


**‘A’ ITEM**

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|---|---|
|  | <b>REPORT TO<br/>CABINET<br/>TO BE HELD ON<br/>17 NOVEMBER 2015</b> |
|   | <b>Key Decision</b> <b>YES</b><br><br><b>Forward Plan Ref No</b>    |
| <b>Corporate Priority</b><br><br><b>ALL</b>                                       | <b>Cabinet Portfolio<br/>Holder</b> <b>Cllr A<br/>Jenkinson</b>     |

**REPORT OF: DIRECTOR (LD) 15/311**

**WARDS AFFECTED: All**

**SUBJECT: CORPORATE EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY SCHEME**

**RECOMMENDATION :**

It is recommended that Cabinet approve the Corporate Equalities and Diversity scheme and action plan 2015/20 for adoption by full Council.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

The Corporate Equalities and Diversity Scheme has come to an end and a new scheme is required. This report seeks Members' approval for the proposed Corporate Equalities and Diversity Scheme and Action Plan for 2015/2020.

**HIGHLIGHTED RISKS:** see attached risk matrix

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 On 14 April 2015, Cabinet approved a draft Corporate Equalities and Diversity scheme for consultation, which covered the period 2015-2020. The document sets out the Council's aims and priorities in respect of equalities and diversity and is supported by an action plan which provides further details of the work to be carried out and the actions to be taken over the next 12 months.

- 1.2 The consultation exercise has now been completed and this report is to advise Members of the comments received and to seek approval for the final version of the Corporate Equalities and Diversity Scheme, a copy of which is attached at appendix 1

## **2. CORPORATE AIMS/PRIORITIES AND THE COMMUNITY PLAN**

- 2.1 Equalities and Diversity are fundamental to the delivery of all the Council's key aims and priorities.

## **3. CONSULTATION**

- 3.1 The Corporate Equalities and Diversity Scheme has been the subject of an extensive consultation exercise with Partners, Equality Groups and the public, following approval of the draft by Cabinet.
- 3.2 85 responses were received, from individuals, Town and Parish Councils and representatives of Equality Groups. Safer and Stronger Scrutiny Committee have also been consulted on the contents of the document. A summary of the results of the consultation exercise is attached at appendix 2.
- 3.3 Respondents were asked whether they agreed with each of the objectives in the scheme and with one exception, over 90% of respondents were in agreement. The main issue related to concern around the possibility of positive discrimination during recruitment in working to achieve a workforce which is representative of the community we serve.
- 3.4 Comments received from individuals, Town and Parish Councils and representatives of Equality Groups have been taken into account in the production of the final document.

## **4. ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 The Equality Act 2010 requires a range of public bodies to consider the needs of diverse groups in the community when designing and delivering public services so that people can get fairer opportunities and better public services.
- 4.2 The Act created a new single public sector Equality Duty which covers race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity explicitly, and gender-reassignment in full.
- 4.3 The previous Corporate Equalities and Diversity Scheme was the first scheme developed by the Council which sought to cover all equalities issues. It brought together a range of documents, including separate Generic Equalities Scheme, Disability, Race and Gender Equalities schemes, and the Equal Opportunities Policy statement, etc. The document was very detailed and comprehensive due to legislative changes and new requirements around equalities. A review of the document has taken place and, since the Equality Act is now embedded, it is felt that it is more appropriate for a more concise and streamlined document to be developed.

