



Speaking Truth to Power

During the Speaking Truth to Power presentation MCF's Victim and Survivor Advocate Megan Hinton spoke about her lived experience of Technology-Assisted Child Sexual Abuse which she experienced aged 14. Megan was joined by Simon Bailey, CBE, QPM, DL, Chair of Policing Institute for the Eastern Region, who answered hard hitting questions about policing procedures and policies developed during his time as National Police Chiefs' Council lead for Child Protection.

During the session Megan bravely shared her lived experience of being subjected to harmful sexual behaviour perpetrated by peers at school. The testimony detailed how the poor professional response from police, social services and schoolteachers resulted in polyvictimisation and further trauma.

Simon Bailey agreed to answer all ten of Megan's questions without seeing them prior to the session. This gave the presentation a truly authentic feel as Simon gave his honest response to potential failings and gave consideration on how best to respond to TACSA in the future.

The wide range of questions covered Outcome 21 and whether it is fit for purpose, what messaging should be given to tackle 'self-generated' child sexual abuse material, and why national minimum standards of policing have not yet been implemented for online sexual abuse and exploitation of children.

The audience were able to leave the session understanding how professionals responses can cause further trauma and the long-lasting impact this has on victims and survivors. Megan's testimony highlighted why the needs of the victim and their family must be at the centre of any investigation or professional intervention if professional wish to effectively safeguard and allow the child to start on the path to recovery. The open and honest responses from Simon allowed attendees to consider how they can improve their response in future and how to acknowledge when systems or procedures need to change.