

NDC Licensing & Community Safety Committee 14th May 2024

Report by Cllr Louisa York

At the March Licensing & Community Safety Committee it was resolved that the Committee members would bring the item of how to learn about issues faced by diverse groups in the community and the engagement with more diverse members of the community to a future meeting.

As Chair of the Committee I met with Kevin Connor, Community Safety Sergeant with the Police, Tim Birtwistle, Community Safety Lead, and Aurienna Dunbrook, Corporate & Community Services, to discuss the work which is happening and to identify any further opportunities.

The diversity of the North Devon district is wide ranging and includes the full range of protected characteristics. The **Zero Tolerance to Hate Crime** campaign highlights disability, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, and gender reassignment. Hate crime is currently categorised as an ‘emerging threat’ in the North Devon & Torridge Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Development Plan.

Sergeant Connor introduced us to the **Devon Diversity and Hate Crime Prevention Action Plan** with the North Devon & Torridge actions added. The ND&T actions have been included at the end of this report.

Mentioned on the Devon-wide plan is Mike Blackwell-Brown who is the Diverse Communities Sergeant for North, East & West Devon. He liaises with the Community Security Trust which is run by the Jewish Board of Deputies. The Community Security Trust (CST) is a British charity whose purpose is to provide safety, security, and advice to the Jewish community in the UK. It provides advice, training, representation, and research.

They will be hosting three, free online Bitesize briefings for police, partners & community members which are based on a case-study of the Lawrence Inquiry and the harms which came from it. Called ‘Impact of hate crime on communities’, details will be communicated to Committee members in due course.

Action 1 aims to diversify representation on the CSP. Ana Lodge, CEO of Sunrise Diversity is now a member. Sunrise is a grassroots charity promoting equality, diversity, and social inclusion in rural communities in Northern Devon. Experiences of individuals with diverse identities living and working in rural areas can be markedly different to experiences of those living in cities or more urban areas. Individuals approaching Sunrise Diversity often experience significant barriers and challenges accessing services and over the last ten years there has been an increasing need for their support services.

Support to Report Scheme – A partnership with Sunrise Diversity has enabled the police to make pragmatic, proactive utilisation of existing frameworks to be able to engage with their diverse groups, including ESOL groups, in a more effective way than by approaching directly. These groups may have some form of distrust of the police, language or cultural barrier, or trauma which prevents reporting of incidents and crimes. The groups which require more support tend to have a lower socio-economic status or have been displaced from their communities, such as refugees. The plan is at an early stage and is in the phase of establishing engagement opportunities at all levels from Ana Lodge down to the group coordinators and caseworkers. This work will eventually lead onto being able to host credible engagement events (**Action 2**) and to be able to offer appropriate reporting opportunities once meaningful relationships have been developed (**Action 3**). There is also the need for

Agenda Item 8 – Explore inclusiveness of diverse communities

the police and local authorities to be more approachable for those who are not able to be reached through these existing frameworks.

In terms of incident reporting, Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), Domestic Abuse (DA), and Hate Crime are prioritised and are taken extremely seriously. Hate crime reports are held centrally and record reasons why individuals were targeted. Analyst Becca Hinchcliffe is using the CSP database to create detailed demand reports on crimes in the area.

The Devon and Cornwall Police website has a page explaining how to report Hate Crime with a link to report online Hate Crime.

The Police.uk website provides information, support, data, and statistics for all forces within the UK, although this is very broad.

As our district become more diverse over time, there may be opportunities to build relationships with groups outside the 'normal' range of engagement such as staff or community associations representing employees from diverse cultural backgrounds such as medical staff at NDDH, or staff at schools and colleges.

Hidden harm because of hate crime is a threat to our community. If hate crime goes unreported, the authorities cannot respond appropriately, and some individuals in the community will remain prejudiced, ignorant, and intolerant, and the cycle will continue.

Being able to successfully integrate and celebrate diverse communities in our area can go a long way to change attitudes and reverse the dehumanisation and marginalisation of people, because they become known to us all.

Other related information and links:

A further Bitesize Briefing about Modern Slavery will be offered to councillors soon.

Sunrise Diversity website: <https://sunrisediversity.org.uk/>

Devon & Cornwall Police Hate Crime webpage: <https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/ro/report/hate-crime/hc-av1/report-hate-crime/>

Police.uk for what's happening in your area: <https://www.police.uk/>

Community Security Trust: <https://cst.org.uk/>



Devon Diversity and Hate Crime Prevention Action Plan – North Devon & Torridge Actions

Action 1 – ND&T CSP to continue seeking opportunities to grow the diverse representation of the partnership. This can be developed in conjunction with EDI portfolio holders across the CSP, the DCT/NPT for police, and existing third sector representative already part of the CSP.

Action 2 - ND&T CSP to create Diversity & Hate Crime events throughout the year. We explored the possibility of having one event in each Sector, however it only dawned on me after the meeting that this is ND&T CSP as opposed to the N&W policing area. As such I have initially amended to include one event for Barnstaple/Ilfracombe/Bideford. These could be themed with partners to include anti-hate, lived experiences, workshops, and Hate Crime presentations.

Action 3 – ND&T CSP to commit to creating a designated third-party reporting centre in each of the three largest towns in the CSP area. (Barnstaple/Ilfracombe/Bideford). Suggestions here were a public building, potentially Libraries where staff turnover is limited, and it is open to all.

Action 4 – ND&T CSP to promote Hate Crime awareness and how to report Hate Crime through a marketing campaign. This could include QR codes/visual displays on public transport, public building, online and at heavily footfall areas including shopfronts in town centres.