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**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**

Delivery of The Police & Crime Plan:

**Priority 5: Hate Crime
and Community Cohesion**

August 2025

Further develop the Hate Crime Champions scheme to strengthen communities in the fight against hate, giving victims another route to the right help and support. Police - Engage with local communities to understand their needs so that everyone feels confident to report crime and share concerns.

Question 1

What progress has been made in relation to the Hate Crime Champions Scheme, what is the current geographical scope and level of engagement of those involved and how is impact being measured?

The Hate Crime Champions Scheme was set up in response to concerns around under-reporting. I have sought to understand how the scheme has developed since its inception and that we have upskilled staff across the force area who can support colleagues, partners and victims.

- The Hate Crime Champions Scheme embedded 110 internal staff across the force, acting as subject matter experts within their departments. They played a key role in fostering open dialogue, offering guidance, and raising awareness of protected characteristics, legislation, and community tensions, particularly in 2024.
- To support their work, the internal intranet (NIK) was updated providing enhanced guidance on investigation standards and thematic insights from Hate Crime Scrutiny Panels.
- The scheme expanded externally through targeted training with key partners. Sessions were delivered to frontline and management staff, aiming to increase awareness of hate crime and ASB, particularly in response to identified hotspot trends affecting public-facing roles.
- Within some Local Authorities, Hate Crime Champions, located within public buildings such as libraries, housing offices and family hubs, are trained to identify, signpost and support victims of hate crime. LA Champions can horizon scan for tension and community concerns, increasing reporting mechanisms into the police. This sees a holistic partnership approach to hate crime improving community intelligence and securing better outcomes for victims.
- Impact will be assessed through Hate Crime

reporting, community feedback, Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel, and dip sampling. Findings will be presented at the six-weekly Hate Crime Board to inform strategy.

- Strategic data from both police and CPS will be analysed via the Hate Crime dashboard to monitor progress, identify trends, and inform future actions.

Over the past 12 months, hate crime reporting has increased by 4% across the force, peaking in September 2024, but is now showing a downward trajectory.

It is really positive to understand how this has been expanded to wider, external partners. This demonstrates the partnership approach to improving services for hate crime victims and widens the opportunities for identifying local issues.



Undertake effective investigations to identify and bring offenders of hate crime to justice.

Question 2

How does the force ensure that hate crime against officers and staff is treated with the same seriousness as those against the public and what is available to ensure their well-being is supported? Is the force involved in Operation Hampshire?

The first tranche of the HMICFRS Inspection into the Public Disorder of 2024 highlighted that some officers, particularly those who could be identified as from ethnic minority backgrounds, were disproportionately targeted. I have sought reassurance from the Chief Constable that officers and staff within Northumbria, who are themselves victims of any form of hate crime, are supported and that perpetrators are dealt with robustly.

- The force demonstrates a clear commitment to treating hate crimes against officers and staff with the same seriousness as those committed against members of the public. This is reflected in its active participation in Operation Hampshire.
- Operation Hampshire provides the force with a strategy, processes and guidance to help them respond more effectively to assaults on police officers and staff. Northumbria has a designated portfolio lead at Chief superintendent level and deputy who are both members of the national network.
- Each Area Command has Chief Inspector Single Point of Contact (SPOCs) for both Operation Hampshire and Hate Crime, ensuring consistent oversight and accountability.
- Over the past 12 months, Northumbria has experienced a 41% increase in hate-related assaults against officers, equating to 42 additional offences. This upward trend highlights the need for continued vigilance and investment in officer welfare and operational resilience.
- Assaults and racially motivated incidents involving police officers, staff, or volunteers are investigated by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), reflecting the seriousness with which these

offences are treated. Victim Personal Statements and Chief Constable impact statements are routinely incorporated into case files to ensure the gravity of these incidents is fully represented in the criminal justice process.

