



STEVENAGE EQUALITIES COMMISSION

Community Members
Expression of Interest Application Form

Chairs Introduction

I have lived in Stevenage for 47 years, my children and grandchildren were born here and this is where I began my social work career. "I'm really honoured to be in this role as chair of this commission at this extraordinary time, where Stevenage Borough Council, like many authorities around the country are looking at themselves and saying: 'How can we be better?' 'How can we deliver services on a more equitable level and how can we be a beacon of good practice?'"

'There are a range of things people can do'

We all have a role to play, be it male allies against sexism, white allies against racism or able-bodied people against inequality for disabled people.

There are a lot of things people can do, some might be big, and some might be small, but they all add up to something special.

"I believe that we owe it to future generations to try and change our world and make it a more equitable place so that everyone benefits from the same opportunities and outcomes in life. That is why I am so excited about heading the commission in Stevenage, I hope that we can play a small but significant part in shaping Stevenage to be one of the best places in the country to live in."

I am encouraged by the spirit in which everyone has been approaching the commission's work and the will to work together to make improvements.

I know that some of the things that we will be exploring will be uncomfortable, however being honest about uncomfortable truths and having a plan to put them right is a prerequisite for a successful commission.

How to get involved

The independent commission will be speaking not just to the council, but to a whole range of local organisations and groups, and to businesses. Members of the public will also be invited to share their views with the commission before it reports its initial findings to the council.

Errol John

*Errol John: MBA, Certificate in Qualified Social Work (CQSW)
Social Welfare, Charities and Community Sector Consultant
Independent Chair: Stevenage Equalities Commission*

SBC Executive Member for Communities, Community Safety and Equalities Introduction

I have represented the people of Stevenage as an elected member for over 20 years, more recently I have been honoured to take on the role as executive member for Communities, Community safety and Equalities. Following the brutal killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, USA in May 2020 and subsequent demonstrations exemplified through the Black Lives Matters movement globally, nationally and locally in Stevenage, Stevenage Borough Council agreed to establish an Equalities Commission. Along with other elected members I championed this motion, to provide the people of our town with an independent Equalities Commission, a body made up of community members and organisations, independently chaired, focusing on the disproportionate impact of inequalities on the lives of Black Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals and communities in Stevenage.

Whilst there has been some progress on equalities issues in Stevenage over a number of years, there is clear recognition that more needs to be done. My hope is that The Equalities Commission will drive forward a number of recommendations in order to create lasting change for communities across the town and where all residents feel included.

The Equalities Commission has full backing of Stevenage Borough Council and over the next year will undertake a strategic assessment of the nature, extent, causes and impact of race inequality in Stevenage and make recommendations for tackling them to create lasting change for communities across the town and ensure all residents feel included.

The Stevenage motto “the heart of a town, lies in its people” is used far and wide across the borough but in this instance it could not be more relevant, this town belongs to all of us, it is our home, our community and our children’s future and that makes it all the more important to ensure that all voices are not just heard but listened to, respected, appreciated, understood and represented.

So please, if you can, get involved, give us your ideas and contributions, the good and the bad, hold us accountable to our promises and help us to make sure we live up to our motto.

Jackie Hollywell

Jackie Hollywell: SBC Executive Member for Communities, Community Safety & Equalities

Background & Purpose

Following the brutal killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, USA in May 2020 and subsequent demonstrations exemplified through the Black Lives Matters movement globally, nationally and locally in Stevenage, Stevenage Borough Council agreed to establish an Equalities Commission.

Whilst there has been some progress on equalities issues in Stevenage over a number of years, there is clear recognition that more needs to be done. The Equalities Commission will drive forward a number of recommendations in order to create lasting change for communities across the town and where all residents feel included.

The Equalities Commission is being established as a body that is independently chaired, focusing on the disproportionate impact of inequalities on the lives of Black Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals and communities (BAME). The Commission will undertake a strategic assessment of the nature, extent, causes and impact of race inequality in Stevenage and make recommendations for tackling them.

The commission will also consider wider issues of inclusion for other sections of the community where inequalities are experienced and will maintain an effective dialogue with the town's Social Inclusion Partnership to tackle these.

The Commission will meet every 2 months starting in July 2021 and concluding in a year when recommendations will be presented to SBC.

Objectives:

- To consider the nature, extent and impact of racial disparities on BAME individuals and communities in Stevenage, and the implications for the town as a whole.
- To invite written and verbal evidence from a wide range of interested parties across the town (and beyond it) particularly those with lived experience.
- To consider evidence on what has worked with regard to reducing racism and race inequalities within the town and elsewhere.
- To establish a wider community dialogue with the town's BAME communities to make further clear recommendations to the council and other public bodies on further actions required to tackle discrimination and reduce inequalities across the town.

