

Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 06 November 2018

Report Title: Notice of Motion - Adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working Definition of Antisemitism

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Paul Findlow, Corporate Policy and Legal Services

Cllr Liz Wardlaw, Health

Senior Officer: Mark Taylor, Interim Executive Director of Corporate Services

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to consider and respond to a notice of motion on the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism which was proposed by Councillor S Gardiner and seconded by Councillor M Deakin at the Council meeting on 18 October and referred to Cabinet for consideration:

"We call upon this Council to adopt formally the definition of antisemitism adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) in 2016 and to ensure that its Equality and Diversity Policies clearly state that there will be no tolerance of antisemitism by its officers or elected members.

Additionally, we call on the Council to declare that it stands four-square behind all Jewish people living in Cheshire East; together with their family members, in these difficult times for their community.

Furthermore, we request that the Director of People be charged with putting in place community cohesion strategies that will help and support any victims of antisemitism or other religious intolerances that may manifest themselves within this Borough."

- 1.2. A new definition of antisemitism was adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) in 2016. It is proposed that Cheshire East Council also adopts this new definition.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1.1. That Cabinet adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance working definition of antisemitism and supports the next steps as set out in the report.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. To support the Council in meeting its statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.2. The definition, although not legally binding, is an important tool for public bodies to understand how antisemitism manifests itself as it gives examples of the kind of behaviours which can constitute antisemitism.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. No other option has been considered. Adopting a clear and consistent definition of antisemitism supports the Council's equality objectives and Equality and Diversity Strategy, providing our residents and visitors with assurance that hate crime of this nature will not be tolerated.

5. Background

- 5.1. Cheshire East has a relatively small population of Jewish residents (0.2%) compared to the North West (0.4%) and England and Wales (0.5%), with small disparate communities across the borough. (Census data 2011).
- 5.2. Unfortunately, antisemitic hate incidents have reached a record level in the UK with 1,382 antisemitic incidents recorded nationwide in 2017 by the Community Security Trust. Jewish people living in Cheshire East can and do experience antisemitism and hate crime. The small size of the Jewish community within Cheshire East makes it potentially more vulnerable to acts of antisemitism.
- 5.3. In December 2016, the Government formally adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, the first country in Europe to do so.
- 5.4. The definition states:

“Anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed towards Jewish or non-

Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

- 5.5. Examples of antisemitism include (but not limited to, all examples can be seen in Appendix 1):
- 5.5.1. Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
 - 5.5.2. Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
 - 5.5.3. Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis
- 5.6. In May 2017, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government wrote to local authorities asking them to adopt the working definition of antisemitism, which a number of Councils have now done.
- 5.7. In order to support the Council’s adoption of the working definition of antisemitism, the Council will commit to the following actions:
- 5.7.1. To incorporate a commitment to opposing antisemitism into relevant policies and give consideration to this in the delivery of services, taking appropriate action to challenge and raise awareness in relation to this form of hatred.
 - 5.7.2. To update the equality, diversity and inclusion pages on the Council’s website and Centranet to record support for the definition along with a supporting media release.
 - 5.7.3. To write to the Secretary of State and local Jewish institutions to inform them of the Council’s actions.
 - 5.7.4. To encourage wider adoption by partner organisations through the Cheshire Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel, supporting work to tackle hate crime.
 - 5.7.5. To encourage 3rd Party Hate Crime Reporting Centres to also adopt the IHRA definition.

6. Implications of the Recommendation

6.1. Legal Implications

6.1.1. Adopting IHRA definition of antisemitism will support the Council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010, and its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty, to demonstrate due regard and to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

6.2. Finance Implications

6.2.1. There are no direct financial implications to the Council as a result of adopting the IHRA definition.

6.3. Policy Implications

6.3.1. The Council's equality objectives and supporting Equality and Diversity Strategy are currently under review and will be revised subject to Cabinet approval. The IHRA definition of antisemitism will be included in this review and the subsequent actions required to embed, communicate and promote the Council's position will be monitored by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board.

6.4. Equality Implications

6.4.1. The Public Sector Equality Duty includes a responsibility by local authorities to foster good relations, between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Adopting the IHRA definition is unlikely to disproportionately disadvantage any protected characteristic, and does not directly prevent the promotion of understanding between different groups.

6.5. Human Resources Implications

6.5.1. There will be a requirement to review existing policies to ensure that the new definition is clearly referenced and included within supporting guidance.

6.6. Risk Management Implications

6.6.1. The recommendations in this report will have no adverse impact on the Council and its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

6.7. Rural Communities Implications

6.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

6.8. Implications for Children & Young People

6.8.1. There are no direct implications for children and young people.

6.9. Public Health Implications

6.9.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

7. Ward Members Affected

7.1. All wards and all members.

8. Access to Information

8.1. IHRA working definition guidance

<https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/working-definition-antisemitism>

8.2. National Hate Crime Operational Guidance, 2014

<http://www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Support/Equality/Documents/Hate-Crime-Operational-Guidance.pdf>

9. Contact Information

9.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

Name: Natalie Robinson

Job Title: Business Manager – Corporate Services

Email: natalie.robinson@cheshireeast.gov.uk