



Report to Policy Committee

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Report of: James Henderson, Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement

Report to: Strategy and Resources Committee

Date of Decision: 2 August 2023

Subject: *Update on Sheffield City Council's response to the Race Equality Commission*

Type of Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Insert EIA reference number and attach EIA: 1228				
Has appropriate consultation/engagement taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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:				

Purpose of Report:

While we have begun to implement the recommendations of the Race Equality Commission report we have not moved quickly enough as an organisation to tackle the racial disparities identified by the Commission. The Leader of the Council has committed publicly to accelerate work.

This paper updates the Strategy and Resources Committee on progress against the Council's December 2022 response to the Race Equality Commission and makes recommendations to increase the pace and monitoring of change. This is important if we are to meet our goal to become an anti-racist organisation and implement all aspects of the Race Equality Commission report.

The recommended actions should empower senior leaders to take an active role in monitoring performance and outcomes across their teams, and ensure action plans are fit for purpose to achieve our goals. By doing this we will be working towards addressing racial disparity and seeing equality, diversity and inclusion being integrated into service plans and becoming part of the way we do things within the Council. We will also be able to monitor progress more accurately and be ready to

report into the final legacy arrangements.

These recommendations will support us to build an organisation that anyone can feel welcome in and proud to work for. And help us to see the services we deliver for every resident improved to tackle the inequalities and racial disparity set out so starkly by the Commission.

In addition, in September we will work with anchor organisations and others to jointly hold an event for community representatives and anchor representatives. This event will enable reflection on the work that has been done and challenge us all to go further and faster over the coming year.

Recommendations: We recommend that:

- a. the Committee note the progress made against the Council's response to the Race Equality Commission agreed at their meeting on 5 December 2022 and agree the need to increase the pace and monitoring of change,
- b. we compile and analyse the learning from the activity to date and set out to the Chief Executive during September a plan to further define priority actions, identify gaps and target support and challenge,
- c. use that plan to support senior leaders to challenge their services, including corporate functions, to set out timebound actions which are realistic and for which impact is measurable,
- d. build on work under our three underpinning areas: learning and development, awareness raising; de-biasing; and, data. Particularly improving how we gather employee views,
- e. support the work of the legacy working group so that it leads to proposals which enable us to work with anchor organisations, partners and the community to support, learn from, and challenge each other as we seek to make progress.
- f. the Strategic Equality Inclusion Board monitors this work and that a further progress report is brought to this Committee in December 2023.

Background Papers:

Sheffield Race Equality Commission, Independent Report 2022: [Race Equality Commission | Sheffield City Council](#)

Sheffield City Council response to the Sheffield Race Equality Commission: [\(Public Pack\) Supplement Pack 1 - Items 10 and 13 Agenda Supplement for Strategy and Resources Policy Committee, 05/12/2022 14:00 \(sheffield.gov.uk\)](#)

Our Values

[Our values | Sheffield City Council](#)

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
	Finance: Kerry Darlow, Senior Finance Manager <i>Legal: David Hollis, Interim General Counsel and Monitoring Officer</i>

	completed / EIA completed.	<i>Equalities & Consultation: Adele Robinson, Equalities and engagement manager</i>
		<i>Climate: Considered within service</i>
	<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	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>James Henderson, Director of Policy and Democratic Engagement</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Councillor Tom Hunt, chair of Strategy and Resources Committee and Leader of the Council</i>
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 Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Lucy Heyes</i>	Job Title: <i>Strategic Delivery Adviser: equalities</i>
	Date: 24 July 2023	

PROPOSAL

Purpose

1. The Race Equality Commission (REC) [published its final report](#) on the 14 July 2022. It made recommendations for the whole city and we are dedicated to playing our part. We accepted all of the Commission's findings and recommendations for the Council. This Committee agreed our [organisational response](#) on the 5 December 2022. That response set out what action we would take to work towards being an anti-racist organisation within 2 years and to fulfil the recommendations relevant to our organisation within 3 years.
2. While we are only 8-months into delivering against that response, this report:
 - a. updates the Committee on progress;
 - b. sets out what we have learnt, both positives and challenges; and,
 - c. outlines, for this Committee's agreement, how we build on work to date to define priority actions, identify gaps and target support and challenge and increase the pace of change.
3. This will support us to make progress against the action we need to take as an organisation. It will also help us to be clear about how we contribute to efforts across the city with partners and residents. It is our intention to meet the commitments we made to become anti-racist and to implement the Commission's recommendations for us which is why we must increase the pace of change.
4. In our [response to the REC](#), we outlined three priority areas, progress on which would underpin our ability to make change as an organisation. These

were: building a more inclusive culture via learning, development and awareness; de-biasing our systems and processes to reduce barriers and inequalities; and, improving data collection, sharing and analysis.

