



## Report to Safer and Stronger Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 6 July 2017

**Report of:** Executive Director, Place

**Subject:** Response to recommendations of the task group on hate crime

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**Summary:** This report will provide information on the Council's response to the recommendations of the Safer and Stronger Scrutiny Committee's task group on hate crime.

**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	
Other	X

**The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:**

Note the report.

**Background Papers:**

Appendix A – Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee Hate Crime Task Group Report

Appendix B – South Yorkshire Police leaflet

**Category of Report:** OPEN (please specify)

# **Report of the Executive Director, Place**

## **1. Introduction/Context**

- 1.1 In September 2016 the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee agree to set up a cross-party task group looking at hate crimes and hate incidents. The task group decided the focus of the review would be the reporting of hate crime and hate incidents – specifically *To understand the different ways hate crime can be reported in Sheffield, identifying things that are working and any areas where improvements could be made*. The task group conducted the review between October 2017 and January 2017.
- 1.2 This report will provide an update on the progress made with implementing the recommendations.

## **2. Hate crime background**

- 2.1 Public awareness and understanding of hate crime has increased in recent years, as have levels of reporting. However, we know that hate crime is still significantly underreported. Following discussions at Full Council, at its meeting in September 2016, the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee agreed to set up a cross party task group to look at hate crime.
- 2.2 The task group looked at national policy on hate crime, including the Hate Crime Action Plan published by the government in 2016, as well as available data on the reporting of hate crime nationally, compared with the findings of the Crime Survey for England and Wales, which showed that many people who responded to the survey saying they had been a victim of a hate crime had not reported it to the police.
- 2.3 The group also looked at the use of third party reporting, the establishment of which was a key recommendation in the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry. The ability to report hate crime at places other than police stations/directly to the police have not been widely used and the group spent time talking to organisations about why this may be the case.
- 2.4 The challenges locally were identified by the task group and included:
  - Underreporting
  - Increasing awareness and understanding
  - Needing targeted communications with groups with the highest rates of underreporting including specific work with disabled people
  - Increases in incidents online
  - Engaging effectively with young people
  - Independent training routes
  - Focussed work on public transport
  - Supporting victims effectively

- 2.5 Some positive areas were highlighted by the task group, including the council and police's work with the Equality Hub Network, partnership working between the police and third sector organisations to build awareness and encourage confidence in reporting. The Fearless campaign for young people had been piloted in Sheffield and had had positive results locally. The task group looked into Merseyside's use of a 24 hour, 7 days a week telephone line for reporting hate crime, independently of the police.
- 2.6 The partnership response to hate crime in Sheffield is co-ordinated by the Sheffield Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership. In response to the recommendations made by the task group, the partnership has agreed to appoint a hate crime co-ordinator to bring together much of the information and the response to hate crime and hate incidents in Sheffield.
- 2.7 The task group made a number of recommendations, based around the following themes:
1. Raising Awareness and Building Understanding
  2. Reporting
  3. Partnership Working
  4. Improving our Understanding
- 2.8 Section 1 covered *raising awareness and building understanding* and the following points should be noted:
- 2.8.1 A citywide anti-hate campaign will be developed to coincide with Hate Crime Awareness Week (14-21 October 2017). This will include publicising reporting routes for hate crime and hate incidents and will aim to engage with public places such as supermarkets, restaurants and public transport. Specific work will be undertaken to establish what support could be provided to encourage the reporting of hate crime by those groups who are known to underreport. The campaign will be in partnership with South Yorkshire Police and Stop Hate UK, as well as other members of the Sheffield Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership.
- 2.8.2 South Yorkshire Police have reviewed their publicity materials on hate crime and hate incidents, in consultation with the Equality Hub Networks, and have re-produced the content (see Appendix B).
- 2.9 Section 2 of the recommendations was about the *reporting* of hate crime, and the following points should be noted:
- 2.9.1 An independent hate crime reporting telephone line is being established in Sheffield. This will be delivered by Stop Hate UK and will be funded for 3 years, subject to annual agreement of funding.
- 2.9.2 As part of ongoing work to improve reporting, relationships with existing third party reporting centres will be reviewed and new guidance around expectations issued. This will include signposting or assisting people to report hate crimes or incidents via the Stop Hate UK reporting line.
- 2.9.3 As part of the campaign to raise awareness and reporting of hate crime, the council, police and partners will be involved in promoting the

use of the reporting line, including frontline staff (eg Fire officers, Housing+, frontline police officers, public transport staff). This may include use of organisations' internal and external communications channels (intranet, internet, social media).

2.10 Section 3 of the recommendations was around *partnership working*.

2.10.1 Awareness raising materials have been reviewed and refreshed by South Yorkshire Police, in consultation with the Equality Hubs Network, who provided advice about the content and style of the leaflets and posters (see appendix B for an example leaflet).

2.10.2 Regarding the remaining improvements to partnership working, the actions noted in recommendations 3.1, 3.2 and 3.4 of the document will be addressed through the multi-agency hate crime action plan to be co-ordinated by the hate crime co-ordinator.

2.11 In order to *improve our understanding* of hate crime as described in section 4 of the recommendations;

2.11.1 The Cabinet Member has written to the Police and Crime Commissioner to request that some changes are made to the South Yorkshire Police recording systems to enable better interrogation of the data and improve our understanding of who is affected by hate crime in Sheffield and South Yorkshire. This includes the introduction of misogyny/misandry as a recorded category of hate motivated crime/incidents, alongside the existing categories of race, faith, gender identity, disability and sexual orientation. In addition, it has been requested that the category of disability is expanded to allow further detail: Learning disability, physical disability, sensory disability or mental ill-health. The Police and Crime Commissioner has responded that he is broadly supportive of these measures, and will look into whether this is possible.

### **3 What does this mean for the people of Sheffield?**

3.1 In order to build cohesive, tolerant communities in Sheffield, the council, police and partners must work together to raise awareness of hate crime and incidents, to equip people in Sheffield to be better able to recognise that an incident has been motivated by hate. There is a need to increase confidence that these will be dealt with appropriately and to spread the message that people can report incidents.

3.2 The recommendations made by the task group will support this message and the work will be ongoing to tackle hate motivated crime locally and nationally.

### **4. Recommendation**

4.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.