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Title of report: Adoption of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims' Definition of Islamophobia

Report : Ipswich Borough Council welcomes all communities and values the contributions its residents make to this vibrant and diverse town. It engages and works with partner organisations across Ipswich to promote a clear and consistent message that prejudicial views or behaviour that could result in hate incidents or crimes are neither tolerated nor condoned. However, Islamophobia, alongside other forms of discrimination, remains a significant challenge, impacting upon cities and towns across the UK.

Following two years of consultation, on 27th November 2018, the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims published a report titled "Islamophobia Defined: the inquiry into a working definition of Islamophobia". This report contained the following definition: "Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness".

The Council's equality policy seeks to ensure people are treated with dignity and respect and the causes of unfairness are understood and addressed. A hate crime is defined as a crime which is committed against someone due to their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability. Tackling hate crime – which includes Islamophobia - is important for the Council, not just because of the devastating consequences it can have for victims and their families, but also because it can divide communities.

Whilst the APPG definition of Islamophobia is not legally binding, its adoption will support the Council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010, and its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty, to demonstrate due regard and 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.

It is recommended IBC adopts the APPG definition of Islamophobia as the working model for challenging and confronting incidents of this form of hate crime and racism.

What evidence/data is being used to support this equality analysis? Please select all that apply.: The Equality Panel, Ipswich Direct/other social media, Findings from surveys, focus groups & consultations, Information from statutory partners (e.g police), Information from voluntary & community sector (e.g ISCRE, ICVS), Published data - e.g Census, State of Ipswich report, Analysis of service data (e.g I-card)

Service area: Corporate Support

Head of Service or Chief Operating Officer: Justin Jupp

Head of Service email: Justin.Jupp@ipswich.gov.uk

Links to supporting documents where available: In November 2018, the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims published a report titled Islamophobia Defined: the inquiry into a working definition of Islamophobia, which highlighted the prevalence of Islamophobic racism in Britain. The report can be found here:
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/599c3d2febbd1a90cffdd8a9/t/5bfd1ea3352f531a6170ceee/15>

Please upload any supporting documents: Islamophobia+Defined.pdf

What is proposed?: Ipswich Borough Council to adopt the APPG definition of Islamophobia as the working model for challenging and confronting incidents of this form of hate crime and racism.

Following two years of consultation, on 27th November 2018, the APPG on British Muslims published a report titled "Islamophobia Defined: the inquiry into a working definition of Islamophobia". This report contained the following definition: "Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness" (All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims, 2018, pp. 11).

The APPG has provided examples within the conclusion section of the report (pp. 56-59) to guide organisations on the implementation of the definition. These are set out below and are considered to be essential supporting elements of the working definition. Contemporary examples of Islamophobia in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in encounters between religions and non-religions in the public sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, instigating, or justifying the killing or harming of Muslims in the name of a racist/ fascist ideology, or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Muslims as such, or of Muslims as a collective group, such as, especially but not exclusively, conspiracies about Muslim entryism in politics, government or other societal institutions; the myth of Muslim identity having a unique propensity for terrorism, and claims of a demographic 'threat' posed by Muslims or of a 'Muslim takeover'.
- Accusing Muslims as a group of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Muslim person or group of Muslim individuals, or even for acts committed by non-Muslims.
- Accusing Muslims as a group, or Muslim majority states, of inventing or exaggerating Islamophobia, ethnic cleansing or genocide perpetrated against Muslims.
- Accusing Muslim citizens of being more loyal to the 'Ummah' (transnational Muslim community) or to their countries of origin, or to the alleged priorities of Muslims worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying Muslim populations, the right to self-determination e.g., by claiming that the existence of an independent Palestine or Kashmir is a terrorist endeavour.

- Applying double standards by requiring of Muslims behaviours that are not expected or demanded of any other groups in society, e.g. loyalty tests.
 - Using the symbols and images associated with classic Islamophobia (e.g. Muhammed being a paedophile, claims of Muslims spreading Islam by the sword or subjugating “Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.” minority groups under their rule) to characterize Muslims as being ‘sex groomers’, inherently violent or incapable of living harmoniously in plural societies.
 - Holding Muslims collectively responsible for the actions of any Muslim majority state, whether secular or constitutionally Islamic.
- (All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims, 2018, pp. 56-57).

Why are the changes being introduced?: The Council remains highly committed to advancing equality, removing or reducing barriers and promoting good relations and aims to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and have due regard to advancing equality for the relevant protected characteristics. The most recent ONS figure from 2018 states there are 7,338 Muslims living in Ipswich, which equates to 5% of the Ipswich population (total population 138,510).

Adopting the APPG working definition on Islamophobia could be seen to add value to our existing commitment to Equality and Diversity and help contribute to the council’s compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty. It is also one important element in a wider programme of work to tackle all forms of discrimination.

