

**Report for:
ACTION**

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No
Title	'Tackling Race Inequalities - Way forward' Hounslow Council's response to Black Lives Matter and Impact of Covid 19 on Black and Ethnic Minority Communities (CEX 490)
Member Reporting	Cllr Lily Bath, Deputy Leader of the Council Cllr Katherine Dunne, cabinet Member for Communities and Climate Change
Contact Details	Celia Golden
For Consideration By	Cabinet
Date to be Considered	20 October 2020
Implementation Date if Not Called In	From October 2020
Affected Wards	All
Keywords/Index	Inequalities

1. Details of Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to note the work of the Member Race Equality Task Group in Appendix 1 and to agree the recommendations listed under paragraphs 3.4 below.

If the recommendations are adopted, how will residents' benefit?

Benefits to residents and reasons why they will benefit, link to Values	Dates by which they can expect to notice a difference
This report puts forward strategic recommendations to reduce race inequality as well as other inequalities and will also add to the substantive work informing the Council's Equal Opportunities and Human Rights policy commitments to residents	The new areas of work will start from October 2020

2. Report Summary

This report outlines the work of the Member Race Equality Task Group which was set up to consider the Council's approach to tackling race inequality, in response to the Black Lives Matter campaign and issues raised by the impact of Covid 19 on BAME communities.

The Task Group comprised Cllr Lilly Bath (Chair), Cllr Candice Atterton (Cabinet Member for Adults, Social Care and Health), Cllr Katherine Dunne (Cabinet Member for Communities and Climate Change), and Cllr Hanif Khan (Cabinet Member for Transport and One Hounslow), and supported by officers including the Chief Executive. It met six times to consider a number of issues leading to this report and

the attached Appendix.

The report presents recommendations put forward by the Task Group under five key responses: i) Strategy and Policy; ii) Members and Community Leadership; iii) Partnerships and Community; iv) Our organisation and our People; and v) Operational Delivery by the Council as a service provider and as an Employer.

3 Reason for Decision and Options Considered

- 3.1 In the wake of George Floyd's death in Minneapolis on 25 May, there followed weeks of protests in the US, the UK and worldwide. Much of the protests, challenged the relationship between the police and the Black community and structural and systemic racism. It sparked considerable universal outrage and demanded an end to racism, discrimination and injustice. It focussed on the police and highlighted the disproportionate criminal justice outcomes for black communities.
- 3.2 At the same time, there were increasing concerns of the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on ethnic minorities across the world. In the UK, reports released by Office of National Statistics into Covid 19 and impact on ethnic minorities, the government's Race Disparity Unit findings and Public Health England's report all showing that the increased risk of dying from the coronavirus (COVID-19) across ethnic groups may be driven by differences in a group's demographic and socio-economic profile as well as experiences of structural, systemic and institutional racism.
- 3.3 The Member Task Group considered a raft of evidence including the framework emerging from National studies and pledged to assess racial inequalities locally with regard to Crime, Justice and the Law, Health, Education, Housing, Culture and Environment, Workforce, Pay and Benefits. This is set out in Appendix 1.
- 3.4 The Task Group presents key recommendations under five strategic headings:
 - 3.4.1 Strategy and Policy,
 - 3.4.2 Members and Community Leadership,
 - 3.4.3 Partnerships and Community,
 - 3.4.4 Our organisation and Our People, and
 - 3.4.5 Operational Delivery.

3.4.1 Strategy and Policy

- 3.4.1.1 A key vision of the Future Borough Strategy of the London Borough of Hounslow is to offer our communities a safe, healthy, happy, connected environment to enable them to achieve their ambitions. It also states that it would protect relationships and ties that welcome, bind, protect and support people and communities by connecting people and places through their associations, through shared interests and good neighbourliness.
- 3.4.1.2 The Future Borough Strategy sets out a strategic framework with all our partners to achieve our collective ambitions and priorities to 'future proof' the borough. A key strand of our Recovery Plan (also on this agenda) draws out the importance

of an ambition and plans to tackle inequality and deprivation. In addition, all strategies of the Council should contribute to the Council's collective efforts to tackle Inequalities. This includes a need to review the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and the Equality Plan to better reflect the work of the Task Group and re-prioritising Equality considerations in our report template.

- 3.4.1.3 Overall there are eleven wards in Hounslow ranked among the most deprived 20% in England. The ethnic profile of these deprived wards is mixed – 46% coming from White British communities and 42% from BAME groups and deprivation reinforces structural and systemic inequality.
- 3.4.1.4 In the light of the mounting evidence of structural and systemic inequalities faced on grounds of race and on grounds of all other equalities groups, we should aim to shape a Borough in which all citizens and communities enjoy equal opportunities, better life chances, better education and better health outcomes regardless of where they live in the borough and regardless of their background.

