

Executive

13 July 2023

Report of the Director - Customer and Communities

Executive Members for:

Finance, Performance, Major Projects and Equalities

Housing, Planning and Safer Communities

Anti-Racism & Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan

Summary

1. In line with a Full Council resolution approved on 21st October 2021 to aspire to make York an Anti-Racist and Inclusive City, this report presents the city-wide strategy and action plan from the independent and cross-sectional working group led by Inclusive Equal Rights UK 3.0 (IERUK), and seeks approval of the council's response and next steps. This report is contained in Annex A.
 2. This follows the council's initial response (21st March 2023) to the report '*A Snapshot View of Racial Disparity in the City of York*' published by IERUK in February 2023, which highlighted structural inequalities and disparities facing ethnic minorities in York.
 3. Both reports reflect that York is a truly multi-cultural city, however with regard to people of colour they are impacted by a failure of institutions and organisations in the city to treat them with fairness, dignity and respect resulting their lives being disproportionately and negatively impacted. Through this report the council is recommended to declare, pledge and provide city leadership on this issue and will work with all partners to do the same in declaring that this failure is unacceptable with a clear route to making the actions a reality.
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Recommendations

4. The Executive is asked to:
 - a. receive the strategy and action plan at Annex A,
 - b. agree the council's response to the strategy and action plan and next steps, including a clear commitment in the new Council Plan and a detailed plan of delivery within 3 months. Instruct officers to carry out the steps identified and note that a further report will be presented to Executive within three months in response to the strategy, with recommendations for change where actions can be implemented in the short term and also identifying medium and longer-term measures,
 - c. recommend that Full Council receive the Strategy and Action Plan on behalf of the city,
 - d. recommend that the Leader sign the Pledge at Annex B on behalf of the Council.

Reason: To demonstrate the City of York Council's commitment to being an Anti-Racist City

Background

5. 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.
 6. 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.
 7. The overarching goal of the motion was to develop a long-term anti-racism and inclusion strategy and action plan for York. The intention was for the document to 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.
 8. 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
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- 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.
9. CYC welcomes IERUK's work and report to help the council and partners understand how people of colour and ethnic minority groups experience life in the city and are grateful for their continued focus on this important, challenging and unacceptable issue.
10. York has long been recognised as a City of Sanctuary and Human Rights City and the work that partners do every day to demonstrate this in respect of work with migrant communities in particular is very evident. CYC acknowledge that however in terms of casual, institutional and structural racism there is a long way to go, and lessons and improvement actions need to be learnt. IERUK's work is key to this particularly as they and York St. John University have gathered experiences and solutions from those residents with lived experience of racism in the City. All those involved are sincerely thanked for sharing their painful and difficult experiences as part of the report and ongoing work.

The 5 Year Strategy Report and Action Plan

11. The Report contained at Annex A to this paper is based on qualitative data collected from the council (workforce, social care (and providers), housing, schools), other rented housing sector, health, police and further/higher education, as well as early findings from qualitative research which is still in progress and undertaken by York St. John University. These point to further questions and observations as laid down in the report.
12. These are followed by recommended actions to address the inequalities identified. For the council a number of these relate to recruitment and retention process and are already under serious consideration following
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a recent senior leadership meeting mentioned in the report. A number relate to external governance and engagement which is being currently reviewed with the York Human Rights City Network, and other recommendations are for political parties to consider.

13. Around Housing, Social care and Schools more work will need to be done in partnership with providers, but the council recognises that it is in a position of influence across all of these sectors and will build in improvements into cultural and commissioning strategies to ensure the structural change that is needed across all sectors in the city.

Next Steps

14. It is recommended that a detailed report back to Executive is received within three months in response to the 5 Year Strategy Report, with recommendations for change where actions can be implemented in the short term. Medium and longer term responses will also be identified. It is expected that work will take place throughout this period which will deliver some of the actions in the report.
15. This work could include a mechanism through the refreshed Human Rights & Equalities Board (HREB) through which the progress against the recommended actions can be monitored. Recommendations on the format and governance of HREB are expected shortly and in advance of the detailed report above.

The Pledge

15. City of York Council and partners have been asked to sign up to the pledge at Annex B to reinforce support to tackle racism and discrimination of all forms. The council is committed to meet the terms of the pledge alongside developing its own plan arising from the Strategy.

Consultation

16. The previous Executive portfolio holder along with senior officers including the Chief Operating Officer have met over the past 18 months with members of IERUK to consider how best they can consult and engage with CYC staff, and other city partners.
 17. The engagement and consultation undertaken by the group and York St John University is outlined in the full report at Annex A.
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18. The council will continue to listen to those with lived experience through the continuing work of York St John University and any further work conducted by IERUK and other partners in the city representing minority groups on anti-racism work.
19. It is recommended that this report is reviewed on a partnership basis through the Human Rights & Equalities Board once re-established.

