



Review into Institutional Racism at the Westway Trust

Background

Since 2015, there has been a perception by some, and public allegations, of institutionally racist practice, leveled against Westway Trust. Allegations were first made at the 2015 Westway Trust AGM (**AGM Minutes 2015**). Whilst the concerns were made, the minutes of the meeting do not record if and how the issues raised would be addressed.

In 2016, the Westway Trust AGM, recorded once again concerns by community members of institutional racism (**AGM Minutes 2016**). At this meeting, the Chair of the Trust, highlighted that whilst he requested evidence be provided to enable the allegations to be investigated, no evidence was provided and as a result no action was taken.

At the 2017 Westway Trust AGM on 20 December 2017, the minutes highlight further accusations of institutional racism (**AGM Minutes 2017**). The minutes record that Mark Lockhart, the joint CEO, *'in agreement with the Board, to engage an external equalities expert body to review the accusations of institutional racism and advise on a course of action'*.

Following the 2017 AGM, the Trust, under new leadership, sought advice from equalities experts in the field (Equality and Human Rights Commission) to establish a shortlist of expert organisations who could undertake the work. The Tutu Foundation UK, a social justice charity has been appointed to undertake a review into concerns of institutional racism of the Westway Trust.

Mr. Bevan Powell, executive coach (Inclusion) to the Westway Trust has worked closely with Dr. Habashi FRSA; Head of the Review and Mrs. Christine Okiya, Secretary to the Review. Discussions, focused on perceptions and experiences of institutional racism at Westway Trust and how they could be understood, examined and addressed in a meaningful manner which would ensure the participation, trust and confidence of the local community.

As part of the initial exploratory discussions, introductory meetings were held with representatives of Westway 23 and One Voice Community Collective on the 18 June and with the Tutu Foundation UK on 23 July 2018. The meetings were aimed at listening to and understanding the concerns of stakeholders, with a view to establishing trust and confidence to gain their support, co-operation, and participation to a review.