

**TOURISM, EQUALITIES,
COMMUNITIES & CULTURE
COMMITTEE**

Agenda Item 24

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Anti-racism pledge update		
Date of Meeting:	16th September 2021		
Report of:	Executive Director Housing, Neighbourhoods, Communities		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 The initial report on actions being taken by the council towards becoming an anti-racist council was presented at TECC committee on 29th July 2020 and an update was presented on 19th November. At this meeting officers were asked to provide brief updates as a standing item at every TECC committee meeting. This report provides an update on actions since the progress report to TECC committee meeting 17th June 2021.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That committee note the report.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 This report should be read in context of the previous reports starting with the report to a special TECC committee meeting in in June 2020 through to the last report in June 2021.
- 3.2 Updates are noted where specific activities or progress has been made. Other actions from the pledges, Notices of Motion and petitions continue to be in progress and updates will be provided as progress develops.

4. Engagement with communities

- 4.1 The fifth and sixth meetings of the Community Advisory Group took place on 8th July and 29th July 2021 as part of a series of thematic discussions and 'challenge' sessions. The fifth meeting focused on the council's Anti-Racist

Schools strategy in recognition of concerns raised by community members about experiences of racism in local schools, schools' approach to racial diversity and inclusion for both students and staff and long-standing challenges about decolonising the curriculum. It was attended by the Executive Director for Families, Children and Learning along with colleagues from her directorate. The meeting provided an opportunity for the advisory group to ask questions about the strategy, the progress on the strategy and offer suggestions.

- 4.2 The sixth meeting was an extra-ordinary meeting called by the group to discuss vaccine confidence. It was attended by Lola Banjoko, Executive Managing Director from Brighton & Hove Clinical Commissioning Group. The meeting explored the challenge to vaccine confidence and actions to assist. The feedback from the group has informed the development on an action plan.
- 4.3 The theme of the next CAG meeting is health inequalities and adult social care. Membership of the CAG is open to BME-led community and voluntary groups in the city and active BME community activists. Any groups and/or activists interested in joining can email equalities@brighton-hove.gov.uk with their contact details.
- 4.4 Recruitment for an independent convenor for the Community Advisory Group (CAG) is completed. Six people applied for the role. Four were shortlisted and interviews were held on 7th and 8th September.
- 4.5 The council's community engagement officer focused on working with the BME residents and groups has continued to reach out and build trust and confidence with groups and residents in the city. The officer has been supporting conversations with community members about the potential project with a national organisation called World Reimagined looking at retelling of the transatlantic slave trade, reaching out to refugee communities in particular Oromo community and supporting groups with access to information and contacts in the council.
- 4.6 The council remains committed to engaging with individual communities to understand their unique experiences and issues, for example, anti-Black racism, anti-Semitism, and prejudice towards people of South-Asian heritage and of Chinese and South-East Asian heritage. It is currently working with the Sussex Jewish Representative council on a joint session to explore more deeply Jewish residents' experiences and what steps need to be taken to reduce anti-Semitism in the city.

5. Education and young people

- 5.1 The council's draft Anti-Racist Schools Strategy was agreed by Committee in November 2020 and has now been consulted on with schools and a range of stakeholders and partners. The second version of the strategy is being worked on and will be available by the end of the year and will be supported by brief information about it on the council website. Funding for the strategy has been approved and an "Education Adviser: Anti- Racism" has been recruited to be

the strategic lead for the work. Racial literacy training has been offered to school staff with 47 schools taking it up so far. Four governor training sessions have been delivered with an anti-racism focus. Pilot projects developing anti-racist practice and funded by the strategy are taking place in six schools.

- 5.2 The work of the Safeguarding & Care Anti-Racist Project continues and, alongside ongoing learning events and practice discussions focused on race and anti-racism. The Project Board has recently agreed an action plan and project plan based on feedback from working groups made up of staff from across the service that focused on staff support, practice with families, and the voice of children, families and carers. One of the areas of focus in this work is recruiting a more diverse workforce and nearly 20% of a recent recruitment round of newly qualified social workers identify as from communities who experience racism. A robust governance and reporting process is now in place to enable the project board to review and monitor the project.

6. Community safety

- 6.1 In April 2021 Policy & Resources Recovery sub-committee allocated £60,000 To support the resilience and recovery of communities disproportionately affected by Covid-19 by funding a pilot of 3 reporting centres including the Racial Harassment Forum, Rainbow Hub, and Possability People to cover all hate crime strands. Negotiations are underway with the organisations to set up the hubs.

7. COVID19 response

- 7.1 In April 2021 Policy & Resources Recovery sub-committee allocated £300,000 from the Containing Outbreak management Fund for the provision of an additional 'Communities Fund' for BME, LGBTQ+, disability, and women's community and voluntary groups across the city for whom evidence points to a disproportionate impact from Covid, including health inequalities, financial and economic impacts, impact from home schooling on future attainment, barriers to accessing information and support including language barriers, digital exclusion, mental health, and violence towards women. A total of 67 bids were submitted. Appraisal of the bids is underway, and decisions will be announced late-September. 18 (27%) of the 67 bids have a BME focus.
- 7.2 The sub-committee also allocated £150,000 to the provision of advice and support for migrant residents whose needs during and after the pandemic are made more complex by their history of migration or by their immigration status by providing an additional 'connector' role and support to associated support organisations. £70,000 funding has been committed to Voices in Exile to provide holistic case work support which compliments additional funding secured by the council and the Trust for Developing Communities from the DWP for employability support to Black, Asian, and ethnic minority people in the city include migrants. £24,000 has also been allocated to EMAS for additional support to very vulnerable migrant families in the city.

