

Calderdale MBC

Wards Affected All

Cabinet 10 July 2023



Adoption of the Anti-Racism Charter

Report of the Interim Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the Anti-Racism Charter and to consider whether the Council will sign up to the Charter.

2. Need for a decision

- 2.1 Should Cabinet support the proposal outlined in this note, then the Anti-Racism Charter would go to Full Council for sign off as it is not within officers' delegation.
- 2.2 Achieving equity at the Council is driven by equality legislation and the moral and ethical reasons around ensuring fairness. There are also the clear business benefits of having a diverse and equitable workforce. This strengthens our support for communities, helps our workforce to understand our communities (70% of our workforce are also residents of the borough) and helps our communities access our services. The Anti-Racism Charter supports our ongoing commitment to Equity and gives us a clear framework to support and advance the equality agenda, supports our existing policies, procedures and practices and progress actions to address disparities.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That Cabinet recommend to Council that:
- The Anti-Racism Charter be adopted.

4. Background and/or details

- 4.1 The Anti-Racism Charter pledges that within the first 12 months Calderdale Council as an organisation implements a clear and visible race equality policy, a programme of anti-racism initiatives and actions across the organisation. The Charter measures are implemented to remove instances of racial discrimination in all its forms and equality actions are progressed to support the development of an inclusive environment and anti racist culture.
- 4.2 UNISON developed the Charter originally in UNISON's Eastern region but GMB and other unions have similar priorities, for example GMB have a hate crime policy in place and more work is in progress on an accompanying charter.
 - 4.2.1 The UNISON charter itself can be viewed here:
[Anti-racism-charter.pdf \(unison.org.uk\)](#) and is provided in **Appendix 1**.
 - 4.2.2 The GMB Hate Crime & Incident Policy is provided in **Appendix 2**.
- 4.3 The initiative is attracting national attention and at this stage Calderdale Council could be the first employer in Yorkshire and the Humber to adopt the Charter.
- 4.4 At the recent We Are Calderdale Event on 25th May 2023, the Anti-Racism Charter was referenced in the introduction by the Council Leader as part of an ongoing commitment to anti racism. This is just part of the Council's overall approach and commitment to Equity and amplifies everything else we are doing. Our commitment is detailed in the Workforce Strategy and delivery plan and supports initiatives around tackling racism and achieving our Equality Objectives. The Council is committed to addressing inequality and providing equitable, fair, inclusive and accessible services to help everyone in Calderdale achieve their potential, whoever they are and wherever they live. This is a key part of the Vision2024 for Calderdale.
- 4.5 From the Buying Our Care report March 2023 one of the recommendations was that the Council's revised workforce strategy should address the need for the Council's workforce to be more diverse and representative of the communities it serves. The Council has a positive attitude to staff and team development which forms a solid basis for taking forward learning arising from the issues raised in *Buying our Care*, particularly around cultural competency. Opportunities for cross learning across the Council, in particular involving Adult Services and Wellbeing Directorate, Children and Young People Directorate and the Safeguarding Team should continue to be taken and advanced. Learning from outside the organisation should continue to play an important part in testing our own practice. It is important that we have the right staff in the right roles and with the right skills to support and deliver this work.
- 4.6 We continue to support interfaith activity in partnership with Calderdale Interfaith, bringing faith establishments together to build community resilience, promote a shared sense of belonging and foster good community relations.
- 4.7 Subject to Members signing up to the Charter, the staff Networks have an important role in this and will be engaged to draw up a delivery plan to monitor current progress against the requirements of the Charter and ensure that the requirements are met within defined timescales. This will then be monitored via the Corporate Equalities Group with updates provided for the People Board.

5. Options considered

- 5.1 To adopt / sign-up to the Anti-Racism Charter to achieve the requirements – this supports one of the 3 corporate priorities on tackling inequality and sends out a clear message to the organisation and to the Borough about the importance of this. This would require performance monitoring against the delivery plan to ensure that we meet the requirements of the Charter.
- 5.2 To not adopt the Anti-Racism Charter – this would not be in line with the Corporate ambition and vision and there would be risks in non-adoption ie this would contradict messages previously communicated and send out the wrong message to the workforce, residents and nationally.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from this report as it is anticipated that any costs associated with the implementation of the Anti-Racism Charter will be met from existing revenue budgets.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 Public Sector Equality

We have a duty to:

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

- 7.2 Adopting the Anti-Racism Charter and subsequently formulating and progressing the delivery plan will support the Council to increase the progress it makes towards the [Corporate Equality Objectives](#) SECTION 1: (sharepoint.com) **Appendix 3**.

