



CABINET

Subject Heading:

Housing Services – Hate Crime Policy (2024)

Cabinet Member:

Councillor Paul McGeary – Cabinet Member for Housing and Property

ELT Lead:

Neil Stubbings, Strategic Director, Place

Report Author and contact details:

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Policy context:

This policy sets out the Council's position in relation to the behaviour of its tenants and leaseholders with regard to Hate Crime.

It is required by the Housing Regulator as a stand-alone policy, and aligns with other, relevant Council Housing policies, such as Domestic Abuse (2024) and Anti-social Behaviour (2024).

Financial summary:

No financial implications.

Is this a Key Decision?

Yes, because it will have a significant effect on two or more Wards.

When should this matter be reviewed? Annually, to ensure it continues to comply with legislative or regulatory requirements.

Reviewing OSC: To be reviewed by the O&S Board.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well	<input type="checkbox"/>
Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUMMARY

This report explains the legal definition of Hate Crime; the numerous forms of Hate Crime and the measures – both legislatively and by Havering Council – currently in place to deal with the perpetrators of hate crime, regardless of whether they are tenants, leaseholders, staff or representatives of the Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The safety of residents and the reputation of the Council would benefit from clearly declaring and communicating our position concerning Hate Crime; defining the consequences for the perpetrators and the support available to victims/witnesses.

Cabinet are recommended to approve this policy.

REPORT DETAIL

Hate Crime is a growing problem both nationally - and in Havering, given its rapidly changing demographics.

This new Housing-specific policy explains:

1. The purpose, aims, scope and legal context of the policy;
2. Defines the term 'Hate Crime';
3. Explains the numerous forms of Hate Crime;
4. Explains how to report Hate Crime;
5. Explains how Housing Services deals with reports of Hate Crime;
6. The consequences for perpetrators of Hate Crime; and
7. The support available to victims.

This policy has been produced in partnership with a range of internal and external expert partners.

REASONS AND OPTIONS

Reasons for the decision to approve this policy are to:

- Meet the current requirements of the Housing Regulator;
- Meet current legislative and regulatory requirements;
- State Havering Council commitment to combat/reduce hate crime, incorporating recognised good practice elsewhere;
- Assure Havering residents that the Council takes Hate Crime seriously and has robust mechanisms in place to help combat/reduce such behaviour; and
- Inform victims and witnesses about the various support options currently available, including how to contact those specialist agencies.

Other options considered:

- **No action**
Hate Crime divides communities. Saying nothing and not having a policy in place for this specialist crime is ethically wrong and presents the Council in a poor light. It also makes victims feel that the Council doesn't take such crime seriously.
- **Allow councillors to represent their views in the absence of Council-agreed guidance**
Not having a policy would expose councillors and the Council to unnecessary and avoidable challenge, such as via resident complaints, FOI requests, press enquiries, etc., and damage the reputation of the Council.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

None. This policy will be delivered using existing financial resources and poses no risk to the Council or to the population of Havering.

Legal implications and risks:

There are no immediate legal implications arising from this Report.

Human Resources implications and risks:

None. This policy will be delivered using existing HR resources and poses no risk to the Council or to the population of Havering.

IT implications and risks:

None. This policy will be delivered using existing I.T. resources and poses no risk to the Council or to the population of Havering.

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion implications and risks:

This policy does not differentiate and applies equally across the entire population, as stated in Section 8 (Equal Opportunities statement) of this policy and further detailed in the accompanying Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA).

Health and Wellbeing:

None. This policy will, if anything, help to improve the health and wellbeing of Havering residents.

Environmental and Climate Change

None. There will be no negative impact on climate change. This policy will, if anything, help to improve the environment by helping to make Havering a better, safer place to live, work and visit.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Hate Crime Policy (2024)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.