

Subject:	Equality and Access Workstream Update		
Date of Meeting:	22nd July 2021		
Report of:	Rachel Sharpe, Executive Director Housing, Neighbourhoods & Communities		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 This report introduces the presentation to be made on Equalities and Access work across the Council in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.2 The presentation is an update of the Equalities and Access Workstream of the Vulnerable Peoples Working Group

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the committee notes this presentation.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Equalities and Access Workstream of the Vulnerable People's Working Group was created in May 2020 with the purpose of understanding the disproportionate community impacts of Covid for communities of identity, in particular BAME, faith and LGBTQ communities, take mitigating actions and make recovery recommendations. The Workstream also expanded to consider impacts in relation to gender, disability and age.
- 3.2 The initial report of the Equalities and Access Workstream September 2020 found disproportionate impacts for all communities of identity considered across economy and finance, education, community safety, housing, communications and digital inclusion, mental and physical health, and concerns regarding the test and trace system. See [\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Policy & Resources \(Recovery\) Sub-Committee, 06/01/2021 16:00 \(brighton-hove.gov.uk\)](#)
- 3.3 Work has since expanded to consider vaccine confidence for communities of identity.
- 3.4 The Equalities and Access Workstream continues to collate equalities impacts regarding the easing of lockdown and take immediate actions, and to embed this work into existing equalities mechanisms.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The Covid 19 pandemic highlighted existing and exacerbated equalities issues and the Equalities and Access Workstream was deemed an appropriate response under the Vulnerable People's Working Group therefore alternatives not considered.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Community engagement has taken place with Community Works Representatives who sit on the Equality & Access Workstream and attend all meetings.
- 5.2 Community engagement has also taken place through ongoing meetings with community groups via the Communities, Equality and Third Sector Team, and ongoing contact via the Equalities mailing list.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Covid 19 pandemic highlighted existing and exacerbated equalities issues and the Equalities and Access Workstream was established under the Vulnerable People's Working Group to identify disproportionate impacts, take immediate mitigating actions and make recovery and renewal recommendations.
- 6.2 Equalities actions have been embedded across recovery and renewal working groups and the related Equalities Impact Assessments, and continue to be progressed through relevant workstreams sitting across the Council

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 This report is for noting, as such there are no financial implications arising from the recommendation made.

Finance Officer Consulted: Michael Bentley

Date: 29/06/21

Legal Implications:

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report which is for members to note. However, the work referred to in the presentation supports the Council's compliance with the public Sector Equality Duty and demonstrates the Council paying conscientious attention to the need to:-

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Lawyer Consulted:

Elizabeth Culbert

Date: 29/06/21

Equalities Implications:

- 7.2 The work of the Equalities and Access Workstream meets the obligations of the Local Authority under the Public Sector Equality Duty to show due regard to equalities when make decisions and service changes during the pandemic

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.3 None

Brexit Implications:

- 7.4 None

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Equalities and Access Workstream Update PowerPoint presentation

Background Documents

None

