

External Services Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on Tuesday, 10 October 2017

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Hate Crime/Incident Update

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

In July 2016 the Government published an action plan ("Action Against Hate-The UK Government's plan for tackling hate crime") outlining how it's going to tackle this divisive crime over the next four years. This new Hate Crime Action Plan covers all forms of hate crime, including xenophobic attacks.

The Lancashire County Council's Equality and Cohesion Team cover many key Central Government policy and legislative areas, including the area of racism, xenophobia, and hate crime.

Lancashire benefits from a strong multi-agency commitment to tackling and preventing hate crime in all its forms. The Lancashire Strategic Hate Crime and Cohesion Group brings together a range of partners from the public and voluntary sectors (including Lancashire County Council), with an involvement in hate crime and cohesion issues across Lancashire.

The Group has committed to developing this three year Hate Crime Strategy (refer to appendix A) and a yearly Delivery Plan which will inform the work of the Strategic Hate Crime and Cohesion Group in this area and which will be regularly reviewed and monitored by the Group as part of its work. The draft strategy and delivery plan is being finalised in order to be presented at the Lancashire Public Services Board on the 25th of October 2017. Input from the External Services Scrutiny Committee would be welcomed and much appreciated.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- (i) Note the report;
- (ii) Note the developments and comment as appropriate.

Background and Advice

Hate Crime:

Hate crimes and incidents are taken to mean any crime or incident where the perpetrator's hostility or prejudice against an identifiable group of people is a factor in determining who is victimised.

A hate incident refers to any non-crime incident which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on or perception of 'race', religion, sexual orientation, disability or whether a person is or is perceived to be transgender. A 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 or perception of a person's 'race', religion, sexual orientation, disability or whether a person is or is perceived to be transgender.

Background

The Lancashire County Council's Equality and Cohesion Team cover many key Central Government policy and legislative areas, including the area of racism, xenophobia, and hate crime. The Principal Equality and Cohesion Manager is the Vice-Chair of the Lancashire Strategic Hate Crime and Cohesion Group.

Lancashire benefits from a strong multi-agency commitment to tackling and preventing hate crime in all its forms. The Lancashire Strategic Hate Crime and Cohesion Group brings together a range of partners from the public and voluntary sectors including Lancashire County Council, District and Unitary Councils in Lancashire, Lancashire Constabulary, the Crown Prosecution Service, PCC, UCLAN and a range of voluntary, community and faith sector organisations with an involvement in hate crime and cohesion issues across Lancashire.

The Group has committed to developing this three year Hate Crime Strategy and a yearly Delivery Plan which will inform the work of the Strategic Hate Crime and Cohesion Group in this area and which will be regularly reviewed and monitored by the Group as part of its work. The draft strategy and delivery plan is being finalised in order to be presented at the Lancashire Public Services Board on the 25th of October 2017, a copy has been forwarded to Management Team and a briefing meeting is being scheduled with the Leader of the Council.

The Lancashire Strategic Hate Crime and Cohesion Group is overseen by Lancashire Public Services Board in addition to reporting within its individual member organisations – e.g. recent briefing for CCIr Peter Buckley (Cabinet Member for Community and Cultural Services), who is also responsible for community cohesion, equality etc.

National Context

Each of the public sector organisations represented on the Lancashire Strategic Hate Crime and Cohesion Group has responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty's general aims which include reference to hate crime. These are:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment or victimisation or any other unlawful conduct because of protected characteristics;

- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share relevant protected characteristics and those who do not share them;
- To foster good relations (improve community cohesion) between people who share a relevant protected characteristics and those who do not share them.

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and its "Prevent Duty Guidance" have also placed additional responsibilities on local authorities, the police, universities and other public sector organisations which can also have implications for their tackling of hate crime and hate incidents. The Group will also be responsive to the emerging work on Cohesion which arises from recent visits and communications from Louise Casey.

In 2012 the Government published its strategy to tackle Hate Crime: Challenge It, Report it, Stop it! The update published in 2014 highlights that victims are still reluctant to report incidents and the importance of continuing to work with partners including the voluntary sector to ensure that victims feel confident to come forward. Understanding the different forms of hate crime and tailoring the response to victims are highlighted.

In July 2016 the Government published an action plan ("Action Against Hate- The UK Government's plan for tackling hate crime") outlining how it's going to tackle this divisive crime over the next four years. This this new Hate Crime Action Plan, covers all forms of hate crime, including xenophobic attacks.

