

**A REVIEW BY THE CORPORATE SERVICES, COMMERCE AND COMMUNITIES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE:
COMBATING HOMOPHOBIC, BIPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC BULLYING OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN HILLINGDON**

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor David Simmonds CBE
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Deputy Leader of the Council Cabinet Member for Education & Children’s Services
Officer Contact(s)	Luke Taylor, Democratic Services
Papers with report	Appendix A - Corporate Services, Commerce & Communities Policy Overview Committee Review of “ <i>Combating Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Bullying of Young People in Hillingdon</i> ”

HEADLINES

Summary	<p>To receive the Committee’s review into Combating Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Bullying of Young People in Hillingdon and to give consideration to the recommendations of the review.</p> <p>This review was initiated under the previous 2017/18 Corporate Services & Partnerships Policy Overview Committee.</p> <p>The new 2018/19 Corporate Services, Commerce & Communities POC has further reviewed the report and recommendations and now presents them to Cabinet for consideration.</p> <p>This review follows-up on the actions from a 2013 review by the Council into the same matter.</p>
Putting our Residents First	This report supports the following Council objectives of: <i>Our People;</i>
Financial Cost	There are no financial costs to the Council associated with this report.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Corporate Services, Commerce & Communities
Relevant Ward(s)	All

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. **Welcomes the Committee's findings from their review into Combating Homophobic, Biphobic, Transphobic Bullying of Young People in Hillingdon; and,**
2. **Endorses the following recommendations from the Committee for implementation by officers, in consultation with and with sign-off where required, by the Leader of the Council and/or the Cabinet Member:**

Policy Overview Committee Recommendations

Following an in-depth review on the subject, it is proposed that the Council follows-up the outstanding actions from the '2013 Assessment of Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Bullying in Hillingdon', which the Committee have incorporated into a set of revised recommendations focused on younger LGBT residents, as detailed below:

1. Officers attend the Headteachers' Forum and Governors' Forum to promote all elements of equality, including a focus on LGBT issues and preventing and tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, as well as how to report it.
2. Ensure homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying be included in the Council's programme of tackling hate crime and extremism in schools.
3. The Council release a template / guidance regarding LGBT bullying for schools, including best practice to combat homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, that can be used or adapted by schools to ensure it meets their individual needs.
4. The Council encourages local primary and secondary schools to join the "Stonewall Champions Programme".
5. The Council release a press statement and fly the rainbow flag outside the Council on the date of "Pride in London" to celebrate LGBT awareness.

Reasons for recommendation

The recommendations of the review will help the Council to tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in the London Borough of Hillingdon, and in turn, improve the lives of those residents who have been victims of this form of bullying.

Alternative options considered / risk management

The Cabinet could decide to reject some, or all, of the Committee's recommendations.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. This review was initiated under the previous 2017/18 Corporate Services & Partnerships Policy Overview Committee where a number of witness sessions were held, including a survey of local schools. The new 2018/19 Corporate Services, Commerce & Communities Policy Overview Committee has since further reviewed the report and recommendations to primarily to follow-up actions from a 2013 review by the Council into the same matter.
2. The aim of the Committees 2017/18 review was to better understand the issues faced by gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans (LGBT) young people within the Borough, and to investigate ways that the Council could improve support for these young people while combating homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying.
3. It is estimated that across Britain, five to seven percent of the population are LGBT, while one percent is trans. Working on these nationwide percentages, it would suggest that roughly 5,000 children and young people within the London Borough of Hillingdon are lesbian, gay or bisexual, and 500 are trans.
4. The Committee heard a number of disturbing statistics that illustrated the need for the review. These figures came from a selection of sources, and including, but were not limited to the following:
 - 45% of LGBT pupils – including 64% of trans pupils – are bullied for being LGBT at school;
 - Almost half (45%) of LGBT students who are bullied for being LGBT never tell anyone;
 - 52% of LGBT pupils feel that HBT bullying has had a negative effect on their plans for future education;
 - One in ten trans pupils are subject to death threats at school;
 - 97% of LGBT young people have seen homophobic, biphobic or transphobic content online;
 - Nearly 90% of teachers said that young people, regardless of sexual orientation, experience homophobic bullying;
 - Only 8% of teachers in primary schools, and 17% in secondary schools, say they had received training specific to tackling homophobic behaviour and bullying;
 - 84% of trans young people have self-harmed and 61% of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people have self-harmed; and,
 - 45% of young trans people and nearly one in four (22%) lesbian, gay and bisexual young people have attempted suicide.
5. It was apparent to the Committee that a large proportion of the LGBT community were victims of homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying, and in addition to the figures listed above, this bullying was considered to be a cause of the increased rates of mental disorder, substance abuse, deliberate self-harm and suicidal tendencies within the LGBT community.
6. During the review, evidence was received from a number of different witnesses, including Council Officers and services, Headteachers and schools, a campaign organisation for LGBT equality, other local authorities, and, perhaps most significantly, members of Fountain's Mill LGBT Youth Group.

