

Report of Director of Environment and Housing

Report to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Board

Date: 10th March 2014

Subject: Leeds Hate Crime Strategy 2014 - 2019

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

- 1 Safer Leeds has revised the Hate Crime Strategy, which sets out our ambition to prevent and reduce levels of hate crime by ensuring victims and witnesses are supported and offenders are brought to justice. Our desired outcome is that People in Leeds are safe and feel safe in their homes, in the streets, and the places they go.
- 2 The strategy is underpinned by an action plan to achieve three key priorities of Challenge it, Report it, and Stop it.

Recommendations

- 3 Members of the scrutiny board are recommended to actively support the implementation of the Hate Crime Strategy in the following ways :
 - Acknowledge the work undertaken to date by partners, residents groups and volunteers. Understand the impact of hate crime on our communities and the steps being taken to resolve them.
 - Acknowledge the importance of including prevention, reporting and stopping hate crime as shared priority for all services.
 - Raise any known issues or areas of overlap in your own ward areas as soon as possible with Service Development Officer, Rebecca Herbert.

- Support the strategic action plan. You can do this by sharing information, signposting to reporting centres and identifying opportunities to raise the profile of reporting, challenging and stopping hate crime within your own portfolios.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform members of the new Leeds Hate Crime Strategy 2014-2019 which is due to be formally launched on 24th April 2014; and to ask members to actively support the work undertaken. The Hate Crime Strategy is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The strategy is underpinned by an action plan to achieve three key priorities of Challenge it, Report it, and Stop it.
- 1.3 **Challenge it – Know how to identify a hate incident. Performance measure: Increased number of reports from Hate Incident Reporting Centres.** Leeds will be a city where people are able to recognise, value and embrace diversity and difference. We will:
- deliver awareness and training programs to support people from different backgrounds and ages to feel comfortable living together in communities.
 - work with organisations across Leeds to promote a clear and consistent message that prejudicial views or behaviour that could result in hate incidents or crimes are not tolerated or condoned.
 - work with communities to ensure people are treated with dignity and respect and the causes of unfairness are understood and addressed.
- 1.4 **Report it – Know how to report a hate incident. Performance measure: Increase in number of impromptu hate incidents recorded.** Leeds will be a city where there is a strong community spirit and a shared sense of belonging; where people feel confident about taking action for themselves and others. Where hate crimes or hate incidents occur, we want people to feel confident to report. Reports can be made to the police, Stop Hate UK, Hate Incident Reporting Centres (HIRCs) located across the city, in schools, and online. Training is delivered to all reporting centres to ensure that victims are offered a safe place to make reports. *We will believe you. We will take your report seriously and we are here to help.*
- 1.5 **Stop it – Know how to respond. Performance measure: Decreased number of repeat victims (deliberate); decrease in prevalence of incidents in identified hot spot areas.** Leeds will be a city where proportionate responses are levelled against perpetrators of hate incidents and hate crimes. We believe that power and control belongs to the victim. We will respond in accordance with the wishes and choices of the victim. The partners can offer a range of options to respond to hate crime. Victims of hate crime will be given access to support and partners will seek to resolve the issues using mediation, restorative conferences, tenancy action, civil legal action or through criminal prosecutions. We will work with victims to stop the behaviour.

2 Background information

- 2.1 In 2012/13, the Home Office published hate crime statistics for England & Wales. There were 42,236 hate crimes recorded nationally, of which 35,885 racial crimes, 1573 religious crimes, 4267 sexual orientation crimes, 1,841 disability crimes and 361 gender identity crimes.
- 2.2 In Leeds, 727 hate crimes were recorded, of which 629 racial crimes, 13 religious crimes, 78 sexual orientation crimes, 44 disability crimes, and 3 gender identity crimes. Partners work hard to protect communities from hate crime but we feel that hate crime and hate incidents are widely under-reported.
- 2.3 West Yorkshire Police, Leeds City Council, Stop Hate UK, Victim Support, Housing Leeds, registered social housing providers, Children's & Adult Social Services, resident and community groups, support services, universities, schools and children's settings are working together to deliver the hate crime strategy. Celebrating equality and diversity is at the heart of what we are trying to achieve and supports key statutory responsibilities set out in Equality Act 2010.
- 2.4 In 2012, the coalition government published the Challenge it, Report it, Stop it Governments Plan to tackle hate crime. West Yorkshire's Police Crime Commissioner, Mark Burns-Williamson, includes within his published *Police & Crime Plan 2013-2018* a priority to tackle hate crime. This priority is strongly felt in Leeds and partners are committed to delivering on 3 key objectives.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 There are no additional resources to support the delivery of this strategy. Through consultation and engagement with key partners across the city, our aim is to embed the integrated hate crime process into current service delivery.
- 3.2 We will work with partners to address the root causes of hate crime. Supported by shared intelligence and analysis, agencies can target limited resources and respond to the issues affecting local communities.
- 3.3 In January 2014, the Safer Leeds Intel team published the first quarterly hate crime intelligence report, which uses prevalence mapping to identify 'hot spot' areas. In Leeds, we have also introduced a new way of categorising hate crime (Appendix D of the Hate Crime Strategy). We are moving away from using language like 'low level' to describe hate incidents as this fails to acknowledge the harm caused to victims.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.2 On 3 December 2013, in conjunction with Disabled Customers Forum and Rainbow Roofs LGBT Group (supported by Rukhsana Mahmood, Housing Leeds Diversity Project Officer) residents hosted the first 'Leeds Challenges Hate' event. The event was planned by the residents, who wanted to gain a better understanding of the before, during and after process of making a hate incident report. 72 residents and service providers attended the event. The purpose of the

event was to raise awareness of hate crime reporting; understand how to access hate incident reporting; and provide an overview of the options available to victims after making a report. Guest speakers included Simon Green, a disabled persons activist and Rikki Arundel, LGBT speaker and activist. James Gibbs of Stop Hate UK delivered presentation on access to reporting centres. Rebecca Herbert of Leeds ASB Team gave an overview of the hate crime strategy. The event closed with a Q&A for the panel. The evaluation of the event is attached as Appendix 2.

