

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 03/06/2024

Subject: Hate Crime Strategy 2024-2028

Report of: Councillor Rebecca Harvey, Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion and Community Safety

Report author: Jessica Twomey, Community Safety Officer (Hate Crime Lead), Laura Seamons, Service Transformation Lead

Responsible Director: Bram Kainth, Strategic Director of Environment

SUMMARY

The Hate Crime Strategy for 2024 – 2028 outlines Hammersmith & Fulham Council's commitment to tackling hate crime and hate incidents in the borough. Developed in collaboration with key partners, voluntary organisations, and residents, it aims to foster an environment free from prejudice, and inclusive of all residents and visitors to H&F irrespective of race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and transgender identity.

The strategy's four main objectives are to:

- Prevent hate crime and increase community cohesion
- Increase trust and confidence to encourage reporting of hate crimes and hate incidents
- Provide effective support to those affected by hate crime
- Work with partners to take coordinated action against perpetrators.

Our hate crime strategy builds on the work of the [Equalities Plan](#) by tackling the issue of hate crime. This strategy also feeds into our wider strategies of [tackling crime](#) and [Violence Against Women and Girls](#).

The rise in Antisemitic and Islamophobic offences in London since the start of the conflict in the Middle East, highlights the need for greater community cohesion and support for victims and witnesses of hate crime.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Cabinet approves the contents and publication of Hammersmith & Fulham's Hate Crime Strategy 2024 – 2028, attached as Appendix 1.
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Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Creating a compassionate council	This strategy seeks to promote inclusion within the borough, while also offering support to those affected by hate crime and / or hate incidents based on race, faith or religion, disability sexuality and transgender identity. It also addresses preventative measures to stop hate crime and hate incidents from occurring.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	This strategy has been produced in partnership with residents, key partners, and the voluntary and community sector.
Taking pride in H&F	The strategy celebrates the diverse communities in Hammersmith & Fulham and our commitment to tackling all forms of hate and intolerance. We want to ensure anyone who works, lives or visits the H&F can enjoy it free from intolerance and hate.

Financial Impact

This strategy has been developed by the Community Safety Unit, in conjunction with key partners, within existing approved service budgets. Actions within the action plan are mostly expected to be contained within existing service budgets. Where additional funding is required, this will be the subject of separate funding approval reports. As such, this report does not approve any additional funding at this time.

Verified by Kellie Gooch, Head of Finance (Environment), 15th April 2024

Verified by Andre Mark, Head of Finance (Strategic planning and investment), 15th April 2024

Legal Implications

By section 5 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended), local authorities are required to work in partnership with other public authorities (i.e. the police, fire and rescue authorities, primary care trusts and the probation services). Collectively, this group of public authorities is known as Community Safety Partnerships.

Section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places an obligation on Community Safety Partnerships to formulate and implement strategies to reduce crime, re-offending, disorder and combat substance misuse, and in particular tackle different types of crime, affecting their respective areas. Hate crime and hate incidents have been identified as a particular issue and are on the rise in the borough.

Amongst other things, the Hate Crime Strategy 2024-28 sets out how the council will respond to and deal with reports of hate crimes and hate incidents. This will lead to an expectation that the local authority and its partners will adhere to the strategy and

failure to do so may lead to scrutiny of policy and practices; potentially and ultimately, this could lead to formal challenges by way of judicial review or otherwise challenged in the course of legal proceedings via public law defences.

Patricia Rowe, Chief Solicitor (Litigation), 12th April 2024

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Proposals and Analysis of Options

1. The Hate Crime Strategy sets out the council's priorities for addressing hate crime and hate incidents in the borough. The strategy builds on our previous work with key partners to improve outcomes for victims, increase reporting of hate crimes in the borough, and build further provisions for hate crime prevention.
2. The strategy uses the UK Government's definition of a hate crime¹. A hate crime is any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim, or anyone else, as being motivated by hostility or prejudice based on one or more of the following personal characteristics:
 - Race
 - Religion
 - Sexual orientation
 - Disability
 - Transgender identity

Examples of hate crime can include physical attacks, such as physical assault, damage to property, offensive graffiti and arson, in addition to the threat of attack.

Meanwhile, a hate incident is a non-crime incident which is perceived by the victim, or anyone else to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on race, religion, sexual orientation, disability or transgender identity.