This Action Plan focuses five key areas to tackle hate crime from beginning to end – from understanding the drivers of hate crime and dealing with its causes to providing improved support to victims:

1. **Preventing** hate crime.
2. **Responding** to hate crime in our communities.
3. **Increasing the reporting** of hate crime.
4. **Improving support** for the victims of hate crime.
5. Building our **understanding** of hate crime.

Local Context

In **2012** Lancashire County Council (LCC) commissioned a piece of research to explore how Religious groups particularly Muslim communities suffered from hate crime and incidents due to global events. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner joined forces with Lancashire County Council and collaborated with this critical piece of work and have supported (Lancaster University-Paul Iganski) in ensuring that a robust research project was conducted, to fully understand the experiences of our Lancashire Muslim Communities.

As a result of the aforementioned research findings, a dedicated third-party Anti-Muslim hate line was rolled out across Lancashire, with the support of ourselves, the Lancashire Constabulary and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for

Lancashire. This approach will help to ensure hate crime or hate incidents are reported and any chance of victims becoming isolated or communities feeling marginalised are addressed. This initiative will also ensure that community cohesion is maintained and trust in state agencies is enhanced, with existing and emerging communities. The recommendations from this research will benefit all diverse groups in Lancashire and will be applied across the protected characteristics, of gender, sexual orientation, disability, race and religion or beliefs.

In October **2015** the Lancashire Strategic Hate Crime and Cohesion Group, whereby Lancashire County Council played a pivotal lead, arranged an evaluation event. The aim was to consider the effectiveness of all agencies' responses to hate crime in Lancashire, to provide context for a revised 3-year Hate Crime Strategy for the Lancashire Strategic Hate Crime Group Strategy Group. The feedback was evaluated by a team from the University of Central Lancashire. The position in Lancashire reflects the national context including under reporting, that lack of confidence to support and the need to review provision of support for victims. The Lancashire Strategic Hate Crime Group Strategy therefore included feedback from that Conference and the subsequent considerations of the Group.

Currently, Lancashire County Council with the Lancashire Constabulary are leading on devising and developing the **2016-19** Lancashire Hate Crime Strategy in partnership with the Lancashire Strategic Hate Crime and Cohesion Group, which will also be in line with the Government's newly published Hate Crime action plan.

Additional to the above the Equality and Cohesion Team are delivering Hate Crime Bitesize Briefings (for Members and Staff). Relevant presentations have been scheduled and presented to Adult and Children Safeguarding Boards.

The following paragraph is prominent on the County Council website and a press release was issued to publicise the July 2016 full council motion:

"We condemn racism, xenophobia and hate crimes unequivocally. Racism, xenophobia and hate crimes of any description have no place in our country or our county."

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires that all public authorities publish Equality Objectives and that these objectives can last for up to four years, tackling hate crime/incidents is one of our objectives.

The following information is also on the LCC Intranet for staff and members:

How can I report a Hate Crime or Hate Incident?

- If you have witnessed or been a victim of hate crime, please report it. This can be done in a number of ways:
- In an emergency always ring **999**
- For non-emergencies ring **101**
- In person at your [local police station](#).
- **Crimestoppers** anonymously on **0800 555 111**.
- Report anonymously online via **True Vision** <http://www.report-it.org.uk/home>

- Lancashire Victim's Services 0300 323 0085 www.lancashirevictimservices.org
 - Young people who experience crime can get help from Nest Lancashire by texting **NEST to 60777**
 - **Lancashire Council of Mosques** new confidential anti Muslim hate incident/crime reporting line – **01254 589699**
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Recorded Hate Crimes in Lancashire

2015/16 – 807
2016/17 – 1022

Lancashire Council of Mosques have dealt with 250 Hate Crime case work (referred by Victim Support) around religious and race, since April 2017 till August 2017.

Nationally

According to the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) hate crimes jumped sharply after terrorist attacks at Westminster, Manchester and London Bridge. NPCC said this pattern was not seen after the Finsbury attack.

Greater Manchester Police revealed more than 500% islamophobic attacks after the terrorist/suicide bombing in Manchester, there were 224 reports of anti-muslim hate crimes in the month after the attack compared with 37 in the same period in 2016.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Arrangements are in place for External Services Committee, Management Team, Equality and Cohesion Team to monitor implementation of the Hate Crime Strategy and supporting activity across the organisation.

Legal Implications

Equality Act 2010 –Public sector Equality Duty

Financial Implications

N/A

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
Equality Act 2010	2010	Saeed Sidat/01772 536118
Action Against Hate- The UK Government's plan for tackling hate crime"	Aug 2016	Saeed Sidat/01772 536118

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A