

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

19 March 2021

Report of Head of Human and Organisational Development - S Rees

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Report Title: Zero Racism Policy Pledge

Purpose of Report

1. For members to consider the signing of the Race Council Cymru's Zero Racism Policy Pledge as part of the Zero Racism Campaign and the Council's commitment to eliminate race discrimination as evidenced in its Strategic Equality Plan.

Executive Summary

2. The Race Council Cymru's (RCC) Zero Racism Policy, which addresses racial prejudice, racial discrimination, harassment and victimisation, has been endorsed by Welsh Government.
3. The policy is part of the RCC's wider Zero Racism Wales campaign – of which we and other organisations have been supportive.
4. The WLGA is supporting the call for Councils to sign up to the Zero Racism pledge, Appendix1, which was considered at the recent WLGA Equality Cabinet Members meeting.
5. While the Council's Strategic Equality Plan contains a strong commitment to tackling racism signing the Zero Racism Wales Policy will give a clear and formal commitment to tackling racism.

Background

6. The Leader's statement following the atrocious events in May last year and the intensification of the Black Lives Matter movement helped pave the way in considering how the Council tackled racism as well as contributing to a review of its equality objectives and actions.

7. Engagement and conversations with staff and representatives of our local Black Asian and minority ethnic minority communities to take place during the autumn to better understand the issues/barriers faced both as residents and as employees of Neath Port Talbot Council.
8. Consequently, actions were developed as part of the Strategic Equality Plan to address the issues raised and were adopted by Council on 27 January. Additionally as a direct result of conversations with staff a Race Equality Action Plan has been developed to address employment issues.
9. During 2020 Welsh Government began work on its Race Equality Action Plan for Wales and as part of its commitment to reduce inequality has supported the Race Council Cymru in its Zero Racism Wales Campaign
10. The Race Council Cymru (RCC) is an overarching body established by ethnic minority grassroots communities to bring key organisations to work together to combat racial prejudice, racial discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
11. The Zero Racism Wales Policy is part of its wider Zero Racism Wales Campaign which has been promoted by many organisations across Wales. The Council participated in this campaign by promoting it on its own social media platforms.
12. Welsh Government has endorsed the campaign and the Wales TUC and Unison Wales are among RCC's partners.
13. 13 Councils have already signed the pledge and the WLGA will be doing so shortly.

The Zero Racism Wales Policy Pledge

14. The Pledge isn't a quality mark or accreditation and there is no test or application to be made. The commitments in the Zero Racism Wales Policy reflect the principles of the Public Sector Equality Duty which underpin the Council's work as well as making explicit commitments which complement the Council's equality objectives and actions and its employment policies and practices.
15. By signing the pledge, and thereby supporting the policy, the Council agrees to take a stand against racism and promote a more inclusive and equal workplace and society that gives every individual in Wales the right to feel safe, valued and included.

Financial Appraisal

16. The commitments in the Zero Racism Wales Policy will be met by the equality objectives and actions as included in the Strategic Equality Plan and/or actions already identified in existing strategies/plans, to address the impacts of identified race inequality.

Integrated Impact Assessment

17. A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.
18. The first stage assessment, attached at Appendix 2 has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A summary is included below.
19. The whole ethos of the Zero Racism Wales Policy is to address racial discrimination, harassment and victimisation as well to advance equality of opportunity between different groups. As the Policy reflects and complements the Strategic Equality Plan, for which a full assessment has been undertaken, it is not considered necessary to undertake a full assessment in this instance.

Valleys Communities Impact:

20. There are no implications associated with this report.

Workforce Impact

21. The Zero Racism Wales Policy reflects the Council's compliance with employment legislation and with its own employment policies.

Legal Impact

22. Under the Equality Act 2010 the Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty and signing the Zero Racism Wales Policy will help evidence this.

Risk Management

23. Having been committed to tackling racism in all its forms, particularly in light of events over the last year, missing the opportunity to sign the Zero Racism Pledge would negate the Council's work to date and would impact on its reputation for the future.

Crime and Disorder Impact

24. The Council has a legal duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to carry out all its various functions with "due regard to the need to prevent Crime and Disorder in its area".
25. The commitments contained in the Zero Racism Policy assist us in discharging the crime and disorder duty.

Consultation

26. There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

Recommendation

27. Having had due regard to the first stage integrated impact assessment it is recommended that Cabinet signs the Zero Racism Wales Pledge as part of the Zero Racism Campaign and the Council's commitment to eliminate race discrimination as evidenced in its Strategic Equality Plan.

Reason for Proposed Decision

28. To help meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Reason for Urgency

In readiness for the Zero Racism Wales launch event at 12.00 on Sunday 21st March 2021.

Implementation of Decision

29. The decision is an urgent one for immediate implementation, subject to the consent of the relevant Scrutiny Chair (and is therefore not subject to the call-in procedure).

Appendices

30. Appendix 1 – Zero Racism Wales Policy Pledge
31. Appendix 2 – First Stage Integrated Impact Assessment

Background Papers

[Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024](#)

[Strategic Equality Plan - Actions to meet the Equality Objectives](#)

[Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 - Integrated Impact Assessment](#)

Officer Contact

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