

EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

Report to: The Cabinet
30 May 2017

Wards: All

Equalities Plan 2017-21 and Annual Update on Progress towards the Corporate Equality Objectives

Report of the Director of Corporate Strategy and Commissioning

A. Executive Summary

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires the Council to refresh its statutory equality objectives at least every four years. In April 2016, Cabinet approved four new objectives for the Council and approved next steps for achieving these objectives.

During 2016/17, a review of policies and procedures relating to the Council's duties under the Equality Act concluded that it would be appropriate to develop a single strategic plan to bring together four previous strategies and policies into one shorter, simpler document.

A single Equalities Plan has been developed and is set out at Appendix 1. Following the approval of the objectives, during the period April 2016 to March 2017, work has been under way to progress the actions at paragraph 1.1.

This report sets out progress made to date and next steps.

B. Corporate Priorities 2016-2021

Supporting Vulnerable People, Reducing Inequalities
Reducing Costs, Raising Performance

C. Portfolio

Deputy Leader
Community Involvement and Council Corporate Services
Transforming Lifestyles

D. Recommendation and Reason for Recommendation

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- i. Notes the progress made to date;
- ii. Agrees that the draft Equalities Strategic Plan 2017-21, as deposited in group offices and public deposit points, be submitted to Full Council for formal approval and adoption; and
- iii. Delegated authority be given to the Director of Corporate Strategy and Commissioning, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, prior to the publication of the Plan, to approve any textual amendments to the Plan, subsequent to its approval, required to reflect changing legislation or circumstances affecting its delivery.

E. Equality Implications

The equality implications have been fully evaluated and taken into consideration when formulating the recommendations in the report. These are outlined in paragraph 2.8 of this report.

1. Background

1.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, and more specifically the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), the Council was required to develop, consult upon and publish a number of equality objectives by April 2012. Furthermore these objectives are required to be reviewed/refreshed at least every four years. In accordance with this, in April 2016 Council adopted four revised equality objectives, namely:

- the Council seeks to provide services which are accessible, wherever possible and appropriate to users
- communications with residents are provided, wherever possible, in clear and easily understood formats
- our knowledge of residents' needs is used to inform service provision
- equality and diversity training is reviewed and revised and made available to staff and Elected Members as appropriate.

1.2 The report to Cabinet (minute 5490) also outlined the next steps following approval of the objectives. These were:

- promotion of the Council Statutory Equality Objectives 2016-2020
- development of a corporate Single Equality Plan 2016-2020 to replace a range of current equalities related policies and strategies
- consult with appropriate stakeholders (including the East Riding Equalities Network) on additional actions and priorities under the objectives
- review of the corporate Equality Analysis process
- refreshing and publicising the Hate Incident procedure in conjunction with Humberside Police
- progress on delivery of the 2016/17 priorities and the implementation of the equality objectives 2016-2020 would be reported to DMTs on a six monthly basis with annual updates to SMT and CMT

2. Progress to date

2.1 Following the approval of the objectives during the period April 2016 to March 2017, work has been under way to progress the actions at paragraph 1.2.

2.2 The review of policies and procedures relating to the Council's duties under the Equality Act suggested that it would be appropriate to develop a single strategic plan, to bring together four previous strategies and policies into one shorter, simpler document.

2.3 The draft Equalities Plan is set out at Appendix 1 for consideration and approval. The Plan sets out the processes and procedures that are in place to meet our statutory equality duties, together with other projects and initiatives designed to support our residents with protected characteristics. It also provides a review of the achievements under the 2012-16 objectives.

- 2.4 There has been wide publicity of the objectives since their adoption, both internally to staff and Members (through training sessions, articles in Grapevine, DMT briefings and the intranet) and to relevant partners, groups and organisations through the East Riding Equality Network (EREN). Promotion has also included consultation regarding the identification of priority actions to support the delivery of the objectives. These are set out on page 8 of the draft plan.
- 2.5 Over the past 6 months, a review has been undertaken of the corporate Equality Analysis (EA) procedure. Consultation has taken place with a number of service managers who complete EAs and their feedback has been used to revise procedures and develop new forms for completion. This will replace the current on-line system, and is designed to give managers greater flexibility, recognising that EAs are usually part of a broader/complex process (for example in redesigning a service or developing a strategy) which may have multiple stages. It is planned that the new procedure will come into effect from 1 June 2017.
- 2.6 In 2016, Humberside Police and the four local authorities within the Force area united to launch a joint campaign to promote the new single reporting system for all hate crime in the Humber area. This is led by Humberside Police, who have committed to investigating all hate crimes and are encouraging victims and witnesses to report all incidents, no matter how minor they are perceived to be. Promotional materials for the new *'Being you is not a crime'* campaign have been produced and distributed throughout the area. The campaign was launched in July 2016. Partners meet regularly and share intelligence as part of the commitment to minimising the impact of hate crime and giving victims the confidence to report.
- 2.7 Additional actions have been undertaken during the past year, including:
- six monthly equality updates to all DMTs
 - Member training on the Equality Act 2010 and the PSED
 - implementation of the national Accessible Information Standard
 - review of the terms of reference of EREN
 - the launch of the Disability Advisory Group, which has replaced previous arrangements for strategic consultation.

Details of these actions, including next steps are set out in the attached draft plan.

- 2.8 Where appropriate, key actions within the draft Plan have been the subject of an Equalities Analysis to check whether they have the potential to adversely affect the protected groups as defined in the Equalities Act 2010. No adverse impacts have been identified.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 Following the adoption of the revised corporate equality objectives 2016-2020, a significant number of actions have been progressed to support delivery of the objectives. This includes the development of a single plan and revision of the Equality Analysis process.

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Background Papers
None