Anti-Racism Action Plan
Summary

September 2023

Hackney

Anti-Racist Action Plan Background

- Over the last five years, Hackney has taken action to tackle racial inequality. We have already started to identify and take action that impacts at an individual, community, system and societal level- work to date is published on our [anti-racism hub](#).

- But this work also shows the gaps. **We need to adopt a consistent approach across all of the work of the Council.**

- We also need to work with **those responsible across the wider system to develop one common approach and set of actions.**

- This means **statutory partners, voluntary and community sector, businesses and employers.**

- **For this reason we have developed an anti-racist action plan** to be developed through consultation and engagement between November and January

- It is a discrete plan that sits alongside a wider anti-racism action plan. By locating the work within a wider assessment of need and priorities, we can be very clear about the urgent case for tackling racial inequality. It also helps us to take an intersectional approach, and consider how racism and racial inequality intersect with other forms of discrimination and disadvantage that someone may experience.

Anti-Racist Action Plan recent commitments

- In July 2020, the Council **adopted a motion to work towards being an anti-racist organisation.** This helped strengthen the focus and commitment to anti-racism.

- It specifically talked about **what we need to change within institutions.**

- Following the 2022 election, **t**here has been an even stronger political and corporate commitment and recognition **of how we need to change as an institution**.

- In May 2022, the **Council held an Anti-Racist Praxis Conference**, led by the Children and Education Directorate and a follow up Council wide season of events was held in October and November 2023

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To have an impact, we need to make sure **everyone in the system is starting from the same understanding of what racism is and what anti-racism is**.

This way, **we can make sure that we are progressing the right actions.**

It avoids **repeating patterns of bias and discrimination that are deeply embedded in society.**

Hackney residents will be affected by other Councils and institutions outside of Hackney. **We want to ensure their experience of other institutions is fair.** By building a common understanding of anti-racism across public institutions, this will become the norm.

Hackney **took a leading role in helping shape an anti-racist statement that all London Council leaders have now adopted.**

We want local institutions to adopt this common approach.

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Anti-Racist Action Plan & London Councils Anti-Racist Statement

Local authorities in London are committed to achieving racial equality because we recognise that persistent racial inequalities are unacceptable and adversely affect all Londoners.We know that certain groups are more likely to face inequality, experience poor outcomes and to live in poverty than others. Often these outcomes are used as an excuse not to acknowledge racial inequality, but groups are not more disadvantaged by chance. Structural disadvantage is strongly linked to racism and discrimination that is both historical and current.

We do have legislation to protect against overt racism, negative attitudes and treatment, but many of the systems that discriminate do so because of more subtle and covert unchecked "prejudice, assumptions, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping." This wording draws on the Macpherson Report 1999 definition of institutional racism which is still relevant today. This is a dehumanising process that is unacceptable and communities are tired of being treated this way. We cannot let another generation down by not actively responding to what remains a clear and compelling articulation of what needs to change.

Anti-Racist Action Plan & London Councils Anti-Racist Statement

All local authorities should be committed to taking an anti-racist approach because the most damaging aspects of inequality and racism are embedded in society. It is not enough to "not be racist" or to focus on tackling conscious hatred, like racial abuse. It is everyone's responsibility to proactively and continuously:

- Unpack and reset beliefs, assumptions and values;

- Take action when we observe racism come into play, in beliefs, assumptions and values and the decision and actions that follow, however subtle;

- Be humble and educate ourselves in what we don't know about racial inequalities and racism that exists, rather than putting the onus on others to educate us.

- Our collective commitment to achieve racial equality focuses on what London councils can do together to have a positive impact on life outcomes at all stages, including in relation to health and wellbeing, employment and education. This is about social justice and promoting equality because all Londoners should be able to reach their potential in all spheres.

Anti-Racist Action Plan translating words into action

This has to translate into whether residents experience frontline services differently.

In October, we will convene an all staff summit focused on culture, behaviour and practice.

It has to be about whether we are making an impact on outcomes. We are going to work closely with residents and partners to look at these outcomes and what difference we can make and by when.

Over the next few months we will be inviting residents, community partners and statutory partners to help us shape this plan.

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Anti-Racist Action Plan and wider Equality Plan

- The anti-racism action plan is a key way to support us **meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)**

- This is because racial inequalities in Hackney are very significant and the Duty is about us taking action to tackle discrimination and disadvantage and promote equality.

- We have chosen to develop the plan as part of a wider Equality Plan. By locating the work within a wider assessment of need and priorities, we can be very clear about the urgent case for adopting an anti-racism action plan. It also helps us to take an intersectional approach, and consider how racism and racial inequality intersect with other forms of discrimination and disadvantage that someone may experience.

