

Authorised Professional Practice

Home ► Decision Making ► Critical Incident Management ►

Case Study

The Murder of Aamir Siddiqi, Cardiff, 2010

On Sunday, April 11 2010 two masked men forced their way into the family home of Aamir Siddiqi in the Roath area of Cardiff. They fatally stabbed 17-year-old Aamir and seriously injured his parents, aged 55 and 68, who tried to intervene.

The media interest in this crime was immediate at both local and national level. Not least because it took place on a sunny Sunday afternoon opposite one of the most popular and busy parks in the city; but also because Aamir was considered, by those who knew him, a well-liked young man with a bright future ahead of him.

Aamir was of Indian heritage and a Muslim living in an affluent neighbourhood. He was a high achiever planning to study law at Cardiff University, and was described as passionate about sport.

When the murder investigation was launched, it was immediately identified as a critical incident. Crowds from the park had gathered at the scene; there were early community concerns that this was an honour-violence issue; and within the immediate Muslim community there was a feeling that this may be a case of mistaken identity involving members of the Sikh community.

To support the SIO, and to provide a local perspective, the local Operational Chief Inspector and the Head of Minorities Support Unit were involved in investigation management meetings from the start. This ensured that any cultural/community issues were flagged at the earliest opportunity. There was also a direct link between the SIO and the Police Community Lead.

Community Intervention

Links with local community contacts were already well-embedded within Cardiff and a lot of good relationships had been developed because of the neighbourhood policing model. When this incident happened, the key contacts within the Muslim and Sikh communities were, therefore, already in place.

Tactics

- Early in the investigation, the BCU consulted community representatives from the immediate vicinity, together with a family representative, to determine the best way of 'talking' to the local community. As a consequence, a poster and leaflet appeal was arranged using Urdu as the main language. The appeal, including posters and leaflet drops in local shops, businesses, community centres, mosques and Guadwaras, was three-fold – a request for information; to provide an update on the investigation; and to provide a reassurance message.
- As a sign of respect, local Mosques and Guadwaras were offered a police presence during Friday prayers. The majority of Mosques took up this offer and local neighbourhood officers were present outside the Mosques on the Friday following the murder. This provided reassurance to communities and an opportunity for attendees to pass on any information.
- Some of Aamir's friends arranged a tribute football match in his memory, with local celebrities from Cardiff City FC attending. The community was consulted on whether a police presence was required. As a result, there was a low-key presence with plain-clothed and uniformed staff available to receive any information.
- The media appeal from the police and Aamir's family was uploaded to YouTube as the community said this would be the easiest means of communication with the Asian communities. This would provide opportunities to communicate with people who did not purchase local/national newspapers, and
- who may have missed the local TV news, but would be able to access YouTube. Part of the appeal was spoken in Urdu by a family member.

**Not protectively Marked
December 2011**

- A mobile police station was deployed to the vicinity of the incident and resourced with a Muslim Neighbourhood Beat Officer who was known and respected within the local community. This proved to be successful as members of the community would attend the mobile police station rather than contacting the appeal telephone number or local police station.
- Cardiff BCU already had a Community Cohesion Group of key individuals and contacts from diverse communities across Cardiff. Although meetings of this group are held regularly, an ad hoc meeting was held following Aamir's murder. The SIO attended and updated the group.
- Intelligence suggested that there were growing tensions between the Hindu and Muslim youth communities, stemming from the rumours that the murder was a result of mistaken identity. A meeting was arranged for youth leaders from across the city to provide a forum to discuss strategies to dispel tensions.
- Due to the age of the victim and the shock Aamir's death had caused, an offer was made to local schools for Neighbourhood Staff to address pupils during school assemblies. The intention was to offer reassurance; quell rumours; diffuse tensions and appeal for information. Most schools were grateful for this offer, in particular the school Aamir attended accepted the offer.
- Patrol strategies were initiated at the time of the murder and local officers continued these for some time after the incident took place.

Current Position at Time of Publication

Two people have been charged with Aamir's murder and are currently on remand awaiting trial. Other persons are actively being pursued in connection with the murder.

For further information contact South Wales Police