

Committee: Council **Date:** Tuesday, 21 July 2020
Title: Statement of commitment and action regarding Equality, Inclusion and Diversity
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Summary

1. The statement set out in the report, produced jointly by Group Leaders with input from other members and the Chief Executive, seeks to send positive signals to the residents and communities of and visitors to the District, as well as to the council's employees that it values diversity and inclusion and recognises that the Council need to take further action.

Recommendations

2. Council is recommended:
 - a. To endorse the statement set out below, and
 - b. to establish Community Listening Events, referred to in para 12 and
 - c. to establish an Oversight Panel, referred to in para 13

Financial Implications

3. Subject to the detail, there may be a small cost incurred in implementing the recommendations, which can be met from existing budgets.
4. The actions arising from the Community Listening Events will need to be costed when more details are known.

Background Papers

5. None.

Impact

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	The Community Listening Events are intended to enable residents to share with the council their experiences of being Black and/or from an ethnic minority background to enable the council to consider the
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	actions it can take to reduce discrimination and inequality. It is intended that this approach will be extended to other groups in the community who also experience discrimination and inequality.
Community Safety	Whilst reported levels of hate crime in the District are low, there is a recognition that such crimes are under-reported and that one crime is too many.
Equalities	This report is intended to raise the issue of inequality and propose actions.
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	The Council has a general duty to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010 and to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	It is essential that all employees of the council are treated fairly and without discrimination in the workplace. More than that the council (as all employers) benefits from having a diverse workforce and this is only achievable if employees from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, as well as those who share other protected characteristics feel they have the same opportunity to perform, contribute and advance as all other employees.

Situation – Joint Statement

7. The recent protests surrounding violence against members of America's black community were a salutary reminder that systemic prejudice and racial disadvantage in their many guises are ever present around the world. They have no place in the 21st century.
8. Here in the UK, the Black Lives Matter demonstrations focused the nation's conscience on what it means to be on the receiving end of racism and the

continuing disparity in life chances and quality of life faced by our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. We are clear that black lives do matter. Prejudice is something this Council will not tolerate.

9. We also recognize the enormous contributions made by Black people and those from minority ethnic groups here in Uttlesford, including the roles they have played in the fight against Covid-19. We are saddened that Black people and those from minority ethnic groups have been disproportionately impacted by the virus.
10. Uttlesford District Council will continue and redouble its efforts to combat racism, disadvantage and injustice. We will, quite simply, do everything within our powers to ensure that the Council and the District are inclusive and welcoming places for all people to live, work and visit.
11. Members and officers are therefore committed to completing its work (that had been suspended with the arrival of Covid19) to reach the 'Achieving Level' of the Equality Framework for local Government by Autumn 2020.
12. As a first step towards better understanding what our minority communities experience, Council will establish Community Listening Events designed together with other community leaders, partner organisations, residents and staff and to be held in the Autumn of this year. These will listen to Uttlesford's Black and Minority Ethnic community and understand what barriers they face. A report will be brought back to full council on what we have learnt from these events, together with an action plan to address such barriers.
13. Council will also establish an independent oversight panel to advise, guide, inform and assure the efforts of the council towards a fully inclusive work and social environment in our district.