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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: Thursday 11th April 2019

Subject: Sheffield City Council Equality Objectives 2019-23

Is this a Key Decision? If Yes, reason Key Decision:- Yes No

- Expenditure and/or savings over £500,000

- Affects 2 or more Wards

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 No

If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? EIA 553 (attached)

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-

*"The (**report/appendix**) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (**insert relevant paragraph number**) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."*

Purpose of Report:

To provide the Cabinet Member with:

- Sheffield City Council Equality Objectives for 2019-23
- Sheffield City Council Equality Objectives 2019-23 – Consultation Report

Recommendations

The Cabinet Member is asked:

1. To approve Sheffield City Council's Equality Objectives for 2019-23 (Appendix 1);
and
2. To note 'Sheffield City Council Equality Objectives 2019-23: Consultation Report'
(Appendix 2)

Background Papers:

- Sheffield City Council Equality Objectives 2019-23 (Appendix 1)
- Sheffield City Council Equality Objectives 2019-23: Consultation Report (Appendix 2)
- Sheffield City Council Equality Objectives 2019-23 EIA (Appendix 3)

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: Anna Sanderson	
	Legal: Nadine Wynter	
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
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Date: Thursday 11 th April 2019		

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Sheffield City Council Equality Objectives 2019-23

1.0 SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

- 1.1 Our Equality Objectives are important to us as an organisation. They guide the work we carry out in the city and demonstrate our commitment to challenging inequality and promoting a fair and inclusive City.
- 1.2 By law the Council is required to set at least one Equality Objective every four years. Our current objectives run until 2018. Following a public consultation, we have produced a final draft of our Equality Objectives for 2019-22, which are now being presented for approval.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Our current objectives were drafted in 2014 and run until 2018. We have provided a detailed annual update against our objectives via our Annual Equality Reports.
- 2.2 Our revised objectives were drafted to reflect our current priorities and areas of focus, including areas identified in our Workforce Opinion Survey, Workforce Equality data and persistent areas of inequality as highlighted in our Annual Equality Report 2017-18.
- 2.3 To help us focus on important areas, so we can make a difference, for 2019-23 we proposed setting four objectives (as outlined below), each with a set of three more specific aims (as outlined in Appendix 1).

Objective 1: Strengthen knowledge and understanding of our communities

Objective 2: Ensure our workforce reflects the people that we serve

Objective 3: Lead the city in celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion

Objective 4: Break the cycle of inequality and improve life chances

- 2.4 A draft set of Equality Objectives were shared with our Strategic Equality and Inclusion Board (SEIB) in October 2018 and following approval these were taken out to public consultation during October-November 2018.
- 2.5 The Strategic Equality and Inclusion Board received the updated draft objectives in February 2019 and were in agreement that they be put forward for sign off by the Cabinet Member.

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. Our Equality Objectives guide the work we carry out in the city and demonstrate our commitment to challenging inequality and promoting a fair and inclusive City.
- 3.2 Our objectives contribute across all 5 of our Corporate Plan priorities; tackling inequalities, better health and wellbeing, strong economy, thriving neighbourhoods and communities and an in touch organisation.

3.3 As a large public sector organisation, our Equality Objectives cover a broad set of issues and priorities, particularly for areas that tackle persistent inequalities, such as health and wellbeing and attainment. Many of these issues reflect challenges at a national level, and our approach to tackling these issues will inevitably be through a wide range of strategies, policies and projects, which cover a period of a number of years.

4.0 HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION

4.1 The Equality Objectives were taken out to public consultation during October - November 2018. The consultation received a total of 178 responses (largely from individuals). There was a lot of support for the areas we have chosen to focus on, with 84% of people saying that the objectives focused on either “The Right Things” or “Most of the Right Things”.

4.3 We also received a wide range of feedback and comments on the objectives, both the comments and our response are summarised in our Consultation Report (Appendix 2).

4.4 Our equalities monitoring for the consultation shows that we engaged with a diverse group of people, for example, 18% of our respondents were from BAME groups (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic), 9% described themselves as LGB+ and 20% were carers.

4.5 Based on the feedback we received we made a small number of amendments to our Equality Objectives, which are reflected in the final draft (Appendix 1).

5.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 As a public authority, we have statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. These are often collectively referred to as the ‘general duties to promote equality’. The Act protects people from discrimination, harassment or victimisation based on the protected characteristics of sex, age, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender identification, religion or belief (including no-belief) marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

5.2 To help us meet the general equality duties, we also have a specific “Public Sector Equality Duty”, as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011, which require us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between different groups.

5.3 Our Equality Objectives provide a framework for our work on challenging inequality and promoting a fair and inclusive City. In this way they should support and enable a range of activities which support us to meet our statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 and related Public Sector Equality Duty.

5.4 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken and is attached to this report (EIA 553). We expect our Equality Objectives to have a positive impact across groups with protected characteristics, as outlined in the EIA. However, at this early stage our objectives do not commit the Council to the delivery of a set of specific projects or policies (which have not already been agreed). Therefore, as we move into implementation, should the Council choose to implement a project or policy as a result of the objectives then standard procedures would be followed. This would include a more detailed 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 As stated above, our Equality Objectives provide a framework for our work on challenging inequality and promoting a fair and inclusive City, at this early stage they do not outline the delivery of a set of particular projects or policies (which have not already been agreed).
- 6.2 However, as we move beyond these early stages, should the Council choose to implement a project or policy as a result of the Equality Objectives any associated costs would need to be identified and would need to be managed from within existing Portfolio / service budgets.

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 5 of this report. 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.
- 7.2 We are required to publish at least one Equality Objective every four years. Our current Equality Objectives run from 2014-18, we therefore now need to publish our objectives for the next 4 year period, 2019-2023. Our proposed objectives are attached (Appendix 1).
- 7.3 We also 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 Equality Duty (PSED). This is in part achieved through the publication of our 'Annual Equality Report' and 'Workforce Diversity Data'. The first 'Annual Equality Report' relating to our new Equality Objectives will be published in spring 2020.

8.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are HR implications in relation to workforce diversity (see Equality Objective 2 "Ensure our workforce reflects the people that we serve") which have been further explored in the EIA. The Equality Objectives have also been approved by our Strategic Equality and Inclusion Board (SEIB), which the Director of HR and Customer Services is a member of.

9.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 We have a statutory duty to publish at least one Equality Objective every four years, and so there are no other lawful options available. Our current Equality Objectives run from 2014-18, so we now need to publish our objectives for the next 4 year period, 2019-2023.

10.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 As a Council, we have a major role in tackling inequality. Our Equality Objectives guide the work we carry out in the city and demonstrate our commitment to challenging inequality and promoting a fair and inclusive City.
- 10.2 We expect our objectives to have a positive impact across groups with protected characteristics. To help us focus on a small number of important areas, so we can make a difference, we are proposing setting 4 objectives each with a set of 3 more specific aims.

10.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet Member is asked:

- To approve Sheffield City Council's Equality Objectives for 2019-23 (Appendix 1); and
- To note 'Sheffield City Council Equality Objectives 2019-23: Consultation Report' (App. 2)