**Gosport Borough Council**

**Corporate Equality Objectives Summary Report**

**2018-2019**

**Objective 1:** Improve awareness and understanding of Hate Crime in Gosport and promote the reporting methods available both internally among Council staff and externally with partners to the public to help ensure such crimes are reported and responded to appropriately.

**Action**: Improve staff awareness and understanding of hate-motivated crime and incidents and promote more about the reporting avenues available to victims and witnesses. Increased reporting will help community safety partners to develop a better profile of hate crime in the Borough and monitor incidents and responses more closely for trends and key risks. The Council will review its internal Hate Crime and Incident Reporting Protocol annually for changes needed and will ensure its staff and representatives are aware of how to identify and report hate-motivated crimes and incidents.

**Background:** A 2012 Home Office report on hate crime identified that all available research suggests that hate crime is hugely under-reported, though this seems to be changing. According to hate crime reporting statistics for England and Wales, in 2016/17, there were 80,393 offences recorded by the police in which one or more hate crime strands were deemed to be a motivating factor. This was an increase of 29 per cent compared with the 62,518 hate crimes recorded in 2015/16.

The increase over the last year is thought to reflect both a genuine rise in hate crime around the time of the EU referendum and also due to ongoing improvements in crime recording by the police. There was a notable increase in police recorded hate crime following the Westminster Bridge terrorist attack on 22 March 2017.

The Office for National Statistics has stated that increases in recent years in police recorded violence against the person and public order offences have been driven by improvements in police recording. Around nine in ten hate crime offences recorded by the police are in these two offence groups.

Hate crime offences can have more than one motivating factor to them. However, the most common motivating factor were race hate crimes, accounting for 78% of recorded hates crimes across England and Wales in 2016/17, followed by sexual orientation hate crimes at 11%.

**Progress:** There had been a 42% increase in recorded Hate Crime in Gosport from 2013/14 to 2014/15, from 35 to 50 incidents. Across Hampshire there has been a 48% rise of recorded incidents from 1100 to 1630 over the same period, compared to an 18% increase nationally. This included a 12% increase in recorded hate crime using the True Vision third party reporting mechanism across Hampshire.

Recorded Hate Crime in Gosport continued to increase in 2015/16 by 32% (+16) increase in recorded Hate Crime within Gosport in 2015/16. This compares to 3.5% increase at Force level 18% at National level. Part of the increase may be the result of Police action to improve their compliance with the National Crime Recording Standards especially for violence against the person and public order offences. This, together with a greater awareness of hate crime, and improved willingness of victims to come forward, is likely to be a factor in the increase in hate crimes recorded by the police.

The latest obtainable Hate Crime figures for Gosport show there was a reduction of -17.9% (67 to 55) reported hate crimes in 2016/17 from 2015/16.

The Council has had a Hate Crime and Hate Incident reporting protocol since 2008 where incidents which happen to Council staff while acting on Council business or which happen to members of the public while on Council property are reported and, with the consent of the victim, are also reported to the Police. Few incidents have been reported by staff or members of the public and some of these have not been actual hate-motivated crimes or incidents.

**Outcome:** No hate crimes or hate incidents have been reported during 2018 using the Council’s reporting protocol. Regularly updated information about hate crime and hate crime reporting mechanisms are promoted to the public via the Safer Gosport website including the True Vision third party reporting mechanism.

Hampshire County Council’s Gosport Discovery Centre was launched as a local third party reporting centre for hate crime 2017. The Council promoted this new local third party reporting centre internally to managers and staff alongside a reminder of its own internal reporting protocol during annual Hate Crime Awareness Week.

This objective was retained by the Council as a Corporate Equality Objective for 2018-19 as ongoing awareness raising among the public, staff and contracted services of hate crime and the importance of reporting it is important to improving everyone’s feeling of safety in Gosport.

This objective is monitored internally through the Corporate Policy and Community Safety Team and sits within the wider priority of “Increasing the feeling of safety among Gosport communities” in the Community Safety Partnership Plan.