

Subject: **Becoming an Anti-Racist Council**
Date of Meeting: **30 July 2020**
Report of: **Executive Lead Office for Strategy, Governance & Law**
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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Action Required of Special Policy & Resources Committee

Special Policy & Resources Committee note the recommendations set out in the report agreed at Special Tourism, Equalities, Community & Culture Committee.

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

SPECIAL TOURISM, EQUALITIES, COMMUNITIES & CULTURE COMMITTEE

4.00pm 29 JULY 2020

VIRTUAL MEETING - SKYPE

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Ebel (Joint Chair), Powell (Joint Chair), Rainey (Deputy Chair), Appich (Opposition Spokesperson), Nemeth (Group Spokesperson), Evans, Phillips, O'Quinn and Simson

Other Members present: Lola Banjoko, Nick May and Anusree Biswas-Sasidharan.

MINUTE EXTRACT

PART ONE

16 BECOMING AN ANTI-RACIST COUNCIL

- 16.1 The Committee considered a report of the Interim Director of Housing, Neighbourhoods, Communities which sought to set out the immediate actions the council were taking to with respect to becoming an 'anti-racist' council. It also sought to outline the effort in increasing equality by informing how BHCC would plan, finance, deliver, commission and review services. The report was provided by the Head of communities and equality.
- 16.2 The Head of Communities and Equality stated the importance of moving fast with the implementation of the strategy and that asking people to detail racist experiences would further compound harm as a result no consultation was needed. It was noted that other groups in the city would be included. It was clarified that a progress report would be brought next year.
- 16.3 Councillor Simson referred to the new resource area on the website and enquired if this had already occurred and if so when.
- 16.4 The Head of Communities and Equality stated that the website had not yet been made live as resources on the website had not yet been made ready.
- 16.5 Councillor Appich enquired whether the new Administration would be moving forward with BHCC's new responsibilities.
- 16.6 The Head of Communities and Equality referred to BHCC's 13 activities and stated that Councillors would be involved in different activities in different ways. It was stated that this was about changing BHCC at a foundational level.

- 16.7 The Chair stated that intersectionality would be a key feature of the strategy.
- 16.8 Councillor Phillips stated 7 different areas to direct progress:
- Importance was stressed on decolonising the curriculum and that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic role models should be brought to light.
 - It was noted that there was a question brought at Full Council regarding the exclusion of ethnicities.
 - Reference was made to intersectionality, it was stated that more people would be invited to take part in the governing process.
 - It was stated that rules on political representation would be looked at.
 - Reference was made to hate crimes and that it would be good to track statistics from police. It was stated that
- 16.9 The Head of Communities and Equality responded with the following:
- Stated that the 'upstanding' programme would be set up to create a city Community network to train people on how to act when witnessing 'hate'.
 - The Head of Communities and Equality referred to the engagement plan and stated that this could be brought back to a later meeting. It was stated that White British officers should not be engaging in the process as it could be seen as taking over the voice of Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic involvement.
 - It was stated that colleagues in Family, Children and Learning would be looking at anti-racism measures to be implemented in schools.
 - It was stated that CAG would be looking at how to implement intersectionality out to all.
 - It was stated that, as per the fair an inclusion action plan, workforce changes would be forthcoming and that HR would be involved in this.
- 16.10 Councillor Rainey referred to item 3.5 and stated that efforts would be underway to look at institutional racism within the justice system. It was stated that there were issues with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people being disproportionately affected by a Stop and Search policy.
- 16.11 The Interim Director for Housing, Neighbourhoods & Communities clarified that part of the strategy was to work in partnership with statutory agencies in the City, It was stated that BHCC would work with many partners. Reference was made to Councillor Alex Phillips comments and it was stated that BHCC's approach would be first and foremost led by the entire community. It was noted that the entire community would decide what was to be prioritised for the City.
- 16.12 Councillor O'Quinn further clarification as to the Stop and Search figures that were alluded.
- 16.13 Councillor Rainey clarified that the figures stated were for Sussex.
- 16.14 Councillor O'Quinn stated that colonial action was taught in great length within the curriculum. It was noted that she had previously taught at the schools noted in the report.

