

Motions on Notice

MOTIONS ON NOTICE

Council Members are asked to consider the under-mentioned Motions:-

1. Adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Anti-Semitism

Reported incidents of antisemitic hate crimes in the UK have risen year after year since 2015. More than 100 incidents of anti-semitism occur each month, including verbal abuse, social media harassment and physical assault. In 2018, there were 78 separate incidents of Jewish owned properties being desecrated.

Sunderland Council condemns these incidents. It resolves to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Anti-Semitism and implement its adoption in the following ways:

- To include a copy of the Working Definition and its examples in newly elected members' induction packs;
- To introduce the Working Definition and its examples at the equality and diversity session included in members' training and in equivalent sessions provided for Sunderland City Council employees;
- To email all elected members and Council employees before the end of October 2019 with the Working Definition and its examples;
- To introduce a reference to the Working Definition in the Members Code of Conduct and equivalent Council staff policies and ensure that any complaints of anti-semitism made against elected members or Council employees are investigated in accordance with the Working Definition and its examples;
- To ensure that the Council observes any official changes the IHRA makes to its Working Definition and/or examples and implements those changes within its own practices (defined above).

Councillor D. McDonough
Councillor M. Dixon
Councillor Dr. A. Mullen
Councillor R. Oliver
Councillor H. Greener

Councillor W. Blackett
Councillor R. Francis
Councillor J. McKeith
Councillor G. Howe
Councillor J. Doyle

2. The Start Time of Future Planning and Highways meetings

Sharon Hodgson MP recently criticised the 4.30 pm start time of a Planning and Highways meeting, suggesting that it was difficult for working people to attend. Council acknowledges Mrs Hodgson's point, made on behalf of residents of Washington relating to the incinerator vote, and resolves to commence all future Planning and Highways meetings at 6 pm.

Councillor R. Oliver
Councillor Dr. A. Mullen
Councillor H. Greener
Councillor W. Blackett
Councillor R. Francis

Councillor J. McKeith
Councillor G. Howe
Councillor D. McDonough
Councillor J. Doyle
Councillor M. Dixon

3. Developing a Community Engagement Strategy

This council believes:

That to achieve its vision of becoming a truly Dynamic, Healthy and Vibrant City it needs to take steps to work with residents in our local communities to ensure they are fully engaged in developing future service delivery.

That only through working together we can ensure that quality services are delivered both at a City level and on a local level.

By increasing community engagement and participation this council also believes we can develop more resilient communities, bringing people together to make a difference by helping them to do more for themselves and others so that their local community and neighbourhoods can thrive.

This council therefore:

Calls upon the Chief Executive to bring forward proposals for developing a proactive community engagement strategy for the city and in doing so look at the feasibility of:

- Delegating more powers and responsibilities to Area Committees to run more services locally; as part of a programme of devolving responsibilities away from the Civic Centre.
- Devolving some decision making and scrutiny of services to residents themselves, allowing the council to work with them on improving their local neighbourhoods.
- Reviewing how residents can become empowered to develop and deliver on local projects and ideas within their community; in addition to becoming more involved in strategic planning of council services.

- Ensure a more robust communication strategy is in place with local communities so residents are aware of the activities of the council that impact on them and their local community, but importantly the part they can then play in reviewing and improving service delivery.

Councillor P. Stewart
 Councillor J. Kelly
 Councillor D. Waller
 Councillor A. Wilson
 Councillor G. Walker
 Councillor K. Chequer
 Councillor G. Miller

Councillor M. Mordey
 Councillor P. Tye
 Councillor D. MacKnight
 Councillor R. Davison
 Councillor P. Smith
 Councillor R. Atkinson
 Councillor S. Foster

4. Appointment of Future Mayors and Deputy Mayors

This Council resolves to appoint future mayors and deputy mayors in proportion to the political composition of the council sharing the appointments among the political groups.

Councillor R. Oliver
 Councillor Dr. A. Mullen
 Councillor J. McKeith
 Councillor D. McDonough

5. Climate Crisis

Sunderland council led the way by being the first in North East to declare a climate emergency. This is a recognition that the climate crisis is the biggest threat to the well-being and economic prosperity of the city and urgent action is needed.

Sunderland council can also lead the way by being the most open and responsive in reacting to the declaration and putting the climate crisis on the agenda of every council meeting.

Therefore, we call upon the cabinet to present and discuss a summary of progress at full council meetings for the foreseeable future.

Councillor D. Armstrong
 Councillor H. Greener

6. School Uniforms

School uniforms are a common requirement in education and provide a sense of identity, community and cohesion in schools. They also have a positive influence on behaviour and discipline within school and remove the peer pressure to dress following fashions and reduce inequalities between pupils. The cost of a school uniform can also be a financial burden on parents, especially where schools have complicated requirements or restrict where uniforms can be purchased.

The costs of school uniforms represent a significant financial challenge for parents and pupils, especially those on low incomes. Costs can result in parents being unable to provide their children with a full school uniform or rely on purchasing ill-fitting oversized clothes. Whilst acknowledging the good work of community groups offering a uniform exchange, parents and pupils also can experience stigma through being forced to rely on second hand clothing.

This council notes that:

- The Department for Education 2015 'Cost of School Uniform' report noted the average cost of school uniform as being £212.88 per pupil (excluding costs of PE kit).
- The Children's Society reports in 2015 & 2018 'The Wrong Blazer' highlighted concerns about the costs of school uniform (up to £340.00 per year), particularly where parents were required to buy from a specialist retailer.

This council therefore resolves to:

- Explore the development of a scheme to provide funding for school uniform grants for parents on the lowest incomes. Report on a scheme to be prepared in advance of the 2020/2021 school year to support parents in covering the cost of school uniforms.
- Encourage schools in Sunderland, Houghton, Hetton and Washington to consider ensuring that school uniform requirements are not over complicated and restrict where they can be purchased. Guidance will be shared which includes:
 - Only stipulate basic items and colours but not styles so that items can be bought from multiple retail chains at reasonable prices and not just from one authorised supplier.
 - Avoid high cost items such as blazers and caps.
 - Have easily washable items: dry clean only items should be avoided.
 - If there are any differences in the school uniform and appearance policies between sexes/ genders, these should be justified and clearly stated in the policy.

- School governing bodies should have a sensible, flexible approach to uniform items to account for extreme weather conditions.
- Limit the frequency of uniform changes as this can be costly for parents and limits the scope for re-sale or handing on to siblings or other pupils.

Councillor S. O'Brien
 Councillor M. Haswell
 Councillor G. Smith
 Councillor A. Wood
 Councillor N. Hodson

7. The UK's Exit from the EU

This Council acknowledges that Sunderland voted to leave the European Union in 2016 and calls upon the City's three MPs to honour this result by facilitating the UK's exit from the EU.

Councillor J. Doyle
 Councillor D. McDonough
 Councillor Dr. A. Mullen
 Councillor G. Howe
 Councillor R. Oliver

Councillor J. McKeith
 Councillor R. Francis
 Councillor W. Blackett
 Councillor H. Greener
 Councillor M. Dixon

