

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: SICS Policy and Accountability Committee

Date: 07/02/2024

Subject: Trustee Diversity in the Third Sector in H&F

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Responsible Director: SLT Director's name, job title

SUMMARY

The report demonstrates the importance of trustee diversity in the third sector - the benefits this has for the communities the Council serves and how ensuring this happens demonstrates the council's Commitment to tackle inequality - this includes leadership on the race equality agenda.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For the Committee to note and comment on the report.
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Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	<i>Having diverse trustee boards aligns with the Council values to promote diversity within the business community and businesses in the Borough. This will help foster an environment in which all residents, workers and borough visitors feel valued, included, safe from discrimination and prejudice and that our public services are responsive to their needs.</i>
Creating a compassionate council	We want to be a council that acts with compassion and inclusivity. We want to ensure our Borough is a place for everybody, and we'll challenge any unfairness and all forms of discrimination that threaten to drive inequality in our borough. This report aligns with the Council's values as it

	seeks to promote diversity and inclusion in all that we do to address inequality and racism that is embedded in society.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	The Council firmly believes in doing things with residents not to them. This means listening and working with residents, using resident insight and feedback to inform how we work and ensuring our ambitions continue to reflect what all residents want. This report aligns to the Council's values as having diverse trustees brings a variety of perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds to the decision-making process.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	The report aligns to the Council's values. Diverse groups tend to make better decisions. Trustee boards with diverse members often have a broader range of skills. This diversity in skills can be valuable in addressing the multifaceted challenges that organizations in the third sector face including financial challenges
Taking pride in H&F	The report aligns with the Council values to invest in public spaces, community programmes and cultural activities to ensure the borough remains a great place to live, work and thrive
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	The report will not impact on the Council values to work with residents, businesses and partners to build a clean, safe and sustainable future that works for the benefit of all people and the environment.

Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None

DETAILED ANALYSIS

- We're committed to making Hammersmith & Fulham the most inclusive borough in the country; a place where everyone feels valued and residents have equal access to the opportunities our borough offers.
- Trustee diversity in the third sector is crucial for several reasons. These are outlined below:

- **Representation and Inclusivity** - Diverse trustees bring a variety of perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds to the decision-making process. This will help ensure that the organisation is representative of the communities it serves and is inclusive of different voices.
- **Effective Decision-Making:** - Diverse groups tend to make better decisions. When trustees have different viewpoints, skills, and expertise, they can approach challenges from various angles, leading to more innovative and effective solutions.
- **Broader Skill Set:** - Trustee boards with diverse members often have a broader range of skills. This diversity in skills can be valuable in addressing the multifaceted challenges that organisations in the third sector face, such as fundraising, program development, governance, and community engagement.
- **Improved Governance:** - Diversity in trustee boards enhances governance. It helps in preventing groupthink, where members of a homogeneous group may be inclined to conform to a single perspective. Diverse boards are more likely to engage in constructive debate and oversight, which is essential for good governance.
- **Enhanced Creativity and Innovation:** - A diverse group of trustees brings a mix of ideas and creativity. This can lead to the development of innovative approaches and strategies, helping the organisation adapt to changing circumstances and better fulfill its mission.
- **Better Understanding of Community Needs:** - Trustee diversity ensures a deeper understanding of the diverse needs of the community the organisation serves. This understanding is vital for tailoring programs and services to meet the specific and varied requirements of different demographic groups.
- **Increased Trust and Credibility:** - Organisations that embrace diversity and inclusion are often perceived as more trustworthy and credible by the public. Having a diverse board can enhance the organization's reputation and build trust with stakeholders, including donors, beneficiaries, and the broader community.
- **Compliance with Legal and Ethical Standards:** - There are legal and ethical expectations for organisations to promote diversity. Having a diverse board helps ensure compliance with these standards and demonstrates the organization's commitment to equality and fairness.
- **Reflecting Changing Demographics:** - Society is becoming increasingly diverse, and having a diverse trustee board allows organisations to better reflect the changing demographics. This ensures

that the organisation remains relevant and responsive to the evolving needs and expectations of the population it serves.

- In November 2023, the Council fully adopted the London Local Government anti-racist statement. The statement has been developed by London Councils to ensure there is a consistent approach across London, adopted by all local authorities to taking an anti-racist approach because the most damaging aspects of inequality and racism are embedded in society.
- Publicly adopting the anti-racist statement aims to provide an opportunity for Hammersmith and Fulham to demonstrate its commitment to:
 - Make it everyone's responsibility to adopt an anti-racist approach.
 - Demonstrate our commitment and visible leadership on the race equality agenda.
 - Achieve racial equality because we recognise that persistent racial inequalities and structural disadvantage rooted in racism and discrimination are unacceptable and adversely affect all Londoners.
- To be proactive in meeting this commitment, we will aim to:
 - Build a picture of what the key inequalities are and then to look at what is driving these.
 - Shape solutions by listening to residents, communities and frontline staff and by responsibly drawing on their lived experience and understanding of what the issues are and what works, without putting the burden on them to educate us.
 - Set expectations of leaders to make the connection between achieving positive outcomes and their own leadership style and diversity, and to take personal responsibility for what they can do now to bring about change. This acknowledges residents have worked hard to achieve social justice and rightly expect to see leadership that reflects their position, to see action, and to be part of solution.

LIST OF APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – The London Local Government Anti-Racist Statement
- Appendix 2 – Action for Trustee Racial Diversity