

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Council – 22 July 2020

**Report Title**

Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge – Hate Crime

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

No

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Judith Hurcombe, Interim Assistant Chief Executive

**Report Author(s)**

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**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

This report outlines the findings and recommendations following a spotlight review undertaken by Rotherham Youth Cabinet regarding hate crime, a key priority in their manifesto for 2020.

The report is presented for information to share the review findings with the wider membership of the Council. Following this meeting, the Cabinet will be required to respond formally to the recommendations and indicate agreement or otherwise and what action will be taken to implement the recommendations, together with details of timescales and accountabilities. External partners will also be involved in developing the response.

**Recommendations**

1. That the report and recommendations in respect of the review of Hate Crime be noted.
2. That the response of Cabinet be reported back to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and Rotherham Youth Cabinet.

**List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1: Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge Scrutiny Review: Hate Crime

**Background Papers**

Notes from Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge Sessions – March 2020

Rotherham Youth Cabinet Manifesto 2020

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board - 12 March 2020

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 10 June 2020

Cabinet – 13 July 2020

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## **Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge – Hate Crime**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge (CCTOC) is a national initiative where children and young people take over an organisation or meeting and assume management/leadership roles. As part of the Council's commitment to the CCTOC, each year the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) supports Rotherham Youth Cabinet (RYC) in undertaking a focused piece of work on a topic chosen by the young people.
- 1.2 RYC chose hate crime as the theme for this year's takeover challenge, as it was one of the key priorities in their manifesto for 2020 after emerging in the top three issues following the annual "Make Your Mark" consultation with young people.

### **2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 It was evident that good work is taking place in Rotherham to raise awareness about hate crime and to challenge attitudes and behaviour, which needs to continue and develop further.
- 2.2 Similarly, with initiatives to encourage people to come forward and report incidents. It also helps to strengthen community confidence when people see clear, meaningful action has resulted following them reporting an incident. Under-reporting is still perceived to be an issue, in particular for disability-related incidents.
- 2.3 Media coverage of events and issues was a clear concern shared by participants in the scrutiny session, as it often created divisions and tensions in the community. It was recognised that this was difficult to control, certainly at national level, although there might be scope for more liaison at local level.
- 2.4 Licensing had acknowledged the legitimate concerns raised in respect of hate incidents experienced by taxi drivers and their families, which had fed into the revised policy and consideration of other potential measures that could be introduced to protect drivers.

### **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 3.1 In light of their findings, RYC developed the recommendations contained in pages 10 and 11 of the review report. In summary these focus on:
  - partners continuing to engage with young people and to consider having a dedicated young person's seat on the Independent Hate Scrutiny Panel
  - liaison between primary and secondary schools to support preventative work on hate crime
  - encouraging all schools to invite the Hate Crime Co-ordinator to work with students, with a focus on work in smaller groups
  - involving young people in a peer educator initiative for hate crime awareness raising
  - partners working with RYC on a campaign to raise awareness with young people about how and where to report hate incidents

- sharing the concerns raised by RYC with regard to press coverage of issues that may impact more widely on communities with the local media

#### **4. Consultation on proposal**

- 4.1 Several of the recommendations have a focus on enhanced and continuing engagement with young people to ensure their views are captured and considered.

#### **5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

- 5.1 It is anticipated that the formal response to the recommendations will be reported back in October 2020.

#### **6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications**

- 6.1 None arising directly from this report, although RMBC and partners will take account of any such implications in developing their response to the review.

#### **7. Legal Advice and Implications**

- 7.1 None arising directly from this report.

#### **8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

- 8.1 None arising directly from this report.

#### **9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

- 9.1 The intention of the review was to impact positively on young people, as set out in the RYC manifesto aim:

*“We want to ensure people understand what Hate Crime is, know how to report it and encourage reporting of Hate Crime incidents. We also want people to understand the impact Hate Crime has on victims and the potential consequences.”*

#### **10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

- 10.1 The recommendations aim to support work to address hate crimes/incidents experienced by people on the grounds of disability; race or ethnicity; religion or belief; sexual orientation and/or transgender identity.

#### **11. Implications for Partners**

- 11.1 A collective approach from the Council, schools and other partners will be necessary to progress recommendations made in the report.

#### **12. Risks and Mitigation**

12.1 None identified at this stage.

**13. Accountable Officer(s)**

James McLaughlin, Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer

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