

Brighton & Hove City Council

Tourism, Equalities, Communities & Culture Committee

Agenda Item 34

Subject: Anti-Racism Pledge Update
Date of meeting: 3rd November 2022
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 2020. 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 the previous TECC committee meeting.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That committee note the report.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The report to TECC Committee on 15th September contains details of actions taken up to that date and this report should be read in that context.

- 3.2 Updates are noted where specific activities or progress has been made.

3.3 Anti-Racism Strategy Document

- 3.3.1 Work continues developing the council's Anti-Racism strategy document and action plan. A phase of internal engagement has now been completed. The strategy is currently in external engagement phase, where we are seeking input from external community groups and residents. The details of this engagement are outlined in 3.7.

3.4 Adult Education Hub

- 3.4.1 The Adult Education Hub works closely with the ESOL network, DWP and other training providers that offer ESOL in the city. It is funded through the Adult Education Budget, via the Education and Skills Funding Agency

- 3.4.2 The [Adult Education Hub](#) gives residents the opportunity to learn new skills and improve their career options. It offers a wide range of classes and workshops

including work and employability skills; pre-employment training for specific city industries; English Maths and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL); and well-being & personal development. The adult learning programme is carefully targeted to meet the needs of local people. It works with communities, local enterprise partners and key stakeholders to ensure learning opportunities reach those that need them most.

- 3.4.3 Participants are from a range of ethnic backgrounds included but not limited to Arab, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Afghani, Iranian and Hong Kongese. Approximately 15% of participants identify as Any Other White. 30% of participants did not provide ethnicity information but it is believed that many of these people present as being from Black & Racially Minoritised backgrounds.
- 3.4.4 People apply to use the service through the [online portal](#), in person or through calling the service. The curriculum follows the council wide City Employment and Skills Plan, and is quality assured under the Ofsted Common Inspection Framework. All courses at the Hub are non-accredited and use Recognition and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA) forms to measure progression. Some learners progress on to accredited ESOL and vocational courses.
- 3.4.5 Progression pathways onto more formal qualifications are in place via BHCC subcontracted providers and through strong networks made with other educational providers in the City.

3.5 Education

- 3.5.1 The anti-racist education strategy was funded in April 2021 and now in it's second year work is continuing at pace. A full annual report is provided to the Children and Young People's Committee at the end of each financial year.
- 3.5.2 On the 15th October, an 'Anti-Racist Education in the Community' event was held at the Lighthouse venue, beneath Afrori Books. This brought together non-statutory agencies and individuals involved in anti-racist education to share their contributions and coordinate with the strategy. This event was a huge success and we will be planning a larger event in 2023.

3.6 Housing

- 3.6.1 The Equality Business Partner for the Housing, Neighbourhoods and Communities (HNC) directorate is working closely with teams in Housing to support their delivery of equalities best practise. This involves working with Housing Officers that are handling cases that involve racism and discrimination.
- 3.6.2 Tenancy services are aware of the Third-Party Reporting Centres that the Safer Communities team have collaborated with community groups to establish. They are sign posting tenants to the service where necessary.
- 3.6.3 The Community Engagement Team have been engaging with Black & Racially Minoritised tenants to understand more about their experiences in council housing. They recently ran four different sessions specifically aimed at and advertised directly to tenants from Black & Racially Minoritised backgrounds, target age groups and disabled tenants. Texts and emails were sent to invite them to the

sessions. Turnout for the sessions was high with many residents commenting on how positive it was to be invited to speak directly about their experiences. Constructive feedback was given about people's lived experiences in council housing and how their intersecting identities affected those experiences. The Community Engagement team are currently processing all the feedback received and putting together a report to present to the Housing Leadership Team.

3.6.4 A new Policy and Training Plan, with a focus on reporting and responding to hate crime, is currently being updated. Among other things, this plan will aim to respond to the nuances and intricacies of how racism and hate crime manifest, upskilling housing staff in how to identify and deal with these situations more effectively. Learning & Development (L&D) members of staff, and the Equalities Business Partner for HNC will be involved in developing this plan alongside Housing staff. Once the plan is completed, it will go to Housing Committee in 2023.

3.7 Engagement with Communities

3.7.1 The most recent Community Advisory Group meeting was held on the 23rd September. The topic for the meeting was the Anti-Racism strategy. Lead Officer presented an update on the Anti-Racism strategy draft and fielded questions from community members. The officer spoke of the internal engagement that has been done with teams across all directorates to ascertain Anti-Racism priorities and develop understanding of Anti-Racism. The next phase of external engagement was also outlined.

3.7.2 Feedback was positive on the work done so far on the Anti-Racism Strategy. Some expressed concern over how council will implement the Anti-Racism plans and how leaders within the council will pioneer actions. There was concern that this could become a 'tick box exercise' rather than a programme of true change. Community members were reassured that an action plan is being developed with directorates directly accountable for their Anti-Racism priorities. Furthermore, it was discussed that the action plan will run in tandem with the Accessible City Strategy and the Fair & Inclusive Action Plan, to ensure efficiency of governance across all equality work within the Council.