3. Hate crimes and hate incidents have a significant psychological impact on victims, causing experiences of distress, anxiety, or depression, and inflict fear. They represent an attack on not just the victim, but an entire community or group's identity. Their implications are hence widespread, imposing hostility and fear both at an individual and community level.

¹ [Hate Crime](#)

4. In 2023, 664 hate crimes were reported to the police in Hammersmith & Fulham, this is a rate of hate crime of 3.6 per 1,000 residential population. This is an increase from last year of 16.3% and an increase of 26.5% from 2018.
5. Most of the hate crimes that took place in the borough and in London were racially motivated. 66% of hate crimes reported in the borough were racially motivated.

Objectives & Implementation

6. This strategy sets out our four main objectives, which are to:
 - Prevent hate crime and increase community cohesion
 - Increase trust and confidence to encourage reporting of hate crimes and hate incidents
 - Provide effective support to those affected by hate crime (including witnesses)
 - Work with partners to take coordinated action against perpetrators
7. These objectives have been developed in partnership with key stakeholders, local businesses, and residents. A public consultation took place between October and December 2023 to help inform our new strategy and ensure it was based on resident experiences. As part of the consultation residents responded that they agreed with the proposed objectives.
8. Hammersmith & Fulham (H&F) wants to stand united against all forms of discrimination, including misogyny. While misogyny and alternative subcultures are not currently recognised as hate crime strands by central government, this strategy also considers crimes against women and alternative subcultures and makes clear that harassment of any kind is not acceptable within our borough. We aim to promote inclusivity, educating ourselves and others while raising awareness and advocating change around wider forms of discrimination and harassment.
9. This strategy and the associated action plan will be monitored and reviewed by the H&F Hate Crime Steering Group (HCSG), which is a sub board of the Community Safety Partnership. It includes representatives from across council services, the Metropolitan Police, voluntary and community sector members and community leaders.

Consultation

10. Hammersmith & Fulham Council is committed to doing things with residents, not to them, and understand that a co-ordinated community response is required to tackle hate crime.

11. In developing this strategy, focus groups were held with key partners, including the Metropolitan Police Service, local businesses and community organisations, in addition to targeted workshops with charity organisations such as Age UK and Action on Disability. To ensure residents for whom English is not their primary language have been consulted, a series of workshops were held and translated in Farsi, Arabic and Spanish during Hate Crime Awareness Week in October 2023.
12. Between the 23 October and 18 December, a public consultation was held on the councils 'Have Your Say' webpage to understand more about our residents' experiences in relation to hate crime and what they would like to see the council do differently when tackling hate crime. Some key findings include:
 - In the last year, 50% of participants experienced hate crime, however, of this number, over 70% did not report it.
 - Participants who had reported the hate crime they experienced had a mixed response regarding the satisfaction of the support they received. Participants of the survey contacted a range of support including the police, family and friends and their housing provider.
 - Over 70% of all respondents agreed with the proposed objectives for the strategy.
 - While misogyny is not classified as a hate crime, 75% believed that misogyny should be considered as part of this strategy.

Reasons for Decision

13. Tackling hate crime has been a priority for the council's Community Safety Partnership Board since 2019, in addition to a wider-London priority as set by the Metropolitan Police and Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC).
14. Our strategy and accompanying action plan demonstrate the importance that H&F places on tackling hate crime and our commitment to ensuring that the borough is safer and kinder for all our residents and visitors to the borough.

Equality Implications

15. The H&F Equality Impact Analysis (EIA) has been completed for this strategy and is attached in Appendix Two. It has concluded no direct negative implications for groups who share protected characteristics as listed under the 2010 Equality Act and would have positive consequences.

Verified by Yvonne Okiyo, Strategic Lead for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, 11th April 2024

Risk Management Implications

16. There is a risk that, as noted by the Law Commission that current legislation may give the impression of a hierarchy of hate crime, and that some offences

are more or less serious than others and that not all characteristics are not protected, resulting in disquiet or confusion amongst residents. However, as this is a concern that is resulting from legislation it is recommended that the council monitors the problem and reports it to the Law Commission or other appropriate bodies.

17. There is a risk that some groups may react negatively to the strategy. These cases should be dealt with practically and the responses recorded.

Comments provided by Jules Binney, Risk and Assurance Manager, 12th April 2024

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Hate Crime Strategy 2024 – 2028

Appendix 2 - EIA