

Black Lives Matter and the impact of Covid-19 on BAME Communities

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Background:

Haringey is one of the most diverse boroughs in London, with a long and proud tradition of celebrating our diversity and welcoming people from all backgrounds and communities to live, learn and work here.

The brutal, and unlawful, death of George Floyd in the United States of America has justifiably triggered global protests against institutional racism faced by Black people right across the world, including here in the United Kingdom.

These protests have come, alongside all the inequalities faced by Black people, in the wake of the devastatingly disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on BAME communities in Britain and other parts of the world.

It is clear that this impact has been made far worse by the structural inequalities Black people face when it comes to health, education and housing amongst the numerous obstacles that Black people encounter daily.

There has also been a sizable recognition that road names, buildings and other municipal institutions linked to, and named after former slave traders and colonialists, demand a re-think and potential re-naming, so as to give the Black community the rightful respect and recognition they deserve.

The Council believes:

That Black Lives Matter.

That George Floyd's brutal murder must be a catalyst for change across the world.

That no country, city, police service or institution can absolve itself of the responsibility to do better.

That there is no place for racism, anti-Semitism, islamophobia or any form of xenophobia or bigotry anywhere in our society.

That language is a powerful tool for inspiration and change, as well as oppression and ignorance and must be used wisely and respectfully.

That the London Borough of Haringey must show leadership in the campaign to rid our city and our world, of bigotry and racism.

That it is necessary for our national and civic leaders to start an open and respectful conversation about who we are and what we stand for as a community.

That the national conversation on institutional racism and immigration should be conducted with care for the dignity of people who are vulnerable, who do not have a voice in the public domain, and have to suffer the consequences of inaccurate, insulting and inflammatory language.

That our education system is a key determinant of the nature of our society, therefore real action must be taken within it to combat racial injustices and disadvantages.

That it is vital all efforts are taken to understand the impact of Covid-19 on BAME communities in the London Borough of Haringey and that we should work with all relevant stakeholders to mitigate the impact now and into the future.

That it is concerning that whilst 53% of Haringey Council's workforce is from a BaME background, just 32% of officers at Grades PO8 and above are.

That we must stand together as one.

The Council resolves:

That all Councillors stand with Black residents in asserting their fundamental right to raise significant issues concerning their community.

That the values and beliefs outlined in this motion should guide the Council's interactions and tackling of racism and bigotry.

That our work, as elected representatives, must be to play a substantive and public role in ensuring racism and discrimination are challenged and eradicated at all levels.

That we will seek the views of BAME communities across the London Borough of Haringey on the issues arising from the Black Lives Matter protests.

That we will read and understand the Public Health England report on the effect of Covid-19 on Black and Minority Ethnic Communities.

That we will address the structural inequality identified in the Public Health England report in its planning for the Borough's recovery.

To carry out a comprehensive risk assessment of the working conditions of all our BAME staff both working at home, in Council offices and across the community.

To ask the Cabinet to explore providing further support, training, and mentoring to the Council's BaME staff to help them rise to senior positions.

That the values and beliefs outlined above should guide the Council's interactions, discussions and work on these issues.

That the Corporate Plan is updated to reflect the values outlined in this motion.

That we will call on the Metropolitan Police Service to rise to the challenge of recognising the inherent dignity of all Londoners and eschewing any tactics which have a discriminatory impact. To further this, Councils asks the Cabinet Member for Communities and Equalities to write a joint letter with their Liberal Democrat Shadow to the Home Secretary, the Mayor of London and the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police asking them to ensure that no stops-and-searches are conducted in Haringey under S.60 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 and that live facial recognition technology is not deployed in the borough.

That the Council endorses the Diversity Reform Initiative and asks the Cabinet Member for Children and Families to write a joint letter with their Liberal Democrat Shadow to the Cabinet Member for Education to express our support.

Finally, that provision will be made for Councillors' to debate the achievements and successes of Haringey's Black Community at the next available full meeting of all members.