

# OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

## Agenda Item

Brighton & Hove City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Equality and Inclusion Policy Progress Report</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>26 January 2015</b> OSC Pre Meeting: 05 January 2015		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Head of Corporate Policy &amp; Communities</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Richard Butcher Tuset</b>	<b>Tel: 29-5514</b>
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<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

## FOR GENERAL RELEASE

### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The council's [Equality & Inclusion Policy 2012-15 and Action Plan](#) (EIP AP) defines corporate equality objectives, activities and progress measures to help the council to meet its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010.
- 1.2 Progress on the action plan is reported annually. This report relates to the financial year 2013/14. It also highlights other important equalities work being led by a number of teams across the council, and in the city.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Overview & Scrutiny Committee notes:
  - (1) Progress against the equality action plan: action plan and example case studies (Section 4, Appendices 1 & 2)
  - (2) The structures for delivering on the Equality & Inclusion Policy commitments (Section 5)
  - (3) The Equality Impact Assessment commitment (Section 6)
  - (4) Progress in delivering the Workforce Equality Action Plan (Section 7)
  - (5) The Stonewall Workplace Equality Index result for 2014 and decision to reapply for the 2015 Index (Section 8)
  - (6) Success in the Stonewall Schools Index 2014 (Section 9)
  - (7) The Schools Global HPO Report and action plan in response (Section 10)
  - (8) Progress and future plans in carrying out Needs Assessments for protected groups (BME, Trans, Disability) (Section 11)
  - (9) The outcome of the Equality Framework for Local Government peer assessment (Section 12)
  - (10) EquIP, the new Equality & Inclusion Partnership (Section 13)

### 3. BACKGROUND:

- 3.1 Our [Equality & Inclusion Policy 2012-15 and Action Plan](#) (EIP AP) was agreed by Full Council in March 2012. It defines corporate equality objectives, activities and progress measures to help the council to meet its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 3.2 The Policy will be reviewed in 2015 to ensure it reflects changes in the council and the city. The review process will involve consultation with both internal and external stakeholders.
- 3.3 Underpinning the Policy is an Action Plan listing the priority equality activities across the council enabling the council to meet its equality objectives. This was developed in consultation with stakeholders, including council staff and representatives from the Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS).
- 3.4 Progress on the action plan is reported annually to Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to local communities via joint events with Community Works. These events are an opportunity to identify changes in the city and the council which may require a change in actions or approach. They also offer a chance to explain the council's approach and learn how it is working for residents, partners, CVS groups and others in the city.
- 3.5 Whilst the EIP AP is our overarching framework, this report details other aspects of equality work across the council and city.

#### **4. EQUALITY & INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2013/14 UPDATE (Appendices 1 & 2)**

- 4.1 The Plan is regularly updated to ensure that actions reflect activity across the council and changes in services and/or the city.
- 4.2 The detail of progress is in Appendix 1. Below are some case studies from Appendix 2 which was produced for Community and Voluntary Sector groups to illustrate activities and outcomes. These are listed by main theme.
- 4.3 **Promoting equality and inclusion through better engagement between the council and communities, groups and individuals**
  - 4.3.1 Royal Pavilion & Museums (RPM) Service worked with Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust in Mill View to make the hospital a more visually interesting and hopeful place through an exhibition of pictures and photographs. Service users were involved at every stage. All had direct experience of acute mental health care so project staff focused on practical and emotional issues so the group was safe as well as exploratory. Participants had access to the collections, a teaching session with a curator, and became more skilled and confident in making their own collections, combining their own photographs with historic photos from the museum's collection to make something new. For more information: [RPM & Millview Art Project](#)
- 4.4 **Promoting equality and inclusion through more effective joint work with statutory organisations and other partners**

4.4.1 Community Safety Casework Team (CSCT): Racist Incident. In May 2013 Mr F called the CSCT, reporting a racist incident against his son, at his primary school. The Caseworker talked with the family and the school and it became clear that there was a pattern of racism towards the whole family by the M family. The CSCT referred family M to the Integrated Team for Families and the main perpetrator was referred to the Youth Crime Prevention (YCP) service to address the racist behaviour. In June a meeting was held with YCP, Police, the secondary school and the F family to agree a plan. The case was closed, with the F family's permission, in Aug 2013 as because of the work undertaken, there had been no further incidents of racism and the F family were reassured that a clear action plan was in place if there were any future incidents.