- 4.3 Housing Leeds & BITMO are supporting LASBT to develop 'Mystery shopping' for hate incident reporting centres. Residents will be asked to improve services by testing out hate incident reporting centres. It is expected that this will be implemented in June 2014, with recruitment and training of volunteers taking place in April/May 2014.
- 4.4 Early draft of the strategy was circulated to partners in Children's Services. As a result, a task and finish group was set up with headteachers, Children's services and Safer Leeds partners to develop the Bullying & Hate Incident reporting guidance for schools. This has resulted in a reporting process being rolled out across local authority primary and secondary schools from January 2014. Another group will convene in April 2014 to develop processes for reporting and responding to hate incidents in all children's settings, including youth service provision and residential care settings.
- 4.5 Early drafts of the strategy were circulated to members of the council's Disabled Staff Network and recommendations were incorporated into current draft.
- 4.6 Early drafts of the hate crime strategy were tabled at community safety partnership panels across the city and recommendations incorporated into the current draft.
- 4.7 Early drafts were shared with lead members. Recommendations were incorporated into current draft. The overarching vision of the strategy was communicated via a presentation to members of the Safer Leeds executive board.

5 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 5.1 Celebrating equality and diversity is at the heart of the hate crime strategy. The action plan supports key statutory responsibilities set out in Equality Act 2010. The strategy supports the council's statutory responsibility to pay due regard to eliminating discrimination and promoting equality in relation to the protected characteristics.
- 5.2 Leeds City Council are preparing a Stonewall submission so that we may achieve the status of Education Champion among top ten local authorities which are best in preventing homophobic bullying in schools in Britain.
- 5.3 This strategy also draws on recommendations from the joint report '*Living in a Different World: Joint Review of Disability Hate Crime 2013*' and the Equality and Human Rights Commission's (EHRC) *Out in the Open Manifesto For Change*. The EHRC recognises the on-going challenges to better understand '*the motivations of perpetrators and societal causes of disability-related harassment*'

and improve *'the collection of comprehensive data on disability-related harassment, to improve decision-making and accountability.'* Although this report focussed on disability, the lessons will be applied to improve outcomes for victims across all strands of hate crime, particularly in relation to increasing our data collation and understanding of issues affecting these groups

6 Council policies and City Priorities

- 6.1 The hate crime strategy supports Vision for Leeds 2030 and our ambition to be 'best city for communities.' This strategy also supports the Safer Leeds Partnership Plan objectives of 'improving approaches to dealing with hate crime', 'reducing vulnerability' and 'safeguarding communities', and it's desired outcome to ensure that 'People in Leeds are safe and feel safe in their homes, in the streets, and the places they go'.

7 Resources and value for money

- 7.1 There are no additional resources available to invest in hate crime. Through partnership working, responses and reporting hate incidents should be embedded into service delivery.
- 7.2 The intelligence led approach will ensure that resources are targeted to areas with identified needs and target the root causes of hate crime with education and prevention. The proactive approach to reducing repeat victimisation and prevalence of hate crime should ensure that services are providing value for money, by responding to issues before they escalate into more serious offences requiring costly legal interventions and investigation.

8 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 8.1 Not applicable

9 Risk Management

- 9.1 Under the actions taken to promote the hate crime strategy, there may be an increase in reporting, which will lead to an increased demand on services provided by the Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour Team & West Yorkshire Police Hate Crime co-ordinators. The intelligence led approach will deploy limited resources to areas with identified needs. Leeds ASB Team will provide quarterly report cards to the Safer Leeds Executive and Safer Stronger Communities Board to identify any trends and be accountable for actions.
- 9.2 The hate crime strategy ensures that partners are accountable and that the different strands of hate crime have appropriate support in place. Without a strategy, the process can be disjointed and lead to vulnerable individuals falling through the gaps.
- 9.3 The hate crime strategy supports Leeds City Council to fulfil our statutory requirements under the Equality Act 2010.

10 Recommendations

10.1 Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Board are recommended to actively support the Hate Crime Strategy in following ways:

- Acknowledge the work undertaken to date by partners, residents groups and volunteers. Understand the impact of hate crime on our communities and the steps being taken to resolve them.
- Acknowledge the importance of including prevention, reporting and stopping hate crime as shared priority for all services.
- Raise any known issues or areas of overlap in your own ward areas as soon as possible with Service Development Officer, Rebecca Herbert.
- Support the strategic action plan. You can do this by sharing information, signposting to reporting centres and identifying opportunities to raise the profile of reporting, challenging and stopping hate crime within your own portfolios.

11 Background documents¹

11.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.