3.4.1.5 The Task Group recommends that the Council

- i. Develop a strategy to tackle inequalities across all Council functions, policies and services.
- ii. Ensures that all future Plans and Strategies of the Council put forward actions to actively redress inequality.
- iii. Reviews the Equal Opportunities and Human Rights Policy and the Equality Plan to reflect the work and recommendations of the Task Group and produces an appropriate monitoring framework to track progress against these actions.
- iv. Sets out plans to incorporate contributions from communities and the third and faith sectors when designing, developing and commissioning services.
- v. In order to embed this commitment, ensures that all strategies and policies of the Council demonstrate improved engagement with relevant communities and show how they are responding to deprivation, race and other structural and systemic inequalities.
- vi. Redesigns its report templates to give priority and prominence to Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment in reports.
- vii. Further ensures that Impact Assessment is comprehensive and thorough in order to better guide member decision making.
- viii. Sign up to the Local Government Equality Framework which benchmarks a Local Authority's performance on Equalities.

3.4.2 Members and Community Leadership

- 1.4.3 Work undertaken by the Community Recovery Taskforce has shown the need for the Council to better support Members to promote leadership in the community. This requires Members to be better supported with information about complex changing dynamics and diversity in the community.

2.4.3 The Task Group recommends that:

- i. There is mandatory training for all Members on Hounslow's diverse communities and cultures, to be informed about our key challenges, to receive information about the work the council is undertaking to address inequality and deprivation and to be aware of our legal obligations and limitations.
- ii. Members are better supported with an online Ward Handbook with key information on ward data. There should be an early warning system or traffic light indicators to alert Members to ward related needs so that they are better able to prioritise community solutions. This would supplement the current Community Information Guide.
- iii. As set out in the borough Recovery Plan, the Council designs, with communities, meaningful and appropriate mechanisms for engagement and involvement of residents. [see reference in the recovery plan report]

3.4.3 Partnerships and Community

- 3.4.3.1 There are a number of partnerships currently undertaking work to address race inequality, such as Education (e.g. Hounslow Education Partnership, PEACE project partnership etc). This council also has a strong and long-standing partnership with all the schools in the borough. This partnership has evolved over time and now has schools that include those that are LA maintained, academy and voluntary aided. Currently, over 95% of the schools are graded by Ofsted as being good or better, and the educational achievement of the pupils in the borough is consistently strong. Appendix 1 highlights this general strong achievement, but also demonstrates the differing achievement levels among different ethnic groups. We need to work towards understanding the trends of these achievement levels and how we can work with partners to closing the gap.
- 3.4.3.2 Whilst, these partnerships have reasonably well-established roots into the institutional environment and other statutory bodies, it is unclear how many of these partnerships exist across the borough and the scope of their work and the opportunities they have to better engage with the community. There is a need to present an overview of these partnerships and the opportunities they present to tackle inequality and deprivation. It is also important to identify and publicise examples of good practice in our partnership work with our schools as well as all other partnership work.
- 3.4.3.3 As regards Policing, Crime and Justice, for instance, the Met Police have acknowledged and understand that there are real issues felt by black communities to policing particularly in relation to the disproportionate use of stop and search and tasers. The Mayor of London invited Borough lead Members for Community Safety and Equality and Engagement to discuss the Mayor's Action Plan for Trust and Confidence in Policing on 17 September 2020 which was attended by Cllr Katherine Dunne.

- 3.4.3.4 The Action Plan for ‘Trust and Confidence in Policing’ is being developed by the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, and the Deputy Mayor for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement; alongside communities and the Police. The key themes in the Action Plan include the need to address the concerns around over use of handcuffs during stop and search, improved use of data and monitoring and the need for more transparency and accountability of police powers. These are now all part of the Mayors new Action Plan.
- 3.4.3.5 The Council will adopt any direct recommendations of relevance from this partnership work and include this in the Community Safety Strategy and MOPAC and Safer Neighbourhood work. We should also better promote closer engagement with our communities in order to co design solutions for better policing and criminal justice outcomes.
- 3.4.3.6 Our suppliers and business partners also have a major contribution to make to achieve our ambition. Council suppliers, often with significant contracts, should actively demonstrate how they can support and deliver our equalities ambitions. This is already provided for in the Public Services (Social Value) Act and we should further optimise value from this. Likewise, we should review how the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 can be leveraged to prioritise improvements to our public community infrastructure in the most deprived wards.