#### 4.5 **Promoting equality and inclusion through fair and accessible services**

4.5.1 Housing Inclusion Team (HIT): An older council tenant, Mrs X, saved money when she was assisted by HIT. She contacted the team because her attendance allowance had stopped. The team quickly resolved this with a phone call to the DWP, and then checked with Mrs X to see if she needed any other help. She took up the offer of advice and as she had limited mobility a member of the team visited her at home. Mrs X was finding it difficult to understand letters and to fill in paperwork so HIT helped her with this, as well as making phone calls on her behalf. The team also:

- Advised Mrs X how to switch energy providers by phone and made sure she felt confident to do this by herself in future.
- Arranged for her to receive an assessed charge discount from Southern Water. This resulted in her bill being halved.
- Assisted Mrs X to switch her contents insurance which reduced her bill by 50%.

#### 4.6 **Promoting equality and inclusion through improving the quality and breadth of information held and used by the council**

4.6.1 Commissioning and Contracts Team - Adult Social Care. Contract Officers monitor providers and provide support and guidance to ensure they have equalities action plans and monitor equalities. Equalities is on the agenda for all Contract Review meetings. For example, the Carers Centre now has an Equalities Working Group that meets four times a year to review and identify equality issues. A plan is in place to monitor improvement, and the Centre recently assessed LGBT inclusion to ensure that their services are accessible. Similarly, Swanborough House, a care home for people with an acquired brain injury, has an exemplar questionnaire developed specially for residents, with colour pictures on laminated cards which are clear and easy to understand.

#### 4.7 **Promoting equality and inclusion through our employment and procurement practices**

4.7.1 Human Resources: progress against the Workforce Equality Action Plan (see section 7 below). Equality categories for monitoring both workforce profile and recruitment activity have been expanded in line with Global HPO's recommendations. The council's progress towards achieving a more diverse

workforce is now being measured against new workforce targets in line with the City's economically active population. Work continues to improve the quality of our workforce data by reducing the percentage of employees and casual workers for whom the council holds either incomplete, or no, personal equalities data. Targeted work in service areas where declaration rates are lowest e.g. CityClean and CityParks has resulted in good reductions of these 'unknowns'. Analysis has also improved and is now reported regularly to senior management, the Workforce Equalities Group and Directorate Equalities Groups.

#### **4.8 Example of improvements planned for the future**

- 4.8.1 Public Health (PH) Equality Audit: The PH team completed a review of all their commissioned services to identify what equality monitoring is done, and to ensure that it is completed across all the protected characteristic groups. All contract managers were surveyed. The results revealed that monitoring is not consistently implemented across all services, though the nature of some work (eg: crisis or street outreach work) means that an equality monitoring form may not be an appropriate method of monitoring. The PH team has committed to increasing monitoring and reporting by all protected characteristics to 100% in the coming year, or to require exception reporting (services explaining why monitoring is not possible). The equality audit will be repeated in one year.

### **5. COUNCIL EQUALITY STRUCTURES AND ROLES**

- 5.1 The Equality Steering Group (ESG) and Workforce Equality Group (WEG) continue to lead work in their different and complementary areas. The ESG focuses primarily on service provision, and the WEG considers workforce issues.
- 5.2 Directorate Equality Groups are firmly established. They support our positive commitment to and energy for equality work across the directorates and ensure compliance with legal duties. The groups meet regularly and are a conduit for information to and from the ESG and WEG. Members of the Communities, Equality & Third Sector (CETS) Team take a lead for each Directorate and provide business partnering support for their equalities work (i.e. Equality Impact Assessments, equality monitoring and issues relating to staff and services).
- 5.3 The Workers Fora (for BME, Disabled staff & Carers, LGBT and Women) produce annual business plans to deliver actions that promote and raise awareness, and support and develop their members. In addition, a Joint Fora Steering Group brings representatives of the Forums together to share good practice and provide a collective response to policies and changes. This work is also strengthened with the Forums having representation at the Workforce Equalities Group. Forums continue to receive support from the CETS Team.
- 5.4 The Executive Director Finance and Resources has been the Equality Champion on the Executive Leadership Team (now she has left, this role is being taken on by the Chief Executive). The CETS Team is in the Assistant Chief Executive's directorate ensuring that senior positions in the authority all champion the equalities agenda.

