

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EQUALITIES BOARD HELD ON THURSDAY, 15TH JULY, 2021

**MEMBERS:** Councillors Huseyin Akpinar, Guner Aydin, Ergin Erbil (Associate Cabinet Member (Non-geographical based)) and Achilleas Georgiou

**Officers:** Peter Nathan (Director of Education), Anna Vaughan (Head of Professional Learning), Lucy Nutt (Head of School and Early Years Improvement Service), Matt Bowmer (Director of Finance), Claire Reilly (Head of Procurement and Commissioning (People and Corporate)), Shaun Rogan (Head of Corporate Strategy), Rebekah Polding (Head of Cultural Services Dept), Karen Maguire (Strategic Property Services and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Lead), Tinu Olowe (Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development), Harriet Potemkin (Head of Strategy and Policy), Lucy Nasby (Strategy and Policy Manager), Koulla Panaretou (Governance Officer)

**Also Attending:** Nick Chanda (Revival Church of Enfield and Enfield Faith Forum), Tim Fellows (Enfield LGBT Network), Neveah West-Lawson (Young Mayor)

### 1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Cllr Ergin Erbil (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Ayfer Orhan, Cllr Clare De Silva, Cllr Dino Lemonides, Cllr Jim Steven, Ben Ingber (Age UK Enfield), Ginnie Landon (Enfield Women's Centre), Chandra Bhatia (Enfield Racial Equality Council).

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest registered in respect of any items on the agenda.

### 3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Board agreed the minutes of the last meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

Cllr Achilleas Georgiou requested that the item on Inclusive Transport, minute number 22.4 be changed from "been delivered" to "been piloted".

### 4. UPDATE ON EPIC - ONE YEAR ON

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Harriet Potemkin (Head of Strategy and Policy) provided an update on Enfield's Poverty and Inequality Commission (EPIC) one year on.

EPIC was set up to understand the causes of poverty and inequality in Enfield and to find local solutions. The independent commission was chaired by Baroness Tyler of Enfield with a panel of 12 commissioners. Their final report was published in January 2020 and contained 27 recommendations.

The update given highlighted progress against a number of the 27 recommendations, noting that a summary in relation to all 27 is contained in the Update circulated in the reports pack.

### **Living:**

Recommendation 3: The Council should work with partners to reform the private rented sector so that it works for all residents. Additional licensing scheme went live 2020 and selective licensing being phased in following government approval in May 2021. A new Housing Advisory Service has been introduced to focus on homelessness prevention. 18 more homes have been secured through Housing Gateway.

Recommendation 7: The voluntary and community sector, supported by the Council, should create a Food Action Plan for Enfield, to ensure all families have access to healthy food. This is being done through school holiday schemes, small grants for community food projects provided, four food pantries established through the Food Alliance and over 79K food/essential item parcels delivered to isolated people across the Borough.

Recommendation 11: The Council should revitalise youth services in the Borough. Prioritise investment in universal youth services and targeted outreach youth workers.

### **Learning:**

Recommendation 12: The Council, education providers and the voluntary and community sector should work together to ensure that all Enfield's Children are "school-ready". This is being done with an additional £150K investment to enhance speech, language and communication services to focus on prevention and early intervention and encouraging take up of free early years places for 2 to 3-year olds.

Recommendation 15: The Council should work with schools to set a target to reduce the use of fixed-term and permanent exclusions. With the help of workshops, training and mentoring programmes, supporting young people's mental health and wellbeing have shown a reduction of 23% of permanent exclusions compared to last year.

### **Earning:**

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Recommendation 18: Poverty reduction should be at the heart of the Council's new economic development strategy, which should set a target to reduce low pay within the Borough. Much work is being undertaken with the Living Wage Foundation to assist in establishing Meridian Water as a Living Wage Zone. 176 employees have now benefited from the London Living Wage now that services for housing repairs, cleaning and grounds maintenance for cemeteries have been brought back "in-house".

Recommendation 24: The Council should help free the poorest residents from the burden of problem debts by extending access to benefits advice, support around debt and good credit. In 2020-2021 over 3,100 residents were supported with advice from new Council team in partnership with Citizens Advice Bureau.

The following comments and questions were received:

1. Tim Fellows noted that the recommendations relate to other organisations as well as the Council, in particular the police, and questioned whether there was a named lead within the Metropolitan police leading on their response.

Harriet Potemkin responded that the council was working in partnership to respond to the recommendations, including with the police. In particular, this included partnership with the police to deliver the 'Safer Schools' programme.in regards to the Safer Schools Team.

Peter Nathan (Director of Education) further advised that the Education Department and Schools were working proactively with police in the 'Safer Schools' programme, and also noted the importance of engagement at senior levels within the police, as well as with school safety officers working longer hours on school sites.