3.4.3.7 The Task Group recommends that the Council

- i. Works with our schools and other partners to understand the educational achievement gap among different ethnic groups.
- ii. Produce an online directory of active partnerships working in the Borough with a profile of their activities and membership. This would better support Members to harness the opportunities they present to address inequality.
- iii. Identifies and highlights partnerships which are examples of good practice so that they inspire and promote other partnerships.
- iv. Reviews and revises where possible its framework agreements, commissioning and contracting arrangements to secure the contribution of our suppliers and business partners to better engage with our communities to tackle inequality.
- v. Works with the Third Sector and Faith Organisations to better harness our collective energies to tackle inequality, to celebrate diversity of local communities and to promote community cohesion.
- vi. Sets out ways to improve its collective engagement with faith and third sector organisations. [see reference in recovery plan]
- vii. As regards Policing, Crime and Justice the Council should actively work to achieve closer engagement with our communities in order to co design solutions for better policing and criminal justice outcomes and make these initiatives known to all Members and to the public.
- viii. Members endorse the highly commendable work set out by our Community Safety and Youth Offending Partnerships. These include the following:
 -) The Community Safety Partnership which undertakes work to engage with the Safer Neighbourhood Board to monitor and review stop and search

figures with MOPAC. This work would inform the development of the Community Safety Strategy and secure better police-community relations.

-) The Youth Offending Service (YOS) which undertakes work to determine reasons for the over-representation of black men in the criminal justice system.
-) The YOS which undertakes joint work with the Police, the Judiciary, the departments of Education, Health, Social Care and families to focus on achieving a reduction in custodial outcomes for over-represented groups.
-) Work with members of our third sector and faith communities and, in particular the Somali community and communities whose children are at greater risk of criminal and sexual exploitation and continue to offer support to the community in helping to build resilience and increase awareness.
-) Work with the Feltham Young Offender's Institution to review their use of powers to separate/isolate BAME prisoners.
-) YOS reviews of why black men are disproportionately affected by crime and will include action points in the Borough's three-year Community Safety Strategy.
-) Work by the Community Safety team to focus more on addressing racism and link to the Black Lives Matter movement for the Borough's National Hate Crime Awareness Week campaign in October.

3.4.4 Our Organisation and our People

- 3.4.4.1 As a large and significant employer in Hounslow we need to set ambitious standards for 'Diversity and Inclusion' and promote these standards to other large employers in Hounslow and Heathrow.
- 3.4.4.2 We have moved beyond compliance to be aspirational. Our ambition is to be world class, diverse, inclusive and leading edge. We want to be a Council with a workforce that reflects the diversity of our community at all levels of the organisation, especially at senior levels. In order to achieve this, we need to review recruitment advertising and the use of recruitment agencies. Such a review will inform the Council of ways to better deliver to this ambition.
- 3.4.4.3 We are promoting continuous professional development and high standards of delivery and customer satisfaction. We also want to ensure that our staff have a deep knowledge of our communities and are capable of managing diversity in all aspects of their job.
- 3.4.4.4 We have already undertaken a raft of work to put equality at the centre of our HR work and they include:
 -) Improving equality data about our people, and more sophisticated analysis of it by equality characteristics.
 -) All staff survey – recently closed, analysis and action planning underway.

-) Have followed up with more in depth / focused surveys and conversations – BLM survey was undertaken in August.
-) Established network groups – BAME, disabled workers, LGBTQ+, women which will offer all staff a say about the organisation.
-) Conversations with our staff to address any structural / systemic inequality in response to national Covid 19 findings.
-) A comprehensive learning and development programme for all our people. This is being commissioned currently.
-) Specific EDI learning for people who manage people.
-) Specific EDI learning for leaders.
-) Knowing our communities.
-) Refreshing our Organisational Development plan through an equality lens (with network groups) – ensuring an inclusive employee journey.
-) Aspirational development programmes where positive action is justified and where this is an appropriate intervention.
-) People resourcing and talent management and development – including a new performance conversations approach including equality and inclusion, as well as a better way of enabling people to learn and develop themselves, every day. We have also reviewed our role profile format so that they are more inclusive, and we are consequently able to attract a more diverse range of talent. Where we have tested these, that has proven to be the case.

3.4.4.5 The Task Group highly commends the work of the department and recommends further that the Council

- i. Should report progress on the improvements achieved to secure better equality data and ability to produce a more sophisticated analysis of pay, progression and employee relations outcomes by equality characteristics as part of its Annual Employment reporting to Cabinet.
- ii. Sets equality goals for recruitment to address underrepresentation of specific equality groups and improve diversity at all staff levels.
- iii. Reviews recruitment advertising and the use of recruitment agencies. Develop new recruitment strategies better able to respond to the diversity of Hounslow.
- iv. Creates talent pools to support opportunities for career progression for underrepresented groups.
- v. Ensures that systems are in place to the monitor progress against the new policy approaches to recruitment and training.
- vi. Provide mandatory equality and diversity training for all staff to develop their knowledge and competence of working with diverse staff and communities.

