

PART E – Hate and Mate Crime

This section sets out the policy for identifying, reporting, and dealing with hate and mate crime in Lincolnshire.

This policy and the commitments made are made in the context of the Equality Act, which requires public authorities to consider how they can take action to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in the community. A key part of this is the correct identification and handling of hate and mate crime.

Hate crime can affect all communities, both urban and rural, and it is important that staff and members are aware of hate crime issues and what to do when hate crime is identified, and to be aware of hate crime issues across the city. Furthermore, mate crime is a growing area of concern, and one which is not yet widely recognised, but is prevalent in all areas of society. Employee awareness is a key part of tackling the problem

Hate Crime	A hate crime or hate incident is any crime or incident which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's actual or perceived social group. There are common social groups who encounter such prejudice or hostility, and therefore the focus within this chapter is on the following strands: • Disability; • Race; • Religion or belief; • Sexual orientation; • Transgender. It is worth noting however, that hate crime can be based on any identifying factor, or a combination of 2 or more factors.
Mate Crime	There is currently no formally agreed definition of mate crime. However, the below is a widely accepted description: <i>'When a person is harmed or taken advantage of by someone they thought was their friend. It is more common with people with learning disabilities and mental health conditions but not exclusive'.</i> Those with substance misuse issues can also be more at risk.

RECOGNISING HATE OR MATE CRIME

A **hate crime** or incident can encompass a large number of actions, directed at a particular person or more generally at a group of people, for the sole reason of their inclusion, or perceived inclusion, in one of the social groups mentioned above. These can include:

- Physical attacks;
- Verbal abuse;
- Offensive graffiti;
- Harassment;
- Damage to property;

- Exclusion from a group or community.

It can be any activity directed at a person or group because of their social group. Usually hate crimes and incidents are easy to recognise for both the victims and the observers due to type of language used, or person targeted. However, not all attacks on minority social groups are because of hate, they may just be randomly targeted, and this must be considered.

Mate crime can be more difficult to recognise as often the victim thinks the perpetrator is their friend and may not perceive themselves as a victim, or what is happening to them as wrong.

Mate crime may include:

- Financial abuse e.g. visiting when the victim has just got their benefit and 'borrowing' money or going out for a drink and getting the victim to buy all the drinks;
- Physical abuse, making a joke of physical abuse, making it part of a 'game';
- Emotional abuse, distancing the victim from their family or other support, manipulating them into doing things they normally would not;
- Sexual abuse, coercion into prostitution, exploitation by their 'friend'.

Mate crime can be very subjective, and it is important to consider the vulnerability of the victim, the incidents occurring and any known background of the alleged perpetrator when dealing with mate crime. If you are unsure, please seek advice from a Safeguarding Officer.

Indicators of a victim of mate crime may be:

- Lack of money shortly after payday;
- Withdrawal from services or family;
- Over reliance on a new friend;
- Changes in behaviour or mood;
- Making excuses for the behaviour or actions of a friend.

Those subject to hate crime may be more at risk of early extremist tendencies, or those perpetrating may be exhibiting extremist views. In such cases Section H – Preventing Violent Extremism, of this policy should be referred to, which will give guidance on who to contact and go to for advice.

RESPONDING TO A REPORT OF HATE CRIME OR MATE CRIME

Across Lincolnshire, partners use [True Vision](#) as the third party reporting centre. If a report is made to a member of staff or elected member, the following process should be followed:

1. Take notes of the incident or allegation;
2. Encourage the person to report the hate or mate crime to Lincolnshire Police;
3. If the victim does not wish to make the report themselves, contact Lincolnshire Police to report the hate or mate crime as a third party. Inform the Safeguarding Lead Officer of the report and any action taken through the internal report form;
4. Consider any additional factors such as Anti-Social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse or Prevent. Where these factors are identified, refer the case to the Safeguarding Lead Officer for further advice;
5. Make any necessary referrals arising from the above risk assessments;
6. Offer the victim appropriate support, giving them a named contact. Identify any additional vulnerabilities including alcohol or substance misuse which may require a referral to substance

misuse services or adult social care. If additional concerns or support needs are identified consider a referral to internal case meetings.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or elected member, the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Deputy must be informed immediately. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will inform the Chief Executive and the Local Authority Designated Officer for Allegations (LADO) and consideration will be given to suspending the member of staff from work or moving them to alternative duties. If the Safeguarding Officer is the subject of an allegation, the report must be made directly to the Chief Executive. If it is necessary to conduct an investigation into events surrounding the complaint, this will be conducted in accordance with advice from the LADO, and through the Council's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Staff Welfare is a key concern for the Council. If a member of staff or elected member is experiencing hate or mate crime, they will be offered the same support as a member of the public reporting to us, plus any extra support the council can offer such as management support. If the person perpetrating the hate or mate crime is an employee or elected member, the same process as described in the above paragraph will be followed, with serious consideration given to suspension to allow for proper investigation and to safeguard the welfare of staff, guided by the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

Training is provided to ensure that staff not only know how to respond to a report of hate or mate crime, but also so that they are aware of the assistance they can get from the organisation.

REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT HATE CRIME OR MATE CRIME

Please contact the Safeguarding Lead Officer or Designated Safeguarding Officer for advice or central recording, using the Internal Online Reporting Form or email safeguarding@lincoln.gov.uk and detail the concerns and action taken so far.

Reporting to the Police: Hate crimes are just that: a crime. Reporting a hate crime to the Police is always the preferred choice so that accurate data can be captured, and the incident dealt with appropriately. There is still a perception that hate crimes will not be taken seriously, which leads to huge under-reporting. A recent report into transgender hate incidents suggested that victims did not know where to go for help as they felt embarrassed to go to the Police and did not believe any action would be taken. The Police can and do take action and victims can be reassured that their complaint will be dealt with, and that they will be treated with dignity.

Third party reporting centres: Where a victim or witness to an incident will not go to the police in person, third party reporting centres can be used. There are various third-party reporting centres which can be accessed in person, by phone or on the internet. Once contacted, the centre can then report an incident to the Police on behalf of the victim or concerned person, provide advice and support and signpost to other agencies as appropriate. Third party reporting provides a safe and confidential environment, with an agency that the individual may have more trust in. Some third-party reporting centres also have specialists in languages and law.