5.5 Councillor Equality Champions continue to meet regularly and to be briefed and share knowledge of issues they identify in the council and across the city.

## **6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (EIAs)**

6.1 Whilst the EIA process is no longer defined or mandated in law there is still an explicit legal requirement for public bodies to 'evidence due regard' to the potential impacts on all protected characteristic groups. The council has given a commitment to meet this duty by continuing to apply its well-established EIA process to all new policies/services and when they are changed or reviewed.

6.2 The Council-wide EIA timetable is continually updated by equality leads in all areas. This timetable records all the EIAs planned and completed. It is reported on quarterly and considered by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).

6.3 During the budget-setting process for 2014/15, EIAs were carried out on all proposed changes with a potential impact on service-users and an assessment made of cumulative impact (across proposals). This enabled the council to demonstrate its compliance with the Equality Act 2010 during our decision-making processes. Other authorities have been subject to legal challenge where they have not been able to evidence this.

6.4 The EIAs were made available with the overall budget information to CVS groups in the city, as part of the consultation process. Views were considered by officers and members during the budget setting process. The same process is being undertaken for the budget 2015-16.

## **7. WORKFORCE EQUALITY ACTION PLAN**

7.1 The Workforce Equality Action Plan (WEAP) follows on from the examination by Global HPO of the council's policies and processes and how they affect Black and Minority Ethnic staff. The full original report is available online here: [Global HPO \(PDF 1.1MB\)](#). A high level action plan was developed to indicate where the council wants and needs to be on workforce equalities in three years' time. It was agreed unanimously at Policy and Resources Committee in July 2013.

7.2 The most recent update to Policy & Resources Committee was in June 2014. The paper is available here: [WEAP Report to P&R Jun2014](#)

## **8. STONEWALL WORKPLACE EQUALITY INDEX**

8.1 The outcome of the 2013 assessment which placed the council 107<sup>th</sup> in the index was discussed in detail with Stonewall. This included discussions around the assessment criteria which were felt to be unfavourable to the authority's integrated approaches to equality and that the Trans Community were not included in the Index. The authority developed an action plan to address identified issues and has recently submitted its 2014 application. Results are due in January 2015.

## **9. STONEWALL SCHOOLS INDEX**

- 9.1 In July 2014 Brighton & Hove was named top council for tackling homophobia and biphobia in schools by Stonewall. The council was praised for its partnership with schools and the Allsorts Youth Project. Young people from Allsorts have delivered sessions to council and school staff and in secondary PSHE lessons and primary school assemblies.
- 9.2 Stonewall praised the commitment of the city's schools, including Blatchington Mill School for its Student Equality Conference involving five schools, and St Nicolas' Primary School for the innovative work it has done on challenging the use of homophobic language in the playground.
- 9.3 Though not recognised in the Stonewall assessment, the council's Education & Inclusion Team has also worked with Allsorts to support trans\* young people at school. They have produced a *Trans Inclusion Schools Toolkit* - sent to all city schools. Training on it has been attended by 16 schools over several sessions. The local *Brighton & Hove PSHE Education Programme of Study, 2014* also supports learning that prevents and challenges gender stereotyping and transphobia and improves understanding of gender and gender identities.
- 9.4 In addition, for the first time this year, the Safe and Well School Survey asked gender identity monitoring questions for 11-16 year olds. Of pupils aged 14-16, 4% of respondents reported that they do not, or do not always, identify with the gender they were assigned at birth. There is anecdotal evidence that suggests that trans\* children have successfully transitioned within city schools and are doing well, supported by peers and schools.