- 7.3 Further to this, the adoption of the Charter will support the Council to mitigate the following risks:

- Failure to meet Public Sector duty under the Equalities Act 2010.
- Failure to attract and retain diverse talent, Calderdale's workforce will remain underrepresented, and disparities not addressed.
- Discriminatory practice/unconscious bias will go unchecked leading to a breach in Equalities legislation and public sector duty.
- Services provided to communities will be provided by a workforce lacking understanding of equality/diversity and inclusion breaching equalities legislation.

8. Human Resources and Organisation Development Implications

- 8.1 The Charter commits employers to a raft of policies designed to challenge racism in the workplace, improving life for staff and therefore the services they provide to the public.
- 8.2 It includes championing a racially diverse workforce, having a clear programme of anti-racist initiatives and providing equality training for all staff. This is a key strand of the Workforce Strategy and Delivery Plan and will be incorporated into the Organisational Development programme.
- 8.3 The Council will also be expected to continue to report on its ethnicity pay gap and monitor disciplinary and grievance processes to ensure outcomes are fair.
- 8.4 There are no additional staffing implications arising from this report. It is anticipated that any resource requirements associated with the implementation of the Anti-Racism Charter will be met from existing resources.

9. Consultation

- 9.1 There has been an initial consultation with the Council's Staff Race Equality network and the delivery plan will be developed in conjunction with the Networks. The Race Equality (formally BAME) Steering Group have played a significant role in identifying disparities and areas of focus for the Council and work collaboratively with HR/OD to progress actions.

10. Environment, Health and Economic Implications

- 10.1 Race inequalities in Covid-19 and its wider impacts were brought into sharp focus during the pandemic and engagement with Black, Asian and Minority communities about disproportionate impacts informed our Covid-19 response and recovery. This also highlighted the imperative to tackle structural race inequality and discrimination that were the root cause of these inequalities. The Anti-Racism Charter provides an important way that the Council can state its commitment to playing its part in increasing race equality.
- 10.2 There are significant race inequalities in health and wellbeing in Calderdale so that Black, Asian and ethnic minority residents are more likely to experience poorer physical and mental health. Racism and discrimination are one of the causes of these health inequities and adopting the Anti-Racism Charter will enable Calderdale Council to further contribute to tackling these health inequalities.
- 10.3 In December 2020, the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership signed off a new plan setting out actions that all partners, including Calderdale Council, can take to support Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities and staff. Adoption of this Charter supports this commitment [Working together to tackle inequalities | News Centre - Official news site of Calderdale Council](#)
- 10.4 Diversity and inclusion are always a priority for the Council. Work has stepped up to tackle inequality. The Vision aims to realise the potential to make the borough's five key qualities (enterprising, talented, kind, resilient and distinctive) mean something for all communities, regardless of who they are – complementing the Cabinet priorities of equality, climate change and strong, thriving towns and places.

11. Equality and Diversity

- 11.1 The Anti-Racism Charter represents the progression of our ongoing commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion as a Council, and our goal to create a fairer and more equal society. It is part of our overall approach and is further strengthened within our Workforce Strategy.
- 11.2 It is simply not enough to be non-racist. We want to go further to ensure our policies, processes, and organisational culture celebrate and champion the diversity of our whole workforce.
- 11.3 An Equality Impact Assessment is being developed in consultation with key stakeholders.

12. Summary and Recommendations

- 12.1 Calderdale has a proud history of supporting the Equalities agenda and in seeking to tackle inequalities and racism, supported by its well established Policies, procedures and approach for addressing issues.
- 12.2 To support this in the future, signing up to the Anti-Racism Charter sends out a clear message to the Workforce, the Community and the Borough and is a key part of our overall approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- 12.3 This report seeks to gain support for the adoption / sign up to the Anti-Racism Charter to ensure the Council continues to focus on Tackling Inequality and tackling racism.

For further information on this report, contact:

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The documents used in the preparation of this report are:

- 1. Anti-Racism Charter
- 2. Equality Impact Assessment

The documents are available for inspection at:

Halifax Town Hall, Crossley Street, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX1 1UJ