
Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 27th November, 2019

Report of the Director of Housing

Refresh of Safe and Sound (Dudley's Community Safety Partnership) Community Cohesion and Hate Crime Strategy

Purpose

1. To provide the Board with feedback received to date in respect of the consultation through Community Forum Meetings to inform the refresh of the Community Cohesion and Hate Crime Strategy.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that:-
 - The Board note the feedback to date in respect of the consultation to refresh the Community Cohesion and Hate Crime Strategy.
 - The Board contribute to the refresh of the Community Cohesion and Hate Crime Strategy.
 - A draft version of the refreshed Community Cohesion and Hate Crime Strategy be submitted to the January, 2020 meeting of the Board.

Background

3. The Board considered the issue of Community Cohesion at four Board Meetings during 2018/19. At the Board Meeting held on 26th March, 2019 it was resolved that a consultation exercise be undertaken on the refresh of the Community Cohesion and Hate Crime Strategy through Community Forum Meetings. Safe & Sound (Dudley's Community Safety Partnership) Community Cohesion and Hate Crime Strategy is a three year Strategy 2017-20. The consultation is timely in respect of informing a refresh of the Strategy.

Once consultation has taken place the refreshed Strategy will be submitted to the April 2020 Safe & Sound Strategic Board meeting for approval.

Progress to Date

4. Following a briefing for Community Forum Chairs, Vice Chairs and Support Officers on 29th July, 2019 the consultation process began in September 2019.
5. Those attending Community Forums were given the option to complete a hard copy of the Community Cohesion and Hate Crime Strategy Consultation questionnaire or an on-line survey.

In answer to the question “Do you feel that the current Strategy addresses issues relating to Community Cohesion in Dudley?”

- 75% of respondents felt that the current Strategy addresses community cohesion issues.
- 25% of respondents felt that the strategy did not suitably address community cohesion.

In answer to the question “Do you feel that the current Strategy addresses issues relating to Hate Crime and incidents in Dudley suitably?”

- 75% of respondents felt that the current Strategy addresses Hate Crime and Incidents.
- 25% of respondents felt that the strategy did not suitably address Hate Crime and Hate Incidents.

Feedback in respect of other questions asked will inform the refresh of the Strategy.

The responses to date have been low from those who have attended Community Forum meetings.

6. Other opportunities for consultation have been or are being used.
 - Delegates that attended the Safe & Sound Hate Crime and Community Cohesion Seminar have been asked to contribute to the consultation.
 - A press release is going out to inform residents how they can “Shape the future of Strategy” as well as how they can report community tensions and hate crime.
 - Consultation will also take place through Safe & Sound (Dudley’s Community Safety Partnership) Strategic Board and Sub-Groups.

Up to date statistics will also inform the refresh of the Strategy.

7. The Community Cohesion and Hate Crime agenda aligns with the corporate priority of 'stronger, safer communities', however it could be linked to many aspects of the Council Plan, in particular:
- Educational Outcomes: Closing The Gap For Disadvantaged Pupils.
 - Children's Social Care: Building Strong Partnerships; Safeguarding In Practice.
 - Adult Social Care: Reducing Social Isolation.
 - Health & Wellbeing: Reducing The Impact Of Poverty; Growing Resilient Communities.
 - Housing: Supporting Vulnerable People.

The Community Cohesion and Hate Crime agenda links to '#HOME Of Warm Welcomes and Close-Knit Communities' of the Borough vision 2030: A place of healthy, resilient, safe communities with high aspirations and the ability to shape their own future.

Finance

8. There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.

Law

9. There are a number of legislative requirements that apply to the Community Cohesion and Hate Crime agenda including:-
- Equality Act 2010.
 - Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides the Council with a general power of competence to do anything that individuals generally may do.
 - Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and its subsequent amendments.

Equality Impact

10. Work being undertaken in respect of Community Cohesion and Hate Crime will not negatively impact on people with different protected characteristics.

An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken in respect of the refreshed Hate Crime and Community Cohesion Strategy.

11. Work will have a positive effect on children and young people who may be affected by hate crime or the lack of community cohesion.

Children and young people have not been consulted to date in respect of the refresh of the Strategy. How children and young people can be part of the consultation will be explored further.

Human Resources/Organisational Development

12. There may be implications from the refresh of the Community Cohesion and Hate Crime Strategy in respect of training and development.

Commercial/Procurement

13. There are no known commercial and procurement implications associated with the refresh of the Community Cohesion and Hate Crime Strategy.

Health, Wellbeing and Safety

14. Hate Crime and the lack of Community Cohesion can affect any individual or community. It can lead to the physical and mental ill-health of victims and their families, community resilience can be undermined and there can be an increase in inequalities in health.
15. Work around this agenda will have a positive impact on the safety of communities and the environment - both actual and perceived.

There are not any negative health, wellbeing or safety implications with continuing to develop work. Conversely, taking work forward on the Community Cohesion and Hate Crime agenda will improve health, wellbeing and safety outcomes for individuals within the Borough.



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List of Background Documents

Link to current Community Cohesion and Hate crime Strategy and Consultation

<https://www.dudleysafeandsound.org/communitycohesion>