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| <b>TITLE/ORGANISATION</b> | Racial Equality Subgroup - Single Item Agenda Meeting                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>VENUE:</b>             | Parliament Buildings, Room 21                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>DATE/TIME:</b>         | 15 June 2026, 17:00-18:00                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>List of Attendees:</b> | <p><b><u>Subgroup &amp; Working Group Members</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ann Marie White (Chair – British Red Cross)</li> <li>• Paul Noonan (ECNI)</li> <li>• Nisha Tandon (ArtsEkta)</li> <li>• Ivy Goddard (Inter Ethnic Forum)</li> <li>• Lilian Senoi-Barr (NWMF)</li> <li>• Judith Searle (Barnardo's)</li> <li>• Martin McDonagh (Chair of the Travellers Thematic Group)</li> <li>• Takura Donald Makoni (ASCONI)</li> <li>• Suleiman Abdulahi (HAPANI)</li> <li>• Lili Wu (Chinese Welfare Association)</li> <li>• Gerard Rice (LORAG)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Guests</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michelle O'Neill, First Minister</li> <li>• Emma Little-Pengelly, deputy First Minister</li> </ul> <p><b><u>TEO</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moira Doherty – Permanent Secretary</li> <li>• Orla McStravick – Director of Race Relations &amp; Integration</li> <li>• Paul Naylor – Head of Race Relations Development &amp; Delivery</li> <li>• Clíodhna Nic Bhraíne, FM SpAD</li> <li>• Matthew Morrison, dFM SpAD</li> <li>• TEO Officials</li> </ul> |

### **First Minister and deputy First Minister Address**

- The First Minister and deputy First Minister condemned the recent violence, expressed support for those affected, and welcomed the PSNI's robust approach in holding offenders to account. They assured members of the Executive's joint leadership in addressing the disorder, emphasised the need for medium and long-term prevention measures, and thanked the Racial Equality Subgroup for its ongoing support, advice and partnership working.

### **Racial Equality Subgroup Chair Statement**

- The Racial Equality Subgroup Chair thanked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for meeting members at short notice. She highlighted concerns regarding the draft Framework for Race Relations and unstable funding for organisations responding to the recent unrest. The Chair requested Subgroup representation on the Community Cohesion Group, the development of contingency plans for racially motivated unrest, improved communication arrangements during rest including the involvement of the Subgroup in the chain of communication and a single point of contact for the sector, and support from Ministers for publishing Subgroup updates on the TEO website.

### **Open Discussion**

- Members highlighted the ongoing impact of recent and previous incidents of racial violence on individuals, families and communities, including reports of intimidation, displacement and loss of livelihoods. Concerns were raised about fear among minority ethnic communities, the impact on their day to day lives, and the need for a single point of contact to support coordinated responses. Members also sought clarification on PSNI communications regarding arrests.
- The First Minister reiterated that those responsible represented a small minority, noted the coordinated response to the disorder, and advised that Civil Contingencies would consider the proposal for a single point of contact. [AP1]
- Members highlighted the significant personal, financial and mental health impacts of the disorder on those affected, particularly women and international students, and noted that much of the support had come from grassroots organisations. Concerns were raised regarding the support available and safeguards for vulnerable individuals.
- A request was made for the First Minister and deputy First Minister to meet two Ugandan students affected by the disorder, which took place following the meeting.
- Members acknowledged the PSNI's efforts to contain the violence but highlighted the fear and uncertainty caused within minority ethnic communities, including the impact of misinformation. Concerns were raised about the long-term effects on community confidence, with some families questioning their future in Northern Ireland. Members also highlighted the lack of support available to those with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) whose homes or businesses had been affected and called for emergency funding and housing support measures, such as an interim duty for NIHE to set aside NRPF policy during disorder, to address these issues.

- dFM highlighted that the housing system here is challenging for everyone, and explained some of the issues with the long waiting list, and temporary accommodation being at capacity, but reassured SA that everyone is treated equally.
- Members called for a more proactive approach to preventing future incidents. It was suggested that proactive PSNI measures may have prevented 200 families in South Belfast being evacuated after a list of HMO addresses was circulated online.
- Concerns were also raised about inflammatory messaging online and by some public figures, and the need to apply lessons from the COVID-19 response to planning for racially motivated unrest.
- dFM reassured attendees that response structures do exist and are effective, and explained that civil contingencies plans are in place whereby the PSNI leads in the initial response before handing over recovery measures to appropriate departments.
- dFM expressed disappointment that sectoral groups feel that communication structures are not working. and agreed this should be addressed. FM noted that the response on the night of 9 June had been too slow and raised concerns about the publication of HMO addresses. Ministers highlighted the need to strengthen recovery and prevention measures, including diversionary activities and early interventions. Concerns about misinformation and online agitation were recognised as a global issue, with the dFM also outlining the operational pressures facing the PSNI during the disorder.
- Member suggested, as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states, that development of contingency plans needs to involve those primarily affected, in this case Minority Ethnic individuals and communities.
- It was also suggested that education and early intervention should underpin a preventative response, including learning about our culturally diverse society, anti-racism, respect of the rights, and critical thinking with the same urgency and resources comparable to Ending Violence Against Women and Girls.
- dFM highlighted T:BUC as a good example of cohesion building, learning from which should be used.
- Members reiterated the need for community groups to have access to emergency or contingency funding and expressed the view that this funding should be made through Executive structures, alongside capacity building to ensure funding can be used effectively.
- Concerns were raised about trust, barriers faced by Minority Ethnic communities, and the challenges associated with NRPF. Members emphasised the important role of grassroots organisations in supporting and reaching affected communities and called for their greater integration into official response arrangements.
- The dFM acknowledged concerns regarding communication and the effectiveness of existing response structures. FM noted the key themes from the meeting were the need for improved communication, consideration of a single-point of contact and greater official use of community groups during disorder.
- Both Ministers reiterated the Executive's condemnation of the violence and thanked attendees for their contributions.

**ACTION POINTS/OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE/TARGET DATE:**

- **AP1 – Civil Contingencies to consider the possibility of a single-point of contact for times of racially motivated disorder.**

**Minutes written by:**  
TEO Secretariat

**Date:**  
17 June 2026