

LGBT ADVISORY GROUP

Meeting held at OPCC Victory House on Wednesday, 26th November 2014 at 5.00pm

- Members requested an update on having a joint Hate Crime Strategy between the three North East Police and Crime Commissioners. The PCC's have collaborated in the past and produced a joint strategy on Violence against Women and Girls so the PCCs could collaborate and produce a joint strategy on Hate Crime. Nitin agreed to progress this with the PCC's.
- Carol Taylor (CT), HR Manager updated the meeting on the results of the survey undertaken by Northumbria Police at the Northern Pride Event in Newcastle. CT added that key issues raised by the respondents will be discussed by the Chief Officer's at the Equality Board meeting on 28 November 2014. A follow up report will be circulated to members of the advisory group.
- Members also discussed the advantages and disadvantages of different methods used in surveys to collect information. CT and Mark Nichols, Chair of Northern Pride reported that more people chose to respond using the online link compared to paper based questionnaires. There was discussion whether people would be 'open' about sensitive issues in face to face interviews although this method provides opportunities for any follow up questions or points of clarification.
- Carol Taylor presented the members of the panel with roles and responsibilities of the LGBT Liaison Officers. The Liaison Officers will focus on the following areas: internal and external liaison, promoting awareness of LGBT issues, taking action to tackle homophobic crime, recording crime against LGBT people accurately, increasing the trust and confidence of LGBT communities and continuity.
- Sgt Philip Cleugh (PC) from Northumbria Police provided members with an overview on delivering the Hate Crime Strategy. He highlighted five key areas which will provide focus on the strategy, these are identifying crime, preventing crime, recording crime appropriately, investigating crime and prosecuting. PC emphasised the importance of staff training to ensure this commitment resulted in positive outcomes for victims.
- Sgt Philip Cleugh also explained that the Hate Crime Strategy is deployed through the six Area Commands. Community Safety Partnerships, Community Engagement Officers and the Neighbourhood Policing Team are working together to ensure their approach is tailored to meet the needs of their own neighbourhoods. Consequently, crime can be reported, investigated and dealt with appropriately. PC also circulated a leaflet produced by Northumbria Police, raising awareness of hate crime, for discussion. Comment were fed back to PC.
- Louise Evan Wong from the North East LGBT Federation raised concerns regarding the quality of some of the interpreters used by Northumbria Police. Louise explained that lacked awareness and understanding of hate crime and there are people who are victims of crime that are dissatisfied with the interpreting service that they have received.