

London City Council
May 7, 2024

Mayor Morgan, Deputy Mayor Lewis, and City Council,

Please accept this letter as my resignation from the Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Oppression Community Advisory Committee for the City of London effective immediately.

I am, and have been, a strong believer in supporting marginalized and diverse individuals; as a queer person of privilege, I've worked hard to support policies that aim to put disadvantaged individuals and communities on a level playing field with their privileged counterparts.

While I continue to believe that diversity work is important, I am also becoming more and more aware that not all members of council support the work that we do, and even believe that some of the individuals we aim to support are nothing more than criminals. It feels largely like lip service to have an advisory committee dedicated to DEI work while simultaneously having a sitting councillor openly state that they do not support funding shelters based on the employment of the clients that use that space. I find it problematic that when found to have violated the Code of Conduct by further marginalizing unhoused individuals,, a toothless and ineffective reprimand was the extent of what could be done.

Furthermore, I've recently been sent screenshots and posts of a fellow member of the committee which reference a number of concerning comments and themes:

- One post outlined that this member opposed "The sexualization of our children and the normalization of pedophilia in our schools and our society" and wanted to "Affirm the Primacy of Parental Authority" by revoking Bill C-4 which outlaws Conversion Therapy in Canada – a practice that targets 2SLGBTQI+ youth and contributes to the stigma of "shame" associated with being queer;
- One shared photo included the quote "Diversity, equity, and inclusion have morphed into perversity, insanity, and delusion";
- A meme of a number of drag queens chasing a photoshopped child. The captions read: "Hey kid, wanna hear a story" followed by "Not today Satan";
- A split image. On the left, a person dressed in traditionally feminine clothing with the headline "From Trans". On the right, a person (possibly the same person, though it's hard to discern) dressed in traditionally feminine clothing with the headline "To Trans-formed by Jesus Christ".

While I verified that these posts were indeed made by a member of this committee, I did not dig deeper into determining whether or not they had other views that supported marginalized communities. I don't think it necessary to name the member in this particular letter, but I do feel that my views on diversity, equity, and inclusion are not compatible with the views held by at least one of my colleagues in the committee, nor with a number of members on the City Council.

I have sincerely enjoyed my time working with DIACAC and I wish the committee all the best as they hopefully aim to make London a more welcoming and diverse place.

Ryan O'Hagan