Written evidence submitted by Citizens UK/Nottingham Citizens

1 Summary

1.1 This submission has been collated by Nottingham Citizens, part of Citizens UK.

1.2. This submission highlights the findings and results of our 2014 report — A Citizens Commission: No Place For Hate.

1.3 This submission focusses specifically on the work done, as a direct result of that report, to recognise misogyny as a category of hate crime by Nottinghamshire Police.

1.2 We recommend that misogyny is formally adopted as a category of hate nationally.

2 Introduction

2.1 Nottingham Citizens is an alliance of 60 community groups in Nottinghamshire — 40 in the City of Nottingham and conurbation, and a further 20 in the ex-coalfields areas of Mansfield and Ashfield.

2.2 Nottingham Citizens is part of Citizens UK. Citizens UK organises communities to act together for power, social justice and the common good.

2.3 In 2014, the alliance raised concerns around experiences of hate crime in the city amongst their membership which resulted in them working with the NTU Hate Crime Institute to conduct the largest ever piece of peer led research into hate crime, surveying more than 1000 people in the city about their experiences, and publishing their recommendations at a public gathering of more than 400 community leaders and key decision makers who pledged to implement the report A Citizens Commission: No Place For Hate.

2.4 The report can be found here: http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/~lgzwww/contacts/staffPages/stephenlegg/documents/14.10.A-CITIZENS-COMMISSION-NO-PLACE-FOR-HATE.pdf.

3 The report — A Citizens Commission: No Place For Hate

3.1 The report made a number of recommendations and led to the following as a direct result:

3.1.i The creation by Nottingham City Council of an inter agency hate crime panel — Nottingham Hate Incident Performance Panel (NHIPP). The aims of the panel is to review open and closed hate crime cases to allow for concurrent accountability in the performance of the case across all agencies, increase victim satisfaction and develop learning capacity for the affected organisations.

3.1.ii A change in the commissioning of Victim Services. This will be one joint unified service hub to provide a) victim support and advocacy, b) scrutiny and learning support for the police and wider criminal justice system and c) Prevention and reporting promotion. This commissioning process is in it’s final stages and the intention for the service to go live for the early part of 2017 for Nottinghamshire.
3.1.iii The creation of specialist posts to be resourced within the Police and Nottingham City Council. This has led to range of joint information sharing and development on various projects. This initiative enabled the both the police and local authority to work in a coordinated manner, in particular after the EU Referendum result. Joint messages and briefings could be sent out around hate crime to support communities, statutory and voluntary organisations.

3.1.iv The recognition of misogyny as a motivator of hate crime and the rolling out of this across Nottinghamshire. For a more detailed analysis of this, please see the section on misogyny hate crime below.

3.2 The report emphasised the importance of dedicated resource, leadership and the importance of engaging communities. In particular, the creation of specific resources for responding to hate crime within the local authority and police has allowed for the following:

3.2.i This resource led to the development of action plans at a strategic level to progress specific areas of hate crime project work across Nottinghamshire. One example is the Hate Crime Transport Forum. Within this forum, there is a sharing of information with regard to hate incidents involving transport services, and a sharing of information about how these can be progressed. Transport agencies can access hate crime training sessions delivered locally and understand more acutely citizens concerns over hate rime and transport. This facilitated engagement with taxi drivers to understand the issues and barriers of reporting and how we can support No to Hate flyers with taxis.

3.2.ii This resource has allowed for joint training sessions to be delivered across Nottinghamshire to statutory, voluntary and community organisations. These training sessions target front line officers and community workers and equip them to recognise hate crime, to report hate crime and to integrate systems within their organisations to reduce hate crime. The systems may take the form of messaging, further training or policy amendments.

3.2.iii This resource enabled Nottingham to quickly support communities who were affected specifically by the EU Referendum and rise in hate crimes. The staff were able to deploy hate crime training sessions to Polish Community groups and share information on how to report hate crime with faith leaders and affected groups. This resource has also given the ability to work more closely with partner organisations tackling hate crime, such as Mencap (learning disability services), Victim Support, and the LGBT switchboard.

3.2.iv This resource has given the ability to work with organisations that support asylum seekers and refugees who have experienced hate crime and have their own fears and peculiarities about reporting such incidents. Training sessions have been carried out for volunteer workers in the refugee sector and refugee women’s support group.

3.2.v This resource saw the formation of special workshops, which have been put on for community groups such as Imams, Muslim Women and the Somali community, so that both citizens and civil society take it seriously to end hate crime and to report any incidents.

4 Misogyny as a motivator of Hate Crime

4.1 The No Place For Hate report highlighted the similarities of experience between women experiencing street harassment and those experiencing other forms of hate crime, and the significant
impact this had on victims in terms of normalisation, changed behaviour, mental health and likelihood to report.

4.2 A follow up survey specifically looking at women’s experience identified that 85% of women surveyed had experienced some form of street or sexual harassment.

4.3 As a direct result of this, Nottinghamshire Police began to recognise misogyny as a hate crime on 4th April 2016, following work with the Nottingham Women’s Centre and Nottingham Citizens to implement this.

4.4 Nottinghamshire Police defines misogyny hate crime as follows:

“Within this procedure Misogyny hate crime may be understood as incidents against women that are motivated by the attitude of men towards women, and includes behaviour targeted at women by men simply because they are women. Examples of this may include unwanted or uninvited sexual advances; physical or verbal assault; unwanted or uninvited physical or verbal contact or engagement; use of mobile devices to send unwanted or uninvited messages or take photographs without consent or permission.

“Domestic abuse is not included within the scope of Misogyny hate crime in this procedure as it is dealt with comprehensively within its own procedure.”