- It is a discrete plan and will have discrete accountability and governance.

Under the PSED, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need 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.

Anti-Racist Action Plan Accountability

Embedding anti-racism into the mindset-culture, behaviours and practice

We will set up the right accountability to make sure that:

- Everyone progressing actions within the anti-racism action plan are working together towards a common set of outcomes and intermediate outcomes

- We are tracking progress against intermediate outcomes and regularly assessing if these are making a difference on our long term outcomes.

- We are taking action to embed equality, diversity and inclusion into service design, delivery and practice.

- We are taking action to ensure an open and humble and anti-racist leadership style

- We are taking action to ensure that the workforce reflects the ethnic diversity of Hackney's population at all levels and are working towards a common set of measures of success.

- We are tracking progress against these measures of success and our workforce is becoming more reflective of the diversity of the community at all levels.

To support this we propose establishing governance that will include:

- A delivery group of senior officers

- Sessions led by the lead Cabinet Member with Cabinet leads and senior officers to review progress and impact.

- The Council's Corporate Leadership and Cabinet will jointly consider progress on a six monthly basis.

- We want to develop this further by developing proposals to involve residents in holding us to account. This is why we are asking you how we should do this as part of this consultation and engagement.

We will ask partnerships and partners to work towards one shared understanding and commitment to anti-racism.

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Anti-Racist Action Plan Objectives

- **Tackle racial inequality at every life stage, by taking protective, preventative and positive action**

- **Build prosperity and wellbeing, ensuring a focus on racial inequality**

- **Embed anti-racism into service plans and practice**

- **Celebrate and serve diverse communities and value their contribution**

- **Change as an institution: the leadership and management culture and diversity of leadership**

Tackle racial inequality at every life stage, taking protective, preventative & positive action

We see racial inequality at every life stage: Pregnancy, School Readiness, Key Stage 4 (GCSE), Leaving school, Employment, Parenthood, Caring and Old age.

When people face difficulty they can also experience inequality or unfair treatment.

There is proven bias in the system that is going to be leading to unfair and unequal outcomes. We need to take preventative action at every life stage, working across the whole system. We need to be specific to needs and intersectional in the way we work.

We will:

- Refresh existing equality evidence base for the whole population. We need to ask who is facing inequality (avoiding blanket categories) and to understand the root causes of inequality across the life course. This analysis will be intersectional.

- Prioritise the groups we need to think about. We need to avoid blanket categories and build on existing work.

- Develop cross-cutting positive, protective, purposeful, preventative work.

- Review progress and impact of work so far.

- Identify whether the right conditions are in place to have an impact and what needs to change.

- Work closely with residents and partners across the system towards actions that support common objectives and outcomes

- Develop an outcomes framework that can be adopted by all partners

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Objective 2:
Build prosperity and wellbeing, ensuring a focus on racial inequality

Plans that tackle poverty and help people to thrive need to be looked at through an anti-racist lens. This is to make sure that black and global majority communities do benefit and equally that there isn't a disbenefit.

A regeneration scheme may include outcomes that support people from black and global majority backgrounds into jobs. If the scheme also leads to inequality this needs to be thought about. This could be by displacing local businesses or increasing local house prices

- Hackney has worked with other local authorities to develop its approach to an inclusive economy. This goes beyond traditional economic development metrics. We will build on this work and seek to embed this understanding across planning, housing and regeneration strategy.

- We will work with leads for Employment and Skills, Area Regeneration, Housing (house building, housing strategy, housing management and housing needs), Planning, Health and Wellbeing and Poverty Reduction to look at where racism is showing up in systems.

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Objective 3:
Embed anti-racism into service plans and practice

Some groups are more likely to face inequality and experience poor outcomes and to live in poverty. But groups don't happen to be more disadvantaged by chance. The origins of structural disadvantage are related to prejudice and discrimination. This is historical and current. It is deeply embedded into societal structures, including public institutions. We need to work with other institutions across the system to embed the following into the way we work:

- Inclusive, humble, trauma informed and anti-racist approaches and practice
- A whole system approach that sees issues from a resident / borough rather than a siloed service perspective
- Understands Hackney's diverse communities and is aware of the impact of poverty
- Considers how we collaborate with communities, co-designing long lasting solutions

This needs to be embedded into culture, service planning, practice and accountability.

This will need the right support corporately and from managers and needs to start with them understanding what racism means and what actions need to be taken to develop anti-racist services and practice.

Develop our understanding

- We have developed a tool to help us understand where racism shows up and what it looks like. It helps us look at our systems and decision making.

We will:

- Engage with services to identify where they are in terms of anti-racist practice and how we embed anti-racism.

