

Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

26 June 2017

Hate Crime Action Group



Report of Jon Carling, Head of Policy and Communications, Office of the Durham Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide members of the Safer, Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the work of the Hate Crime Action Group (HCAG) for County Durham and Darlington.

Background

2. The Joint Hate Crime Action group was formed as a delivery group in November 2013 following the suggestion of the Police & Crime Commissioner. The purpose of the group was to deliver one coordinated action plan between statutory and voluntary partners, working under the PCC's priority 'to reduce the impact of hate crime'.
3. The group meets every quarter and has until recently been chaired by a member of the senior management team of Durham Constabulary. The Safe Durham Partnership has been informed that, from the next meeting, the Chair will come from the Office of the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner. The Group will be asked to approve a new set of Terms of Reference and a work programme for 2017/18 at its next meeting, and to agree the arrangements for chairing the meeting.

Aims

4. The key aims of the group following the agreement of the overall strategy are as follows:
 - Increase public satisfaction
 - Increased Incident reporting
 - Increase confidence in service deliverers
 - Reduce true level of crime and ASB
5. Each of these aims led to the agreement of specific key areas of work. Details of progress against these indicators features in section 5 of this paper.

Key Areas of Work

6. Below is an outline of the key areas of work that the Group has undertaken, with the current position.

Safe Places

7. The Safe Places scheme is a partnership endorsed by the Police, DCC / DBC and the Police Crime & Victims Commissioner's Office. Safe Places are locations where vulnerable people can go when they are out and about in their communities and they feel anxious or intimidated. They are designed to provide support to vulnerable people, giving them confidence when they go out and helping them to feel able to report incidents of hate crime. Safe Places is co-ordinated by colleagues from Durham County Council.
8. Durham County Council has rolled out the pilot scheme in Peterlee, Durham City, Chester-le-Street, Stanley and Bishop Auckland; with 54 Safe Places initially signed up to the scheme. There is currently a review of safe places as it was found that many of them were not active. Plans are in place to roll out Safe Places in other towns and shopping centres across County Durham, but these plans are currently on hold pending the results of the review.

Community Hands

9. Community hands was a volunteer advocate scheme, co-ordinated by Durham Constabulary volunteers and formed in June 2014. The scheme provided help and advice to victims of hate crime that did not wish to report incidents to the police. Community Hands signposted victims to various local support agencies and supported them to report the incident to the police.
10. The nine volunteers of Community Hands were vetted by Durham Constabulary to Non Police Personnel Vetting (NPPV) Level two. This allowed the volunteers access to Durham Constabulary buildings and access to parts of the computer systems. This allowed Community Hands to act as a bridge between the community and the Police. It also allowed a level of trust between the volunteers and the victims they were assisting.
11. The Community Hands organisation closed recently.

Support Services Network

12. Within the Joint Hate Crime Action group it was identified that there was a need for a network of support services across County Durham & Darlington that victims of hate crime could utilise if needed. The Group is discussing how to take this forward.

Communications Group – Media Teams (Durham Police & CPS)

13. The aim of the Joint Communications group is to raise awareness of hate crime within communities and increase the reporting of hate crime. Since the group formed, it has undertaken various projects including a Hate Crime Campaign week of action. This week comprised of a theme for each day of the week and all partners involved ran various media campaigns and events.

Restorative approaches (RA)

14. Within Durham Constabulary where a crime has been identified as a Hate Crime investigation, officers should seek higher authority if they think it might be suitable for RA. There is also a quality assurance dip sample process, where a member of the Police contact the victim to ascertain if they were prepared to follow the RA process rather than the criminal justice route. This additional threshold has limited the number of Hate Crime cases which have progressed to RA, and follows the recommendations of the HCAG.

Police Accountability

15. At every meeting of the Group, the Constabulary delivers a presentation detailing recent crime and anti-social behaviour data. This enables HCAG members to consider trends in the data and try to identify the reasons behind change.

Problem Solving

16. Durham Constabulary has undertaken a plan to close the gap between the actual and the reported hate incidents within the area. This plan has formed various actions that will help achieve the goal. The Constabulary has identified a need to record the number of hate incidents occurring within County Durham & Darlington. Using the Keep In The Know messaging system, which is a messaging system that has over 5,000 community members signed up to receive messages from the Constabulary, the Force circulated a Hate Crime Survey to measure their views and their experience of hate crime.

Performance data

17. The Hate Crime Action Group takes an interest in the following indicators, for which recent performance data is shown:

Hate crime incident reporting:

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
No of reported incidents	409	436	375	452

18. Comment: Although data for the full current year is not yet available, data for the year to date suggests that the number of incidents will increase in 2016/17.

