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Policy & Improvement Officer

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Report of: James Henderson, Director of Policy, Performance and Communications

Report to: Cllr Olivia Blake, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

Date of Decision: 12th March 2019

Subject: Sheffield City Council Annual Equality Report 2017-18

| | | |
|--|------------------------------|--|
| Is this a Key Decision? If Yes, reason Key Decision:- | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| - Expenditure and/or savings over £500,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| - Affects 2 or more Wards | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Which Cabinet Member Portfolio does this relate to? Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance | | |
| Which Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee does this relate to? Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee | | |
| Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? EIA not required. | | |
| Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:- | | |
| <i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i> | | |

Purpose of Report:

To provide the Cabinet Member with:

- A summary of our Statutory Equality Duties and how we are meeting them.
- An overview of progress against our Equality and Fairness Objectives for 2014 /18.
- An update on progress made and continued challenges on equality and diversity.
- A summary of our workforce diversity.
- An overview of areas of persistent inequality that will require continued focus.

Recommendations

The Cabinet Member is asked:

1. To note
 - Progress made in meeting our Statutory Equality Duties and Equality and Fairness Objectives 2014 – 2018
 - Our latest Workforce Diversity data and outstanding challenges
 - Areas of persistent inequality that will require continued attention
2. To approve 'Sheffield City Council's Annual Equality Report 2017-18' (Appendix 1)

Background Papers:

- Annual Equality Report 2017-18 (Appendix 1)
- Annual Workforce Diversity Report 2017-18 (Appendix 2).

| Lead Officer to complete:- | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required. | |
| | Finance: | |
| | Legal: | |
| Equalities: Michael Bowles | | |
| <i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i> | | |
| 2 | EMT member who approved submission: James Henderson | |
| 3 | Cabinet Member consulted: Cllr Olivia Blake | |
| 4 | I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Decision Maker by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1. | |
| | <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Lead Officer Name: Diane Owens</td> <td>Job Title: Policy & Improvement Officer</td> </tr> </table> | Lead Officer Name: Diane Owens |
| Lead Officer Name: Diane Owens | Job Title: Policy & Improvement Officer | |
| Date: TBA | | |

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Annual Equality Report: 2017-18

1.0 SUMMARY of PROPOSAL

1.1 To provide the Cabinet Member with:

- A summary of our Statutory Equality Duties and how we are meeting them.
- An overview of progress against our Equality and Fairness Objectives for 2014 /18.
- An update on progress made and continued challenges on equality and diversity.
- A summary of our workforce diversity.
- An overview of areas of persistent inequality that will require continued focus.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Fairness and tackling inequality is at the heart of the Council's values, we believe that everyone should get a fair chance to succeed but recognise that some people and communities need extra support to reach their full potential, particularly when they face multiple layers of deprivation.
- 2.2 The business case for fairness and equality remains strong; good practice will lead to benefits for all across the city. Tackling inequality is crucial to increasing fairness and social cohesion, reducing health problems and helping people to have independence and control over their lives.
- 2.2 We want our workforce culture to promote and embrace equality, fairness and inclusion, realising that each individual adds value to a team. We are committed to supporting our workforce to develop and to commission or deliver quality services.
- 2.3 The national austerity programme has resulted in substantial cuts to the Council's budget since 2010. These falls in funding have come at a time when there have been unprecedented increases in demand for social care services, which are being experienced by councils nationally. The authority has identified a further £30 million worth of savings to be made over 2019/20; this takes the cumulative total of savings and financial pressures over the last nine years to £460 million. Consequently, to set a balanced budget, for the first time we are planning to draw upon £11million from reserves in 2019/20.
- 2.4 These substantial funding cuts mean that our work on equality and fairness is much more focused on ensuring we do not slide backwards and lose ground in existing areas of inequality. The emphasis is on making sure we are doing things fairly and meeting demand pressures. National issues such as welfare reform have also had a significant impact across the city. The changes have impacted most on groups who already experience inequality, such as people on low incomes, disabled people, women and those from BAME communities.
- 2.5 As a local authority we have a statutory duty to publish information on an annual basis which demonstrates how we are meeting our statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Duties (PSED). This includes publishing information relating to employees who share protected characteristics.
- 2.6 Our Annual Equality Report 2017-18 outlines actions we have taken over the past 12 months to improve equality and to meet our statutory duties under the Equality Act. This includes demonstrating how we have met the commitments we made in our Equality

Objectives 2014-18. The report highlights a number of examples, including our work to support citywide events and activities, work on health and wellbeing and health inequalities and our progress and challenges in terms of attainment. This is the final report against our 2014-18 Equality Objectives and we are in the process of finalising our new objectives for the next 4 years, 2019-22.

