

Tackling Racism Taskforce

A public summary of the Tackling Racism Taskforce's meeting held on 30 October 2020.

The Tackling Racism Taskforce held its eighth meeting on 30 October 2020 with a focus on **adult skills and cultural and creative learning (education)**.

Firstly, the City Corporation's Strategic Education & Skills Director directed the Taskforce with the paper's section on adult skills, which suggested that consideration be given to the following areas:

- a) Providing accessible work experience opportunities in the City and beyond
- b) Increase efforts to encourage apprenticeship applications from BAME learners and ensure these convert in proportion to appointments.
- c) Continued 'reach-out' offers for community learning, using community engagement and family learning to support children and their families.
- d) Continued development around fusion skills for all across lifelong learning.

The Taskforce heard about some of the work (both accredited and non-accredited) that the City Corporation had provided, such as food hygiene courses for Bangladeshi women. There was also some discussion on the Family Learning Festival which helped the whole family (both children and parents) with a range of learning activities.

Similarly, the City Corporation had a particular focus on apprenticeships in recent years with BAME representation in 2020/21 cohort of 41%. The Taskforce heard how the London Careers Festival, which connected individuals to a range of apprenticeship opportunities, had been very successful.

The Chief Executive Officer of the City of London Academies Trust also presented information on a new pre-Apprenticeship Academy for young people who may otherwise have been permanently excluded. He added that the Taskforce may wish to consider whether they could recommend that the City Corporation provide financial support to this initiative, as this is currently being funded by the Schools directly (and match-funded by pupil premium). On the whole, Members were enthusiastic about the scheme and, following questions, it was clear that this programme was different from a Pupil Referral Unit.

It was also suggested that the Taskforce should encourage Members and senior officers to volunteer with mentoring of these children.

Following this, the Taskforce then heard about the Cultural and Creative Learning work and watched a YouTube video giving a small idea of what initiatives were being undertaken during Black History Month, where a Black Londoner responded to one of our cultural items. It was reported that many teachers did not feel confident teaching on Black or ethnic minority curriculum and asked that the Taskforce consider what they could do to improve professional development for teachers. Similarly, it was noted that not all children were able to visit the cultural institutions and the Culture Mile Schools Visits Fund aimed to overcome this.

Members of the Taskforce then had separate conversations into breakout rooms and fed back the following points:

- Apprenticeships are extremely important, and there is sometimes still resistance as universities hold a certain status. Working and learning, however, is important for children that have outgrown school.
- There is a need to increase mentoring for students.
- The dots need to be connected between the work that the Barbican are doing and Culture Mile learning
- Continual Professional Development (CPD) is an important aspect for teachers alongside peer mentoring groups.
- The Fusion Skills work, encouraging parents and parental engagement in education is vital.

The Co-Chair concluded the discussion to underline how the Taskforce will build on a fantastic foundation of work in this area. In particular, the Taskforce could look at what financial support could be offered to the pre-Apprenticeship Academy and to offer and promote mentoring by Members and officers to young people. The Taskforce also highlighted the important work of the Culture Mile Learning team to help children access and be exposed to cultural institutions.

Separately, the Taskforce also briefly discussed the use of the term BAME and concluded that it should be used in the final report as it is the term used and recognised nationwide. The report should, however, address that the term is not cohesive and must be broken down into the separate groups when necessary.

Finally, the Taskforce considered a report listing the external experts that the Co-Chairs and Members of the Taskforce had liaised with, and noted that due to the amount of sessions remaining, the final report would be submitted to the January 2021 meetings of the Policy and Resources Committee and Establishment Committee, rather than December 2020.

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