- Develop a resource pack, workshops and training sessions

- Develop service planning guidance

  We are engaging with the Population Health Hub to integrate hese tools into wider work.

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Objective 4:
Celebrate and serve diverse communities and value their contribution

Hackney's diverse, dynamic and changing population is what makes Hackney feel unique. It gives different areas their unique sense of identity. There is, however, a risk that the very communities that helped create a sense of place are excluded and marginalised.

Although there is a high level of trust in the population overall, this is much lower for Black and Global majority residents and social housing tenants. Some residents feel that Council communication does not resonate with their experience of life in the borough. They feel we are too defensive when presented with new ideas or challenges.

In response, we need to develop a culture that is comfortable with hearing residents tell us uncomfortable truths about how racism is playing out. We need to be more open and confident about working with residents to be part of the solutions. We must pay attention to residents who we are least likely to hear. We have to remain agile and adaptive to meeting new needs that we identify through this dialogue. We need to put residents and communities first, thinking about underserved communities.

We need to develop the anti-racism action plan further during the consultation and engagement period, asking openly what we should be doing that is different, what we can learn from work communities are leading, what new solutions residents want to see and what good practice we should look at.

Identify the solutions needed:

- We need to increase the level of community engagement activity to support delivery of this action plan. This will also help strengthen accountability and support co-production.

- We need to develop a more consistent approach to involving residents in checking and challenging our work.

- We need to develop ways to enable ongoing co-production across the system.

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Objective 5:
Change as an institution: the leadership & management culture & diversity

The work we have led on tackling inequality in Hackney continually comes back with urgency to the reality that structures and systems do not work for all.

We need a workforce that:

- understands what being inclusive, humble, anti-discriminatory, anti-racist and trauma informed means.

- is confident working with communities

- can operate in a no blame culture, but also knows that racism will not be tolerated.

- leads and works as a system- from a resident / borough not service perspective

- understands Hackney's diverse communities and is aware of the impact of poverty

- reflects the diversity of Hackney, at all levels

- can collaborate with communities, co-designing long lasting solutions

In December 2018, the Council adopted a Corporate Equalities Programme to foster a culture of inclusive leadership and increase workforce diversity especially at senior levels. This was informed by focus groups with black and global majority staff. These focus groups were led by directors to identify the solutions needed to achieve a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

Since then we have further developed our understanding about the relationship between racism and other forms of discrimination, frontline stress, progression and wellbeing. To achieve a workforce that is reflective of the diversity of Hackney at all levels, we need to continue to address these issues.

Detailed workforce profiles will help us identify nuances that exist within different staff groups. This needs to be about the whole employee journey.

Positive actions will be identified corporately and by division

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Hackney's Diversity

- 53.1% of Hackney residents identified their ethnicity within the 'White' category.

- The second most common ethnic group category in Hackney after "White" is 'Black', with 21.1% of Hackney residents identifying in this category.

- Hackney's Asian population is 10.37% which is significantly less than the average for London (20.7%)

- Census data does not give us an accurate estimate for the Turkish population and we will do more work to develop an accurate estimate

- Hackney is also home to distinct ethno-religious groups:

  - People of the Jewish faith makeup 6.7% of the population which is much higher than London (1.7%) and England, (0.5%).

  - Many Kurdish people from Turkey live in Hackney and Haringey. The majority of Turkish-speaking residents belong to the Sunni sect of Islam, with most Kurds are Alevi who make up about 1% of Hackney's population.

- An estimated 89 languages are spoken in Hackney. The top 10 preferred languages in Hackney are: English (80.1%), Turkish (3.2%), Spanish (2%), French (1.3%), Portuguese (1.3%) Yiddish (1.3%), Italian (1.2%), Polish (0.9%), Bengali (with Sylheti and Chatgaya) (0.8%) and Gujarati (0.6%).

Groups facing key inequalities

- Black Caribbean, Black African, Other Black groups, and Turkish Kurdish groups face key inequalities in education, health, income, and employment. We also see these inequalities in the Charedi community.

- Within the Muslim community - there are many different groups. They will have specific needs that will not be catered for by one generic approach to engagement.

- Hackney is home to smaller communities who face significant inequalities. This includes: Gypsy Roma Traveller, South American, Chinese (including Hong Kong Chinese), Somali and West Central African communities.

  In considering how we tackle racial inequality, we need to consider communities who are oppressed or marginalised by a wider majority group, for example a minority religious group.

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Links

Equality Plan
➔   Summary Slides
➔   Detailed Summary

Anti-Racism Plan
➔   Summary Slides
➔   Detailed Summary

LGBTQIA+ Strategic Framework
➔   Summary Slides
➔   Detailed Summary