5. At that point we identified that practice across these three enabling areas was inconsistent. This inconsistency was found across everything we do even though we had policies, procedures and training in place. This made it clear that reducing inconsistency was essential to enable us to progress. 8-months into implementing our response, in a 3-year long journey to completing the REC recommendations applicable to the Council, for these priority areas we have done the following.

Building a more inclusive culture via learning, development and awareness

6. We have rolled out and are monitoring uptake of mandatory training. We are working with services to identify and remove barriers which get in the way of our people completing this learning, and challenging areas with low completion rates. All Trade Union Convenors have done the mandatory training.
7. We have rolled out a new self-directed learning platform called Bookboon. This platform delivers learning and awareness raising through resources, audiobooks and videos on a multitude of topics, including diversity and race, in highly accessible formats. Take-up has been high and feedback positive. Services are also making the most of informal learning and sharing opportunities. Staff and the public have participated in awareness raising events, including marking the 75th anniversary of Windrush Day.
8. We have prioritised work on recruitment including developing surveys and rolling out mandatory recruitment and selection training. 700 managers have been trained to date and a further 150 are booked on forthcoming training. This is raising skills, de-biasing our recruitment processes and encouraging more creative and inclusive recruitment practices.
9. We are building on this progress through work to develop senior leader equality objectives, a new induction approach, employee surveys, and gathering learning from grievance processes to shape policies and training.
10. These actions speak to the areas of priority set out in our December response under the heading ***our staff***, in which we looked at our demographics as an organisation. In that analysis we concluded that for the calendar year 2023 our priority for our staff would be training and learning. This was based on evidence that the knowledge of racial literacy and cultural competency varied across the organisation and staff recognition that this needed to change if we are to improve outcomes, both internally and externally.
11. We have completed the 2021-22 Workforce Data Report including producing a summary report, specific report on race and ethnicity, and pay gap data. This data and analysis is now informing the Equality Impact Assessment work that is going on across the organisation. We are currently extracting the data for the latest report and early indications have shown that there are positive movements in terms of overall profile, new starters and apprentices. The workforce census has been updated to collect demographic monitoring information that is aligned with the Office for National Statistics Inclusive Data

Standards so that we are able to compare against national data sets and reports.

12. Our response to the REC set out our baseline staff data. Updated data shows that the Council employs over 8,000 employees of whom 17.3% (up from 16.6%) are from a Black, Asian or Minoritised Ethnic background. In 2011, the National Census showed that in Sheffield 19% of residents were from a Black, Asian or Minoritised Ethnic background. This figure has risen slightly with the 2021 National Census data showing that 20.9% of residents identified themselves as Black (4.6%), Asian (9.6%), Mixed (3.5%) or Other Ethnic Group (3.2%), other residents identified themselves as White British (74.5%) and White-non-British (4.6%). We want a workforce which reflects the city we serve and services are taking steps towards this. For example, our Housing service changed its apprenticeships recruitment processes by promoting opportunities in local communities and accepting CVs. This led to 44% of those recruited coming from a Black, Asian or Minoritised Ethnic background.

De-biasing our systems and processes to reduce barriers and inequalities

13. We have focused the first 8 months of our actions on targeting key workforce policies and processes. Key to this are high-quality Equality Impact Assessments (EIA). We have launched a new platform to guide officers through the EIA process and to prompt them to challenge their proposals, for example how their proposal could contribute to anti-racist organisation and city objectives. This is accompanied by training, guidance and access to support to drive up the quality and impact of these assessments. We are monitoring compliance and will be sampling for quality assurance and targeting support.
14. Developing better EIAs to inform tender processes has had a positive impact. For example, in Public Health it led to a more diverse smoking cessation service workforce, which is more representative of the community it serves, being employed in the past months. This came about through developing commissioning principles, talking about equality, diversity and inclusion issues regularly and work with the provider.
15. We have chosen to prioritise ensuring the HR policy framework includes EIAs to ensure policies address unconscious and conscious bias and other issues. We have also prioritised de-biasing the Dignity and Respect and Individual Grievance processes, policies and supportive training so that investigations are undertaken knowledgeably and sensitively.
16. These actions speak to the areas of priority set out in our December response under the heading ***our services***. The EIA actions look to directly address the previous experiences that EIA processes were inconsistent, completed too late and were relying on incomplete data. These new processes are still bedding in but early indications are positive.
17. The ***our services*** section of our December response detailed service specific work which has now begun, for example:
 - a. Education: encouraging schools to have a culture where racism is reported, investigated and tackled. Strategic Director of Children's Services speaking to education leaders of colour to understand

barriers, issues, support needs and good practice. Developing new training opportunities and work on Governing Body diversity.

