

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Hate Crime and Community Tensions

**REPORT OF:** Steven Kelly, Community Safety Co-ordinator,  
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and Public Protection

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## **Summary**

Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee will receive an update in relation to the work taking place in Gateshead around Hate Crime and Community Tensions. It will also highlight the latest hate crime performance figures.

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## **1. Background**

1.1 As a reminder for members, we have a strong approach to tackling hate crime within Gateshead and have a proactive response to dealing with community-related tensions. Partners worked together to develop a robust and refreshed Hate Crime Strategy, which was approved by Community Safety Board in May 2019, and included a wealth of actions around three key themes:

- Increasing awareness & reporting of hate crime
- Increasing the uptake of referrals to victim support services
- Hate crime education

1.2 The strategy is underpinned by a detailed multi-agency Action Plan, which is reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis and sets out the activities that will be undertaken by the partnership to address hate crime over the forthcoming twelve-months. It is complemented by the Community Tensions Framework which provides details of how we respond to tensions and community-related issues experienced within the Borough.

1.3 We also have a Strategic Hate Crime and Tension Monitoring Group which is a multi-agency forum that meets on a bi-monthly basis and is chaired by the Sergeant from the Central Community Engagement Team at Northumbria Police. This Group oversees the delivery of the Hate Crime Strategy and Action Plan.

## **2. Performance 2018/19**

2.1 The table in Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of hate-related crimes and incidents reported in Gateshead between April and September 2019.

2.2 The number of hate incidents in the first six months of 2019/20 have increased by 17% when compared to 2018/19. This year to date there has been a total of 263 incidents recorded, 39 more than at this point in 2018/19.

Racist incidents account for over half of all hate-related incidents reported during the period, slightly less than in the previous year. The reduction in the proportion of incidents classed as racist can be attributed to the increase in the proportion of incidents classed as homophobic or disability hate. Whilst racist incidents continue

to account for the greatest number of hate-related incidents reported in Gateshead, it is encouraging to see increases in reports relating to other strands.

### **3. Progress**

#### **3.1** Some of the key activities carried in Gateshead in the last six-months relating to hate crime and community tensions include:

- Attending the Community Security Trust (CST) Regional Hate Crime conference in Manchester. This provided an overview of Anti-Semitism in the North of the country. The CST were very complimentary of Northumbria Police & Gateshead Council and the work that they are doing to support the Jewish Community around hate crime.
- Supporting a number of local organisations with bids to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Communities Fund for work centred around the Hate Crime agenda. The bids were submitted with support from the Community Safety Team and Community Engagement Teams and several were successful. Community Safety plan to work closely with those organisations who have since been allocated funding to develop and deliver their projects.
- Co-Ordinating a range of activity during National Hate Crime Awareness Week 2019, including:-
  - A walk of solidarity took place to launch Hate Crime Awareness week on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at Newcastle Eagles stadium, in partnership with Safe Newcastle and Northumbria Police's Community Engagement Team. This followed on from last year's successful walk of solidarity that took place at Gateshead Stadium. This year's event was attended by close to 200 people, including residents, victims of hate crime and various organisations.
  - Community Safety and colleagues from the Community Engagement Team in Northumbria Police worked closely with Lawnmowers Independent Theatre Company, a group of Adults with a Learning Disability who deliver performances focusing on the struggles faced by people with a Learning Disability. The group were supported with a successful bid to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Community Fund. The bid focused on the research, development and rehearsal phase of a production focusing on hate crime which can then be delivered to organisations using some real-life personal experiences and case studies as part of the performance. The pilot session took place during National Hate Crime Awareness week on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2019 and professionals from a range of organisations were invited to attend. The feedback from the performance and the communication scenarios that took place afterwards has been very positive and some organisations have made enquiries with Lawnmowers about further bookings.
  - The main focus of this year's activity was predominantly on Hate Crime education and a speaker from the 2018 Experts by Experience event, a Bosnian Refugee who lives in Newcastle and

who's family were affected by the Srebrenica Genocide in the early 1990's, presented at secondary school assemblies and delivered workshops at schools in Gateshead plus Gateshead College, talking about his personal experience of hate crime.

