

Item 12(b) - All Party Notice of Motion – Anti-Racism

Proposers:

Councillor Prad Bains (Independent), Councillor Arun Mummalaneni (Conservative), Councillor Keith House (Liberal Democrat) and Councillor Kim Taylor (Labour).

Seconders:

Councillor Louise Parker-Jones (Independent), Councillor Juliet Henderson (Conservative), Councillor Adrian Collett (Liberal Democrat) and Councillor Jacky Tustain (Labour).

Racist and discriminatory views have no place in society, but unfortunately, we continue to see incidents of abuse occurring.

Individuals who post or comment racist and or unlawfully discriminatory views need to be held to account, and as Members, we too should all be held to account, ensuring we also promote equality and diversity in all that we do. Failing to do so has the potential to bring not only the individual, but our Authority and all of us into disrepute. We are proud to live in and represent a diverse, inclusive and multi-cultural Hampshire and we stand proudly against discrimination and racism, in any form.

All our Group's remain appalled that the County Council is powerless to address such behaviour from its Members, when not acting in their official capacity as a Member of the County Council.

In any other walk of life, an expression of racism towards another person would undoubtedly be addressed appropriately. Unfortunately, the County Council finds itself in a position whereby it cannot address racist and or unlawfully discriminatory posts by Members when not acting in their official capacity as a Member of the Council, and as it stands, remains unable to address them again in the future.

It is incongruent that Councillors should hold racist and or discriminatory views, whilst simultaneously considering themselves fit and able to represent all of Hampshire's residents, including every person from an ethnic minority and diverse background.

This motion is written to help prevent any future incidents of racism and or unlawful discrimination from occurring from Hampshire County Councillors and importantly, to also ensure that the County Council is fully equipped to suitably deal with any such incident from this point onwards.

Martin Luther-King once said, "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." This is our chance to stand up and speak up, to show Hampshire's residents that we take the issue of racism seriously and to seek to ensure that we are able to address racism and discrimination by Members in all forms, from this point onwards.

We propose that the County Council resolves:

- (a) To request that the Leader of the Council writes to Government to request that the code of conduct legislation is amended, so that when racist and discriminatory remarks are made by a Councillor, in a public forum, their actions should fall within the scope of the Council's Code of Conduct.
- (b) To request that the County Council's Conduct Advisory Panel considers amending the County Council's Arrangements for dealing with complaints against Members to include reference to the Council's ability to invite a Member to resign as part of an action of censure determined by the Council in accordance with those arrangements when a Member is found to have expressed racist and or unlawfully discriminatory beliefs publicly.
- (c) To request that the Leader of the Council creates the position of an Anti-Racism Champion for Hampshire County Council and to appoint a Member to this role prior to the next Council meeting.
- (d) To request that the Executive Member for the portfolio inclusive of inclusion & diversity, ensures that equality, diversity and inclusion training is available for all Members annually.