Report to Safer and Stronger Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

Subject: Hate Crime and Hate Incidents 1st March 2015 – 28th February 2017

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Summary:
1.   Hate crime is gaining increasing precedence in national and local crime prevention priorities.
2.   Increasing awareness and responses to hate crime has resulted in an increase in reporting both nationally and locally.
3.   Over the last two years, there has been an upward trend in the volume of hate crime and hate incidents reported to South Yorkshire Police, with much of the last year seeing above average volumes.
4.   Recorded volumes of hate crimes and incidents have increased by 57% from 2015/6 – 2016/7.

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Type of item: The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	x
Other	

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

The Committee is asked to consider the findings.

Background Papers:
None

Category of Report: OPEN

Report of the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services
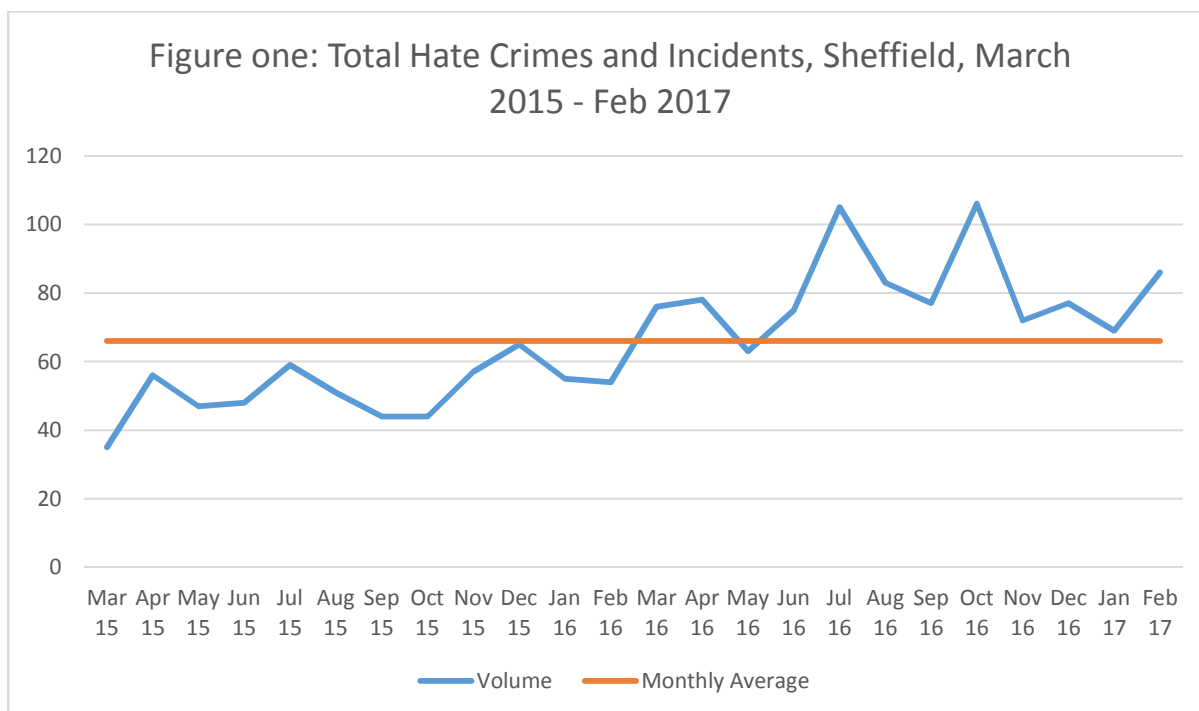
Hate Crime and Hate Incidents

1.   Introduction/Context

1.1   This report has been requested by the Committee to provide an update on hate crime and hate incidents in Sheffield.

1.2   Hate Crime is taken to mean any crime where the perpetrator's prejudice against an identifiable group of people is a contributory factor in determining who is victimized. This is a broad and inclusive definition; a victim of Hate Crime does not have to be a member of a minority group, or someone who is considered to be a 'vulnerable' person. Anyone can be a victim of a Hate Crime.

1.3   Hate Crimes can include a range of threatening behaviour, assault, robbery, damage to property, harassment or inciting others to commit hate crimes. Hate incidents refer to any incident, which may or may not be a crime, which the victim or any other person perceives to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards any aspect of a person's identity.

1.4   This report includes details of Hate Crime and Incidents recorded by South Yorkshire Police between 1st March 2015 – 28th February 2017. As there is no single category of Hate Crime, offences are determined either by the offence itself, e.g. Racially or Religiously Aggravated Criminal Damage, or by an Aggravating Factor being recorded on the crime or incident. Hate Crime Aggravating Factors include:

- Disability
- Racial
- Religion
- Transgender / Transphobic
- Sexual Orientation

2.   Main body of report, matters for consideration, etc

2.1   Hate crime is gaining increasing precedence in national and local crime prevention priorities. Increasing awareness and responses to hate crime has resulted in an increase in reporting both nationally and locally.

2.2   Over the last two years, there has been an upward trend in the volume of hate crime and hate incidents reported to South Yorkshire Police, with much of the last year seeing above average volumes. The year on year increase is currently 12% higher than the previous report (57% when 2015/16 is compared to 2014/15). During the last 2 years (1st March 2015 – 28th February 2017), 1020 hate crimes and 526 hate incidents were recorded. Figure 1 illustrates the trend of recorded hate crime and hate incidents over the past 2 years. The orange line indicates the monthly average.

Figure one: Total Hate Crimes and Incidents, Sheffield, March 2015 - Feb 2017

2.3 Racially aggravated hate crime is the most common type of reported hate crime and hate incidents in Sheffield (79.9% of all hate crime and incidents in the last 2 years were racially aggravated). This reflects the national trend and it is accepted that whilst underreporting exists for all hate crime and incidents, significant underreporting is most prevalent within certain groups, particularly disability and transgender hate crimes.

2.4 The sexual orientation aggravating factor recorded the second highest volume of hate crimes and incidents in Sheffield in the last 2 years (11.3%).

3. What does this mean for the people of Sheffield?

3.1 Hate Crime features in South Yorkshire Police's (SYP) Force Strategic Assessment 2016 as a medium risk thematic area, based on the probability and impact of an event. In light of concerns around the under-reporting of Hate Crime, there has been ongoing work to increase confidence, provide more accessible reporting through online and third party reporting centres and improve crime-recording standards. Consequently, there has been an increase in hate crime reported to the force, which is a strong indicator that the actions and engagement undertaken by SYP and nationally, has increased awareness and confidence to report crimes and incidents.

4. Recommendation

4.1 The Committee is asked to consider the report.

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