

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO CABINET EQUALITIES COMMITTEE

19 NOVEMBER 2018

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVES DIRECTORATE

CONSIDERATION FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE FULL DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM AS PROPOSED BY THE INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE ALLIANCE (IHRA) BY BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL.

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with information on the full working definition of antisemitism as outlined by the IHRC.
- 1.2 This definition has been adopted in full by Welsh Government, other local authorities in Wales and England and the four police forces across Wales.
- 1.3 Cabinet Equalities Committee is asked to consider if the working definition of antisemitism should be adopted by Bridgend County Borough Council.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 This report links to the following corporate priorities:
 - Priority 2: **Helping people to be more self-reliant**; taking early steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services.

3. Background

- 3.1 In August 2018 the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) asked all local authorities if they had adopted or were considering adopting the IHRA definition of antisemitism.

In response to this BCBC informed WLGA that this would be considered at the next Cabinet Equalities Committee.

- 3.2 Welsh Government adopted the IHRA working definition of antisemitism in July 2017, First Minister Carwyn Jones stated:

“As part of the Welsh Government’s ongoing commitment to tackle antisemitism, I can confirm that we have now adopted the International

Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism.”

4. Current situation

- 4.1 The IHRA definition will help all organisations and bodies in Wales to understand and recognise contemporary antisemitism. This will help to ensure that fewer perpetrators get away with being antisemitic. The four police forces in Wales are already using the definition.

In the spirit of the Stockholm Declaration that states: “With humanity still scarred by ...antisemitism and xenophobia the international community shares a solemn responsibility to fight those evils” the committee on Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial called the IHRA Plenary in Budapest 2015 to adopt the following working definition of antisemitism.

On 26 May 2016, the Plenary in Bucharest decided to adopt the following non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism:

“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.”

- 4.2 To guide IHRA in its work, the following examples may serve as illustrations:

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for “why things go wrong.” It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective

— such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.

- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

- 5.1 If the IHRA working definition of antisemitism is adopted this will be published within our Strategic Equalities Plan (SEP). The SEP is a statutory plan which supports the community cohesion agenda and cuts across policy areas and service delivery.
- 5.2 Any future requests for the adoption of definitions in relation to equalities, discrimination or community cohesion will be managed in the same way as this definition. In that the information will be brought to, discussed in, and a decision made by Cabinet Equalities Committee.
- 5.3 At present other faiths do not have an internationally recognised definition of discrimination.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 The report provides the committee with information which if accepted will positively assist in the delivery of the authority's equality duties.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

8. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment

- 8.1 This is an update report, therefore a well-being of future generations Act (2015) assessment has not taken place in order to prepare this report.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 That the Cabinet Equalities Committee receives and considers this report before making a decision on the adoption of this working definition by Bridgend County Borough Council.

Darren Mepham

Chief Executive – Chief Executive's Directorate.

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Background papers: None.