

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21 February 2019

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Enterprise,
Community and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Resources

SUBJECT: International Holocaust Remembrance
Alliance Working Definition of Anti-Semitism

WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to request that the Executive Board recommends that the Council adopts the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of Anti-Semitism. The Council has been approached by the Jewish Leadership Council and asked that it adopts this definition.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Council be recommended to adopt the IRHA working definition of Anti-Semitism.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) is an intergovernmental organisation founded in 1998 which unites governments and experts to strengthen, advance and promote Holocaust education, research and remembrance worldwide and to uphold the commitments of the Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust. The IHRA has 31 member countries, two liaison countries and nine observer countries.

3.2 IHRA adopted the Working Definition of Anti-Semitism at a plenary session in 2016. On 1 June 2017, the European Parliament voted to adopt a resolution calling on European Union member states and their institutions to adopt and apply the definition. The non-legally binding working definition includes illustrative examples of Anti-Semitism to guide the IHRA in its work. These examples include classical Anti-Semitic tropes, Holocaust denial and attempts to apply a double standard to the state of Israel.

3.3 This is the IHRA working definition:

“Anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of Anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities”.

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 levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as Anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism 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 Anti-Semitism 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, dehumanising, demonising, 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 (eg 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, eg by claiming that the existence of a state of Israel is a racist endeavour.

- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic Anti-Semitism (eg claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterise Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

4.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 **Children and Young People in Halton**

7.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

7.3 **A Healthy Halton**

7.4 **A Safer Halton**

7.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

8.1 There is a risk that failing to make clear the Council' strong support for the IHRA working definition of Anti-Semitism will send a counter message creating space that legitimises by omission hatred of Jews. This will therefore be mitigated by expressing unequivocal support for the IHRA working definition of Anti-Semitism.

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 9.1 As a recognised ethnic minority, Jews are protection from hate and discrimination by existing UK legislation, such as the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and the Equality Act 2010.
- 9.2 The IHRA working definition has therefore been developed and promulgated in order to ensure that culprits will not be able to get away with being Anti-Semitic because the term is ill defined, or because organisations or bodies have different interpretations of it

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

- 10.1 None.