Shaun Rogan (Head of Corporate Strategy) advised that many voluntary and community sector organisations were instrumental in informing the recommendations – both as panel members and through participation on the engagement process with the Commission. He noted the ongoing commitment of these local organisations to working in partnership to respond to the recommendations. -

2. Cllr Ergin Erbil (Chair) asked for further information on our work to actively support the use of the London Living Wage across the borough.

Harriet Potemkin advised that the Council is working with the London Living Wage Foundation to assist in establishing Meridian Water as a 'Living Wage Zone' and is also developing a new Sustainable and Ethical Procurement Policy to help to accelerate the use of London Living Wage amongst our suppliers, noting that further information on this will be given as part of item 4 on the agenda today.

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3. Cllr Achilleas Georgiou asked how the Council is working with partners to roll out the London Living Wage and requested further detail on what's being done within Meridian Water to become a Living Wage Zone.

Harriet Potemkin will ask the Meridian Water team to provide a briefing for the Board. **ACTION: Harriet Potemkin**

4. Cllr Huseyin Akpinar asked how the Meridian Water approach can be rolled out across the borough to other local businesses, and what proportion of Enfield businesses currently pay the London Living Wage.

Harriet Potemkin will ask the Economic Development Team to provide a briefing for the Board. **ACTION: Harriet Potemkin**

### 5. OVERCOME RACISM IN ENFIELD

The Board received an update on how Enfield Council is working towards its equalities objective to overcome racism in Enfield.

1. Shaun Rogan (Head of Corporate Strategy) provided an update on how the Borough celebrates and promotes its rich diversity by supporting an annual programme of educational, challenging and inspiring events celebrating ethnic minority communities, as follows:

- 1a. The Council are committed to continuing with flagship events of significance, such as Black History Month, LGBT, Pride, Holocaust Memorial Day, International Women's Day and carers week etc.
- 1b. The Council actively seek to create a Borough that is fair and has strong values against racism and discrimination, helping retain momentum against these ambitions, celebrating communities and helping make Enfield a diverse place to live.
- 1c. The pandemic has meant that we have run a number of events online this year, resulting in increased numbers participating in events.

Rebekah Polding (Head of Cultural Services Department) provided further information on the community events which took place during 2020 and 2021 and the ways in which the Council's Culture Connects Strategy links with our Fairer Enfield Policy to celebrate diversity and inclusion.

In response, the following comments/questions were raised:

- Cllr Huseyin Akpinar asked if Refugee Week could be added to the calendar of events.

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- The Chair noted that he would welcome Enfield doing more to celebrate Carnival to celebrate African and West Indian Heritage.
- Nick Chandra (Revival Christian Church of Enfield) commented that more needs to be done to encourage victims of racism to report incidents and get support.

In response the Chair agreed that a lot more work is needed on the front line, such as counselling and assistance when reporting crimes.

- Nevaeh West-Lawson (Young Mayor) sought clarity on the age group of youth work.

In response Shaun Rogan advised that 16-24-year olds begin to seek employment and set up a life for themselves, but more work is needed, especially involving the youth parliament and helping younger people in the Borough to talk to their youth parliament representatives to explore what their overall needs and requirements are.

- Cllr Ergin Erbil (Chair) asked what voluntary and community organisations should do if they wanted a council presence at one of their events.

Shaun Rogan responded he is happy for his contact details to be given as the contact point for organisations.

2. Peter Nathan (Director of Education) and Anna Vaughan (Head of Professional Learning) provided an update on the support given to Enfield schools in their work to deliver a diverse and inclusive curriculum that educates children and young people on systemic racism and our local diverse history.

2a. Following on from the murder of George Floyd, a response from the professional learning department was necessary which began with a bespoke 10 session programme on “unconscious Bias and Anti-Racism (September 2020-March 2021). By Spring 2021 a professional learning offer was launched on a newly created portal from the Hub with antiracism showing as the first menu. This will help to deliver a higher quality service to our Enfield Schools. Feedback has been very positive.

2b. Peter Nathan confirmed that the Council are fully committed to the anti-racism work that is being undertaken in the Borough’s schools. Anti-racism talks are being delivered but there is still a lot of work to do. Next year a Champions Programme is being introduced which will target groups that are not achieving as much as they should. It is important to challenge, and targets have been set with Head Teachers.

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- 2c. Anna Vaughan (Head of Professional Learning) shared that one school who had engaged with the 10-session program had gone on to seek engagement with parents and students which has helped in generating real change. The program created a sense of community amongst those that attended evoking discussions and honesty, especially certain issues with the desired outcome of creating a more inclusive school environment. All schools were informed about the 10-session program and are now being encouraged to engage with the new Anti-Racism menu of professional learning for 2021-2022.
- 2c. A working party formed from Peter Nathan's leadership group was critical to the creation of the 10-session program and data has been collected regarding feedback, this has been shared with Nexus Enfield who contributed funds for the program. During the 2021-2022 academic year, the working party will be reinstated to look at engagement to date, and next steps.