Percentage who agree that the Police and local Council are dealing with ASB and crime issues in their local area						
	BME	White	Disabled	Non-disabled	Gay or lesbian	Straight
2012/13	53	48	50	47	55	47
2013/14	76	63	64	63	62	63
2014/15	71	62	67	61	77	63
Source: Police confidence survey						

19. Comment: Levels of confidence appear to be broadly similar for all groups, and perhaps higher than might be expected amongst BME and LGBT communities.

Percentage of victims who are satisfied with the whole experience				
	BME	White	Disabled	Non-disabled
2012/13	86	86		
2013/14	84	88	79	90
2014/15	96	89	83	90
Source: Police victim satisfaction survey				

20. Comment: Levels of confidence have grown amongst BME communities, and are higher for BME than for white people, but lower for disabled people than for non-disabled people.

- Reduce true level of crime and ASB (no data available)

Future activities

21. At the Group's meeting in February 2017, a workshop took place to review the Group's activities. The Group noted that a new Police, Crime and Victims' Plan was published in November 2017, and that it contained this objective:

To reduce the impact of hate crime

22. The Group commented that it had achieved a number of important outcomes, as listed above.

23. As a consequence of discussions at the workshop, the Group has:

- Developed a new set of terms of reference (see Appendix 2), which emphasises the importance of organisations working together as a delivery partnership, and as a group which influences the work of other organisations, as well as the benefits of holding the police to account
- Agreed that a key role will be to consider evidence relating to hate crime as a matter of routine; in addition to hate crime and anti-social behaviour statistics, there should be presentations from partner organisations. Consideration of the evidence should facilitate agreement over a programme of delivery by the group
- Decided to develop a programme of joint-activity, to take place over the following year. This will include:
 - Jointly planned communications
 - Consideration of services for victims of hate crime, with a view to: reviewing effectiveness; identifying gaps; and commissioning gaps to meet needs
 - Exercise to map services for victims of hate crime
 - Reviewing use of the Institute of Community Cohesion's Tension Monitoring Toolkit

- Agreed that it should be accountable to partners and communities, as well as to the PCVC and the two Community Safety Partnerships, and send a report of the Group's activities, once a year, to the Community Safety Partnerships
- Ensure that membership of the Group includes representation of a variety of protected characteristics, as well as public sector bodies which provide services

24. The Safer, Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to suggest any areas of work which it thinks the Hate Crime Action Group might take forward.

Recommendations

25. The Safer, Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:
- (a) Notes the contents of the report;
 - (b) Suggest possible area of work for the Group to consider.

Contacts: Jon Carling, Head of Policy and Communications, Office of the Durham Police and Crime Commissioner jon.carling@durham.pcc.pnn.gov.uk
Dave Dove, Partnerships Officer – Hate Crime Lead / Equality & Diversity, Durham Constabulary david.dove@durham.pnn.police.uk

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – N/A

Staffing – N/A

Risk – N/A

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – N/A

Accommodation– N/A

Crime and Disorder– A key focus for the Hate Crime Action Group

Human Rights– N/A

Consultation– N/A

Procurement– N/A

Disability Issues– N/A

Legal Implications– N/A

Appendix 2

Terms of Reference: County Durham and Darlington Joint Hate Crime Action Group

The Hate Crime Action Group (HCAG) exists to take forward initiatives to address the PCVC's objective, in his Police Crime and Victims' Plan, to:

reduce the impact of hate crime

1. In so doing it will:
 - Monitor trends in statistics related to hate crime, and incidents
 - Aim to identify trends as they emerge
 - Consider evidence from member organisations and a wide range of stakeholders including communities affected by hate crime, about the impact of hate crime and how best to address it
 - Work together, as a group of partner organisations, to develop and implement plans and strategies to deal with those trends, drawing on good practice locally, nationally and internationally
 - Comment on the success of initiatives designed to reduce hate crime, or the impact of hate crime

2. Membership of the Group will include representatives from:
 - Durham Constabulary
 - Durham County Council
 - Darlington Borough Council
 - Crown Prosecution Service
 - Victim Care and Advice Service (VCAS)
 - Office of the Durham Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner
 - Local Criminal Justice Board support team

The group will also include a diverse range of members of the community, who can represent the interests of people who are affected by the different strands of hate crime.

3. The Group will review and decide who its chair should be once a year, during the Spring. There will be no limit to the number of years that someone can chair the Group.

4. The Group will be supported by the Strategic Demand and Reduction Command within Durham Constabulary.

5. The Group will meet four times a year, with communication taking place by e-mail between meetings.

6. The Group will also set up Project Groups as necessary. These will have a remit, if necessary, to identify funding sources for projects.

7. The Group will send reports to the Safe Durham Partnership and the Darlington Community Safety Partnership. It will also receive reports from the three Independent Advisory Groups, covering: LGBTQ+, BME and Disability