



YOUNG PEOPLE MEET IPCC COMMISSIONER TO DISCUSS DEATH OF RASHAN CHARLES

Press Release

On Tuesday evening this week, Hackney CVS hosted a meeting of the Young People's Stop and Search Monitoring Group and young people from The Crib, to discuss the community tensions arising from the death of Rashan Charles who died following a police arrest in the early hours of Saturday 22nd July. Because of the nature of the incident a team of Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) investigators are examining the circumstances of Rashan's death following police contact in Hackney.

The meeting was attended by the IPCC Commissioner, Cindy Butts, the Mayor of Hackney, Phil Glanville and Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Cllr Caroline Selman.

Mayor Glanville said: *"The death of Rashan Charles has left many people shocked, hurt and angry. It was extremely powerful to listen to the concerns, questions and fears of those young people who attended the meeting last night. We are committed to doing everything we can to make sure that those concerns are heard. We welcome the very early involvement of the IPCC and their commitment to working with Rashan's family and engaging with the community. Rashan should not have died on Saturday morning and it is vital that the investigation is as transparent, rigorous and thorough as possible. In the meantime, we would urge people to engage with that process, to stay calm at this difficult time and to ensure protests are peaceful."*

The meeting was an opportunity for Hackney Council and the IPCC to hear the views of local young people who expressed concern about the conduct of the arresting police officer (who is not a local police officer but a member of the Met Police's Territorial Support Group aka TSG).

The meeting heard about young people's fears of being mistreated by the police and was also an opportunity for them to understand the process for the IPCC investigation with many providing useful information and insight to the IPCC's representatives.

Jake Ferguson, CEO of Hackney CVS said, after the event: *"The shocking video of Rashan's death has affected many people and left many questions to be answered. Tragic incidents like this remind us all of the need for improved relationships between young people and the police so that the 2011 riots do not happen again. People and communities need to be heard. The police should be here to protect us all and not be feared by young people or any communities for that matter"*.

Dami Okusaga, from the Young People's Stop and Search Monitoring Group said, after the event: *"It's a welcome step by the IPCC in trying to build relations with the community. The meeting provided a good opportunity to understand in a little more detail what the IPCC actually does, but it was also clear where there were still gaps. The meeting also highlighted the real issues between the community and the police and it was nice to have the Mayor in attendance informing the audience, what actions he took and what he intends to do from here onwards in relation to this incident"*.

The role of the IPCC is to investigate the most serious incidents and complaints involving police in England and Wales. It is an independent organisation, making its decisions entirely independently of the police and government. It is not part of the police.

IPCC Commissioner Cindy Butts said: *"Tuesday night was a really valuable opportunity to meet and speak with young members of the community. I was hugely impressed with their contributions and questions, and I welcome the chance to keep up this engagement as our investigation continues. People are understandably concerned about what happened, and I am committed to overseeing a thorough and independent investigation that seeks to answer the questions that people have about the tragic death of Rashan Charles"*.

The investigation has started and the IPCC are currently gathering and sifting through evidence in relation to the incident. The investigation will focus on the police contact with Rashan, including the use of force and restraint on him and the actions taken by police when it became apparent he was unwell.

Updates on the investigation from the IPCC are available here:

<http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/investigations/rashan-charles-metropolitan-police-service>

In the meantime if you have any information that can help the investigation please contact kingslandroad@ipcc.gsi.gov.uk

For media enquiries please contact:

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The Youth Stop and Search Monitoring Group facilitated by Hackney CVS was set up in the aftermath of the 2011 riots as a way of supporting young people to discuss stop and search practice with the local police. For more information email: deji@hcvs.org.uk

Other contacts:

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