- Over 100 Hate Crime Champions across Gateshead are now in place, acting as a first point of contact for their organisation's employees and customers around hate crime, the different ways to report and advice on the support that is available to victims.
- There are now 30 Student Hate Crime Champions in Whickham School and 100 Student Hate Crime Champions in Gateshead College acting as a point of contact for students who may want advice or information about hate crime.
- Delivered a Hate Crime Champions training session at the Urban Transport Group Safety and Security Meeting, which is attended by Public Transport Providers from across the country.
- Meeting with Paul Gianassi, Cross Party Hate Crime lead based in the Home Office regarding the Hate Crime Champion scheme which originated in Gateshead and has now been rolled out across the Northumbria area. Paul has committed to provide £2,000 funding towards merchandise and fees for NCFE (a national, educational awarding organisation) who will endorse the training and co-brand certificates to show their support for the level of training being provided. This funding is also being match funded by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- The Victim Support Task and Finish Group, established to look at ways in which to increase the number of victims who access support provided by Victims First Northumbria has recently developed a Hate Crime Victim Action Group for Gateshead, the purpose of which is to build an understanding of the issues around and barriers to accessing support after an incident has taken place. The first meeting took place in June 2019 and was attended by 7 residents who had been affected by Hate Crime.
- Attended the Ateres High School for Jewish Girls to discuss Hate Crime awareness and the barriers to reporting incidents, with further sessions planned in Jewish Primary and Secondary schools in the coming months.
- Community Safety & Community Engagement Teams have carried out a review of Safe Reporting Centres in Gateshead. Of those visited, only a small number were deemed suitable to continue in this role and refresher training has since been provided to these organisations in January 2019. We have since identified further Safe Reporting Centres across Gateshead and have provided training to each organisation. We now have 8 Safe Reporting Centres across Gateshead and continue to try and identify additional suitable organisations.

- The Community Safety and Community Engagement Teams continue to engage with community groups, peer support groups and drop in's representing the different strands of hate crime to raise awareness and discuss the barriers to be reporting their concerns.
- Providing regular training sessions for council staff and partners linked with Hate Crime Awareness and Mate Crime – all of which have been well received.
- Built-up excellent working relationships with local groups representing the various strands of Hate Crime, with a focus on previously under reported strands – Disability and Gender Identity. This has resulted in an increase in reporting from these strands in recent years.
- Arranging for Dr David Wilkin, a Researcher in the Department of Criminology at Leicester University and the Lead Coordinator of the Disability Hate Crime Network to come to Gateshead to discuss his research project in to Disability Hate Crime on Public Transport with professionals. This research contributed to the Public Transport module on the Centre for Hate Studies new international online hate crime training package.
- Videos made locally on the bus and metro focusing on hate & mate crime with members of Gateshead People now feature on the public transport module of the above online hate crime training, with Gateshead recognised as an area of best practice.
- Attending the North East Srebrenica Board meeting and contributed to plans for NE Srebrenica Memorial Day, which took place at St Nicolas' Cathedral in July 2019.
- Supporting The Gateshead Housing Company and their customer-led Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Group to help raise awareness of hate crime and how to report it with a production of an information film.
- Interviews taking place on Pride Radio on two occasions, firstly to discuss Hate Crime Awareness and the work taking place locally to tackle hate crime in Gateshead, and secondly to raise awareness of the plans for National Hate Crime Awareness week 2019.

#### **4. Future Focus**

4.1 The activity that the Strategic Hate Crime and Tension Monitoring Group will focus on in the coming months include:

- Further development and training of Student Hate Crime Champions across the Borough, to include new schools and academies.
- Further awareness raising of the Council's online Hate Crime reporting system, which can be used by victims, witnesses and third parties to report hate crime and access support
- Increase reporting of hate crime from schools using the Council online Hate Crime reporting system.

- Supporting local organisations who have received funding from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to deliver projects focusing on Hate Crime and Mate Crime.

#### **4. Recommendation**

- 4.1 Committee are asked to:
- (i) Note the contents of the report;
  - (ii) Comment on and scrutinise the approaches undertaken around Hate Crime and Tension Monitoring

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### **Appendix 1 –**

#### **Recorded Hate Crime in Gateshead (April to September 2019)**

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>Diff (n)</b>	<b>Diff (%)</b>	<b>% of 2018/19</b>	<b>% of 2019/20</b>
Disability	28	31	3	10.7	13.6	17.1
Homophobic	15	21	6	40.0	5.6	10.8
Racist	149	157	8	5.4	63.2	56.8
Religious	37	57	20	54.1	20.8	20.7
Transphobic	8	7	-1	-12.5	2.4	3.6
<b>Total Hate Crime</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>17.4</b>	-	-

*Please note, crimes may involve more than one hate crime strand therefore the numbers in the table above do not tally*