- 4.4 The Scheme provides a framework for setting out how the Council will promote the equalities and diversity agenda, and promote community cohesion. This scheme replaces the current Corporate Equalities and Diversity Scheme, and seeks to further embed equalities and diversity issues into all the work of the Council.
- 4.5 The Scheme aims to:
- Meet the statutory requirements of the Equalities Act
  - Show how we intend to deliver equality in all areas of the Council's work, both as an employer, service deliverer and partner organisation.
  - Identify both our equality objectives, and the actions we will take to achieve them
  - Demonstrate how the Council intends to fulfill its general and specific duties.
- 4.6 The document sets out the Council's equality objectives and contains an action plan which sets out how these objectives are to be delivered.
- 4.7 Consultation on the document is now complete and it has been updated to take account of the results of the consultation and comments received.
- 4.8 The Scheme also includes a detailed action plan setting out how the key issues identified in the scheme will be progressed.
- 4.9 The final version of the scheme is attached for approval by Members at appendix 1.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The implementation of the Corporate Equalities and Diversity Scheme will have Policy implications for the Council in its Corporate Planning processes and delivery of services in future. There will also be implications re the Council's approach to Equalities and Diversity issues.
- 5.2 There are no Legal, Financial, Sustainability, Staffing, Planning, Crime and Disorder, Health and Safety or Environmental implications arising from this report.

## **6. ACTION PLAN**

- 6.1 Following approval by Cabinet, the action plan which forms part of the Corporate Equalities and Diversity Scheme will be implemented and monitored through the Performance Management Framework. Safer and Stronger Scrutiny Committee will continue to receive an annual Equalities and Diversity Monitoring Report.



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Director

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**Background Papers:**

Equality Framework for Local Government  
Equality Act 2010

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT OR WISH TO INSPECT ANY  
OF THE BACKGROUND PAPERS, PLEASE CONTACT PETRA JACKSON  
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## Risk Matrix

| <b>Risk Ref</b> | <b>Date</b>   | <b>Risk</b>   | <b>Consequences</b>   | <b>Mitigation</b>   | <b>Current Risk Score</b> | <b>Target Score</b> | <b>Service Unit Manager/ Responsible Officer</b>     | <b>Action Plan</b>                 |
|-----------------|---------------|---|---|---|---------------------------|---------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| 1               | November 2015 | The Council does not ensure that it complies with the statutory requirements of the Equality Act              | Risk of intervention by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission, risk of litigation<br><br>Poor outcomes for equality groups | Staff and Member Training will be undertaken, provision of guidance via Council Intranet and advice available | B3                        | A2                  | Senior Performance and Governance Officer/HR Manager | Scheme implemented                 |
| 3               | November 2015 | Performance against actions identified in Corporate Equalities and Diversity Scheme not effectively monitored | Weak performance score in external audit assessment. Undermining of regional assessment of performance                          | Introduce a clear action plan that can be monitored through the scrutiny process and the PMF                  | C3                        | A2                  | Senior Performance and Governance Officer/HR Manager | Action plan in place and monitored |
| 4               | November 2015 | The Council's Policies on equalities and diversity issues are maintained not up to date                       | Risk of intervention by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission  | Development of a Corporate Equalities and Diversity Scheme  | B3                        | A2                  | Senior Performance and Governance Officer/HR Manager | Scheme implemented                 |

## Glossary of Terms

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Risk                 | An event which may prevent the Council achieving its objectives                        |
| Consequences         | The outcome if the risk materialised   |
| Mitigation           | The processes and procedures that are in place to reduce the risk                      |
| Current Risk Score   | The likelihood and impact score with the current mitigation measures in place          |
| Corporate Objectives | An assessment of the Corporate Objectives that are affected by the risk identified.    |
| Target Risk Score    | The likelihood and impact score that the Council is aiming to achieve                  |
| Service Unit Manager | The Service Unit or Officer responsible for managing the risk                          |
| Action Plan          | The proposed actions to be implemented in order to reduce the risk to the target score |

## Risk Scoring

|        |            |   |   |   |   |   |
|--------|------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Impact | 5          |   |   |   |   |   |
|        | 4          |   |   |   |   |   |
|        | 3          |   |   |   |   |   |
|        | 2          |   |   |   |   |   |
|        | 1          |   |   |   |   |   |
|        |            | A | B | C | D | E |
|        | Likelihood |   |   |   |   |   |

### Likelihood:

A = Very Low  
 B = Not Likely  
 C = Likely  
 D = Very Likely  
 E = Almost Certain

### Impact

1 = Low  
 2 = Minor  
 3 = Medium  
 4 = Major  
 5 = Disaster