- To ensure that Stevenage Borough Council's HR and management policies fully meet the requirements for equalities, diversity and inclusion in the recruitment and career progression of all staff and to promote best practices to all employers in the town.
- To stimulate and listen to debate amongst the people of Stevenage about inequality and inclusion
- To work with our partners in Stevenage Together to ensure we are all listening and engaging with our BAME communities as we plan the future of our town together.
- To engage with Hertfordshire County Council to address systemic issues of racial inequality and disparities, and their impact on BAME communities across Hertfordshire.

Role & Responsibilities

The Commission will operate as a team, draw on the skills and talents of each member, and work toward common goals to ensure success. It is important that the Commission is made up of people with a range of skills and expertise to support its objectives and those of the communities on which it is focussed. Effective Commission members should have:

- a commitment to the Commission
- sufficient time to devote to the Commission
- an understanding of the role of the Commission and their role within it
- leadership skills and willingness to accept responsibility
- listening skills

Commission members are expected to:

- Review and abide by the Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct for the Commission.
- Contribute constructively to meetings and have good communication and team-working skills; this should include a commitment to considering the needs of the communities on which it is focussed.
- Use their background knowledge and experience to advise and assist the Chair in meeting the Commission outcomes and developing recommendations.
- Read all relevant documentation and make constructive comments and proposals at (and between) Commission meetings.
- Work with the Chair and other members of the Commission to develop, prepare and write the rationales for the recommendations.
- Work with the Chair and other members of the Commission to develop and record the Commission's discussion of the evidence.
- Work with other members of the Commission to develop recommendations based on the evidence or on consensus if evidence is poor or lacking.

- Advise the Chair on how to identify best practice in areas for which evidence is absent.
- Consider, with other members of the Commission, the feasibility of the recommendations and highlight any potential implementation issues to Stevenage Borough Council.
- Agree, with other members of the Commission, the minutes of Commission meetings.

What support will I get from The Equalities Commission & Stevenage Borough Council?

- As part of a team, you will be supported and guided by the chair, other commission members & Stevenage Borough Council Officers.
- All personal information and contact information will be kept secure in line with current GDPR guidelines and will not be disclosed to third parties.
Allowances can be made for travel or out of pocket expenses if you are a member in an unpaid or voluntary capacity

What happens now?

If you are interested in applying to be on the Commission please complete the expression of interest form below, giving us as much detail as you can and return it to:

Equalities.Commission@Stevenage.gov.uk

Or

**Equalities Commission
Communities & Neighbourhood
Stevenage Borough Council
Daneshill House
Danestrete
Stevenage
Herts
SG1 1HN**

By: Friday 2nd July 2021

Please feel free to email us if you would like an informal chat regarding applications and we will arrange a call with you.

As we receive applications they will be assessed for suitability by our independent Chair against our pre-determined criteria you will then be invited for an informal interview about your application. We intend to hold these in the week beginning 12/07/2021 via Zoom. Following this you may be offered a place on the Commission or a place in the Community Voices sub group dependent on your suitability for either role.

If successfully offered a place you will be sent the relevant paperwork including the terms of reference, code of conduct, timetables of meetings and events, contact details for support & guidance and any other admin you will need.

The first meeting of the Commission will be held via Zoom in the week commencing 26/07/2021.

Expression of Interest Form

About You:

First Name:

Family Name:

Address:

Phone No (Home/Mobile):

Email address:

Previous work experience within the Community:

Dates

What did you do?

Where?

Other skills or experience that you think would help you as a Commission Member:

<p>Can you tell us why you would like to become a member?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you think it involves?• What do you think your responsibilities will be?• What skills do you have?• Why Stevenage?	
<p>Can you tell us about a time when you were involved in any community groups or initiatives?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How did you get involved?• How did you encourage participation?• What kind of activities did you do?• What were the outcomes?	
<p>Can you tell us about when you have worked in a team?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do you communicate?• How do you share your ideas?• What was your role within a team?• What qualities do you bring to a team?	
<p>What has been the most difficult challenge that you have faced personally in working co-operatively with another person who did not share your values, beliefs or ideas?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What was the impact on your ability to get things done?• What was the impact on the other person's ability to get things done?	

<p>Do you have any experience as an individual or as part of a group of addressing issues relating to racial inequalities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is your experience from? • What did it entail? 	
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Would you be interested in undertaking training?		Yes	No
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Please give the details of two people that we could ask about your suitability to be a Equalities Commission Member (not a relative)	
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Name:	Name:
How do they know you?	How do they know you?
Address:	Address:
Phone number:	Phone number:
Email:	Email:

Is there anything we need to know to help us support you as a volunteer?

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I declare that the information I have given on this form is true and complete.	
Signature	Date