

**Decision Session – Executive Member  
for Culture, Leisure & Communities**

**21 March 2023**

**Report of the Director - Customer and Communities**

**Update on Anti-Racism Strategy Work**

**Summary**

1. This report provides the Executive Member with an update on ongoing work within City of York Council (CYC) in response to the Full Council Motion October 2021 to become an anti-racist and inclusive city. It also provides an initial response to the report ‘A Snapshot View of Racial Disparity in the City of York’ published by Inclusive Equal Rights UK 3.0 (IERUK) in February 2023, with the intention of highlighting structural inequalities and disparities facing ethnic minorities in York.

**Recommendations**

2. The Executive Member is asked to:
  - Note the ongoing work in relation to the council motion to become an inclusive and anti-racist city; and
  - Note the initial response to the IERUK report.

Reason: To reaffirm City of York Council’s commitment to being an Anti-Racist City.

**Background**

3. In December 2022, Council approved a 10 Year Plan for the city, known as York 2032. York 2032 sets out a clear vision for the city “York will be a vibrant, prosperous, welcoming and sustainable city where everyone can share and take pride in its success” – setting an expectation that York will be a city where everyone who lives, works and visits is able to fully engage in, and benefit, from the opportunities the city offers.

4. Prior to this, the City of York Council was the first in the North of England to declare a commitment for York to become an anti-racist and inclusive city. In October 2021, a motion was unanimously approved by full council in support of 'Speak Up Diversity' (now IERUK) with the endorsement of several agencies across the city.
5. The overarching goal of the motion was to develop a long-term anti-racism and inclusion strategy and action plan for York. The action plan will provide an evidence-based set of initiatives to tackle and dismantle casual and systemic racism, promote equality and fairness and champion diversity and inclusion in the city of York.
6. The long-term anti-racism and inclusion strategy and action plan will be submitted to the City of York Council in Summer 2023.
7. CYC welcome IERUK's work to understand how ethnic minority groups experience life in the city and are grateful for their continued focus on this important and challenging issue.
8. York has long been recognised as a City of Sanctuary and Human Rights City. CYC acknowledge, and will learn from, IERUK's work with residents who have been subjected to racism and thank these individuals for sharing their experiences with IERUK.
9. To date the council has supported the work of the group in the following ways:
  - funding the establishment of the group and its work (£5k set up costs and £20k running costs – both one off payments);
  - ongoing advice and support e.g. sourcing website development resources;
  - distribution of survey material in the council's two main office buildings;
  - supporting data requests and sign posting information published on York's open data platform;
  - promoted IERUK's request for support from volunteer data analysts from the council workforce; and
  - facilitated introductions to future partners and support agencies across the city, including IERUK discussing with the Head of Communications Group.

## **Consultation**

10. The portfolio holder along with senior officers including the Chief Operating Officer have met, and will continue to meet on a quarterly basis, with members of IERUK to consider how best they can consult and engage with CYC staff, and other city partners.

## **Options**

11. It is open to the Executive Member to accept the recommendation to move forward on the proposals in this report and CYC's commitment to becoming an anti-racist and inclusive city or decline to do so.

## **Analysis**

12. This sets out in further detail the Council's plan to deliver its contribution towards this important commitment.
13. There are several practical steps the council, and Executive, is taking to demonstrate its shared commitment to being an anti-racist and inclusive city.
14. It has already been agreed there is a need to allocate sufficient officer resource to Human Rights and Equalities within the council. As such, a team to focus on all aspects of Human Rights, Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion is being brought together and led by the Assistant Director of Customer, Communities & Inclusion.
15. The team will also provide strategic direction and organise training in relation to the council's human rights and equalities work, increasing knowledge and awareness amongst all officers and elected members.
16. Refreshed Human Rights and Equalities Impact Assessments will be introduced and form a fundamental part of decision making and policy development. This process will be continually developed and refined.
17. How we publicly report back on progress against the long-term anti-racism strategy and associated action plan will be agreed after May's election.
18. York Human Rights City Network (YHRCN) run the Community Voices project on behalf of CYC, with the intent of amplifying the voices and agendas of those residents in marginalised communities and groups. YHRCN are reviewing this programme with CYC to ensure that it meets its original objective to work with the most marginalised and:
  - a. Create an opportunity for them to be heard both individually and collectively and influence policy making.
  - b. Encourage meaningful participation by engaging with communities and individuals in ways that enabled those participants to set the agenda.
  - c. Engage with, and understand, the needs and priority issues for those whose voices are not being heard already.

