PRESS RELEASE

Commission welcomes Criminal Justice Inspectorate’s report on Hate Crime

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland today welcomes the Criminal Justice Inspectorate’s (CJINI’s) review of the criminal justice system’s response to hate crime in Northern Ireland.

Speaking after the launch of the report, Equality Commission Chief Executive Dr Evelyn Collins, said: “The Commission welcomes this report and we share the concerns raised by CJINI that, despite the progress that has been made by the criminal justice agencies, hate crime in Northern Ireland remains ‘stubbornly high’.

“The CJINI’s recommendations outlined in today’s report echo calls previously made by the Commission, including those aimed at addressing under-reporting, improving the way the police and prosecution service identify, investigate and prosecute hate crime. We also welcome calls for the public prosecution service to publish more detailed analysis on the hate crimes reported to it by the police (including the reasons for no prosecution) and continue to recommend the end-to-end tracking of hate crime cases.

“We reiterate the need for strong hate crime legislation which offers equal protection to all victims and welcome CJINI calls on the Department of Justice to review the hate crime legislation – echoing our recommendations in 2014.

“While further work remains to be done, we acknowledge that the criminal justice agencies cannot tackle hate crime alone. It is important that specific long-term measures are implemented to tackle prejudicial attitudes, address discrimination and to promote values of acceptance and respect for difference in our society.”

- Policy briefing on Criminal Justice Inspectorate’s report (pdf, 590kb)