What evidence is being used to support this Equality Impact Assessment, and how is it being used?: IBC Equality and Diversity Policy, IBC Equality Charter, Equality Act 2010, Public Sector Equality Duty, Corporate Plan: Building a Better Ipswich, Ipswich Population Data (ONS), "Islamophobia Defined: the inquiry into a working definition of Islamophobia".

How will this change be implemented?: The Council will:

- Incorporate the definition into all of its processes, practices and toolkits and give consideration to this in the delivery of services, taking appropriate action to challenge and raise awareness in relation to this form of hatred.
- Update the equality and diversity pages on the Council’s website to promote the Council’s support for the definition and a press release will be issued to notify the general public.
- Advise employees that advice and guidance regarding the adoption of the definition will be available from the Community Support Team and the Intranet.
- Write to the APPG to inform of the Council’s actions, once the definition has been formally adopted.

Age: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: Adopting the APPG definition is unlikely to disproportionately disadvantage the protected characteristic, age.

Disability: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: Adopting the APPG definition is unlikely to disproportionately disadvantage the protected characteristic, disability.

Marriage & Civil Partnership: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: A particular strain of anti-Muslim prejudice when it comes to attitudes towards marriage to people of Muslim background has been reported by Manchester University. Adopting the APPG definition is unlikely to disproportionately disadvantage the protected characteristic, marriage & civil partnership.

Race: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: It is important to note that islamophobia intersects with racism (written evidence submitted to the APPG on British Muslims by Akeela Ahmed MBE of the Government's Cross-Department Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred, p.30).

Adopting the APPG definition is unlikely to disproportionately disadvantage race and does not directly prevent the promotion of understanding between community groups. However, consideration should be given to the potential rise in hate crime that may arise following the adoption of the definition and the subsequent promotion of it in the media.

Pregnancy & Maternity: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: Adopting the APPG definition is unlikely to disproportionately disadvantage the protected characteristic, pregnancy & maternity.

Religion or Belief: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: Adopting the APPG definition is unlikely to disproportionately disadvantage religion or belief and does not directly prevent the promotion of understanding between community groups. However, consideration should be given to the potential rise in hate crime that may arise following the adoption of the definition and the subsequent promotion of it in the media.

Gender Reassignment: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: Adopting the APPG definition is unlikely to disproportionately disadvantage the protected characteristic, gender reassignment.

Sex: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or further promote positive impact.: Although islamophobia intersects with sexism (written evidence submitted to the APPG on British Muslims by Akeela Ahmed MBE of the Government's Cross-Department Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred, p.30), adopting the APPG definition is unlikely to disproportionately disadvantage the protected characteristic, sex.

Sexual Orientation: No impact

Please provide an explanation of this impact and actions to mitigate any adverse impact, or

further promote positive impact.: Adopting the APPG definition is unlikely to disproportionately disadvantage the protected characteristic, sexual orientation.

I can confirm the report does meet Ipswich Borough Council's equality objectives: I can confirm the report does meet Ipswich Borough Council's equality objectives

The report helps us to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment & victimisation' in the following way(s): The adoption of the APPG definition of Islamophobia will support the Council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010, and its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty, to demonstrate due regard and 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.

Adopting the APPG working definition on Islamophobia for use across the Council is one important element in a wider programme of work to tackle all forms of discrimination, whereby it will be promoted that prejudicial views or behaviour that could result in hate incidents or crimes are neither tolerated nor condoned.

The report helps us to 'advance equality of opportunity...' in the following way(s): Adoption of the APPG definition of Islamophobia would be wholly consistent with, and complement the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy, which in turn is fully aligned to the Corporate Plan.

The Council's equality policy seeks to ensure people are treated with dignity and respect and the causes of unfairness are understood and addressed. A hate crime is defined as a crime which is committed against someone due to their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability. Tackling hate crime – which includes Islamophobia - is important for the Council, not just because of the devastating consequences it can have for victims and their families, but also because it can divide communities.

The policy helps us to 'foster good relations...' in the following way(s): Ipswich Borough Council welcomes all communities and values the contributions its residents make to this vibrant and diverse town. Tackling hate crime – which includes Islamophobia - is important for the Council, not just because of the devastating consequences it can have for victims and their families, but also because it can divide communities. Adoption of the APPG definition will challenge and confront incidents of this form of hate crime and racism and help foster good relations.

The new provisions will be reviewed in the following way(s): Community Support will undertake reviews (in line with reviewing the Equality and Diversity Policy) to understand the impacts of adopting the definition has had (both positive and negative) in Ipswich. The review will not include any changes to the wording of the definition itself unless there are changes made or suggested by the APPG.

The Community Support Team will work with Councillors, partners, and stakeholders to conduct the review as appropriate.
