

## **Report to Governance Select Committee**

**Date of meeting: 3 October 2017**

**Subject: Equality Objectives Update**

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**Committee Secretary:** Jackie Leither (Ext. 4756)



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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

The Governance Select Committee notes:

1. The update on our existing Equality Objectives 2016-2020 and proposed approach for setting new Equality Objectives for 2018-2023.
2. The new version Equality Impact Assessment form which replaces the previous Equality Analysis Report to test and analyse the nature and impact of what we do or are planning to do in the future.

### **Report:**

1. Appendix 1 - Equality Objectives 2016-2020
2. Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment
3. Appendix 3 - Equality Impact Assessment user guide

### **Executive Summary:**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the current action plan for the Equality Objectives 2016-20 and our approach to enable us to set some new Objectives for 2018-2023 alongside the corporate plan for 2018-23. The proposed actions are to be completed over the coming months and a new set of draft objectives presented back to Management Board for implementation in April 2018.

In addition, the new version Equality Impact Assessment form is attached for information. This will be used consistently going forward and replaces the previous Equality Analysis Report.

#### **1. Equality Objectives 2016-20 (Appendix 1)**

The Equalities Working Group (EWG) met in July 2017 to review the action plan for the 2016-2020 objectives and an updated copy with current status against deliverables is attached for information.

### **Recommendations for new Equality Objectives 2018-23**

Having conducted some research on other local authorities' equality objectives it was felt that our current plan focusses very much inwards on EFDC operations. We feel that our Equalities Objectives would benefit from a more holistic approach embracing our communities and focussing on the culture and behaviours we would like to improve throughout EFDC.

For this reason we are taking the following approach to what would be a timely introduction of new Equality Objectives for 2018-2023;

- Consult with all colleagues and ask for their feedback on what they feel our vision and objectives should be for Equality via a colleague survey
- Consult with a number of potentially vulnerable groups on our strategy and objectives to capture their feedback
- Develop a draft set of new Equality objectives to be taken back to Management Board for implementation from April 2018

## **2. Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 2)**

There has been some inconsistency in usage of the new Equality Impact Assessment form (appendix 2). We have communicated to all Directorates that this form is to be attached to all reports to Cabinet going forward, no reports will be accepted without an Assessment form. A user guide to aid completion has been provided and Members were given an overview and training on the form on 20<sup>th</sup> September (please see appendix 3)

### **Consultation undertaken:**

Consultation with the Corporate Equality Working Group (CEWG) and within Directorates via representative to the working group. Potential vulnerable groups are to be identified for consultation on the new objectives and colleagues will be consulted via a colleague survey.

### **Options considered and rejected:**

No other options are appropriate in this respect. Failure to monitor and review progress against the public sector equality duty and to consider actions to address identified issues could mean that opportunities for improvement are lost and respective decisions unsound. We could continue with the existing Equality Objectives plan however we would be missing the opportunity to enhance the content and adapt a best practised approach to Equality, particularly in light of the development of the new Corporate Plan 2018-2023. Failure to gain approval on the use of the Impact Assessment form is likely to result in an inconsistent approach across the organisation.

### **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.