

20 FEBRUARY 2020

Report Title	ADOPTION OF INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE ALLIANCE WORKING DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM			
Purpose of Report	For Council to consider the adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism			
Decision(s)	Council RESOLVES to Adopt the IHRA working definition of antisemitism with immediate effect.			
Consultation and Feedback	None			
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Options	Council can decide whether to adopt the definition or decline to do so.			
Background Papers	None			
Appendices	Letter dated the 15 th of October 2019 from Rt. Hon. Robert Jenrick MP, Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	No	Yes	Yes	No

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On the 15th of October 2019, the Secretary of State wrote to all Council Leaders in England requesting that the Council formally adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism. 136 Councils out of 343 have already adopted the definition. The IHRA is an intergovernmental body established in Stockholm in 1998. It comprises 31 member nations whose purpose is to place political and social leaders' support behind the need for Holocaust education, remembrance and research, both nationally and internationally.
- 1.2 A new definition of antisemitism was adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) in 2016 and formally adopted by Central Government on 12th December 2016. It is proposed that Stroud District Council also adopts this definition.
- 1.3 The definition is not legally binding but is an important tool to enable public bodies to understand how antisemitism manifests itself as it gives examples of the kind of behaviours which can constitute antisemitism. It will also assist the Council to meet its statutory obligations relating to its public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

1.4 Adopting the IHRA definition is unlikely to disproportionately disadvantage any protected characteristic, and does not directly prevent the promotion of understanding between different groups.

1.5 Unfortunately, antisemitic hate incidents have reached a record level in the UK. Jewish people can and do experience antisemitism and hate crime. Adopting the definition will also provide our residents and visitors with assurance that hate crime of this nature will not be tolerated.

1.6 The definition states:

“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 towards Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

1.7 The IHRA website (<https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/node/196>) provides the following guidance in relation to the definition:

“Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism 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 antisemitism 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, dehumanizing, demonizing, 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 (e.g. 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, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.*
- *Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.*
- *Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.*
- *Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.*
- *Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.*

1.8 In May 2017, the then Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government wrote to local authorities asking them to adopt the working definition of antisemitism, which a number of Councils have now done. It is understood that the definition was informally adopted at this time by the then Monitoring Officer and Director of Tenant and Corporate Services, but it is appropriate that Council should formally adopt the definition to give it appropriate prominence and to demonstrate to Central Government that the Council has complied with its request.

2. IMPLICATIONS

2.1 Financial Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

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2.2 Legal Implications

Any legal implications are set out in the body of the report.

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2.3 Equality Implications

There are not any specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision and any equality implications are set out in the body of the report.

2.4 Environmental Implications

There are no implications within this category.