

29th September 2021

Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis
Office of the Chief Rabbi

The Board of Deputies of British Jews

We are writing to you as the Council of the British Association of Social Workers to apologise for the hurt caused to Jewish members and social workers by holding our Annual General Meeting on the eve of Yom Kippur.

We recognise the distress we have caused. We particularly acknowledge the impact of our action at a time when Jewish people in this country experience discrimination, and where their needs are often ignored.

We are deeply sorry.

We know that an apology means little without a commitment to do better in the future. Our mistake happened we think for two important reasons. The first is that we did not check the date to proactively look for clashes with significant occasions. We will do this in future. The second runs deeper and relates to the need for greater diversity in our leadership, executive and membership. This is something we are working on, however we will work harder.

We understand that our action undermines trust not only from our Jewish colleagues but also from members of other minoritised groups, who will rightly question our commitment to inclusion and anti-discrimination. We hope that we can rebuild this trust and see this letter as one small step in doing so.

Best wishes

Gerry Nosowska

Chair BASW UK, on behalf of BASW Council