

EQUALITIES SUB COMMITTEE – 24 AUGUST 2020

PART I – NOT DELEGATED

7. ANTI-SEMITISM DEFINITION

1 Summary

1.1 This report provides background information on the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism and proposes that the Equalities Sub Committee considers this definition and makes appropriate recommendations to the Policy and Resources Committee to recommend Council adopts the definition.

2 Details

2.1 The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), founded in 1998, is an inter-governmental body that unites governments and experts to strengthen, advance and promote Holocaust education, research and remembrance and to uphold the commitments to the 2000 Stockholm Declaration.

2.2 The United Kingdom has been member of the IHRA since it was founded in 1998.

2.3 In October 2019, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government wrote to local authorities expressing an urgent need to take action which includes adopting the definition.

2.4 The definition is as follows: “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”.

2.5 The 2011 Census data showed the stated religion of Three Rivers residents to be:

Christian	59.9%
Buddhist	0.4%
Hindu	4.5%
Jewish	1.9%
Muslim	2.2%
Sikh	0.5%
Other religion	0.7%
No religion	22.8%
Not stated	7.0%

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census, Table KS209EW

2.6 Hertfordshire’s Counter Terrorism Local Profile has identified the Jewish Community at high risk of attacks from terrorist groups. In addition the Jewish Community are

disproportionately represented in hate crime reporting figures both locally and at a national level.

- 2.7 Confusion exists over how to categorise anti-Semitic incidents, as they can be both categorised as religious based hate incidents and racist incidents. Jewish residents may, or may not, be practicing Jews in terms of their religion, but will also identify with their community in terms of their ethnic origin, and what sub-group of the Jewish Community their families have come from according to geographic origins.
- 2.8 With the significant Jewish Community in Three Rivers the levels of reported anti-Semitic incidents appears to be low. However, it is important to remember that incidents may occur to residents outside of the District, and with all local synagogues being outside of the District, along with key schools, and Jewish Cemeteries, we may not have access to information regarding the experiences of residents.
- 2.9 The weekly tension monitoring reports from Hertfordshire Constabulary demonstrate that anti-Semitic incidents are a regular occurrence in Hertfordshire.
- 2.10 The Community Safety Partnership are therefore ensuring that in its community engagement work that it specifically reaches out to this community in the delivery of the hate crime action plan. The adoption of the IRHA definition by the Council would support this work.
- 2.11 Adoption of the IHRA definition of Anti-Semitism would also be wholly consistent with, and complement the Council's Comprehensive Equality Policy (CEP).
- 2.12 Following the adoption of the Anti-Semitism definition the Equalities Sub committee would build on this by undertaking the following steps to put it into practice:
- Undertake equalities impact assessment on the adoption of the definition
 - Set up task and finish groups and invite community representatives to understand further the issues and explore further other communities which also experience harassment or prejudice.
 - Work with the Community Safety partnership to undertake consultation on prejudice and harassment issues in Three Rivers.
 - Review Three Rivers Comprehensive Equality Policy.
- 2.13 Officers have begun to develop a timeline for the sub-committee to progress into a work plan of actions, for the benefit of all of our diverse communities. (see Appendix 2)
- 2.14 Three Rivers District Council reviewed and adopted its Comprehensive Equality Policy (CEP) in 2018. The Policy states: "The Council is dedicated to the promotion of equal opportunities and to removing any discrimination in service delivery, procurement and employment. The Council is committed to advancing equality and community cohesion in partnership with other organisations and local communities."
- 2.15 The CEP makes a number of commitments to which the Council has actively supported since and prior to the review in 2018, such as:
- To promote equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all our communities;
 - To promote fair and equal access to services by all citizens on the basis of need and to provide services in a manner which is sensitive to the individual;

- To help and support members of the public and staff who face harassment and to take action against perpetrators where possible;
- To exercise its community leadership role to promote equality;

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 Adopting the IHRA definition could be seen to add value to the existing commitment to Equality and Diversity and help contribute to the Council’s compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, particularly in relation to those that come under the Religion and Belief Protected Characteristic.

3.2 The adoption of the definition will support Three Rivers District Council and the Community Safety Partnership to proactively tackling anti-Semitism in Three Rivers.

3.3 The Government wrote to Local Authorities in October 2018 urging us to take action and adopt the IRHA definition.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council’s agreed policy and budgets. The relevant policy is entitled the Councils Comprehensive Equality Policy 2018.

5 Financial, Legal, Community Safety, and Customer Services Centre Implications

5.1 Whilst the IHRA definition of Anti-Semitism is not legally binding its adoption will support the Council’s obligations under the Equality Act 2010, and its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty, to demonstrate due regard and to:

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

5.2 The Council will of course wish to ensure in implementing its equalities policies and exercising its functions more generally that it does adhere to the EqA 2010 in respect of all protected characteristics

6 Equal Opportunities Implications

6.1 Relevance Test

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact?	No
Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required? The Equalities sub committee have agreed to as part of their terms of reference review the Councils Comprehensive Equality Policy and engage with the community to ensure	No

we continue to meet the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty in line with adopted definitions. Relevance test and full impact assessment will follow after.	
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7 Staffing Implications

7.1 None.

8 Environmental Implications

8.1 None.

9 Communications and Website Implication

9.1 The equality and diversity pages on the Council's website will be updated to promote the Council's support for the definition and a press release will be issued to notify the general public.

10. Risk and Health & Safety Implications

10.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

10.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Community Partnerships Unit service plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this plan.

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	Risk Rating <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
Significant impact on the Council's reputation and relationship with the Jewish community if the definition is not adopted	Unlikely that it will significantly increase the risk of hate crime and racism towards the Jewish	Definition is agreed and proposed to P&R	2	2

10.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Likelihood Very Likely ----- Remote	Low 4	High 8	Very High 12	Very High 16
	Low 3	Medium 6	High 9	Very High 12
	Low 2	Low 4	Medium 6	High 8
	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Low 4
Impact Low -----> Unacceptable				

Impact Score

Likelihood Score

4 (Catastrophic)

4 (Very Likely (≥80%))

3 (Critical)

3 (Likely (21-79%))

2 (Significant)

2 (Unlikely (6-20%))

1 (Marginal)

1 **(Remote (≤5%))**

10.4 In the officers’ opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Corporate Framework and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

11. Recommendation

11.1 That Equalities sub-committee considers and approves the IRHA definition and makes formal recommendation to Policy and Resources Committee to adopt the definition as follows:

“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”.

That public access to the report be immediate.

That public access to the decision be immediate.

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Data Quality

Data sources:

Comprehensive Equalities Policy 2018

Corporate Framework 2020-2023.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Data checked by:

Gordon Glenn

Data rating: Tick

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	✓
3	High	

Background Papers

[Corporate Framework 2020-23](#)

APPENDICES / ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1 – IRHA Examples

Appendix 2 - Workplan and Timeline

Appendix 1

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.

Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property — such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries — are selected

because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.

Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries

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