Robust governance and scrutiny mechanisms promote accountability, drive organisational learning, and support the implementation of preventative measures aimed at reducing repeat victimisation. Operation Hampshire is a key focus during Hate Crime Awareness Week, with Area Commands actively promoting the support available to police staff and officers.

I am pleased to learn that the force is an active member of Operation Hampshire. The response from the Chief Constable provides me with confidence that officers and staff receive a good standard of care if they are victims of hate crime. It is concerning that the number of incidents has increased however, this demonstrates that staff themselves have confidence in the action that will be taken both to support them and bring offenders to justice.

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Ensure officers and staff are trained to communicate empathetically with victims of hate crime and where needed connect them with victim support services.

Question 3

Is the Chief Constable confident that the workforce has the skills to correctly identify all types of hate crime and understand the cumulative effect of repeat victimization?

HMICFRS have identified a national data integrity issue in respect of ASB, noting that issues such as hate are often incorrectly recorded as ASB. Given the increase in hate related incidents, both locally and nationally, it is essential that the workforce are able to identify where hate may have played a role to ensure the offender is dealt with appropriately and that victims can receive the right support. The response provided by the Chief Constable demonstrates the confidence she has in the workforce.

- Since last Summer, the Chief Constable has increased confidence in the workforce's skills and improved awareness of Hate Crime. This progress is attributed to enhanced training initiatives and heightened visibility of hate-related incidents at both local and national levels. However, there remains an ongoing need to sustain training and continued professional development across all areas of the workforce.
- All student officers receive hate crime training within their initial learning phase. They undertake both classroom-based learning and practical scenarios with additional sessions relating to Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DE&I) more broadly. This ensures that all officers entering the organisation have a theoretical and practical understanding of Hate Crime.
- Hate Crime training is maintained via e-learning training modules for all staff. These resources focus on identification, accurate recording, understanding lived experiences, and taking positive action.
- New training is being developed to address Hate Crimes committed within Mental Health Hospitals. This aims to support police officers and key partners such as hospital staff and the

Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), ensuring a more informed and coordinated response to these complex incidents.

- Hate Crime Scrutiny Panels play a key role in performance oversight. They focus on reviewing language use and victim experience with feedback provided on learning for officers and staff. Insights and trends identified through these panels are to be integrated into future Community Engagement Teams (CET) training for frontline staff and internal champions.
- For repeat victims, secondary contact is carried out by local NPTs to provide further support, and the creation of harm reduction plans for victims where appropriate.
- Tailored workshops are being developed with a focus on repeated / cumulative harm and intersectionality.

I am pleased to learn of the range of training delivered across the force to ensure that the workforce has the confidence to positively respond to hate crime and that there is additional consideration in relation to those who are repeat victims. The ongoing work in this area will ensure victims reporting Hate crime will have confidence that these offences will be dealt with appropriately.



Work with communities and partners to encourage reporting of hate crime and make it easier and safe to do so.

Question 4

What are the strategic plans in relation to enhanced reporting centres and places of safety? What is the current overview of the Safe Reporting Centres and how is this promoted to the public and partners?

Safe reporting centres provide alternative venues for Hate Crime victims to report. I have sought an update on work in this area and to understand how this is promoted to ensure that people are aware of reporting options.

