

Hate Crime Update December 2024

Date: Friday 6th December 2024

Report of: Director of Communities, Housing and Environment

Report to: Communities, Housing and Environment Scrutiny Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

Hate Crime is any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person's: Disability, Gender Identity, Race, Religion or Sexual Orientation.

A Hate Incident is any incident that the person affected or anyone else believes is based on a person's identity. Not all hate incidents will lead to criminal offences, however, it's equally important to report both hate crimes and incidents, as incidents can turn into hate crimes or show a pattern of behaviour that could become a crime.

The council's responsibilities in regard to Hate Crime, which include the provision of 'Third Party' reporting functionality, sit within the Equality and Hate Crime Team, Community Relations and Cohesion, within Safer and Stronger Communities.

The team have oversight of the Hate Crime Strategy, produced in partnership with West Yorkshire Police with annual reporting to the Safer Leeds Partnership Board.

The Hate Crime Strategic Board (chaired by Cllr Harland as Executive Board Member for Communities, Customer Service and Community Safety) and the operational working group that sits under it (Hate Crime Operational Group, co-chaired by the council's Hate Crime Officer and Leeds Community Cohesion Police Sergeant) have strategic and operational oversight of the work outlined within Appendix A.

Overall figures of Hate Crime have fallen in the most recent year to the end of 23/24 with the exception being Religion or Belief motivated hate crimes which have risen overall as a result of various factors including the current conflict in the Middle East and the recent far right disturbances.

Recommendations

- a) For Scrutiny Board to note and discuss the contents of Appendix A and provide feedback

What is this report about?

1 The council's approach to its work around the Hate Crime agenda is focused against the 5 priorities within the Hate Crime Strategy:

- (1) **Preventing Hate Crime**
- (2) **Responding To Hate Crime**
- (3) **Increasing The Reporting of Hate Crime**
- (4) **Improving support for Victims of Hate Crime.**
- (5) **Building Our Understanding of Hate Crime**

The Appendix A provides board members with an update on some of the key work being currently undertaken or planned, to address the five priorities. The work on combatting hate crime and incidents sits alongside our wider organisational work on the Equality Diversity and Inclusion agenda, including celebrating diverse communities through EDI international days/weeks/months and links to work around Anti-Social Behaviour, countering extremism, becoming a Local Authority of Sanctuary, Intercultural Cities activity and developing the new Social Cohesion Strategy.

What impact will this proposal have?

2 The council and its partners' work on combating hate crimes against residents and visitors is an essential part of our work to be an inclusive city for everyone, irrespective of their protected characteristics. Encouraging the reporting of hate crime and addressing the root causes of discriminatory views which lead to it, will have a significant impact on how people view the city.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

3 Hate Crime has a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of its victims, and it can also impact on perceptions of the city as a place to live, work and enjoy recreational time, which can impact on our ambitions around inclusive growth.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

4 The council will be consulting with key partners as part of its refresh of the current Hate Crime Strategy.

What are the resource implications?

5 As this is an update report, there are no resource implications. The council has recently employed its first ever Hate Crime Officer within the Equality and Hate Crime Team and allocates some funding awarded from the West Yorkshire Mayors Community Safety Fund to support this agenda.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 6 Hate crime/incidents are often unreported due to various reasons. Crimes and work to encourage reporting through raising awareness is a key part of the work of the Council's Hate Crime Officer.

What are the legal implications?

- 7 The council has a duty to provide third party reporting functionality to report hate incidents where residents may not wish to report directly to West Yorkshire Police which it meets through its contract with Stop Hate UK, who provide a telephone and online reporting process as well as a network of third-party reporting centres.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 8 N/A

How will success be measured?

- 9 As well as reporting to Scrutiny Board work undertaken to address hate crime and hate incidents, oversight is provided by the Safer Leeds Partnership Board and Hate Crime Strategic Board. This includes the provision and tracking of performance information used to inform activity.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

- 10 The work to deliver the Hate Crime Strategy is ongoing.

Appendices

- Communities Housing and Environment December 2024 Scrutiny Update

Background papers

- None