4.5 The hope is that through recording incidents in this way we will be able to:
Raise awareness of the seriousness of these incidences and encourage women to report
Gather better intelligence to disrupt activities/perpetrators
Better manage risk and support women affected
Reduce women’s fear of crime in public spaces, which is frequently informed by their fear of sexual assault, informed in large part by experiences of street harassment[1]

4.6 The long-term aim is to nudge people towards a culture shift and to reframe these behaviours as socially undesirable. In doing so, we will challenge the way that some men express their ‘masculinity’ to the detriment of women.

4.7 All police staff will have received training in recognising and responding to misogyny hate crime by the end of August 2016, carried out by Nottingham Women’s Centre. So far, this training has been well received.

4.8 Although there has been some academic debate on the value of conceptualising crimes against women as hate crimes[2] by focusing on the bias motivation, there has to date been no attempt to translate this into policy practice. Nottinghamshire Police have therefore taken an important first step in recognising street harassment of women as hate crime.

5 Defining misogyny hate crime

5.1 ‘Misogyny’
5.1.i The No Place for Hate commissioners felt strongly that misogyny should be used as the key word to understand why certain behaviours are taking place.

5.1.ii ‘Misogyny hate crime’ was chosen over the initial suggestion of ‘gender-based hate’ because of the need to recognise the way that women’s experiences differ to men’s (and, within this, to understand the overlap of misogyny into other forms of hate such as transphobia, transmisogyny and homophobia).

5.1.iii Although terms such as ‘street harassment’ and ‘sexual harassment’ are more commonly understood by the general public, they are problematic when dealing with the police as they have a very distinct meanings, and also do not necessarily cover the whole range of behaviours that women might experience or the places that they might experience these. Interestingly, Google searches on the word ‘misogyny’ have been steadily rising since 2012.[3]

5.2 ‘Hate crime’

5.2.i The Home Office describes Hate Crime in the following way:

- Hate crime targets people because of their identity. It is a form of discrimination that infringes human rights and keeps people from enjoying the full benefits of our society.
- Research has shown that hate crimes cause greater psychological harm than similar crimes without a motivation of prejudice.
- Hate crime creates fear in victims, groups and communities and encourages communities to turn on each other[4]

5.2.ii All of the above could easily be applied to misogynistic acts, more commonly termed ‘street harassment’ or ‘sexual harassment’

5.2.iii Hate crime has a focus on the perpetrator – their attitudes and beliefs. It is also perception-based: ‘any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards someone based on a personal characteristic.’

5.2.iv It is worth noting that some hate incidents may not constitute a criminal offence and, therefore, they will not be recorded as a hate crime. However they can still be recorded as a hate incident within the police crime recording system, enabling the police to monitor any interventions that may still be appropriate and to track any emerging trends.

5.2.v There are currently five strands of monitored hate crime which are the minimum categories that the police are expected to record. However, police forces are free to extend their own policy response to include the hostilities that they believe are prevalent in their area or that are causing the greatest concern to the community.

5.2.vi Within the internal procedures of Nottinghamshire Police, misogyny hate crime constitutes a flag or ‘qualifier’ on the incident log, rather than defining the incident itself. The
offence is not changed – so for example, an incident of anti-social behaviour would become anti-social behaviour with a ‘misogyny hate crime qualifier’.

5.3 Where does domestic abuse fit?

5.3.i We recognise that there are inherent difficulties with including domestic abuse within this definition. Hate crime is generally seen as a ‘stranger’ crime and it is difficult to ask a survivor of domestic abuse to recognise ‘hate’ in the actions of the person who is supposed to love them. It is also unclear whether seeing domestic abuse as another form of hate crime could have longer term implications for the funding of specialist domestic abuse services.[5]

5.3.ii At a local level, those involved have worked closely with partners in the domestic and sexual abuse sector to ensure that we minimise any risk to their own services. Nottinghamshire Police already has a comprehensive policy and risk assessment process relating to cases of domestic abuse, and therefore we felt that it would be sensible to view domestic abuse and hate crime cases as two separate things, thereby avoiding some of the problems highlighted above.

5.3.iii Interestingly, Nottingham Women’s Centre’s experience of delivering training to the police so far tells us that, even though domestic abuse is not included within the hate crime policy, officers are often able to recognise that misogyny is likely to be at the root of this too.

5.3.iv Similarly, we are aware that misogyny hate crime can act as a bridge to women talking about (and recognising) other forms of violence against women. Where women may feel that domestic abuse is something that happens to ‘other women’ and is not linked to inequality, they are more readily able to recognise this with misogyny hate crime.

6 Recommendation — recognise misogyny hate crime nationally

6.1 We recommend that misogyny is formally adopted as a category of hate nationally.

6.2 We base this recommendation on our experiences of working directly with women, of the findings of the No Place For Hate report, of the work of Nottinghamshire Police, and of the other experiences described in this document.

6.3 We welcome further questions or queries regarding the work discussed in this submission.

7 Future research — 2017 No Place For Hate Review

7.1 In 2017, as part of their ongoing work in this area, Nottingham Citizens will be conducting a follow up piece of research into hate crime — No Place For Hate Review: Where Are We Now, & What about Brexit? — looking to assess the impact of the original No Place for Hate report, the introduction of misogyny as a motivator of Hate Crime and what impact this has had on women’s experience in the city.
7.2 Taking into account the significant shift in the political climate this review will also look at the specific impact of Brexit on hate crime both in the City of Nottingham and how this compares to the experiences of the Maun Valley in the North of the County — an area with a 70% leave vote which has recently taken its first ever refugees under the SVPRS.

7.3 As before the review will focus on both structural solutions and the role for Civil Society Groups in looking at welcome and tackling hate crime.

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