

HATE CRIME STRATEGY 2017 - 2020

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Hate Crime Strategy Statement

Hate Crime creates fear and can have a devastating impact on individuals and communities.

The hate crime strategy is an overarching framework to address crimes that meet the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and the CPS agreed definition of hate crime which is:

“any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on a person’s race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability and any crime motivated by a hostility or prejudice against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender.”

The approach set out in this strategy aims to secure justice and support everyone affected by of these crimes. Hate Crime policies are applied fairly and equitably to all perpetrators and victims of crime – irrespective of their race, religion, sexual orientation, age, gender identity or disability or any other protected characteristic.

This strategy is underpinned by partnership working at local, national and international levels and is supported by a CPS hate crime action plan.

Introduction

This hate crime strategy should be read in conjunction with the cross-Government hate crime action plan [Action Against Hate: the UK Government’s Plan to Tackle Hate Crime](#), published in July 2016. The action plan aims to prevent and respond to hate crime, increase reporting of hate crime incidents, improve support for victims and build an understanding of hate crime.

The CPS will play a key role in delivering the commitments in the cross-Government action plan as well as contributing to multi-agency activity. The CPS aims improve its work in this area through reviewing our guidance, training, best practice and performance across hate crime strands and engaging with stakeholders.

We recognise that people can be targeted for a combination of reasons and protected characteristics. We acknowledge that some victims facing multiple forms of discrimination may be frequently targeted by hate crime perpetrators which can significantly affect the way in which they live their lives.

This hate crime strategy also reflects the vision of [CPS 2020](#).

We will continue to work with colleagues internationally by sharing our experience of hate crime prosecution with a focus on disruption of criminal activity, prevention and supporting prosecutors.

Outcomes

We will demonstrate achievements by means of:

- Improving performance in relation to key issues including: volumes, conviction rates, guilty pleas, victim issues and sentence uplifts;
- Providing victims and witnesses with relevant and appropriate support by considering their safety and support through the Criminal Justice System (CJS) process;
- Publishing the CPS Hate Crime Annual Report (including offences of stirring up hatred and crimes against older people) incorporating performance data, supporting activity, stakeholder engagement and next steps to ensure we are held to account;
- Producing innovative and effective communications which better reach communities and inform victims, witnesses, defendants and the wider public;
- Improving the accuracy and completeness of relevant data including: personal characteristics of defendants, victims and witnesses; and
- Incorporating lessons learnt for policy development through Local Scrutiny and Involvement Panels, the Community Accountability Forum and National Scrutiny Panels.

Key Commitments for 2017-2020

This strategy contributes towards the CPS's overall objectives as outlined in the CPS 2020 plan; public confidence, high quality casework, continuously improving and success of our people. The key commitments below have been grouped under the main 2020 objectives; however, most will contribute to more than one.

Public Confidence

We will work with our key partners and stakeholders to protect the public and create a safer society by:

- Reviewing policies, legal guidance, training and best practice across hate crime strands;
- Ensuring transparency and accountability of hate crime prosecutions through the annual publication of a CPS Hate Crime Report; and
- Create engaging multimedia campaigns to explain our work and raise awareness and increase reporting of hate crime.

High Casework Quality

We will deliver justice through excellent, timely legal decision-making, casework preparation and presentation by:

- Sustaining improvements to the proportion of announced and recorded sentence uplifts with a level of ambition of 55%;

- Demonstrating an appropriate understanding of the social model of disability and the barriers to justice for disabled victims and witnesses of crime;
- Emphasising the need to explore appropriate and relevant evidence in order to build a case that is not only reliant on the evidence of a victim. This includes considering information about the perpetrator, social media, Body Worn Video and any circumstantial evidence;
- Building effective partnerships nationally and internationally across hate crime strands to ensure excellence across the CJS;
- Ensuring that decisions to drop or alter the charges substantially in cases involving hate crimes are communicated to victims in a timely and transparent manner;
- Treating every case fairly and equally, bringing the correct charges and applying for sentence uplifts across hate crime strands according to the evidence and the Code for Crown Prosecutors; and
- Applying file quality and data accuracy checks through the Hate Crime Assurance scheme and providing targeted support to Areas.

Continuously Improving

We will deliver justice, continuously improving the way in which we work by:

- Ensuring that best practice in hate crime cases is shared across the CPS;
- Provide regular oversight of CPS casework including a bi-annual assurance to the Director of Public Prosecutions;
- Engaging with stakeholders to inform the work of the CPS on hate crime; including through internal and external scrutiny structures and, locally, through the work of the Hate Crime Coordinators and Inclusion and Community Engagement Managers;
- Addressing ways in which the CPS can work with others across government and with NGOs to improve the level of support provided to victims of hate crime throughout the criminal justice process;
- Establishing a joint hate crime governance structure with the police; and
- Developing support material to encourage the use of Community Impact Statements in hate crime cases informed by Area and Police practice and case law.

Success of Our People

We will deliver justice through supporting the success of our people by:

- Assisting the CPS to effectively prosecute hate crimes by identifying and supporting senior leadership hate crime champions and specialist Hate Crime Coordinators including through

monthly dial-in phone conferences and bi-annual face to face meetings to share best practice and problem solve;

- Build resilience and capability of our prosecutors; and
- Invest in the skills of our workforce through bespoke training packages for individual hate crime strands as well as identifying cross-cutting issues and themes to increase the effectiveness of our case strategies.

Conclusion

Tackling hate crime requires the cooperation and engagement of multiple sectors of society including (but not limited to) the CJS, education, health services, as well as specialised support services for victims and witnesses.

It requires the promotion of equality and the elimination of prejudice, challenging engrained and institutionalised attitudes towards disability, race, religion, sexual orientation and gender identity. It is toward this purpose that we will focus our work.

The CPS will review this strategy annually through consultation with internal and external partners.