

THURSDAY, 6 JULY 2017

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR COMMUNITIES AND WELLBEING**AGAINST HATE CAMPAIGN****EXEMPT INFORMATION****PURPOSE**

To inform Members of the Amnesty International UK's 'Against Hate Campaign'.

To seek Council endorsement of Amnesty International UK's campaign and the adoption of the Amnesty International motion to condemn racism, xenophobia and hate crimes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet endorses the Amnesty International UK motion:

“We are proud to live in a diverse and tolerant society. Racism, xenophobia and hate crimes have no place in our country. Our council condemns racism, xenophobia and hate crimes unequivocally. We will not allow hate to become acceptable.

We will work to ensure that local bodies and programmes have the support and resources they need to fight and prevent racism and xenophobia.

We reassure all people living in this area that they are valued members of our community.”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Amnesty International is a global movement with 542,000 members, supporters and activists here in the UK campaigning for human rights. Collectively, the vision is of a world where human rights are enjoyed by all.

The Against Hate campaign was launched in response to the reported rise in hate crimes following the EU referendum. From June 2016 Amnesty International UK supporters have been writing to their local councils asking them to pass a council motion to condemn racism, xenophobia and hate crimes and to work to ensure local bodies and programmes have support and resources to fight and prevent racism and xenophobia.

The Leader of the Council was approached recently by Amnesty International for Tamworth Borough Council to pass a council motion to condemn racism, xenophobia and hate crimes. Whilst there is no indication that there is a particular problem in Tamworth the Council feels it important to sign up to this proposal. Ninety-one councils including Lichfield District Council have already passed a motion condemning hate crime.

Tamworth Borough Council through the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has engaged Communities Against Crimes of Hate (CACH) to support victims of hate crimes and to educate and challenge unacceptable behaviours within Tamworth. The figures provided by CACH for hate crimes where the victim resides in Tamworth between April 2016 and February 2017 are as follows:

- 14 x Race
- 5 x Learning Disability
- 3 x Gender Identity (transgender)
- 3 x Religion
- 1 x Sexual Orientation
- 1 x Age

- 13 x verbal abuse
- 9 x harassment
- 4 x physical assault
- 2 x mate crime
- 2 x criminal damage
- 1 x theft

Some victims felt that they were targeted for more than one reason and experienced more than one type of incident.

Although the current figures are relatively low, there is traditionally an under reporting of incidents. The CSP is actively working to identify vulnerable persons to offer support and to tackle the issues on a case by case basis as part of the CSP action plan.

Staffordshire Police encourage all incidents to be reported on 101 or 999 if an emergency or on-line <http://www.report-it.org.uk/home> As the Amnesty International UK's recommended motion is aligned to everything the Council promotes through policy, procedure and behaviours, Council is requested to endorse the motion to publically condemn racism, xenophobia and hate crimes.

Under the Council's Diversity and Equality Scheme 2015-19 Making Equality Real (MERIT), the Council is committed to working to make Tamworth a place free from discrimination. An update report on the Councils Equalities Policy and progress made is also on this agenda where members will find information on actions taken.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

An option would be to not adopt the motion; however, this would not be in accordance with everything the Council promotes through policy, procedure and behaviours. The option presented to adopt the campaign is supportive of the work of

the Community Safety Partnership and the Council as a statutory member of the Responsible Authorities Group.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

£4,000 from the Community Safety budget has been allocated to fund CACH during 2017/18. This funding provides a half a day dedicated support worker for Tamworth.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

Tamworth Borough Council has a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010, General Duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and
- Foster good relations between people from different groups.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Work to address Hate Crimes is a specific element of the Vulnerability strand of the Community Safety Partnership’s annual action plan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Council and the CSP has a long history on promoting equalities and addressing hate crime.

REPORT AUTHOR

Karen Adderley Head of Partnerships and Commissioning

Karen-adderley@tamworth.gov.uk, Ext 569

Jo Sands Head of Community Safety

Joanne-sands@tamworth.gov.uk, Ext 585

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDICES

None

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