3.4.5 Operational Delivery

- 3.4.5.1 There is a raft of race equality initiatives currently undertaken by departments (see Appendix). Many of these initiatives are complex and well established and designed to address structural race inequality.

- 3.4.5.2 However, the Black Lives Matter Campaign has shone a spotlight on the Public Realm as an area which required closer scrutiny. For instance, immediately following the protests, the London Mayor set up a Commission for Diversity in the Public Realm to "review and improve diversity across London's public realm to ensure the capital's landmarks suitably reflect London's achievements and diversity."
- 3.4.5.3 The Council has also set up a review of diversity and participation in the arts, galleries, heritage sites, museums, etc. Early findings show a paucity of data and point to where work needs to be undertaken.
- 3.4.5.4 Currently work is being undertaken to understand racial inequalities in the arts and related service areas. The department aims to revisit links between access to Leisure, Green Spaces and Health Inequality; to identify opportunities for Increasing BAME visitor numbers, to increase diversity and equalities in the street scene including reviewing street, parks and street assets naming policies.

3.4.5.5 The Task Group recommends that the Council

- i. Should note the work undertaken by various departments to promote race equality (see Appendix 1).
- ii. Actively promotes Race Equality and Diversity in Environment, Culture and the Public Realm.

At an operational level the Task Group recommends that the Council notes the work planned below for addressing race inequality in the Public Realm:

- iii. To improve participation by BAME communities in arts and leisure across the borough, including our commissioned services.
- iv. To Improve equality data and produce more sophisticated analysis of participation and involvement in leisure and cultural activities by equality characteristics.
- v. To undertake an audit of the historical context of cultural service offers including statues, buildings, street names, park names, graffiti policy within the borough to assess any areas for concern and secure greater inclusivity.
- vi. To review impacts from poor air quality and noise pollution; availability of mobility choices and density of service provision and road safety to contribute to health equality.

4.0 Key Implications

The work to tackle racial inequalities is ongoing and the recommendations above will have significant positive impact for BAME communities and other equality groups.

5.0 Comments of the Executive Director, Finance and Resources

This report sets out the recommendations arising from the Member Race Equality Task Group which was set up to explore the Council's approach to tackling race inequality.

The majority of costs associated with the implementation of the recommendations set out in paragraph 3.4 continue existing workstreams and therefore can be managed within existing budgets. As new requirements arise from the completion of the activities outlined within this report, funding will be made available via the appropriate decision-making forum to support delivery of agreed outcomes.

6.0 Legal Details

a) The relevant equality legislation is set out in paragraph 11.1 below.

b) Comments of the Head of Governance

The Head of Corporate Governance supports the Council's work to tackle racial inequalities.

7.0 Value for Money

The new work will maximise scarce Council resources to ensure all residents can benefit from co-ordinated efforts of all Council departments and partners to tackle structural and systemic inequalities. Together with the planned interventions highlighted in the Recovery work, the associated costs of early planned insight and interventions will bring about sustained and long-lasting benefits through better use of existing budgets

8.0 Sustainability Impact Appraisal - N/A

9.0 Risk Management - None foreseen

10.0 Links to Council Priorities

The new priorities will continue to respond to the 'Customer first' pledge which informs Council priorities and principles, set out in the Corporate Plan. The report has high ambitions for borough residents, and it seeks to go the extra mile and demonstrates that we never give up trying to tackle inequalities and improve services for all. There is a single-minded drive to improve the quality of residents' lives, and to increase and improve engagement with BAME communities. The initiatives also contribute to the Recovery Strategy, other Key Strategies such as Health and Well Being Strategy, Skills Strategy, Leisure and Culture Strategy and the Preventative Agenda.

11.0 Equalities, Human Rights and Community Cohesion

11.1 The Council has to give due regard to its Equalities Duties, in particular with respect to general duties under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Having due regard involves, the need to remove or minimize disadvantages suffered by equality groups.

11.2 The recommendations in this report are strategic and together with the operational actions set out in the Appendix, responds directly to the structural and systemic issues highlighted by national studies in response to Covid 19.

12.0 Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications: N/A

13.0 Property and Assets: N/A

14.0 Any Other Implications: No

15.0 Consultation

This report is entirely informed by the work of the Member Task Group and evidence submitted by departments and the responses framed by the departments. All departmental senior leadership and departmental leadership teams, and the Corporate Leadership Team actively contributed to the final report.

16.0 Timetable for Implementation

Much of the work identified in the Appendix is ongoing but the new activities will be taken forward following Cabinet decision making.

REPORT ENDS