3.7.3 Engagement with other community groups about the Anti-Racism Strategy is also taking place on a 1:1 basis. This gives those who are unavailable for the CAG an opportunity to have a say on the development of the strategy and ensures a diverse range of voices are part of the development process. Being flexible in how we engage with Black & Racially Minoritised communities is vital in building trust and confidence, which is a key component of our Anti-Racism Strategy. Embedding this best practice into the development of the strategy creates a solid foundation of engagement on which we can build upon once the strategy is complete.

3.7.4 Feedback on the project that investigated COVID-19 vaccine equity among Black & Racially Minoritised communities has now been completed. This project gave participants a chance to speak about why they have or have not taken the vaccine, what information influenced their decision, what concerns may have been part of the decision making process, and what wider health concerns affects the community. Preliminary findings showed that the majority of participants who took part had taken at least two doses of the COVID-19 vaccination. Many cited the need to be safe and fully protected against COVID, the need to travel to see family

abroad, and wanting to keep family members safe as main reasons for taking the vaccine. Of those who did not take the vaccine, some cited fear of side effects as a reason not to take it. A full report has been provided to our Public Health team who will be taking the feedback forward as part of a wider inquiry into vaccine equity among neighbourhoods in Brighton & Hove.

3.8 Council Workforce & Fair & Inclusive Action Plan (FIAP)

3.8.1 The Diverse Talent programme, an innovative career support programme, was offered to 15 employees within Brighton & Hove City Council. The program ran from January to September 2022, with the aim of supporting Black & Racially Minoritised colleagues with personal and professional career development, increasing confidence to progress in careers and to overcome barriers in accessing opportunities and gaining promotion. Each employee involved was assigned a mentor from our Leadership Network. Participants also had the support of an external coach.

3.8.2 On September 13th, there was a celebration of the end of the pilot Diverse Talent programme. Participants and mentors attended the event, celebrating the successes of the programme whilst also recognising there is lots we can learn from this pilot. Of the 15 participants, 4 people were promoted internally and a fifth externally during the programme and everyone said their confidence had increased.

3.8.3 One participant said: "Diverse Talent was led by an empathetic and experienced 'Trainer of Colour' who was not only a successful Director and business owner but also an experienced and fully qualified psychotherapist. This told me we were in safe hands. It was a unique experience to work with colleagues of colour and a great opportunity to be able to share the highs and lows of our employment experiences. The trainer expertly helped us identify how to be recognised more in our work as well as how we can help ourselves and each other to understand exactly what we want in our careers and how to "go for it!"

3.8.4 They also said: "This course enabled me to look critically and objectively at external barriers, how to navigate around or through them, how to answer my own questions around bias, imposter syndrome, learning styles, "traditional BME" jobs. It also helped me to focus on talents other than the ones I felt I could "only" do as an older Black woman. We were each allocated a "sponsor" [mentor] for support and there were also the BME coaches and mentors available via the Black & Minority Ethnic Workers' Forum."

3.8.5 A Fair & Inclusive update report will be going to P&R Committee on the 1st December which will give an in-depth overview of Council's workforce equality progress.

3.9 Emergency Food

3.9.1 The council has allocated funding of £15,000 for an exploratory piece of research on the emergency foods access needs of Black, Asian and Minority ethnic communities and Refugee & Asylum Seekers. The Commission aims to reduce inequality and address immediate concerns about malnutrition, health and well being. This funding has now been granted to Bridging Change and Brighton &

Hove Food Partnership, who will be collaborating to deliver the outcomes of the research.

- 3.9.2 Bridging Change contacted a wide variety of organisations and conducted over 50 surveys and 3 focus groups attended by 54 people and two engagement sessions. Further meetings with organisations will be conducted over the next few months. Preliminary findings have been shared with the Food Policy Coordinators and Bridging Change are now working on the final report and recommendations.

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 above in Section 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

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Finance Officer Consulted: Mike Bentley

Date: 14/10/2022

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 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: Joanne Dunnyaglo

Date: 20/10/22

9. EQUALLITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 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.

9.2 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.

10. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 No implications arising from this report.

11. SOCIAL VALUE & PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no direct social value and procurement implications that arise from this report

12. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLCATIONS

12.1 Crime & Disorder implications are covered in section 3.10 & above

13. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

13.1 As outlined in 3.7.5 engagement around the topic of the Covid-19 vaccine has provided us with clearer data on uptake of the vaccine. This will inform all of our COVID and vaccination related actions going forward and may lead to changes in our current methods of engagement around the COVID 19 Vaccine and Public Health in general.

14. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

14.1 There are no other implications that arise from this report.