

Subject:	Anti-racism pledge update	
Date of Meeting:	17th June 2021	
Report of:	Executive Director Housing, Neighbourhoods, Communities	
Contact Officer: Name:	Emma McDermott	Tel: 01273 291577
Email:	emma.mcdermott@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
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 antiracist council was presented at TECC committee on 29th July 2020 and an update was presented on 19th November. At this meeting officers were instructed 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 11th March 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 June 2020 through to the last report in March 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.

3.3 Engagement with communities

3.3.1 The fourth meeting of the Community Advisory Group took place on 29th April 2021, with the second themed meeting in a series of thematic discussions and 'challenge' sessions. The meeting was focused on the council's Housing Services. It was attended by the Assistant Director for Housing and the Head of

Tenancy Services. The meeting's discussion centred on the services equality monitoring and its handling of race hate incidents. In recognition of the breadth of the service, Housing officers committed to an on-going dialogue with the CAG.

- 3.3.2 Recruitment for an independent covenor for the Community Advisory Group (CAG) is underway. More information available at ***insert link to page***. 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 to be added to the group.
- 3.3.3 A new community engagement officer post focused on working with the BME residents and groups has recently been filled. The postholder has made contact with a wide range of groups and is developing an engagement plan to increase trust and confidence between communities and the council and facilitate discussions about the council's anti-racism strategy. This will likely include inviting CVS groups (involved in CAG and not) to run engagement sessions with a range of communities (specific ethnic groups and/or specific characteristics), open sessions for all people who've experienced racism and/or anti-racist allies and/or all residents inviting people to suggest actions on the theme: 'What does an anti-racist city look and feel like?' and parallel staff sessions to focus on council-specific actions.
- 3.3.4 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.

3.4 Education and young people

- 3.4.1 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 final version of the strategy is nearly complete. Funding for the strategy has been approved and an "Education Adviser: Anti-Racism" post is going to be advertised. Racial literacy training and small pieces of pilot work are ongoing.
- 3.4.2 The work of the Safeguarding & Care Anti-Racist Project continues and, alongside ongoing learning events and practice discussions focused on race and 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.

3.5 Community safety

- 3.5.1 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.

3.6 COVID19 response

- 3.6.1 There has been a programme of work undertaken by a multi-agency, cross sector, group to ensure residents of Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds have access to the information they require to inform their decision making about the vaccine and that the health system fully understands peoples' barriers to accessing the vaccine. Action includes community organised webinars with a range of communities, sharing of translated material, text messaging by Sussex Interpreting Services, direct contact with asylum seekers in the city and direct feedback to the NHS about communities' concerns and experiences.
- 3.6.2 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. The funding will be managed through a similar process to the Communities Fund [insert hyperlink](#). Bids will be encouraged from a wide range of organisations to address both individual needs for these groups, and intersectional needs.
- 3.6.3 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.

3.7 Civic leadership

- 3.7.1 Funding was allocated at budget council in February 2021 for the progression of the civic leadership scheme. The intention is for the scheme to be cross-agency recognizing the need for greater diversity in positions across council, health, criminal justice. Officers are awaiting responses from partners regarding their involvement to inform next steps with operation Black Vote.

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

- 3.8.1 Two new HR Diversity Recruitment Consultants have started in post. The role is focused on supporting the council's recruitment and retention of a more diverse workforce that represents the city demographics. Work includes the delivery of a targeted insight programme to community groups, ensuring ethnically diverse panels for senior roles, development of recruiting managers to ensure inclusive recruitment practices as well as providing initiatives to develop BME staff.

The HR advisory team hold Fair & Inclusive case review meetings every Friday to discuss any cases that involve racism to ensure tight monitoring and consistent application of the racism and zero tolerance definitions.

The restorative approach has been drafted and is being discussed with our two unions and BMEWF before final sign off.

3.9 Council workforce learning and development

- 3.9.1 35 mandatory sessions have been held on the council's Fair and Inclusive Action Plan and anti-racism since October 2020. 3,400 members of staff have participated, and a recording is available for staff who can't access the live delivery via MS Teams. These sessions will continue every quarter as part of induction for new staff.
- 3.9.2 Eight different council teams have received bespoke anti-racism training. Two sessions have been run for elected members and there have been seven open sessions attended by 112 staff.
- 3.9.3 The bi-annual staff survey closed on 14th May. It will give an update on the impact of the council's fair and inclusive actions and inform work going forward.
- 3.9.4 A 6 month positive action programme is being piloted with 12 BME staff. 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

3.10 Statues and monuments review

3.10.1 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 started discussion with the Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust around commissioning objective research to produce a report exploring and outlining these issues.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 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.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

5.1 Engagement is as outlined in paragraph 3.3

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 TECC committee requested a standing item on every agenda updating on progress towards the council's anti-racism commitments.

6.2 This report updates on progress and the contents are for Members to note.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

7.1 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: 21/05/21

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 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: 21/05/21

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 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.
- 7.4 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:

- 7.5 No implications arising from this report

Brexit Implications:

- 7.6 No implications arising from this report