7. A survey of local school headteachers, which is set out in more detail in the review report, also identified that:
- Very few schools had any assistance in formulating an anti-LGBT bullying policy, although some used online materials for guidance;
 - An overwhelming number of schools confirmed that templates for anti-LGBT bullying policies would be helpful;
 - Workshops, training, guidance and support materials were among suggestions for improving procedures that tackle HBT bullying in organisations that work with young people.
8. The Terms of Reference of the review were as follows:
- I. To examine how the Council services, schools, and other relevant departments identify and support those who are experiencing, or have experienced, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying.
 - II. To examine relevant work by this Council, other Councils, and voluntary sectors to identify opportunities and methods to tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in support of the Council's wider equality objectives and the aims of the review.
 - III. To make practical, prudent recommendations to Cabinet (and other bodies, if applicable) from the Committee's findings to support residents experiencing homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, and reduce instances of bullying within the Borough.

The Committee's recommendations

During the review, the Committee received details of the Council's 2013 report into homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying. This report resulted in five recommendations (as shown in the Committee's review report attached) to help the Borough become more inclusive to LGBT people. However, it was apparent to Members that it was not clear how successfully the recommendations were implemented following the review.

As such, the Committee agreed to incorporate and update the previous 2013 recommendations into a revised set of recommendations focussed on younger LGBT residents:

Recommendation 1: *Officers attend the Headteachers' Forum and Governors' Forum to promote all elements of equality, including a focus on LGBT issues and preventing and tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, as well as how to report it.*

Officers advise that this recommendation will help to raise awareness of the challenges faced by young people and provide practical advice and guidance to schools on bullying.

Recommendation 2: *Ensure homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying be included in the Council's programme of tackling hate crime and extremism in schools.*

Officers advise that this programme is supported by funding from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime. The aims of the programme are to strengthen community cohesion, build resilience

and improve community relations, enabling the local community to work together to raise awareness and understanding of hate crime and extremism and how to tackle these issues.

The Council wants to encourage more young people to feel confident in challenging hate and discrimination and in promoting greater understanding, respect and unity. Students discuss the many different aspects of hate and discrimination, including homophobia and LGBT issues, and how to report and where to seek support and help. Participating students have produced infomercials, poems, lesson plans, documentaries and more. This work will form part of a community learning resource to be utilised by other schools and local community organisations.

Recommendation 3: *The Council release a template / guidance regarding LGBT bullying for schools, including best practice to combat homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, that can be used or adapted by schools to ensure it meets their individual needs.*

Officers advise that this recommendation will help to raise awareness of the challenges faced by young people and provide practical advice and guidance to schools on bullying.

Recommendation 4: *The Council encourages local primary and secondary schools to join the “Stonewall Champions Programme”.*

Officers advise that this recommendation will support local schools to develop and embed a strong inclusive approach to diversity in Hillingdon.

Such established programmes by Stonewall can provide bespoke support and guidance to schools and Multi-Academy Trusts. As set out in the review report, there is a small fee schools themselves would need to pay if they wish to take up a programme.

Recommendation 5: *The Council release a press statement and fly the rainbow flag outside the Council on the date of “Pride in London” to celebrate LGBT awareness.*

It has been agreed that the Council will fly the Pride flag on 6 July 2019 to mark Pride in London. This will help to raise awareness of LGBT rights and equality in Hillingdon’s community.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications for Council revenue budgets arising from the review. Officers will undertake any guidance or training on bullying within existing mechanisms and resources. Should schools wish to take-up more bespoke support from Stonewall in this regard, this will be a decision within their own local budget arrangements.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?

The Committee’s recommendations, if approved, will seek to improve support by local schools for young people in combating homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying.

Consultation carried out or required

The Committee sought a wide range of external witness testimony, as set out in the report.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed the report and concurs with the financial implications set out above noting that there are no financial implications arising from Council managed budgets.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.