19. Key questions for CYC in the IERUK report (found here <https://www.ieruk.org.uk/racial-disparity-in-york-report>) are focused on the number of staff from ethnic minority backgrounds and steps taken to make the council more representative. The report states that only 6.3% of staff are from minority groups, compared to around 14% of the population. This data comes from staff who have chosen to share declare their ethnicity. The percentage of staff who choose to declare this is around 6.5%.
20. To improve this data, we intend to look at how we increase the declaration rate across all protected characteristics.
21. We have recently established a new Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff network to learn from and improve policies based on the experiences of staff in the network.
22. The report also contains significant data on race related hate crime. The council regularly hosts a Hate Crime working group which is well attended by both the Police and partners from across the city and is working through an action plan to tackle hate incidents. The group's current priorities are:
  - Improve data capture to a) develop an intelligence-led approach to addressing Hate Crime across York and b) monitor performance (with a particular focus on improving data capture in schools).
  - Improve awareness and understanding of Hate Crime and challenge attitudes and prejudices. Work with North Yorkshire Council to develop and deliver an annual training programme.
  - Establish a network of Hate Crime Reporting Places across York.
  - Increase community engagement and improve community cohesion. Identify areas of Community Tension.
  - Ensure appropriate and accessible advice and support is available to all victims of Hate Crime. Increase the number of successful prosecutions for Hate crime offences by building trust and confidence between victims and the police to encourage reporting.
  - Identification of Cross-Cutting Themes Across Community Safety Work-streams (Prevent, Domestic Abuse, Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) Strategy Group, Night Time Economy).
  - Coordinate communications with North Yorkshire Police (NYP) in respect to a calendar of activities, including Hate Crime Awareness Week.
23. The work of the group needs to ensure it is learning from lived experience and will ensure that it considers IERUK's work and their final strategy proposals.

## Council Plan

24. Demonstrating our commitment to becoming an anti-racist and inclusive city is consistent with the Council Plan priority of “Safe communities and culture for all”. However, the impact of structural inequalities and racism has an impact on every element of the Council Plan and associated policies.
25. York has a long history of being proud to welcome and learn from everyone who chooses to the city home. We recognise the importance of upholding, and standing up for, our values. This work will contribute to significantly improving the quality of life for those affected - together with reinforcing York’s reputation as a City of Sanctuary and Human Rights City.

## Implications

26.

- a) **Financial** – The only costs expected as a result of the work outlined in the report, will be officer time that can be contained within existing budgets.
- b) **Legal** – The Council needs to take into account the Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it in the exercise of a public authority’s functions).

The motion to become an anti-racist and inclusive city will assist in demonstrating the Council’s consideration of impacts of both the Executive and non-Executive decisions it makes on minority groups; however, all parties must be clear that, with regard to decision-making, the Council’s discretion to take decisions which are contrary to expressed views cannot be fettered.

- c) **Equalities** – This is an information for noting rather than decision – making report so whilst there is no decision to assess, increased knowledge of this work may improve awareness across all groups but especially BAME groups. We will need to consider how we assess the impact of the final proposals and the council’s response that will be set out in the Anti Racism Strategy and accompanying action plan, produced by IERUK.
- d) **Human Resources** – Human Rights and equalities training / awareness will be undertaken to embed these themes into all aspects of everyday working at the Council to further embed a

positive culture.

- e) **Crime and Disorder** The hate/crime elements of work undertaken in partnership will have a positive impact on crime and disorder implications.
- f) There are no known Information Technology, Property, or other implications arising from the report.

## Risk Management

27. The main risks that have been identified associated with the proposals contained in this report are those which concern risks to effective working in partnership and work toward becoming an Anti-Racist city.

## Contact Details

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<b>Specialist Implications Officers:</b> Legal – Bryn Roberts Finance – Dawn Shaw			
<b>Wards Affected:</b> All			
<b>For further information please contact the author of the report</b>			

**Annexes:** None

## Background Documents:

Council approve 10-Year Plan (York 2032) [Agenda for Council on Thursday, 15 December 2022, 6.30 pm \(york.gov.uk\)](#) item 36

‘A snapshot view of racial disparity in the City of York’  
<https://www.ieruk.org.uk/racial-disparity-in-york-report>

Council Motion:

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=331&MId=12805&Ver=4>

**Abbreviations**

BAME – Black and Minority Ethnic

CYC – City of York Council

IERUK – Inclusive Equal Rights UK 3.0

NYP – North Yorkshire Police

YHRCN – York Human Rights City Network