

Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel

Briefing Note

To: Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel **From:** Bev Houghton, Manager
Subject: LGB&T Projects and Initiatives **Dept.:** Community Safety
Date: 15th October 2014

Overview

This briefing is to inform the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel of the community safety initiatives dealing with issues affecting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGB&T) communities that are currently taking place or have previously taken place in Redditch.

These projects are in addition to the Domestic Abuse projects and initiatives outlined in the previous briefing note, all of which are targeted at or offered to residents who may be of LGB&T communities who are experiencing or at risk of Domestic Abuse.

Worcestershire LGB&T Hate Crime Forum

This is a countywide meeting held as a sub-group of the West Mercia Police Independent Advisory Group arrangements. The meeting is held monthly and is attended by a number of statutory agencies and LGB&T support organisations. The group discusses community support activities, campaign opportunities and community safety issues affecting individuals and local LGBT communities across Worcestershire. The meeting is supported by council officers and Sarah Kelsey, Community Safety Project Officer attends the meeting to provide the link between the forum and the North Worcestershire Hate Incident Partnership.

North Worcestershire Hate Incident Partnership and Reporting Centres

North Worcestershire Hate Incident Partnership provides practical support for victims and witnesses of Hate incidents and crimes. The partnership has received reports via its community reporting centres from gay, bisexual and transgendered residents who have been the target of harassment because of their sexuality or perceived gender status. Hate incident cases are discussed and support offered through a multi-agency, victim-centred approach. Any resolutions identified are discussed with the victim to ensure they are fully comfortable with any proposed actions.

Respect! - Community Safety Schools Programme

The Community Safety Schools programme has been delivering hate crime awareness workshops called "Respect!" in local High Schools for 5 years. The workshops include activities and exercises around all aspects of hate crime awareness including scenarios about people affected by LGB&T hate crime. The LGBT sessions are delivered within the context of a young person coming to terms with their sexuality and the prejudice they might experience when they choose to come out. The young people are asked to look at the situation in relation to it being a school friend or classmate and what they could do to provide support or report any bullying. The programme has recently obtained a copy of the Crown Prosecution Service resource 'Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Hate Crime Schools Project' and this will be integrated into the Respect! Programme delivery in schools this year.

"Breaking the Cycle" – North Worcestershire Hate Incident Partnership Film

The making of this film was commissioned by the North Worcestershire Hate Incident Partnership to be used as a training tool for the community based Hate Incident Reporting

Centres and other organisations. The film depicts the stories of real life victims of Hate Crime all reported to reporting centres in Worcestershire. A number of the stories portrayed are those of victims of LGB&T hate crime and show the true impact that these incidents have on an individual's quality of life. It is hoped that the film and its accompanying training manual will be purchased by organisations and agencies to train front-line staff and volunteers and any income generated will be used to fund future activities of the North Worcestershire Hate Incident Partnership.

Hate Crime Awareness Sessions

The North Worcestershire Hate Incident Partnership delivers a number of awareness raising sessions to members of the public on hate crime/ incidents and within these sessions scenarios and case studies about LGB&T hate crime are used. Using funding received from the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner, the partnership delivered a number of activities to promote national Hate Crime Awareness week (13th – 19th October). Working with colleagues from Wyre Forest, the Community Safety Team commissioned a street theatre company to deliver a number of outdoor performances in the town centres of the three North Worcestershire districts. The event in Redditch was held on Thursday 16th October and took place in the Market area. A series of interactive street theatre performances throughout the day showed the impact of Hate Crime on individuals and how victims and witnesses can report incidents and access support. The event was supported by West Mercia Police officers and PCSOs and Bill Longmore, West Mercia Police and Commissioner attended the afternoon performances to speak to the actors and staff involved in developing the project.

Redditch Night Club - Gay Night Pilots

As part of LGB&T History Month in February 2011 and 2012, Fever Night Club held a Gay Night at its Market Square venue. The aim was to encourage members of the gay community to have confidence to take part in social activities in Redditch; this was following local research that indicated that the majority of local residents felt safer socialising and using night-time economy venues out of the area. Both events were backed and promoted by the Night Club Manager, who was very supportive of the concerns raised by local members of LGB&T communities. Unfortunately, each of the Gay nights held operated at a loss to the night club and it was decided by the Manager not to hold future events.

Theatre Production Commission: Palace Theatre - February 2011

Again during LGB&T History Month, a professional theatre company was commissioned to put together a production which reflected some of the harassment faced by LGB&T communities. The production was held at the Palace Theatre, with guest speakers invited to attend from the Police and the Gender Trust. Unfortunately, despite quite substantial advertising, the event was not well attended and partners agreed that this method of engagement had not worked in this format.

For More Information

If you have any queries about any of the LGB&T Initiatives highlighted, please contact

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