

SEFTON LABOUR GROUP
NOTICE OF MOTION
TO BE PUT TO THE COUNCIL MEETING ON 21 APRIL 2022

Moved by: Councillor Natasha Carlin

Seconded by: Councillor

Sefton Council Race Equality Declaration of Intent

Sefton is home to many people from many diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and they are key members of our communities. The Council recognises that those of a Diverse Ethnic Background are not homogenous – different communities and individuals within communities have differing needs. Needs that should not be defined by stereotyping or presumptions. This Council understands and acknowledges that systemic and institutional racism is an issue affecting the outcomes for all those who identify with having a Diverse Ethnic Background (DEBs – Previously known as Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic/BAME).

The Pandemic -and its disproportionate impact on disadvantaged groups and ethnic minorities - and the Black Lives Matters Movement give social and racial justice a new level of urgency. There is strong expression of the need for change.

Sefton Council accepts that it has an important role to play in tackling race injustice and inequality and driving forward positive change.

- As a major employer, we must look internally at our own organisation, and ensure that it is representative of the population we serve, welcoming, safe and inclusive, and that DEBs staff have equality of opportunity to develop and succeed.
- As a lead organisation within the community, we have a responsibility to ensure our services are accessible to all of our residents.
- Finally, as a partner in the Liverpool City Region Race Equality Programme, we must use our commitment to race equality to help identify best practice for us, and other organisations and stakeholders, to follow.

The council recognises that there is work to do in order to have a workforce where the percentage of DEBs staff reflects that of the borough's DEBs community in terms of DEBs staff in the Council's workforce and DEBs representation at a director and senior management level.

Proportional representation in the workforce is only one indicator of race equality in employment. An equally important indicator is the 'lived experience' of DEBs staff and DEBs residents, and we know that tackling the impact of systemic and institutional racism is the key issue to achieve.

Sefton Council is working with the Combined Authority and the other Liverpool City Region (LCR) Councils to develop and deliver a Race Equality Programme that seeks to meet the shared vision of “tackling systemic injustice and inequality and driving forward positive change for our DEBs employees and residents - influencing the partners we work with to do the same”.

Sefton Council is committed to emerge from the current crisis and achieve the Sefton Council Strategy vision of *A Confident and Connected Borough*.

Our Race Equality Declaration of Intent supports and embodies the Sefton 2030 Vision priority of *“Together a Stronger Community”*. It contributes to ensuring that *“We focus on our similarities and the strength that comes from diversity, but never on our differences”*.

The Success of this intent will be measured by demonstrating that *“people feel safe and supported”* and ensuring that *“people are influencing decisions which affect them and communities work together and with partners to deliver effective change”*.

This Council therefore will:

- Support an inclusive and safe workplace environment for DEBs Staff.
- Provide a mandatory equality and diversity training programme for all staff and councillors and ensure it is undertaken by staff and councillors, with the programme continuing to capture all future new starters to the organisation.
- Demonstrate ‘due regard’ to race equality in employment policy and decisions.
- Work with the DEBs Staff Group to understand how the organisation can improve.
- Ensure discrimination and harassment cases are investigated and outcomes reached within reasonable timescales.
- Set up a Racial Equality Monitoring Group – drawing on the expertise from Councillors, from DEBs staff, local communities, residents, young citizens, critical race theories, local organisations and anti-racism charities, businesses, and other relevant parties. Within this over the following 12 months, the group will consider strategies and actions being developed by the Council and other partner organisations and develop a Borough-wide strategy in line with the Liverpool City Regions targets of 2025/2026. It will also recommend ways we can maximise the voice of the DEBs staff group, promote improvements in the number of DEBs staff, improve retention, and promote progression into Senior leadership roles.

It will obtain data on DEBs staff and be able to assess this data and use it to set obtainable targets around DEBs staff – including having a minimum number of DEBs staff based on local and regional demographics and based on the makeup of individual professions. Within this the working group will also assist in promoting the DEBs staffing group throughout the Council and the Borough.

- Monitor impact assessment of policy and decisions.
- Promote good race relations and raise public awareness through the council’s commitment to race equality, diversity, and inclusion.

- Develop more responsive, accessible, safe, and inclusive services that meet the needs of our increasingly diverse community.
- Develop a coordinated communication strategy in relation to the council's commitment to race equality, diversity, and inclusion – which maximise the opportunity to improve awareness of good race relations, and acknowledge, value, and celebrate cohesion and diversity.
- Review and improve the Community Impact Assessment process and ensure all necessary staff are trained to complete assessments effectively.
- Review and improve the Council's Equality Monitoring processes to ensure appropriate collection, storage and use equality profile data to provide meaningful information to demonstrate equality of opportunity in service access, quality, and outcome.
- Support inclusive participation in engagement strategies for residents, community organisations, and businesses, representing people who share protected characteristics.
- Ensure an Annual Equality Monitoring report is undertaken – which will include the outcomes of staff training, discrimination and harassment monitoring, and impact assessment of policies and decisions. This will also include rigorous and substantial community impact assessments.
- Sefton Council will support LCR Race Equality Programme and its target of substantial change in both policies and practices by 2025.