

Safer Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

21 September 2018



County Durham and Darlington Hate Crime Action Group: update

Report of Alan Reiss, Chief of Staff, 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.
- 3 The group meets every quarter and is chaired from the Office of the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner. The Group's Terms of Reference are attached at Appendix 2.
- 4 In practice the group has two broad functions:
 - a To hold service-providing organisations to account
 - b To oversee the delivery of initiatives to address hate crime

Aims

- 5 Ron Hogg's recently refreshed Police, Crime and Victim's Plan contains several priorities which are relevant to the work of this Group, including:
 - a Tackle and Reduce Hate Crime
 - b Ensure that victims are supported at all stages of the criminal justice system
 - c Safeguard vulnerable people
- 6 Earlier this year the Joint Hate Crime Action Group (JHCAG) distilled four objectives which support the priorities in Ron's Plan:
 - a Understand and reduce the true level of hate crimes and incidents
 - b Increase reporting of hate incidents
 - c Provide effective support for victims
 - d Ensure effective prosecutions

New Joint Hate Crime Action Plan

- 7 On 4 July the PCVC hosted a Hate Crime Conference at the Xcel Centre in Newton Aycliffe. The conference was attended by 120 people from a very wide range of organisations in the public and voluntary sectors. One of the key elements of the conference was a series of twenty workshops at which delegates tried to identify some workstreams to help achieve the JHCAG's objectives.
- 8 The JHCAG then met on 10 September to distil ideas and initiatives from the conference into the following five clear workstreams. Collectively, these are the new Joint Hate Crime Action Plan.

- A. Develop a multi-agency communications strategy, demonstrating a cross-organisation and cross-sector approach, including a message that there should be zero-tolerance of hate crime. The strategy will:
- i Be developed by an external party, covering:
 - ii Aim at a variety of audiences:
 - a Victims
 - b Offenders
 - c Partner organisations
 - d General public
 - e Young people
 - iii Clarify what is meant by 'hate'
 - iv Feature good news stories
 - v Include a Durham & Darlington brand / logo
 - vi Cover all protected characteristics

Lead organisation: Office of Police, Crime and Victims Commissioner

- B. A review of reporting mechanisms and pathways
- i Identify how hate crime be reported at present – and to who (local and national sources)
 - ii Identify any gaps, and how they might be filled
 - iii Identify what staff do when they receive a report of hate crime
 - iv Share good practice (including via a video) of what to do when hate crime is reported, including to third party reporting centres

Lead organisation: Durham Constabulary

- C. Review how organisations share intelligence
- i Map the sharing of intelligence between organisations
 - ii Identify gaps
 - iii Identify good practice
 - iv Make recommendations

Lead organisation: Durham Constabulary

- D. Review the use of evidence to ensure prosecutions
 - i Map the use of evidence at present
 - ii Consider how it is used at different stages of the victim and perpetrator journeys
 - iii Identify how and when advocacy other victim support services are used
 - iv Consider how these contribute to outcomes and make recommendations

Lead organisations: Crown Prosecution Service and Darlington Borough Council

- E. Map support for victims and identify gaps
 - i ODPCVC to carry out review and report back to JHCAG, with recommendations

Future meetings

- 9 Over the next year, the JHCAG will:
 - a Monitor progress against the five workstreams in the Action Plan
 - b Hold the Police to account for putting measures in place to tackle and reduce hate crime
 - c Hold the two Councils to account for delivery of measures to tackle and reduce hate crime
 - d Review the Community Cohesion Toolkit which Durham County Council has produced, and consider whether it can have wider application to other service providers
 - e Report to the Safe Durham Partnership and the Darlington Community Safety Partnership.

Recommendations

- 10 The Safer, Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note and comment on the contents of the report.

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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:

Tackle and reduce 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