- 2.7 The information provided in the Annual Equality Report represents a sample of the work that has been undertaken. It is therefore designed to be read in conjunction with other related reports on the work that the Council has carried out, as well as policies and strategies that impact on equality.
- 2.8 The Annual Equality Report provides examples of our work, both in terms of how we serve the city and how we behave as an employer. As an appendix it includes our Workforce Diversity Profile for 2017-18. It also highlights the persistent inequalities that we will continue to focus on, including poverty and health and wellbeing.
- 3.0 HOW DOES THE DECISION CONTRIBUTE TO THE CORPORATE PLAN AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR SHEFFIELD PEOPLE**
- 3.1 As a Council, we have a major role in tackling inequality and it is important that we work with communities and partners in doing so.
- 3.2 During 2017-18 our work on equalities supported the Council's Corporate Plan 2015-18 ambitions of tackling inequalities and making it easier for people to overcome obstacles by investing in the most deprived communities and supporting individuals to help themselves and achieve their full potential. We also contributed to ongoing work around poverty and fairness.
- 3.3 In times when resources are diminished, it's feasible that equalities could be viewed as less of a priority. As a Council however we are determined to keep fairness and tackling inequality as a key area. We will do as much as we can to strive for greater equality for everyone, and particularly those who face multiple disadvantage, discrimination and additional barriers such as those who share protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. We retain our ambitious aim to make Sheffield the fairest place to live and work.
- 3.4 As our Annual Equality Report shows, there is excellent work being undertaken across the organisation and city in relation to equality and fairness that will continue to have a positive impact on people's lives. However, there remain areas of persistent inequality and challenges that are unacceptable.
- 3.5 These issues are not solely issues confined to Sheffield and often reflect challenges at a national level. Addressing these areas requires us to not only push on with existing work and initiatives but also look at where we may need to do things differently, if we are to improve outcomes for everyone in the city. Furthermore, we know that we cannot achieve our goals alone; and we will continue to work together with our partners from across the sectors to join up our approaches to meet these challenges and tackle inequality effectively.
- 4.0 HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION**
- 4.1 Our Annual Equality Report 2017-18 sets out how we are meeting our Equality Duties and outlines a sample of the work that has been undertaken in the past year. Consultation and engagement activity will have been undertaken as required.
- 4.2 The Equality Hub Network as noted in (section 3.3) of the Annual Equality Report was set up to strengthen the voice and influence of communities of identity (COIs) in Sheffield by

providing a route for the Council to engage with those communities to help shape policy and services in the city. These COIs are specifically identified as a protected characteristic within the Equality Act 2010.

- 4.3 The report has also been shared with our Equality Leads (who have contributed content) and with our Strategic Equality and Inclusion Board (SEIB).

5.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 As a Public Authority, we have legal requirements under Section 149 and 158 of the Equality Act 2010. These are often collectively referred to as the 'general duties to promote equality'. To help us meet the general equality duties, we also have specific duties, as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011. We have considered our obligations under this Duty in this report and the Council is committed to ensuring that citizens have access to appropriate information and services in particular those who share protected characteristics under the Equality Act. We currently comply with our legislative requirements under the Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Duties (PSED). Our Annual Equality Report 2017-18 sets this out in more detail.
- 5.2 Should the Council choose to implement a policy / project as a result of the report that requires a further decision to be made this would be taken in the usual manner and in line with the Council's constitution / Leader's Scheme of Delegation. Any actions taken or decisions made would include consideration of any equalities implications including equality impact assessments and appropriate consultation to ensure the Council fulfils its obligations.

6.0 FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There may be costs associated with supporting and improving practice in some areas e.g. action linked to the EIA Review and Internal Audit, but these costs would be managed from within the existing Portfolio / Service budget.
- 6.2 Our commercial partners (Kier, Capita, Amey and Veolia) sit on the Strategic Equality and Inclusion Board (SEIB) and submit annual reports and updates on equalities including how they are contribute to meeting our Duties.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 As a Public Authority, we have legal requirements under Section 149 and 158 of the Equality Act 2010 as referred to in section 3 and section 5 of this report. These are often collectively referred to as the 'general duties to promote equality'. To help us meet the general equality duties, we also have specific duties, such as the requirement to produce, publish and report on equality objectives as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011.
- 7.2 We have considered our obligations under this Duty and this report details how we meet the Duties, including an update on progress on meeting our Equality Objectives 2014-18.

8.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are HR implications in relation to workforce diversity (see section 3.4 'Recruiting and Supporting a Diverse Workforce' and Appendix 2 'Annual Workforce Diversity Report 2017-18'). The report and its recommendations have been approved by the Strategic Equality and Inclusion Board (SEIB) and by the Director of HR and Customer Services.

9.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 We have a statutory duty to publish information on an annual basis which demonstrates how we are meeting our statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Duties (PSED). This includes publishing information about our workforce diversity.
- 9.2 Section 4.0 of the report outlines some of the areas we will focus on from 2019 to ensure we continue to meet our Public Sector Equality Duties and address persistent long term inequalities. This includes developing our Equality Objectives for the next 4 year period, 2019-23.

10.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Our aim is to make Sheffield a fairer place to live, work and visit and on an ongoing basis we will continue to meet the needs of our diverse customers. There are many strategies, policies and practices which impact our work on equality, diversity and inclusion; and there is excellent work being undertaken across the Council and city that will continue to make a difference to people's lives in the city. These are highlighted in the report.
- 10.2 However, alongside this work there are areas of persistent inequality and challenges in areas across the Council and the city that this report has noted and which are unacceptable. These are not solely issues in Sheffield, but they will require ongoing attention and may need to be addressed differently if we are to improve outcomes for everyone in the city. The Council cannot do this alone and all partners in the city will play a part if we are to meet these challenges.

10.3 Recommendations

The Cabinet Member is asked:

10.3.1 To note

- Progress made in meeting our Statutory Equality Duties and Equality and Fairness Objectives 2014 – 2018
- Our latest Workforce Diversity data and outstanding challenges
- Areas of persistent inequality that will require continued attention

10.3.2 To approve 'Sheffield City Council's Annual Equality Report 2017-18' (Appendix 1)
