

Mr Duncan Crow, Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities

Response to Mr Oxlade's Notice of Motion about Hate Crime to County Council on 18 October 2019

4 December 2019

Director of Law and Assurance

Ref No. FRC02 19/20
Key Decision: No
Part I
Electoral Divisions: All

1. The Chairman of the County Council referred the notice of motion on Hate Crime submitted to the County Council on 18 October 2019 to Mr Duncan Crow, the Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities, for consideration (Appendix 1). The motion called on the Cabinet to:
 - 1) Ensure that the Hate Incident Support Service is protected from any future budget cuts to ensure this unique and highly valued service can be maintained at its current level.
 - 2) Explore cost-effective ways of increasing the promotion of hate crime reporting using wider-reaching advertising opportunities (at roundabouts, on vehicles and local public transport and
 - 3) Ensure a regular report on hate crime is provided to the Chairman of the ECFSC and the Business Planning Group for monitoring (and further scrutiny if required)
2. The Cabinet Member notes the Hate Crime briefing note circulated with the 18 October County Council agenda.
3. The Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities held a meeting with Mr Chris Oxlade on 4 December to discuss the motion. In discussing the motion, the Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities responded to each point raised in the motion as follows:
 - 1) As things currently stand there is provision within the Community Safety & Wellbeing service budget to maintain the Hate Incident Support Service for 2020/21. I am keen that this funding continues. Having said that it is recognised that there are significant financial pressures facing the council. At present investment is being maintained for Children and Young People and the Fire & Rescue Service and so the corporate requirement for further savings are being apportioned across the remaining services which includes Communities.'
 - 2) I would be delighted to take advantage of any offers for wide reaching promotion and will explore with Commercial Business & Marketing colleagues to establish if there might be a 'free' opportunity for using West Sussex County Council owned assets. I understand that the council has funded bus shelters and public transport adverts in years

gone by but these are now cost prohibitive and a correlation between investment and increase in service take up was not achieved. It is recognised that it is essential to find innovative and creative ways to keep re-energising the communication messages so that the agenda and indeed the Hate Incident Support Service offer is at the forefront. With that intent we now have a campaign page:

[Hate Crime Awareness - West Sussex County Council](#)

and have this month launched a new Facebook site:

[West Sussex Community Safety - Home](#)

These tools will increase our social media reach and wider engagement. The service would be keen to take up any other offers that Members can make to support or access promotional opportunities such as radio, local publications or presentations to community groups. The experience shows us that for victims of hate crime, and indeed other forms of abuse, it is essential that individuals are able to seek support when they are ready and so it is essential that we can also promote the key contact details in a very discrete yet accessible manner. The council is currently exploring the use of QR codes (a machine-readable code that can be scanned by the camera on a smartphone), for example, to allow someone to scan a sticker in public spaces and obtain a direct link to service contact details. A blend of universal promotion and sensitive communications which meet right time and right place are recognised as essential.

West Sussex County Council does not fund the Hate Incident Support Service alone but we have no reason at this stage to believe that the Police & Crime Commissioner will alter the level of grant funding contribution received in 2019/20 (currently approx. £35K).

- 3) I would welcome this opportunity to highlight not only the work of the Hate Incident Support Service in supporting individuals across West Sussex but also to explore wider activity which links to this agenda, such as the development of content for the new Safeguarding for Education curriculum and resources available for schools, youth organisations and communities. The service already provides a quarterly update as part of the existing West Sussex County Council performance pack available via the website but would be pleased to complement this with an annual/bi-annual report and if desired exception highlights of emerging trends/issues:

[Open Performance | West Sussex County Council](#)

4. In light of the information above and whilst the Cabinet Member supports many elements of the motion, he is unable to support its entirety as drafted, so will prepare an amendment in advance of the County Council meeting on 17 December.

Tony Kershaw

Director of Law and Assurance

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Appendix – 18 October 2019, Notice of Motion from Mr Oxlade – Hate
Crime

Background papers

None

Appendix 1

County Council – 18 October 2019

Notice of Motion from Mr Oxlade

Hate Crime

This Council notes that since 2016 there has been a significant increase in the number of referrals made to the hate incident support service (HISS) in West Sussex, with the number of reports of hate incidents/crimes motivated by both sexual orientation and directed at those with a disability having doubled. This Council's ambition is for the residents of West Sussex to feel safe in their neighbourhoods, that people from different backgrounds get on well together, benefit from a sense of shared belonging and take up opportunities to participate in community life. This Council condemns homophobia, transphobia, racism, xenophobia and hate crimes unequivocally and pledges to tackle hate crime to ensure such behaviour does not become acceptable and to continue to support those affected by hate crime.

This Council calls on the Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue and Communities to:

- 1) Ensure that the Hate Incident Support Service is protected from any future budget cuts to ensure this unique and highly valued service can be maintained at its current level.

- 2) Explore cost-effective ways of increasing the promotion of hate crime reporting using wider-reaching advertising opportunities (at roundabouts, on vehicles and local public transport and

- 3) Ensure a regular report on hate crime is provided to the Chairman of the ECFSC and the Business Planning Group for monitoring (and further scrutiny if required)