

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 18 DECEMBER 2019

REPORT BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

ADOPTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE  
ALLIANCE WORKING DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

**Purpose/Summary of Report**

- This report sets to give a clear message that East Herts Council will not tolerate antisemitic behaviour or any forms of intolerance in any way. To unequivocally demonstrate this, Council members are invited to formally adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism and reaffirm the Council's commitment to promoting equalities in East Herts.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:**

**That:**

<b>(A)</b>	<b>East Herts Council adopts the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, that is, "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."</b>
<b>(B)</b>	<b>East Herts Council reaffirms that it finds antisemitism and all forms of prejudice targeted at those with a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 abhorrent and not in keeping with the council's values and its duties under that Act.</b>

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 East Herts has a numerically small though nonetheless valued and important population who identify as Jewish. It is vital that the council demonstrates that it will not tolerate antisemitism.

## **2.0 The report**

- 2.1 Over the last few years, the Council has taken pride in annually recognising Holocaust Memorial Day, with events hosted by the council which seek to commemorate the Holocaust in a fitting and meaningful way while also aiming to inform and inspire the values of inclusion and cohesion in future generations. The legacy of the Holocaust continues to drive this work as a symbol of the council's ongoing commitment to remembrance.
- 2.2 The Council recognises, respects and values all of the district's many and diverse communities including its Jewish citizenry, as articulated through the council's Corporate Equality Policy 2016-2019. This document makes explicit that *'the council is dedicated to the promotion of equal opportunities and to removing any discrimination in service delivery, procurement and employment'* and that *'the council is committed to achieving equality and community cohesion in partnership with other organisations and local communities'*.
- 2.3 Given the Council's approach to equality issues, adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism is clearly in-keeping with East Herts Council's strategic direction and aspirations.
- 2.4 The adoption of the working definition of antisemitism gives clarity to the Council's understanding of the term and provides a strong and potent signal of a responsible organisation giving assurance to the district's Jewish residents and indeed all those living, working or visiting here that antisemitic discrimination will not be tolerated and has no place within East Herts.

### **3.0 Implications**

- 3.1 The Council is committed to working to promote and tackle discrimination in line with the Equality Act 2010. Adopting the working definition of antisemitism provides a further demonstration of how seriously the council takes both its duties under the Act and its leadership role in confronting the scourge of antisemitism.
- 3.2 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.
- 3.3 The complete implications of the report are provided Essential Reference Paper A.

#### Background Papers

None

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