

## Notice of Motion – Labour Motion

Council 7 February 2024

### **Council notes:**

- Merton is proud to be a diverse borough and to have a workforce that is making great strides towards being truly reflective of the communities we serve.
- Merton's diverse communities and employees have played a vital role in shaping our borough's identity and are a key part of the vibrant culture and neighbourhoods that make Merton the fantastic place it is today.
- That our diverse ethnic communities have distinct characteristics histories, cultures and identities that should not be homogenised. We have created an 'Inclusive Language Guide' for staff through the continued collaboration with our staff networks and communities, and we are aiming to develop more appropriate terminology to describe the borough's diverse communities.
- The impact of the government's policies and rhetoric on the rise in racism and hate crime during the last 14 years and the impact this has had on Merton's communities and employees.
- That Merton Council and its partners can play an important role in eliminating racism, both within the workplace and within our communities and neighbourhoods.
- The need for all Councils to embed racial equality considerations in the decisions we make.
- That our most recent Equality Diversity and Inclusion survey showed that only 52% of staff feel comfortable talking about race at work, and that 7% of respondents have personally experienced, and/or witnessed a colleague experience, a form of racism whilst working for Merton Council.

### **Council welcomes:**

- The zero-tolerance approach to racism, bullying, and harassment adopted by our organisation, but recognises that more work needs to be done.
- The publishing of our Hate Crime and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategies, and the priority of this administration to instil civic pride through reducing inequality, tackling discrimination, and promoting and celebrating diversity across our borough.
- Our commitment to having dedicated safe spaces for open and meaningful discussions about Equality Diversity and Inclusion topics, issues, and concerns.
- The work of our Joint Consultative Committee with Ethnic Minorities and our Faith and Belief forums to advise on strategic policies, including the local concerns of ethnic minority communities, and our work to eliminate discriminatory practices and racial prejudice in the delivery of Council services and shape inclusive services that are culturally sensitive.
- The Race Equality Network's (REN) continued work to develop and build initiatives across the council, including advising in the procurement of Equality,

Diversity, and Inclusion training for leadership and their active support on all recruitment panels for managerial roles and above.

- The launch of new staff networks, for underrepresented groups, as well as the Aspiring Leaders Program, which aims to nurture career progression and provide skills and training for staff aspiring to leadership roles.

**Council believes that:**

- Our signature of UNISON's Anti-Racism Charter demonstrates Merton's ongoing commitment to being an explicitly anti-racist organisation and employer. We are committed to being proactively anti-racist, not just non-racist.

**Council resolves to:**

- Sign UNISON's Anti-Racism Charter and work with UNISON to introduce the commitments contained within the Charter.

**Cllr Eleanor Stringer**

**Cllr Edith Macauley**

**Cllr Billy Christie**