- There are currently 40 designated Safe Reporting Centres in operation, aimed at enhancing accessibility, visibility, and effectiveness. The referral rate from safe reporting centres and reporting is currently low.
- Safe Reporting Centres are distributed evenly across the force area and are strategically located across a range of accessible community settings, including libraries, housing offices, community projects, and retail partner locations. These centres serve as visible and trusted points of contact for individuals wishing to report hate crime in a safe and supportive environment.
- Tailored hate crime awareness training is provided to venue staff. Upon completion, centres receive certification materials to visibly identify their status as Safe Reporting Centres.
- Digital reporting options are being piloted to expand accessibility with further targeted outreach to businesses in identified hotspot areas, ensuring those most at risk have clear and convenient pathways to report incidents.
- Public awareness is being driven through a multi-channel approach, including direct promotion by service providers and CET, website content, coordinated social media campaigns, and the distribution of printed materials in multiple languages. Information about Safe Reporting Centres is prominently featured on the Northumbria Police website, under the “How to Report a Hate Crime” section.
- A baseline template for Hate Crime and tension monitoring groups has been developed for use across all LA areas. This ensures a consistent and proactive approach to early warning and prevention.
- Efforts to improve inclusivity are ongoing, with a comprehensive review of accessibility standards across all Safe Reporting Centres. This includes the introduction of translated signage, hearing loops, and staff training in trauma-informed approaches to better support individuals with disabilities, language barriers, or other access needs.
- A notable example of local innovation is in Gateshead. Over 50 local authority staff have been trained in hate crime identification and victim support. As a result, every LA building in the area has been designated a Safe Reporting Centre, significantly increasing the likelihood of capturing previously unreported incidents.
- Gateshead has also launched an Enhanced Reporting Centre within Citizens Advice, the first of its kind in the UK. This initiative is based on trauma-informed service principles commonly used in domestic abuse and sexual violence support.
- The centre provides a safe and environment for victims of hate crime, offering emotional support through trained chaperones, facilitating evidence collection in a more comfortable setting, and delivering guidance via Connected Voices, commissioned by the OPCC.
- The initiative has been positively received and is being considered for wider replication and highlighted as a potential model of best practice.

I am pleased that there are a number of community-based reporting centres available across the force however, further work needs to be undertaken to raise their profile and increase their use. I would like to thank those organisations and staff who have made this initiative possible. My office has supported the recent work in Gateshead Citizens Advice Centre and I look forward to hearing more about the impact of this work.



Engage with communities to understand and identify community tensions, ensuring that policing feels a part of those communities, rather than something that is happening to them.

Question 5

Following the Supreme Court ruling, and in advance of local elections next year, are you anticipating any rise in community tensions and if so, what are your plans to address this?

I continue to be acutely aware of how easily tensions can be ignited and it is therefore vital that the force continues to monitor events that may negatively impact on this. I have sought reassurance that the force is thinking ahead and has appropriate plans in place.

- Policing preparations for the pre-election period are already underway, with a particular focus on identifying and mitigating potential triggers for community tension. These efforts are being coordinated through a multi-layered approach that combines intelligence gathering, community engagement, and inter-agency collaboration.
- At the heart of this work is the community cohesion monitoring group, which has recently been established within each area command. These groups bring together local statutory bodies and third-sector partners to coordinate intelligence and engagement efforts.
- Where there are known links between social deprivation and crime disparities, targeted monitoring is being used to inform local engagement strategies and resource deployment.
- Multi-agency structures are in place to ensure that both performance and public concerns are reviewed regularly and acted upon appropriately.
- Community engagement is maintained through the neighbourhood policing model and the deployment of dedicated CETs across all area commands. These teams play a vital role in contributing to daily intelligence reports, for early signs of concern or rising tensions.
- A new analytical tool is currently in development which will support trend analysis and risk assessment, enabling the early identification of incidents targeting specific communities and

facilitating targeted reassurance patrols and engagement in vulnerable areas.

- While no significant tensions have been identified following the recent Supreme Court ruling, the force remains vigilant. The existing intelligence and engagement framework will be fully operational in the lead-up to next year's local elections to monitor and respond to any emerging risks. At present, there are no concerns beyond routine levels.
- Progress continues to be made against the HMICFRS recommendations and areas for improvement (AFIs) aligned to areas of business within Priority 5 and no additional risk has been identified in their delivery.

I am confident that the force has improved its' monitoring of community tensions over the last 12 months and that it is in a better position to predict, and keep track of, future incidents. The Chief Constable has appropriate engagement in place and is planning ahead for the upcoming elections, should any issues arise from this.





**SAFER STREETS
STRONGER COMMUNITIES**



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