

COUNCIL 12 APRIL 2017

MOTION ON NOTICE – ADOPTION OF THE IHRA WORKING DEFINITION OF ANTI-SEMITISM

To consider the following motion submitted by Councillors Terrie Metcalfe, Oscar Thynne and Nathan Burns.

“We are well aware that anti-Semitism continues to be a problem in this country. It is therefore right that, as a Council, we are able to demonstrate the seriousness with which we take it, as for all forms of hate crime. Anti-Semitism must be understood for what it is – an attack on the identity of people who live, contribute and are valued in our society. In light of this, Members agree to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of anti-Semitism (below), for application by the City Council.”

“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.”

(Background papers to the motion are attached.)

Officer briefing note:-

As set out in a briefing note to accompany two motions last July about supporting a diverse and tolerant society, the Council's Corporate Plan include Community Leadership as one of the four priorities. The Council is committed to bringing communities together and addressing the major issues affecting the district through working in partnership. The role of the council is summarised in the Corporate Plan and includes maintaining a cohesive community.

As a point of information for Members, Lancaster District Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is a collective of public, voluntary, community and private organisations who come together to do all that they can to make the district's communities safer. The CSP provides a co-ordinated response to community safety issues, drawing together organisations and people that can make a difference. Lancaster district CSP's membership comprises:

- Lancaster City Council
- Lancashire Constabulary
- Lancashire County Council
- Lancashire Fire & Rescue Services
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
- Cumbria and Lancashire Community Rehabilitation Company (Probation)
- Youth Offending Team
- North Lancashire CCG

The Communities Together group has representation from many diverse religious and ethnic groups in the district as well as the community and voluntary sector, Lancashire County Council, Lancaster City Council, Lancaster University, University of Cumbria and Lancashire Constabulary.

Section 151 Officer's comments:-

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

Monitoring Officer's comments:-

The Government response to the Home affairs Report (attached) considers the definition a useful tool for public bodies to understand how anti-Semitism manifests itself in the 21st Century.

However, please note at paragraph 4 of the report the additional caveats:

"it is not anti-Semitic to criticise the Government of Israel, without additional evidence to suggest anti-Semitic intent.

It is not anti-Semitic to hold the Israel government to the same standards as other liberal democracies, or to take a particular interest in the Israeli government's policies or actions, without additional evidence to suggest anti-Semitic intent"