
Report of Director of Communities and Environment

Report to Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources)

Date: 22nd March 2018

Subject: Equality Impact Priorities refresh

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

1 Summary of main issues

1.1 This report provides a summary of performance information relating to Equality Impact Priorities refresh.

2 Recommendations

2.1. Members are recommended to:

- Consider and comment on the update.
- Use the information provided in the report to determine further scrutiny work to support improvement over the coming year.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1. This report provides members with information and an update on the council's Equality Improvement Priorities. The update is not intended to give a comprehensive view of all the equalities work undertaken during 2017/18, but instead provides an overview using examples from across all council directorates.

2. Background information

- 2.1. The council's Equality Improvement Priorities 2016 - 2020 were approved by Executive Board in October 2015. The Equality Improvement priorities were produced to ensure that the council meets its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act became law in October 2010. It replaced previous legislation (such as the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) and ensures consistency in what employers and employees need to do to make their workplaces a fair environment and comply with the law.
- 2.2. Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 includes a specific duty to develop equality priorities which are reviewed at least every four years. The specific duty requires local authorities to:
 - publish accessible information outlining the equality analysis which has taken place to inform equality objectives;
 - engage with people who have an interest in furthering the aims of the general equality duty; and
 - demonstrate progress against equality objectives for both employment and service delivery; and
 - publish information to show their compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually
- 2.3. The council's Equality Improvement Priorities take into account the protected characteristics as required under the Equality Act 2010. They also recognise poverty as a barrier that limits what people can do and can be. As a result priorities were included that address poverty as the council recognises that a number of the protected characteristics are disproportionately represented in those living in poverty. The Equality Improvement Priorities also recognise that there are currently different outcomes and experiences for different groups and communities.
- 2.4. The Equality Improvement Priorities were developed to compliment the priorities set out in the Best Council Plan and the ambition for Leeds to be 'The best city in the UK: one that is compassionate with a strong economy, which tackles poverty and reduces the inequalities that still exist'.
- 2.5. The council has a legal duty to publish information to show how it complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

3. Main issues

- 3.1. During 2017/18 work is taking place with council directorates to review the Equality Improvement Priorities to ensure that they are still relevant and continue to reflect the ambition of the council. This work is due to conclude at the end of April 2018 and the annual update and revised Equality Improvement Priorities will be reported to Executive Board in July 2018. (**Appendix 1**: Equality Improvement priorities summary – updated November 2017)
- 3.2. This also aligns to the work on the updated Best Council Plan which was approved by Executive Board in February 2018.

- 3.3. In addition, Human Resources set out important building blocks to help the council become more inclusive and representative (**Appendix 2**: spider diagram). Teams are able to use this framework to check and challenge everyday practice.
- 3.4. To support the delivery of Inclusion and Diversity work in 2017/18, it has been agreed with directorates that they need to develop delivery plans setting out details of the work they are doing to 'be more representative, and be more inclusive'. Progress against these delivery plans will be included in future Equality Improvement Priorities Annual Update reports, with the first progress report due in July 2018.

Corporate Considerations

4. Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1. This is an information report and as such does not need to be consulted on with the public. It is noted that performance information such as the BCP key performance indicator results are available to the public.

5. Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 5.1. This is an information report rather than one that requires a decision and so it is not necessary to conduct an equality impact assessment.

6. Council Policies and City Priorities

- 6.1. The Equality Improvement Priorities were developed to compliment the priorities set out in the Best Council Plan and the ambition for Leeds to be 'The best city in the UK: one that is compassionate with a strong economy, which tackles poverty and reduces the inequalities that still exist'.

7. Resources and value for money

- 7.1. There are no specific resource implications from this report,

8. Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 8.1. The Equality Improvement priorities were produced to ensure that the council meets its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010. The council has a legal duty to publish information to show how it complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- 8.2. This report is an information update and as such is not subject to call in.

9. Risk Management

- 9.1. Failure to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 may result in a number of risks arising including:
 - Discrimination claims being made against the council by employees, and the resource implications of having to deal with these claims. The council's Corporate Risk Register includes a risk on 'Employment Litigation'.
 - Enforcement action taken against the council by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).
 - A significant adverse impact on the council's reputation.
 - The council may be seen as a less attractive organisation to work for when compared to others that comply with the act.

10. Conclusions

- 10.1. This report provides an overview of progress being undertaken across the council in reviewing the Equality Improvement Priorities and also the development of directorate delivery plans setting out how they intend to 'be more representative and be more inclusive'.
- 10.2. It is noted that as actions are due to be completed in the first quarter of 2018/19, a further report is planned for Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources) later in 2018 to provide an update on this work.

11. Recommendations

- 11.1. Members are recommended to:
 - Consider and comment on the update.
 - Use the information provided in the report to determine further scrutiny work to support improvement over the coming year.
- 11.2. Background documents¹
- 11.3. Appendix 1: Equality improvement priorities summary – updated November 2017
- 11.4. Appendix 2: Inclusion and diversity building blocks

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.