disability covers a huge spectrum of issues and needs. It is fair to say that even persons with the same disability will have different levels of need.*

*Many people are unsure how to treat a person with a disability i.e. do we ask them do they need any help (or do we presume that they will ask for help if they need it. Will they be offended if I offer help as they might feel patronised or will they think I don't care if I don't offer to assist?*

*My own opinion and my own style is that I offer help in a polite manner and I am prepared therefore to risk offending people as I think it's more important that their needs are catered for, even if someone is offended that I have asked.*

*As an example, on the day of the conference, at lunch I was sat with someone who was visually impaired. I could see that her jacket lapel was catching on her curry - I simply said to her 'can I just turn your plate around so the rice is nearest to you as your jacket is getting curry on it'. Did I offend her - she never said. Perhaps I should have said nothing and allowed her to dirty her jacket. Visually impaired or not I would much rather someone point that out to me. I would like to think I pointed out the issue and communicated it in the right way.*

*When I spoke I mentioned that it had been pointed out to me that I had not offered sugar to someone who was a wheel chair user. On that occasion the lady presumably had felt*



*unable to ask for the sugar so she didn't mention it. I think there is a responsibility on both sides. Most of us do not encounter disability on a regular basis, I would suggest we cannot all be expected to understand and make provision for every conceivable issue because of the complexity of identifying individuals' needs. The disabled person must do their part if they can. Yes some of us are ignorant through choice but many people simply don't recognise the signs of disability as they are not used to it and thus for them it would be helpful if the disabled person could make their needs clear. Again I recognise that subject to the persons needs they might not be able to ask for help.*

*I guess what I am saying is - that we will all get it wrong and whilst I would hope we improve with experience we will all come across a scenario or need that we have never dealt with and don't know what to do - but again the key for me is asking 'Is there anything I can do to help'*

*If someone does feel they have been treated like a child by an officer (because of their disability) then I am appalled - I am committed to dealing with any complaint of such behaviour. I would be further appalled if such experiences were common and I would be very interested in any views / evidence that this happens in the Wigan Borough.*

*My role ensures that I am involved in building bridges between vulnerable groups and the police - as part of this I arrange for student officers to attend mental health training at our local hospital and likewise I arrange guest speakers on any such subjects to come into the police station and educate our staff. I welcome any suggestions as to how we can improve on this where disability is concerned.*

*I am happy to discuss this further as this general question has only enabled me to offer a general response.*