In response the following comments/questions were received:

- Cllr Erbil (Chair) thanked the Education Department on behalf of the Board. They have the most important role as can only tackle racism through education.

In response, Anna Vaughan advised that a number of schools participated in the program, with a small proportion having their whole staff attend in socially distanced locations. It would be wonderful if all schools can engage.

- Karen Maguire asked if the portal was for college students, primary or secondary schools.

In response, the portal is focussed on early years and secondary but expanding the offer is worth exploring. **Action: Peter to talk to Barnet & Southgate College and CONEL.**

3. Karen Maguire (Strategic Property Services Gypsy Roma Traveller Lead Officer), updated the Board on the work with our partners to reduce discrimination experienced by Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities in accessing education, healthcare and service provision. A short film to raise awareness can be viewed on the following link: <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/your-council/grt/#2>
- 3a. There are 300,000 Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people in the UK which equates to 1 in every 200 people, and we estimate that 10,000 are Enfield residents.
- 3b. Gypsy, Traveller and Roma people have the worst health outcomes of any ethnic group in Britain, in relation to educational attainment, health and employment. There are higher mortality rates and (anecdotally

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reported) incidences of suicide within Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities than are found amongst the wider British population.

- 3c. The main objective of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Board is to encourage partnership working and collaboration with a cross section of professionals, community advocates and community members to proactively help and support Gypsy, Roma and Traveller residents in the borough.
- 3d. We are working in collaboration with GRT community members, voluntary sector groups in Enfield, Schools, London Gypsy Travellers, GLA, MHCLG, NHS, CCG, and Metropolitan Police.
- 3e. Through collaboration we now have 9 working thematic groups whom are currently drafting action plans that will eventually feed into Enfield's first Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Strategy, which we envisage will go to full Cabinet late Autumn following extensive consultation. Each group has a departmental lead/sponsor. The thematic groups presently are as follows: Health & Wellbeing, Customer Experience & Journey (Heritage & Culture), Education, Community Engagement, Equalities Monitoring, Community Safety, Site Delivery, Financial Inclusion & Employment and the Census Working Group
- 3f. There is now a dedicated web page with communications specifically for GRT communities in Enfield. <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/grt>.
- 3g. The health workstream will include working with partners to gather evidence of health, wellbeing and support needs within these communities and gain a better understanding of health inequalities and barriers to accessing services; increase access and registration to primary healthcare; building referral pathways into secondary care and support services; promoting healthy lifestyle and wellbeing through outreach and education:
- Household Surveys on health & wellbeing capturing data to facilitate wrap around health care pathways.
  - Campaign for mental health.
  - Campaign for myth busting on immunisations.
  - Campaign for Covid-19 vaccination uptake.
  - Dental Care.
- 3h. Enfield's first GRT Strategy aims to address the barriers to accessing all service provision and make significant improvements, including access to funding streams. This will help the community to feel listened to, safe and part of the Borough.

In response the following comments/questions were received:

- Cllr Akpinar asked if the data available was from the last census in 2011.

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In response, Karen Maguire advised that only roughly 500 residents identified as Gypsy, Roma or Traveller in the 2011 census. The Council has funded a social media campaign for the 2021 census to encourage Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities to complete the census form. The results of the census will inform how we can develop services to better support Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

- Nevaeh West-Lawson (Young Mayor) asked if the GRT people were pushed out of sites?

In response Karen Maguire advised that the GRT community in Enfield predominantly live in bricks and mortar as we do not have any sites. A negotiating stopping policy is now being implemented for transient communities coming to Enfield, following new guidance from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government issues during the Covid-19 restrictions. Lockdowns.

- Cllr Ergin Erbil (Chair) asked if a permanent site can be identified for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities all year round, and if so, the Council need to support this.

In response Karen Maguire advised that through the accommodation needs assessment and wider stakeholder engagement, 21 pitches have been identified in addition to a temporary stop over site.

- Nick Chandra (Revival Christian Church of Enfield) advised that some of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community refrain from sending their children to school and there is a need to further educate the parents on this importance of schooling for their children.

In response Karen Maguire was aware of this issue. Discussions are being held with teachers to raise awareness of culture and actions taken through the Education Action Plan to better help and support Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children to achieve their dreams and aspirations.

- Cllr Ergin Erbil (Chair) advised that some communities find voting difficult and GRT community have always had an issue with this due to "no fixed abode".