- b. Public Health: internal action plans and dedicated learning time. Comprehensive data monitoring which shows and tracks disparities. All services that have been recommissioned required providers to include equality, diversity and inclusion policies. Recommissioned services all conducted equality impacts assessments, these have been held up as best practice and changed what and how we commissioned, including in tobacco control, and work and health services commissioning.
- c. Community: awareness raising of REC with Local Area Committee (LAC) managers. Public meetings to discuss race equality and specific workshops for elected Members have begun and feedback collected to improve these. Each LAC will have access to data through ward profiles and insight reports and are setting out what other data would support race equality work.
- d. Housing: Developed better data monitoring to understand tenant satisfaction by demographic, this is enabling us to look at intersectionality. Changed apprenticeships recruitment processes which led to 44% of those recruited coming from a Black, Asian or Minoritised Ethnic background. Building on this through work with staff to understand and address any barriers to progression. Will incorporate into our REC action plan the stronger diversity outcomes expected in the Consumer Regulation Framework for social housing.
- e. Culture: Sheffield City Archives, working in partnership with the Centre for Equity and Inclusion, University of Sheffield and writer, Desiree Reynolds, applied for and were awarded a £112,000 grant to progress and expand the *Dig Where You Stand* work. This uses the city's archives to explore marginalised histories – specifically people of colour pre-Windrush.
- f. Sport: integrated race equality priorities into our sport and leisure strategy to ensure any sporting investment in the city facilitates authentic cultural representation of Sheffield's Black, Asian and minoritised ethnic communities. Working with regional partners as part of the Yorkshire and Humber Anti Racism in Sport Group. Built equality objectives into the specification for the new leisure operator.
- g. Crime and justice: we have progressed the work of the existing 2021-2024 Safer Sheffield Partnership Plan through the Safer Sheffield Board and reviewed the Board's terms of reference. Targeted work on Knife Crime including awareness raising. New appointments of Youth Workers in every LAC. Increased the diversity of the Youth Justice Service and designated an equality, diversity and inclusion board member.
- h. Children's and adults social care: while not explicitly highlighted by the REC these services are integrating lessons from it into their provision.

Improving data collection, sharing and analysis.

18. We have put in place a new data platform to meet our commitment to develop a new data warehouse. Testing of the platform has begun and staff are being trained to ensure good use.
19. The process of doing this has revealed the volume of data currently held around protected characteristics is relatively low. This issue isn't unique to us. The Government's Racial Disparity Unit has highlighted consistent issues with this due to factors including low trust and low response rates which are exacerbated if the policy documentation and privacy statements, which would enable legally compliant data collection, are not in place. We have identified national data sets which we can draw on to support policy making (such as the Government's Ethnicity Facts and Figures Service) while we improve.
20. We are also refreshing our Population Knowledge Profiles based on Census 2021 data to understand the make-up of groups and communities in Sheffield. We have made it easier for staff to access local insight comparator data. This work has enabled us to refine next steps to improve our data which will look to: adopt the Government's Standard for Ethnicity data; build on a LGA Data Maturity Assessment pilot to baseline data collection; and, training to manage the new platform and its datasets. We will also examine whether we need new processes or initiatives to build useful, legally compliant datasets which we can use to monitor our performance year-on-year, set expectations across the organisation, and identify and tackle gaps. We have also improved the customer service monitoring form to improve consistency in the data we do gather. Feedback from services has shown that the push to use data to target activity is creating the right conversations within the organisation.

Legacy

21. In our December 2022 response, we also set out our aspirations for **ourselves as a city leader**. In March the Sheffield City Partnership Board (SCPB) agreed the establishment of a time-limited REC Legacy working group with an independent chair, Richard Stubbs, Chief Executive of the Yorkshire and Humber Academic Health Sciences Network and until recently chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership. This working group is made up of representatives from communities, private sector and anchor organisations. It is developing a set of options for long-term legacy arrangements which will hold the city to account in its work to become anti-racist. In the Autumn, the group will present a recommendation back to SCPB on the most appropriate model for the Legacy Body and how it should be implemented, including a transparent model for recruitment as appropriate. The Commission's recommendations envisioned the legacy arrangements holding the whole city to account for progress. It has taken some time to work through the best way in which to set up to do that in a way which engenders confidence. These working group arrangements give us a clear forum in which to come to an agreement on next steps.
22. We have been working with our partners and key anchor organisations to improve the diversity of city boards and committees. We have introduced equality and diversity monitoring for the SCPB to establish a baseline and create targets to improve diversity following the review of the Board. We have also worked to broaden agendas to include more diverse voices and

discussions, and moved out into community venues. We will use learning from this to evolve our ways of working in partnership in response to the city goals.

