

Company Number 11177145

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust

Purpose of report

For information.

Summary

Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) takes place each year on 27 January, building on the objective that prejudice and the language of hatred must be challenged by everyone. HMD 2020 will have particular significance as it marks both the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and is the 25th anniversary of the Genocide in Bosnia.

Claudia Hyde, Local Government HMD Officer from the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust - a charity set up to promote HMD and support other organisations to mark it - will be attending the meeting to provide an update on their work and explore how they can assist councils planning 2020 events.

Recommendation

That the Board notes the input from the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust.

Action

Officers to action any matters arising from the discussion, as appropriate.

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Holocaust Memorial Day

1. Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) takes place on 27 January every year to remember the six million Jews murdered during the Holocaust, and the millions of people killed under Nazi Persecution and in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur.
2. HMD has taken place in the UK since 2001, building on the objective that prejudice and the language of hatred must be challenged by us all. In 2019, over 200 councils were involved in arranging over 1,000 activities including vigils, film viewings, talks, arts events, and hearing from survivors. Set in town halls, libraries, workplaces, schools, universities, museums and other settings, these enable thousands of people come together to learn lessons about the past and to take action to help create a safer future.
3. 27 January marks the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp. HMD 2020 will have particular significance as it marks the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz – made particularly poignant by the dwindling number of survivors who are able to share their testimony – and is the 25th anniversary of the Genocide in Bosnia.
4. The theme for HMD 2020 is Stand Together, which will resonate with the work many local authorities are already doing on counter-extremism and cohesion. The theme explores how genocidal regimes throughout history have deliberately fractured societies by marginalising certain groups, and how these tactics can be challenged by individuals standing together with their neighbours, and speaking out against oppression.

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust

5. Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) HMDT was registered as a charity in May 2005 and has been funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government since 2007. Its objectives are to:
 - 5.1. promote HMD across the UK.
 - 5.2. support individuals and organisations across the UK in marking HMD.
 - 5.3. commemorate and increase understanding of the Holocaust, Nazi Persecution and subsequent genocides, and what can occur post-genocide, through the life stories of those affected.
 - 5.4. enable others to work towards a safer, better future by: promoting a society free from hatred, prejudice and persecution; and reducing the likelihood of future genocide.

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6. HMDT is keen to see more councils than ever marking HMD 2020 and has recently launched new [resources](#) to support local organisations, including a '[Get Involved Guide](#)' for local authorities. The LGA has been supporting efforts to disseminate materials to local authorities through our ebulletins, online Knowledge Hubs and First magazine.
7. Events such as HMD provide an opportunity for local partners, representatives of different communities and residents to convene to show unity, celebrate diversity and vibrancy, and reflect on the consequences of hatred that extremists are trying to promote.
8. Many of the themes for 2020's HMD are particularly apt in terms of current cohesion and extremism challenges including: exploring how propaganda using stereotypes and existing prejudices dehumanises persecuted groups; the need to support and champion individuals who show solidarity with these groups; and the importance of taking a stand together against rising division and hate.

Issues

9. This meeting will provide an opportunity for Board members to explore how HMDT can support local authorities further for events in 2020, and as part of longer-term ambitions to tackle extremism and build cohesion.
10. HMDT is keen to explore the following questions with the Board:
 - 10.1. How much awareness of Holocaust Memorial Day is there amongst members and local councils?
 - 10.2. What challenges do council members and staff face in commemorating Holocaust Memorial Day?
 - 10.3. What support do local councils need to help increase awareness and understanding of the Holocaust and genocides in their communities?

Implications for Wales

11. Holocaust Memorial Day is marked across the UK and HMDT is supporting local authorities throughout the country to take part.

Financial Implications

12. HMDT's website makes a number of resources available to download for free.

Next steps

13. Members are asked to note the input from the HMDT. Officers to follow up as appropriate.