

**Report to: Governance Select  
Committee**

**Date of meeting: 29 September 2016**



**Portfolio:** Governance and Development Management (Councillor R. Bassett)

**Subject:** Annual Equality Information Report 2016

**Officer contact for further information:** B. Copson (01992 564042)

**Democratic Services Officer:** M. Jenkins (01992 564607)

---

**Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**That the Select Committee reviews the Equality Information Report for 2016.**

**Executive Summary:**

The Equality Act 2010 requires that authorities subject to the public sector equality duty publish equality information annually to demonstrate compliance with the duty. The Council published its last equality information report in September 2015, and the 2016 report sets out the progress made since the last report, to improve the Council's services and employment practices for people with protected characteristics.

The Council's progress against the public sector equality duty is monitored bi-annually by Management Board and overview and scrutiny to ensure compliance and drive improvement in performance.

**Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

The broad purpose of the public sector equality requires that the Council integrates a consideration of equality and good relations into its day-to-day business. It must consider how it can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and fairness, and reflect equality considerations into the design of policies and the delivery of services; and keep these issues under review.

The review and monitoring of performance against the equality duty helps the authority to comply with its legal requirement; and to provide services and employment practices which meet the diverse needs of its customers and employees.

**Other Options for Action:**

No other options are appropriate in this respect. Failure to monitor and review progress against the public sector equality duty and to consider corrective action where necessary, could mean that opportunities for improvement are lost.

**Report:**

1. The Equality Act 2010 requires that public bodies, including the Council, which are subject to the public sector equality duty, have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between different groups, and
- (c) foster good relations between different groups.

Having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- (a) removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- (b) taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people; and
- (c) encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The equality duty covers: age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. The duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination also covers marriage and civil partnerships.

2. The broad purpose of the equality duty is to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the day-to-day business of public bodies. Understanding how services affect different groups makes it more likely that the services have the intended effect and this can lead to greater equality and better outcomes. Organisations which provide services which meet the needs of their customers and workforce are likely to carry out their core business more efficiently and have a more productive workforce.

3. Public bodies are also subject to a specific duty which requires that they publish information at least annually demonstrating compliance with the equality duty. The Council last published information in October 2015 covering the 12 months up until July 2015 and the Equality Information Report 2016, attached at Appendix 1, sets out the work it has undertaken in the 12 months up until July 2016, to improve equality for its customers and employees.

4. The annual Equality Report translates technical action plans for the year into an accessible outcome led report setting out how people have actually benefited from the work undertaken. The report will be published on the Council's website alongside other equality information, and will be available in other formats upon request.

5. Work to take forward the Council's equality duty is coordinated by the Corporate Equality working group and routinely monitored by Management Board and the Governance Select Committee bi-annually at quarters 2 and 4, with other specific reports as required. The Equality Information Report was reviewed by Management Board on 3 August 2016.

6. The Select Committee is requested to review the Equality Information Report for 2016.

**Consultation Undertaken:** Corporate Equality Working Group (CEWG) and within Directorates via representatives to the CEWG.

**Resource Implications:** None

**Legal and Governance Implications:** The adoption of a policy supports activities to comply with the Equality Act 2010; and the production and publishing of an annual report complies with the Equality Act 2010.

**Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:** None

**Background Papers:** None.

**Impact Assessments:**

***Risk Management:*** The production of a policy and annual information report reduces risk associated with non-compliance with statutory duties.

***Equality and Diversity:*** The production of a policy and annual information report supports the Council's equality work and helps to ensure the delivery of good equality practices throughout the Council.