8. Fair & Inclusive Action Plan (FIAP) anti-racism actions

- 8.1 Following recruitment to a full-time HR Diversity Recruitment Consultant post in April to increase the percentage of applicants from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds who get appointed to council roles, several activities have taken place. These include delivery of 3 separate insight programmes to community groups, delivery of interview skills workshops to internal staff, commencing review and update of the council's jobs pages and relevant recruitment guidance and documents, including updates to the Recruitment & Selection Toolkit.
- 8.2 In addition, targeted support has been provided to 21 separate recruitment exercises with a total of 47 vacancies, including the recent appointment to Anti-Racist Education Provider. In collaboration with our BME Workers Forum we have also piloted ethnically diverse panels for several recruitment exercises. Analysis of these initiatives will be conducted in October.
- 8.3 HR Advisory Services hold weekly Fair & Inclusive case review meetings to discuss any cases involving racism. This is to ensure consistent application of the racism and zero tolerance definitions and allow safe challenge to any possible biases. The restorative approach to reports of racism has been drafted and will be presented at the next Corporate Equality Delivery Group meeting in August for approval.
- 8.4 Organisational results from the 2021 staff survey show a 3% increase in the Fair & Inclusive Index since 2019. This increase is not consistent across all staff groups and details of the results are being looked at to inform work going forward. Both the Disabled Workers & Carers Network and the BME Workers Forum have accepted offers to attend workshops planned for September with the staff survey provider, Ixia to prioritise actions.

9. Council workforce learning and development

- 9.1 36 mandatory sessions have been held on the council's Fair and Inclusive Action Plan and anti-racism since October 2020. 3500 members of staff have participated, and a recording is available for staff who can't access the live delivery via MS Teams. These sessions are held every quarter as part of induction for new staff.
- 9.2 31 bespoke anti-racism training have been delivered, attended by 370 staff. Two additional sessions have been run for 20 elected members. 35 Children's Social Care staff attended an anti-racism webinar. Two new bystander and microaggressions courses are currently being piloted. A wide range of equality and diversity eLearning modules and resources is available on the Learning Gateway.
- 9.3 A 6-month positive action programme will be piloted with 12 BME staff (grades 4, 5 and 6), starting in October 2021. Through a mix of self-reflection, workshops and coaching the aim of the programme is to:

- Prepare and develop for staff for their next role within the council
- Develop their knowledge, experience, skills and confidence to be part of an inclusive culture and influence for change in the organisation if you choose to do so
- Deepen their self-awareness and leverage their strengths
- Learn about key management and leadership theories
- Develop their communication, presentation and interpersonal skills
- Understand organisational context, to help you shape and influence your own career progression

10. Statues and monuments review

- 10.1 In furthering the conversation within our community, it has become clear that our legacy as a city sits within a contested arena, with deeply held views concerning our common colonial history and links with enslavement and its impact on our past and present from a range of perspectives, and with some critical areas lacking an informed consensus. Because this work touches on issues of racism and exploitation which resonate with members of our contemporary community who may trace their heritage to those who suffered directly through enslavement and colonialism, it is important that any actions taken now stem from the fullest understanding and appreciation of this which we might accomplish. To this end the council have been in discussion with the Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust around commissioning objective research to produce a report exploring and outlining these issues. Next steps are to hold a series of expert facilitated session that engage with all stakeholders on enslavement and colonisation, responses from Brighton & Hove to the slave trade and colonialism, and future memorial and celebration of our city.

11. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 11.1 The progress outlined above is on actions undertaken in response to the council's pledge to become an anti-racist council, anti-racism Notices of Motion and petitions accepted by full council/committees and previously Member agreed work under the Fair & Inclusive Action Plan.

12. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 12.1 Engagement is as outlined in paragraph 3.3

13. CONCLUSION

- 13.1 TECC committee requested a standing item on every agenda updating on progress towards the council's anti-racism commitments.
- 13.2 This report updates on progress and the contents are for Members to note.

14. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 14.1 Project management and leadership of the work is being carried out as part of core business of the Communities, Equality and Third Sector (CETS) team. A budget of £10,000 has been allocated from the CETS initiatives budget to support the work. Financial implications arising from the other actions identified in the report will be considered by the relevant service as part of their standard budget management processes and decisions on allocation of funding will be made in line with council's budget setting process.

Finance Officer Consulted: Michael Bentley Date: 12/08/21

Legal Implications:

- 14.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report which is for noting. All of the actions proposed are in line with the Council's powers and duties, in particular under the Equality Act 2010.

Lawyer Consulted: Alice Rowland Date:17/8/21

Equalities Implications:

- 14.3 The intention of this work is to address identified racial inequalities and racism experienced by people who live in, work in and visit the city. The range of engagement planned with people who share other characteristics in addition to their ethnicity will ensure that perspectives are heard from a wide range of people. This will enable the development of tailored and bespoke actions to address all forms of racism, where it is based on ethnicity, skin colour or any other attribute.
- 14.4 The work is central to the council's legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between communities, as well as to encourage civic engagement by under-represented groups. It also complements and supports the council's Fair & Inclusive Action Plan in addressing the findings of the review of race diversity by Global HPO.

Sustainability Implications:

- 14.5 No implications arising from this report

Brexit Implications:

- 14.6 No implications arising from this report