

MEETING: 20 JANUARY 2020

SUBJECT: HATE CRIME CHARTER

JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER/CHIEF EXECUTIVE (THE CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY) THE STRATEGIC FINANCE MANAGER AND THE PERSONNEL ADVISOR TO THE AUTHORITY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report recommends the adoption of a Hate Crime Charter, and requests the Chair of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer to sign the Charter on behalf of the organisation, alongside the officials of the representative bodies.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 During the last 18 months a number of collaboration events have been held with partner organisations including Northumbria Police and the North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (NEAS) around the topic of hate crime. These were aimed at improving the general understanding of the definition of hate crime, where responsibility lies for recognising it, reporting it and supporting victims.
- 2.2 A hate crime is any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by hostility or prejudice based on an individual's actual or perceived race, disability, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity. A hate crime can involve:
- Physical attacks such as assault, damage to property, offensive graffiti and arson.
 - Threat of attack including offensive letters or language, abusive or obscene telephone calls,
 - Intimidation and unfounded, malicious complaints, outing or threat of outing.
 - Verbal abuse, insults or harassment - taunting, offensive leaflets and posters, abusive gestures,
 - Dumping of rubbish outside homes or through letterboxes, and bullying at school or in the workplace.
- 2.3 Driven internally by our Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Staff Network, this work has resulted in the adoption of the concept of workplace Hate Crime Champions and the training of relevant TWFRS staff as champions. There are currently 17 champions within the Service.
- 2.4 The second output of this collaborative work has been the drafting of a TWFRS Hate Crime Charter, which has been influenced by the charters adopted by partner organisations.

3. TWFRS HATE CRIME CHARTER

- 3.1 The proposed Hate Crime Charter is appended to this report (Appendix 1). It is proposed that subject to approval and signing, the Charter will be communicated and publicised throughout the Service and the communities we serve.
- 3.2 The Charter confirms that TWFRS will have a zero tolerance approach to hate crime against our staff and community members.
- We are committed to supporting staff and community members when they are victims of hate crime, or if they witnesses a hate crime.
 - We will encourage them to report to the Police at the time that incidents occur, or as soon as possible afterwards.
 - We will support training and awareness among our staff that assists in tackling hate crime and the impact upon victims.
 - We will train and support Workplace Hate Crime Champions throughout our service.
 - We will engage with voluntary groups, local authorities and the police to ensure that we are working to prevent hate crime.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The risk to the authority has been assessed as minimal and the Charter will support both the safety of residents and employees of Tyne and Wear.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications in respect of this report.

6. EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct equality and fairness implications in respect of this report, although the Hate Crime Charter will reinforce the communication of the Service's role in addressing crimes based on discrimination and actual or perceived race, disability, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The Authority is recommended to:
- a) Endorse the contents of this report
 - b) Receive further reports as appropriate.