



22 December 2020

Hate Crime Team,
Law Commission,
1st Floor,
52 Queen Anne's Gate,
London,
SW1H 9AG.

Dear Sir/Madam,

We write to you as the Coalition of Race Equality Organisations (CORE), to respond to your consultation on hate crime, and address a number of pertinent issues, in relation to current laws.

As a collective, we believe that the effectiveness of hate crime laws is highly dependent on proper resourcing, national strategy support, adequate data collection and trusted reporting mechanisms. Considering any changes to hate crime law, must be seen in this context, and address these issues otherwise they risk being ineffective at best, and harmful at worst.

We welcome the increase in sentencing for those convicted of hate crimes as reported by the CPS earlier this year, but also note that the number of convictions has not kept up with the massive increase in hate crime reporting.

This year, the prominence of the Black Lives Matter movement in the media appears to have led to yet another upsurge in hate crimes by way of a backlash and we fear that the proportion of successful prosecutions will fall even further as a result. This suggests that there is already a severe lack of resources targeted at investigating and prosecuting using the existing hate crime legislation.

In principle, we would welcome the extension of legal protection from hate to a broader range of protected characteristics. Hate towards one group, is often aligned with hate for other protected characteristics. People share

intersectionality on a range of characteristics, which can subsequently multiply their vulnerability to hate. We recognise that hate crime laws serve an important symbolic function in tackling bigotry, prejudice and inequality, and affirming the identity and personhood of those who are subjected to it. However, we caution that broadening the scope of protection, without properly increasing the resourcing for it, is in effect reducing protection to those groups already covered by the legislation. Not only is the ability to implement protection for each characteristic reduced, but the lack of implementation leads to a sense that there are less consequences for hate.

We stress that any reforms to hate crime laws, should not weaken existing race hate protections. Race hate continues to be the largest and fastest increasing experience of hate crime in England and Wales, and shifting the focus away from race (through a reduction of resources for example) could have a substantially negative impact.

Additionally, we advocate for greater funding for Third Party Reporting Centres. Hate crime is underreported by victims, and those from BAME communities (who are often most impacted), are among the least likely to report these crimes to the police. This can be due to numerous factors including lack of confidence in procedures, lack of knowledge in terms of how to report, failure to recognise that they have been subjected to a hate crime, and concerns as to whether their experience will be taken seriously. Increasing access to Third Party Reporting Centres, enables victims to overcome these challenges, by providing them with an alternative form of reporting, without having to engage with the police.

We also strongly suggest introducing a more robust system of data collection, which would provide greater clarity in terms of specific strands of hate crime, for example, that which is racially aggravated. Furthermore, we believe that it is imperative that regional Victims' Commissioners assume the role of hate crimes leads, and produce quarterly reports on reported cases and prosecution.

With regard to hate crime in football, despite the work of organisations such as 'Kick it Out' and 'Show Racism the Red Card', it is still rife on the stands and on social media. In response, we urge the Football Association to build and develop stronger links with race equality/BAME community organisations, in order for them to ensure a more nuanced approach to the independent

monitoring of hate crime, backed with funding to enable a collaborative equitable partnership.

Yours sincerely,

Coalition of Race Equality Organisations (CORE)

CORE, the Coalition of Race Equality Organisations, is comprised of a number of the leading organisations within the UK Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME), voluntary and community sector. CORE acts as a collective voice to lobby government, influence policy, and raise awareness of issues of inequality that permeate society. Priority areas include housing, health, criminal justice, education, employment, and political engagement and representation.

CORE's membership is outlined below:

- **Alliance for Inclusive Education**
- **Black Training and Enterprise Group**
- **Black South West Network**
- **Blacksox**
- **BME National**
- **BRAP**
- **Caribbean and African Health Network**
- **Council of Somali Organisations**
- **Croydon BME Forum**
- **Friends, Families and Travellers**
- **Greater Manchester BAME Network**
- **JCORE**
- **Lancashire BME Network**

- **Migrants' Rights Network**
- **NHS BME Network**
- **OLMEC**
- **Operation Black Vote**
- **Positive Action in Housing**
- **Race on the Agenda**
- **Race Equality Foundation**
- **Race Equality Matters**
- **Runnymede Trust**
- **South Asian Health Action**
- **Steering Group for London Race Equality Councils**
- **The Traveller Movement**
- **UKREN**
- **Voice4Change England**