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Tackling Racism Taskforce

Date: **FRIDAY, 2 OCTOBER 2020**

Time: **8.30 am**

Venue: **VIRTUAL MEETING**

1. **PUBLIC SUMMARY: 2 OCTOBER 2020**

For Information
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John Barradell
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

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Tackling Racism Taskforce

A public summary of the Tackling Racism Taskforce's meeting held on 16 October 2020.

The Tackling Racism Taskforce held its sixth meeting on 16 October 2020 with a focus on **education**.

The City Corporation's Strategic Education & Skills Director gave an overview of the areas for action that the Taskforce could focus on, such as:

a) Lobbying for more inclusive forms of evaluation and assessment
b) Continued research on wellbeing and adaptive practices for equalities groups
c) Proactively diversify school governing bodies through recruitment practices
d) Lobbying for inclusive curriculum design and addressing some recent national curriculum changes, which may have resulted in some negative changes.
e) Providing greater access to pupil wellbeing, counselling and family support.

The Taskforce then had a detailed discussion where the following points were made:-

- Overall, the schools were doing a really good job in this area but there was no room for complacency.
- It would be useful to have the demographic statistics of pupils in the City Corporation's selective schools.
- It was important to consider the language used when advertising for school governors to attract diverse candidates with the right skills. The alumni community could be an important source of candidates for school governor roles. Age diversity for school governors was also important.
- Black writers needed to be embedded across the curriculum – this was something the City Corporation could lobby for. One Member suggested that the curriculum be devolved to reflect the diversity of London. The CEO of the City of London Academies Trust (CoLAT) explained that, despite the constraints of the National Curriculum, the academies had been teaching about the role of BAME individuals in English Literature, Science and History.
- There was a disparity in funding from the City of London Corporation to the independent schools in comparison to the academies, as highlighted in the Tomlinson Review. This should be looked at.
- Generally, across the country, there seemed to be disproportionate impact on black Caribbean boys and white, working-class boys in terms of exclusions. Following a further discussion on exclusions, it was noted that any exclusion was always a last resort and also had to be taken when considering other pupils' ability to learn without distraction.
- There should be better partnership working in this area between the independent schools and the academies.
- High stakes examinations induced anxiety for pupils and this may affect their wellbeing.
- Raising standards and aspirations was the only real way to increase outcomes.
- Whilst some Members felt it was important that schools be left to concentrate on getting through the fallout of the pandemic, others felt that it was important

to keep shining a spotlight on this area to ensure that all pupils, whatever their ethnicity, recover from the pandemic, equally.

- It was important to look at what other initiatives were in place, such as the Financial Services Skills Commission, and see where the City of London Corporation could add value.
- The role of bursaries, philanthropy and endowments should not be underestimated in helping educational outcomes. The City Corporation may be able to do more to financially support the academies, such as a City Giving Day.

Members of the Taskforce requested that the most recent exclusion data report be sent to the Taskforce for information.

The Taskforce also acknowledged that there were other governing bodies, such as the Education Board and the Board of Governors for the independent schools, in this space and so the Taskforce should not overstep its boundaries.

The Taskforce concluded that it would focus on:

- Bringing together initiatives on tackling racism across the family of schools
- Drawing together some common themes, including clear outcomes and timelines, such as:
    - Data on exclusions and diversity within schools
    - Governor diversity and linking schools with alumni
    - Curriculum – can the Taskforce support something specific
    - Funding – can the City Corporation support particular initiatives financially
    - Improve diversity and unconscious bias training for governors and staff

The Taskforce agreed to have two additional sessions on education: one to focus on independent schools and state schools, and the other to focus on cultural and creative learning and skills and adult learning.

For any enquiries to the Tackling Racism Taskforce, please contact emma.cunnington@cityoflondon.gov.uk