

Tackling Racism Taskforce

A public summary of the Tackling Racism Taskforce's meeting held on 4 September 2020.

The Tackling Racism Taskforce held its fourth meeting on 4 September 2020. The key focus of this meeting was on **governance**, and specifically on the interim report that the Taskforce were submitting to the Policy and Resources and the Establishment Committees in September.

As the Taskforce considered the interim report, they received an update from the Diversity and Engagement Lead Officer on some of the HR recommendations:

- Anonymised recruitment is still in testing stage, but it has been implemented at interview stage using mixed panels.
- The Bullying and Harassment Procedure is out for consultation and is being linked to the Grievance Policy.
- Piloting for mentoring and reverse mentoring has started, and senior Members and Officers (such as the Lord Mayor, Chair of Policy and Town Clerk) have been part of this.
- Work experience schemes are being reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose.

Following an update on the launch of the consultative exercise on historic items with links to racism and slavery, the Taskforce reviewed – in detail – the guidance for Members, Chairs and Officers when discussing racial injustice. There was some discussion relating to the term ‘microaggression’ and whether this had become a politicised word. The Taskforce also debated the pros and cons of listing (or recommending) particular books for individuals to educate themselves on the issue, such as *Why I'm no longer talking to white people about race* by Reni Eddo-Lodge or *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo.

The Taskforce also briefly discussed a report of the Members Diversity Working Party concerning recommendations relating to improving the diversity of the Court of Common Council. In particular, Members discussed recommendations around nomenclature (i.e. that the City Corporation had changed Standing Orders to allow for Committee Chairs to officially call themselves ‘Chairs’ rather than ‘Chairmen’, if they wished to) and ensuring that the nominated electorate from businesses were a diverse representation of their workforce.

There was also a discussion relating to whether the City Corporation should sign up to particular Charters on improving ethnic diversity. It was agreed that some Charters, such as the *Charter for Black Representation in Finance and the Professions*, could be supported by the City of London Corporation, without the organisation being signatories.

Finally, the Co-Chair suggested that the next meeting should focus on asking Members of the wider Court of Common Council to attend (or submit views in advance) to input into what the Taskforce are doing. This would be a private meeting.

Following this meeting, the Taskforce would then focus on its workstreams of police, education and business.

For any enquiries to the Tackling Racism Taskforce, please contact emma.cunnington@cityoflondon.gov.uk