

HR Committee

9 May 2019



Report of: Director: Workforce & Change

Title: Diversity and inclusion work programme

Ward: N/A

Officer Presenting Report: **Helen Sinclair-Ross** (Diversity, Inclusion and Employee Initiatives Manager)

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Recommendation

The Committee notes the report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the equalities and inclusion work programme and the work of the Staff Led Groups.

The significant issues in the report are:

A detailed diversity and inclusion work programme is underway to help build an inclusive organisation. The actions are aligned to the commitments in the Organisational Improvement Plan and Equality and Inclusion Strategy.

The work programme is sponsored by the senior leadership team and includes our action plans around structure; governance; policy and strategy; learning and development; employment opportunities; communication and engagement.

The staff-led groups were re-launched in 2018 to help BAME, LGBT+, disabled and young employees to have a more influential voice in the organisation. They have a work programme with dedicated budget.

Policy

1. The Corporate Strategy describes the aspirations for the future organisation, one where we innovate and improve where we need to, ensuring the council is one that people are proud of and which delivers its priorities to high standards.
2. The Organisational Improvement Plan outlines our commitment to building an inclusive organisation where the workforce reflects the city we serve and the needs of all citizens, and where colleagues feel confident about being themselves at work.
3. The Equality and Inclusion Strategy includes a workforce objective for our handling of equality and inclusion to reach the high standards we expect of ourselves and others will look to us as a source of good practice.

Consultation

4. Internal

Not required because this report is for information only.

5. External

Not required because this report is for information only.

Context

6. Work programme

(a) The diversity and inclusion work programme (see Appendix I) sets out the actions we are taking to meet the commitments of the Organisational Improvement Plan and Equalities and Inclusion Strategy. The actions underway include:

(b) Senior sponsorship

The senior leadership team are sponsors for our equalities work with the Head of Paid Service the council's diversity champion. We are also establishing equality and inclusion champions at service level, who will help improve the robustness of equality impact assessments.

(c) Structure

The existing equalities functions are being realigned into a single, central team. Additional investment was approved at Full Council for a new post of Head of Equalities and Inclusion and additional equalities and community cohesion posts.

(d) Learning and Development

A refresh of the learning and development offer for diversity and inclusion is underway. This is designed to equip colleagues with the essential skills and knowledge to ensure handling of equality and inclusion is at the high standards we expect of ourselves.

Over 3,000 colleagues have already attended workshops on the organisational values, exploring how we work best with each other and uphold expected standards of behaviour.

The award-winning Stepping Up programme is now in its second year. It is a leadership development programme for equalities groups and is designed to improve the diversity of senior leadership across the city.

(e) Policy and strategy work

All services are required to prepare an equality action plan which will feed in to a corporate action plan. This will be reviewed on an annual basis. Equalities will be woven into individual performance objectives to ensure ownership for actions.

Workforce profile data is being used to analyse diversity gaps and identify target areas for our recruitment strategy. This is complemented with an action plan for addressing the gender and race pay gap. Work is also underway to assess if there is a disability pay gap.

Reverse mentoring and diverse recruiter schemes have been re-launched with a pool of ten mentors recruited and 20 diverse recruiters so far.

Staff Led Groups, trade unions and managers are taking part in a refresh of key HR policies, including a systematic review for the presence of unconscious bias.

(f) Communication and engagement

Colleagues are kept informed of our equalities work programme with regular updates. This is designed to raise awareness of equalities issues and the actions we are taking to address them.

The communication plan will highlight and promote events and training courses, ensuring that any activity is aligned to our objectives and that we keep colleagues updated on our progress towards them.

Our annual employee engagement survey collects feedback on the experience of the workforce. It includes questions on fairness and respect at work, and measures confidence levels around reporting unacceptable behaviour. Focus groups will be invited to review the survey results and help shape the action plans.

7. Staff led groups

- (a)** Another action in the Organisational Improvement Plan is to support the staff led groups to have a more influential voice in the organisation.
- (b)** We currently have four staff led groups, representing BAME, LGBT+, disabled and young employees
- (c)** The groups were refreshed and relaunched in 2018. They have an agreed terms of reference and work programme with an associated budget.
- (d)** The work programme in Appendix II details the staff led group priority actions.

- (e) An annual review is due in June to review the progress and refresh the work programme for the year ahead.

Proposal

8. That Committee notes the report

Other Options Considered

9. None.

Risk Assessment

8. Not required because this report is for information only.

Public Sector Equality Duties

- 11a) Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:
- i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
 - ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
 - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
 - iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –
 - tackle prejudice; and
 - promote understanding.
- 11b) Not required because this report is for information only.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

Not required because this report is for information only.

Financial**(a) Revenue**

Not required because this report is for information only.

Land

Not applicable.

Personnel

Not required because this report is for information only.

Appendices:

I – Organisational Improvement Plan – diversity work programme

II – Staff Led Group work programme

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**Background Papers:**

None.