

## **EMERGENCY MOTION – COUNCIL 22 MARCH, 2021**

### **MISOGYNY IS A HATE CRIME**

**Proposed by Councillor Samantha Frost**

**Seconded by Councillor Janette Williamson**

This council notes that the Law Commission is currently reviewing all current hate crime legislation to consider whether gender/sex should be made a protected characteristic in hate crime legislation, after closing its request for submissions at the end of December 2020. The initial recommendations of the Law Commission Review suggested the inclusion of sex/gender as a protected characteristic. Misogyny is currently recorded, or its inclusion is being considered, as a hate crime by 11 out of 43 police forces in the UK.

Council notes that this proposal is backed by major campaign organisations on hate crime, women's rights and community safety including but not limited to: Citizens UK, the Fawcett Society, Plan UK, Our Streets Now, Centenary Action Group, UN Women UK, the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities, Juno Women's Aid, and Muslim Women's Network, and Hate Crime Campaigners including the Jo Cox Foundation, Hope not Hate and Tell Mama.

Council understands that women and girls across the country and on Wirral suffer harassment and abuse every single day. A YouGov national survey in 2021 found that 97% of women in the UK aged 18-24 had been sexually harassed, whilst 80% of UK women of all ages had experienced sexual harassment in public spaces. Council also notes that one of the leading factors why women do not report experiences of sexual harassment is that they "didn't think reporting it would help".

Studies have shown that the intersectional nature of discrimination means that women and girls with additional protected characteristics, such as those who are BAME, disabled, or LGBTQ+, are even more likely to experience harassment, discrimination and abuse.

The adoption of misogyny as a hate crime was successfully implemented in Nottingham, where analysis showed an increase in reporting as well as an increase in the use of wider services. It also showed that the vast majority of local people wanted the scheme to continue.

#### **The Council resolves:**

Council believes that the lived experiences of women and girls across the Borough, City Region and our country should be listened to and requests the Leader to write on behalf of the Council to call upon:

- the Government to listen to those experiences and urgently act on any recommendations the Law Commission makes to strengthen the law on hate crime, and to reform legislation around harassment to recognise as an offence a 'course of conduct' which targets women and girls in their community.

- the Government to provide the resource and funding for police forces across the UK to effectively tackle harassment, misogyny and domestic abuse.
- Merseyside Police to record the harassment of women and girls as a hate crime, following successful trials in Nottingham and elsewhere.