Learning and challenges

23. In our December 2022 response, we said that we would not be afraid to change and adapt our practice and actions if the impact is not felt or situations change. While we have begun to implement the recommendations of the REC alongside other organisations in the city, we also know that the council has not moved quickly enough as an organisation and that the racial disparities identified by the commission still affect the lives of many people in Sheffield. While a lot of good activity has taken place, not enough of it has outcome measures, hampering our ability to track improvement. The Leader of the Council has committed publicly to accelerate work.
24. From the action to date we have learnt that collaboration is key. The most progress, and most positive feedback, has come from areas where teams are working together either internally, with Trade Unions or with organisations and partners across the city. People want to learn and improve, services value the support being provided and can see how this will support them to bring about improvements. All the feedback has reinforced the message that talking about equality, diversity and inclusion is important and learning and training time is essential and needs to continue to be an underpinning priority. While there are currently constraints on what our data can tell us, the intelligence we do have, insight from other data sources and sharing the REC report are creating the right conversations within and beyond the Council. This has reinforced that the shared mission and willingness to improve is present – we need to capitalise on this.
25. Through our work to date we have uncovered new challenges. Issues with the volume and quality of our data mean we can't currently look to our own data to tell us which Council processes are inherently biased. We also need to improve the way the Council as a whole, and individual services, systematically collect and use data to inform service improvements and target actions.
26. As highlighted by other reviews, large scale culture change is not something that can be achieved instantly. Change will take time and effort, especially given the challenges the Council faces financially which create capacity issues for Council teams. There are also issues present across the city, and the country, which we can influence but which will take time to show change, for example nationwide trends in the lack of diversity of the workforce in some sectors.
27. These challenges mean that while areas have made progress, change has not been sufficiently pacy or systematic to address the inconsistencies highlighted in our response to the REC.

HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?

The Race Equality Commission set out recommendations to Sheffield as a city, and organisations including the Council, to support and challenge us all to take

action to become anti-racist organisations and an anti-racist city. This update on progress against the Council's response to the Commission contributes directly to progress towards these aims. We expect that this work will also contribute to work to define the Council's corporate plan and Sheffield wide development of the City Goals.

HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

The development of the Council's response to the Race Equality Commission involved senior leaders, service managers, staff and staff networks. The progress reporting has taken feedback from services and views from the wider Council. We have not consulted externally on this update as it is our report on the progress to date.

RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

Equality Implications

The Council conducted an Equality Impact Assessment as part of developing its response to the Race Equality Commission. That impact assessment remains applicable to this update on progress.

Financial and Commercial Implications

As per the December Council response to the Race Equality Commission, this report does not have specific financial implications beyond what has already been agreed in relation to the Commission and the Council's response. SCC will need to contribute to the establishment and ongoing costs of the Legacy arrangements alongside other city partners.

Legal Implications

The Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to in the exercise of its functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

As per the December Council response to the Race Equality Commission, this report does not have any specific legal implications beyond what has already been agreed in relation to the Commission and the Council's response to that. Delivering against the Race Equality Commission report will assist the Council in meeting that duty.

However, it is also recognised that as the Race Equality Commission report sets out the aim of being Anti-Racist goes beyond meeting legal duties.

Climate Implications

Due to the update nature of this report, a full scored Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) has not been deemed necessary, however the climate implications of the report have been considered.

The actions within this report do not have immediate nature and land use, adaptation, buildings and infrastructure, transport, economy, energy, resource use or waste implications.

Against the CIA category of Influence: people from a Black, Asian or Minoritised Ethnic background are likely to be impacted by the climate emergency both in Sheffield (due to overlaps with levels of poverty and health disparities) and through family links to places feeling the impact of climate change most intensely. Work to improve the data we hold and to work with communities, as well as specific actions on health disparities, should contribute to addressing these inequalities.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

This Committee agreed that the Council should pursue a specific response to the Race Equality Commission. This report does not recommend a change to that approach.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To learn from early experiences in our response to the Race Equality Commission and refine our approach to increase the pace of change and monitoring.