

ITEM

Adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working Definition of Antisemitism

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Recommended:

That the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of antisemitism is adopted; namely “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish Community institutions and religious facilities”

SUMMARY:

- The purpose of this report is to consider the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of Antisemitism.

1 Introduction and background

- 1.1 The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) is an international organisation consisting of 32 member countries, including the United Kingdom, bringing together member governments to strengthen, advance and promote Holocaust education, research and remembrance.
- 1.2 In May 2016 the IHRA adopted a working definition of antisemitism and set out some contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace and the religious sphere. The definition states:

“ Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish Community institutions and religious facilities”
- 1.3 In December 2016 the UK Government, recognising that antisemitism continues to be a problem in this country also formally adopted the definition and numerous Local Authorities have gone on to adopt it also.
- 1.4 It is proposed that Test Valley Borough Council adopts the IHRA’s working definition.

2 Options

- 2.1 The options are to either adopt the definition or not. Adopting a clear and consistent definition of antisemitism supports the Council's equalities objectives and would provide residents of and visitors to the Borough with reassurance that antisemitism will not be tolerated.

3 Risk Management

- 3.1 A Risk Management questionnaire has been completed and indicates this report does not require a risk assessment because the changes/issues covered by this report are not significant in terms of risk or have previously been considered.

4 Resource Implications

- 4.1 No resource implications are identified.

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications, save that adoption of the definition would support the Council's equalities objectives and duties as further described below.

6 Equality Issues

- 6.1 No adverse equality issues are identified. Adopting the IHRA definition of antisemitism would support the Council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 including its duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty to have due regard to the need to -
- (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
 - (c) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

7 Other Issues

- 7.1 None are identified.

8 Conclusion and reasons for recommendation

- 8.1 It is recommended that the IHRA working definition of antisemitism is adopted.
- 8.2 Whilst the definition is not legally binding, adoption would support the Council in meeting its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 in providing a clear definition of antisemitism and assisting in identifying antisemitism where it may exist.

Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

None

Confidentiality

It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.

No of Annexes:	None	File Ref:	N/A
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Portfolio: Leader

Officer:	Karen Dunn	Ext:	8401
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	11 September 2019
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