- 16.15 The Head of Communities and Equality clarified that decolonisation implied looking at the way that history was taught. It was stated that it would be an effort to redress the perception of and the representation of Black people in British history.
- 16.16 Councillor O'Quinn stated that the report was worded poorly and noted that good history teachers already did this.
- 16.17 Councillor Evans referred to 3.52 and enquired how work had been started. Reference was made to the Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) and if it would be possible to explore how HOSC could advance anti-racism action.
- 16.18 The Head of Communities and Equality stated that they were happy to explore how HOSC could be involved.
- 16.19 Anusree Biswas, Co-optee, requested possible KPIs and performance targets. Clarification was sought with regard to funding and resources. It was stated that older Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups and intersectional groups should be included. It was stated that racism required action and that it required powerful white people to realise their grip on power.
- 16.20 The Head of Communities and Equality stated that there was an internal group meeting being held weekly and that issues such as structural discrimination was being discussed. It was noted that various KPIs and performance targets were established and that lots of correspondence from individuals in the city had been received. It was clarified that all residents in the City would be engaged to ultimately decide the priorities of the City. It was noted that a conversation had to be held with White British people and to note how they would participate in this. It was clarified that a budget was being worked on at the moment and that a dedicated officer would be established to focus on workforce change. It was stated that someone with lived experience of the City would be appointed and that they would be supported by Democratic Services.
- 16.21 Anusree Biswas agreed that White British people needed to be included in conversations. It was stated that the representative appointed needed to understand the nuance of policy with respect to racism experienced in the city, it was stated that it was not enough to be black.
- 16.22 The Head of Communities and Equality stated that focus would be placed on action to be taken earlier in the process.
- 16.23 Anusree Biswas sought clarification with regard to the local outbreak plan and expressed concern that there would be another wave of Covid 19 and that this would affect the most vulnerable including Black, Asian and Minority ethnic people and the homeless.
- 16.24 The Head of Communities and Equality stated that efforts were being undertaken to focus on this issue such as the provision of cultural appropriate food.
- 16.25 Lola Banjoko, co-optee, noted that BHCC had been in close communication with many groups across Brighton and Hove. It was stated that a Talent Management Program was being set up. Reference was made to risk assessments and that areas such as schools would be looking at how to implement this will being mindful of risks being

carried out. It was noted that there was a higher number of deaths among pregnant Black, Asian and Minority ethnic women.

- 16.26 Councillor Ebel stressed the importance of a commitment to equality of opportunity for all and that racism must be confronted. It was stated that white people must acknowledge their privilege and educate themselves to improve the lives of all in the city. It was stated that intersectionality was important and that racism against a person was worse if they were also either female or gay. It was confirmed that the anti-racist strategy would have a strong focus on this.
- 16.27 Councillor Grimshaw referred to the process of decolonising history education and noted the example of what was taught regarding the history of the Pavilion and the treatment of Indian people. It was stated that what was not focused on was how white people were not as positive as what was historically taught. It was noted that history should be truthful and ought not gloss over various events that also occurred.
- 16.28 Councillor Simson stated that the Black, Asian and Minority ethnic community was not a community rather that it was a large block of people with lots of different communities within. It was further stated that this work should not be rushed.
- 16.29 **RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the actions committed to in the report towards becoming an anti-racist council and the authority's plan for being led by Black, Asian and Minority ethnic (BAME) residents and communities in the development of its anti-racism strategy be noted;
 - (2) That officers be instructed to provide a progress report in November 2020 on the council's activity to becoming an anti-racist council; and
 - (3) That it be noted that the draft anti-racism strategy would be brought to committee for approval in Spring 2021 at the latest.