Options

20. It is open to the Executive to accept the recommendations 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.
21. The Executive can agree the council's response and next steps including a clear commitment in the new Council Plan and a detailed plan of delivery within 3 months, or consider other responses or timescales/actions.
22. The Executive can agree with signing the Pledge at Annex B or disagree.
23. The preferred options are those that are contained in paragraph 4 above which give achievable timelines and reflect the commitment of the Council given in October 2021, recognising that city leadership is needed on this important matter and to ensure that the lived experience investment in this work results in real change.

Analysis

24. The analysis behind this report is contained within the full report provided by IERUK's full report at Annex A.
 25. For further information and context on 21st March 2023 a report presented to the then Executive Member for Culture, Leisure & Communities relayed the council's progress to date as follows:
'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.*
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- 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.*

Key questions for CYC in the IERUK 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%.

To improve this data, we intend to look at how we increase the declaration rate across all protected characteristics.

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.

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*
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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.*

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 and policy framework

26. Demonstrating the council's commitment to becoming an anti-racist and inclusive city is consistent with the 10 Year Plan for the city, known as York 2032 which sets 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 and the emerging Council Plan around addressing all inequalities. The impact of structural inequalities and racism, however will have an impact on every element of the emerging Council Plan and associated policies.
27. Whilst the work contained in this report was delivered by IERUK 3.0 the resulting council action plans clearly will contribute to the council's ambitions around:

Health – there are known health disparities for people of colour and ethnic minority groups and any improvement in opportunity impacting on health and wellbeing will have a positive impact on the community.

Climate – there are no likely direct impacts on Climate Change or the Environment in this report although celebration of culture and the city's black and ethnic history will bring a positive contribution to our community places and spaces.

Affordability – systemic and institutional racism can impact on access to jobs, skills development and economic opportunity and so any improvements made in response to the report will have direct benefits of the financial and economic wellbeing of the community

Human Rights and Equalities Whilst the recommendations within this report will have a favourable impact on people of colour and other ethnic minority and intersectional groups, there will be a need to ensure resources are dedicated to all equalities work across all protected characteristics under the Equalities Act. An Equalities Impact

Assessment (EIA) has been carried out and is attached to this report at Annex C. In summary, the result of the assessment is no to make any further changes to the recommendations - the independent Anti-Racism report is already evidence based (both qualitative and quantitative) to justify the conclusions and recommendations in the report with a positive impact on all affected groups. It is important however to ensure that areas identified from this EIA are built into the council's own action plan in the following areas:

- Ongoing engagement with those with lived experience of racism to seek joint development of solutions.
- Specific guidance on to how to handle and respond to racism in council policies
- A mechanism for all institutions and partners in the city to take joint action in reducing racism and promoting active inclusion.

Implications

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- a) **Financial** – The costs expected as a result of the work outlined in the report, will be officer time that can be contained within existing budgets, although may be considerable. Resources within Communities team are being reviewed to create some capacity to support equalities work corporately.
- 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).

Under the Human Rights Act 1998 it is unlawful for a public authority to act in a way which is incompatible with the rights set out in the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, agreed by the Council of Europe at Rome on 4th November 1950 ("the Convention"). In particular, the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set out in the Convention must be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.

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

Risk Management

29. The main risks that have been identified associated with the proposals contained in this report are those which concern effective working in partnership and work toward becoming an Anti-Racist city as a whole, to be addressed (if agreed) through the refreshed HREB and clear city leadership from all officers and councillors in this work. Reputational impacts for the city as a whole through continued hate/crime and institutional /structural racism could be significant impacting on the city’s reputation as a welcoming and safe city in which to live, work, visit and do business.

Contact Details

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	Report Approved	√	Date 29 th June 2023
Specialist Implications Officers: Cathryn Moore, Legal Business Partner (Corporate) & Deputy Monitoring Officer			
Wards Affected: All			
For further information please contact the author of the report			

Annexes:

Annex A – A five year anti-racism and inclusion strategy and action plan for the City of York (IERUK 3.0)

Annex B – Anti Racism Pledge

Annex C – Equalities Impact Assessment

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>

Update on Anti-Racism Strategy Work 21st March 2023

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s166137/Report.pdf>

Abbreviations

BAME – Black and Minority Ethnic

CYC – City of York Council

EIA – Equalities Impact Assessment

HREB – Human Rights & Equalities Board

GRT – Gypsy, Roma Traveller

IERUK – Inclusive Equal Rights UK 3.0

NYP – North Yorkshire Police

YHRCN – York Human Rights City Network

VAWG – Violence against women and girls