In response, Karen Maguire stated that the use of the yellow cards for NHS access have been very successful for the transient community. Although Karen had not spoken to the wider community about voting, the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Board will seek further advice and guidance. **Action: Karen Maguire**

Karen Maguire will come back to the Equalities Board in a few months to provide a further update. **Action: Karen Maguire**



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4. Tinu Olowe (Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development) provided an update on the increase in representation of Black and ethnic minorities in leadership positions across the Council's workforce, so that it is proportionately representative of Enfield's ethnic minority population by 2030, as follows:

- 4a. As defined in the Equalities Act 2010, Enfield Council is committed to supporting and promoting the fair and equal treatment of all staff, ensuring that all the talented staff are encouraged to progress, remain and grow "in-house".
- 4b. The Council is committed to tackling inequality and embedding a diverse and inclusive workplace culture. Ethnic minority employees represent 33.3% of our workforce, with the objective to increase representation of Black and ethnic minorities in leadership positions.
- 4c. In respect of the ethnicity pay gap, the median hourly rate at Enfield Council is 3%. Following a staff focus group four main themes were identified: recruitment and employment practices; career progression; learning and development; holding people to account. Work programmes are being developed and rolled out to address these themes.
- 4d. Fairer Enfield EDI Policy 2021-2025 commitments were defined, with the following highlights:
  - Boldness to call out racism with a zero-tolerance outcome
  - Senior Leadership commitment
  - Ethnicity pay gap reporting
  - Equality Audit
  - Growing our own talent
  - Career development
  - Ultimate goal = **"a happy and empowered workforce"**
- 4e. The Action Plan to end racism in the workplace includes:
  - Building an inclusive culture
  - Updating the annual workforce report to understand our data
  - Providing a safe environment to hold focussed and facilitated discussions, with ally/inclusions champions programmes.
  - Recruitment and selection policy to be reviewed and updated
  - Provide a diverse recruitment panel
  - Training on unconscious bias and language in line with the equalities training programme.
  - Black on Board development programme
  - Cultural and difficult conversations encouraged and supported

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In response the following comments were received:

- Cllr Ergin Erbil thanked Tinu Olowe for her presentation and stated that the 2021 census has included a specific ethnicity category for Kurdish people and that our workforce ethnicity categories should also reflect this.
- Cllr Huseyin Akpinar sought clarity on the 1% of those who refused to state their ethnicity.

In response, Tinu Olowe advised that those members of staff selected 'prefer not to say' regarding their ethnicity, as opposed to not completing the equality monitoring survey. The HR team is working with our software provider to update the terminology used.

- Cllr Huseyin Akpinar asked for the ethnicity of the top 5% of earners in the Council.

Tinu Olowe noted that it may not be possible to disclose this information because the cohort would be small enough to identify individuals. She noted that the presentation provided a breakdown of ethnicity by pay grade.

Nevaeh West-Lawson (Young Mayor) asked for further information on how reports of racism in the workplace are investigated and addressed.

In response, Tinu Olowe advised that the said individual initially makes a formal complaint, and a disciplinary investigation will then commence, which could lead to a hearing. The panel will determine the outcome, with an appropriate sanction.

## 6. SUSTAINABLE AND ETHICAL PROCUREMENT POLICY

A presentation was received from Matt Bowmer (Director of Finance) and Claire Reilly (Head of Procurement) outlining the new Sustainable and Ethical Procurement Policy and Equalities Supplier Guide.

The following key points were highlighted:

- 6a. The new policy reflects refreshed Council priorities and good timing due to other recent policy initiatives.
- 6b. Key that procurement benefits local communities and the local economy, minimises damage to the environment and ensures human rights are upheld in the supply chains.
- 6c. Before implementation, research and benchmarking, engagement with internal services and external stakeholders/suppliers took place and is ongoing.
- 6d. Action plans, staff training and practical documentation in development are being put in place.

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- 6e. Four priority areas were identified: Social value, ethical practices, supporting the local economy and climate action.
- 6f. Next steps will be as follows:

Second phase of external engagement - **July 2021**

Members' Equality Board - **July 2021**

Analyse engagement results - **August 2021**

Finalise policy based on feedback - **August 2021**

Attend procurement boards to discuss toolkit and policy implementation - **September 2021**

Cabinet sign off - **October 2021**

Implementation of Policy - **October 2021 onwards**

In conclusion, the policy is realistic but challenging and has the benefit of protecting smaller suppliers in our Borough by having a range of standards in place – minimum, enhanced and preferred.

In response the following comments/questions were received:

- 1. Cllr Erbil (Chair) asked how we can secure the small local providers so that they are not excluded.

In response, Claire Reilly advised that a key aim of the policy is to encourage and support small and medium sized local providers, and to help us to support the local economy in the way we procure. The policy allows officers to tailor their approach, and for us to work with smaller local businesses and organisations to help them develop their sustainable and ethical practices.

## **7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Noted and agreed that the next Equalities Board will take place on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

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