

Report To:	COUNCIL	Date:	13 FEBRUARY 2020
Heading:	ADOPTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE ALLIANCE WORKING DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM		
Portfolio Holder:	PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY		
Ward/s:	ALL		
Key Decision:	NO		
Subject to Call-In:	NO		

Purpose of Report

To consider the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of Antisemitism.

Recommendation(s)

- That the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition be adopted –
 “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of Antisemitism are directed towards Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, towards Jewish community institutions and religious facilities”
- That the Council’s Corporate Equality and Inclusion Policy 2017 – 2021 be amended to include the definition.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)

All Councils have been asked to consider the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of Antisemitism.

Alternative Options Considered

Not to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of Antisemitism.

Detailed Information

In 2017 the Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of Antisemitism was formally adopted by Government. In recognising that local councils have a valuable role to play in tackling all forms of hate crime, all local authorities were encouraged to formally adopt the definition.

The definition is not designed to be legally binding, but it is a tool for public bodies to understand how Antisemitism manifests itself in the 21st century. It demonstrates a commitment to engaging with the experiences of Jewish communities and supporting them against the contemporary challenges they face. In 2016 the UK became one of the first countries to adopt the definition.

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of Antisemitism is;

“a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of Antisemitism are directed towards Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, towards Jewish community institutions and religious facilities”.

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as Antisemitic.

Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of Antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- 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.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.

- Using the symbols and images associated with classic Antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Corporate Equality and Inclusion Policy 2017 – 2021

The Corporate Equality and Inclusion Policy 2017 -2021 sets out the commitment for Ashfield to be a place where no-one experiences discrimination or disadvantage because of their individual characteristics.

The aim is to make Ashfield District a place where the diversity of our community is recognised, supported and valued. Everyone in the District has a right to feel safe from harassment and to be able to access high quality services that respond to their individual and diverse needs.

Equality is about ensuring that all people are treated according to their diverse needs. This does not mean treating everyone the same but recognising the differences in life situations and experiences and ensuring that there is equality of opportunity for all people taking into account their individual needs.

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies to consider the needs of different groups and individuals when carrying out their day to day work. It requires the Council to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

Ashfield District Council's equality objectives were reviewed in 2017, namely:

- To maintain a modern and diverse workforce that is reflective of the local community and whose staff feel valued and treated fairly;
- To ensure community engagement and consultation is effective;
- To recognise the needs of different customers and make reasonable adjustments;
- To support individuals and communities to achieve a better quality of life particularly targeting resources at areas of most need.

The Equality and Inclusion Policy further details that the Authority will treat everyone as individuals with the same attention, courtesy and respect to ensure that people do feel valued and respected and have equality of opportunity regardless of:

- Marital or civil partnership status
- Gender
- Gender reassignment/gender identity
- Religious belief
- Race (including colour, nationality or ethnic origins)
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Maternity and paternity

The Council is legally required to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations within and between communities to build good community relations

There is currently no definition of Antisemitism detailed in the Policy.

Implications

Corporate Plan:

By 2023 we will ensure the foundations for a good quality of life are in place; reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.

Legal:

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of Antisemitism is not legally binding.

Finance:

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	None
General Fund – Capital Programme	None
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	None
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	None

Risk:

Risk	Mitigation
That the Council does not respond to the Government's request to adopt the definition	The Council adopt the IHRA definition of Antisemitism.

Human Resources:

Ashfield District Council believes that equality is one of the key values of the organisation and must be embedded within all of the services we provide.

Equalities:

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the duty to give people from different groups, with identified Protected Characteristics, consistent rights and protection. The Council's commitment to equalities is set out in the Corporate Equality and Inclusion Policy 2017 - 2021

Other Implications:

None

Reason(s) for Urgency

None

Reason(s) for Exemption

None

Background Papers

Letter from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

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