



Report of Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Report to Scrutiny Board (Resources and Council Services)

Date: 7th April 2014

Subject: Leeds City Council's Decision Making Process and Due Regard to Equality

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. At its meeting in February, the Board agreed terms of reference for an inquiry into the Council's decision making process and due regard to equality. In summary the purpose of the inquiry was to make an assessment of and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:
 - Whether the current Equality Impact Assessment process provides the quality assurance of decision making demanded by the council
 - Whether the current Equality Impact Assessment process enables communities and interested groups to be involved appropriately in considering the impact of any proposals or whether other mechanisms should be adopted.
 - Whether there is sufficient support within the council to help promote and develop the equality agenda and to act as the champions for the nine 'equality characteristics' (Equality Areas); Race, Disability, Gender, Transgender, Age, Sexual orientation, Religion or Belief, Pregnancy and Maternity and Carers.
 - Whether the current process for 'due regard' and approaches to wider involvement and engagement specifically meet the needs of disabled people in Leeds. This is a particular issue that has been raised through the council's Equalities Assembly Disability Hub as a barrier to inclusion.

2. At its meeting on 24th March the Board discussed the above issues with the following;
 - Councillor Peter Gruen, Executive Member, Neighbourhoods, Planning and Support Services
 - Councillor David Blackburn - Leader of the Green Group (member of the Member Champions Equality Action Group)
 - Dennis Holmes, Deputy Director, Adult Social Care
 - Lelir Yeung – Head of Equalities
 - Geoff Turnbull –Senior Policy and Performance Officer
 - Pauline Ellis - Senior Policy and Performance Officer
3. In addition a working group of the Board is scheduled to meet representatives from the Council's 'Equality Assembly'.
4. At today's meeting the Scrutiny Board is asked to agree its observations and recommendations following the above two meetings. These will be tabled at the meeting as they are not available at the time of agenda despatch.

Recommendations

5. Members are asked to agree its observations and recommendations regarding the Council's decision making process and due regard to equality

Background documents¹

None used

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.