## **10. SCHOOLS GLOBAL HPO REPORT**

- 10.1 Following its earlier work looking at the council's corporate position in relation to BME staff, Global HPO (GHPO) has been working with the council and city schools to understand issues around the employment of BME staff in schools and the impact of this on children and young people from diverse communities.
- 10.2 Their report identifies that, while there is some good practice in individual schools and within the council, in general the ethnic and racial demographic of students has been changing rapidly and overall schools were not prepared for it. Employment of BME staff is an important element of this problem, as are wider issues, including academic achievement, social interactions, parental involvement, curriculum development, and assessment issues.
- 10.3 For more information contact Jo Lyons, Assistant Director - Education & Inclusion (tel: 293514, email: [Jo.Lyons@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:Jo.Lyons@brighton-hove.gov.uk) )

## **11. NEEDS ASSESSMENTS**

11.1 To help shape our understanding of our communities, the statutory sector and third sector are working together to develop a set of needs assessments and recommendations focussed on groups by protected characteristic. Current projects focus on our Trans and BME communities and a further assessment will start in early 2015 to look at the issues experienced by disabled people.

## **12. LGA EQUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

12.1 In May 2014 the council requested some informal feedback and assessment of how it has progressed since its last Equality Peer Challenge in 2011. A small team spent 1.5 days meeting with senior staff and focus groups, after considerable background reading.

12.2 A number of strengths were identified in the council's approach and structures:

- Good direction of travel
- Share and celebrate success
- Staff welcome changes from senior leadership
- People feel like they are pushing on an open door
- People have been open, honest and frank
- Belief that cultural change will make a difference.

12.3 Further areas were identified for consideration:

- Encourage more collaboration across council departments
- Lack of consistency across BHCC in a number of areas
- How do staff engage and understand equality?
- Use data more effectively (to understand trends and outcomes)
- Knowing your communities (changes and needs in the city population)
- Widen staff engagement beyond workers' fora
- Using equality champions more effectively to share responsibility.

12.4 The peer assessors recommended that the significant culture change process across the organisation should be allowed to fully embed itself before the council reapplies for 'excellent' under the EFLG, so that outcomes of this work can be clearly demonstrated. The full report is available here: [EFLG Peer Assessment Report 2014](#)

12.5 An action plan to address all the points identified in the report is being developed to enable progression before the full assessment (date to be confirmed).

## **13. EQUALITY & INCLUSION PARTNERSHIP (EQUIP)**

13.1 The Equality & Inclusion Partnership (Equip) was formed in 2014 and brings together the City Engagement Partnership and City Inclusion Partnership. This brings together the engagement, inclusion and equality agenda into one Partnership under Brighton & Hove Connected.

13.2 The Equality & Inclusion Partnership (EquIP) and comprises:

- Community Works
- Third Sector Equalities Representatives
- Brighton & Hove Clinical Commissioners Group
- Sussex Police
- Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company
- East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service
- Adult Learning
- Cross party councillor representatives
- Brighton & Hove City Council

13.3 The newly formed Partnership's overarching purpose is to drive improvements in collaboration between public services and communities to reduce inequality and foster community resilience and activity.

13.4 To achieve its aim to enable appropriate access to services and opportunity for all those living, working and visiting our city, the Partnership will:

- advise, drive, guide and support the B&H Connected (BHC) family of partnerships on equality and engagement
- identify, promote and share good practice to help BHC organisations develop and improve their equality and engagement policies
- provide a critical friend to BHC partnerships to help them improve practices and champion, address and promote equality and engagement
- use research and data to gain insight into our communities, service users, customers and social capital to identify opportunities, needs and service gaps for championing across the family of partnerships
- work to ensure services hear the voice of diverse residents.

#### **14. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

##### Financial Implications:

14.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations to this report. The actions carried out to date were met within the agreed 2013/14 budget. Those new and future actions proposed can be funded through identified budgets of the Council and partner organisations.

Financer Officer consulted: Anne Silley

Date 08/12/14

##### Legal Implications:

14.2 The Council's Equality and Inclusion Policy and Action Plan assist the Council to meet its statutory responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

Lawyer consulted: Elizabeth Culbert

Date 08/12/14

##### Equalities Implications:

14.3 The equalities implications are directly addressed by the work contained within the report.

##### Sustainability Implications:



14.4 The strategic objectives of the policy and action plan will contribute to the One Planet Living principles of Culture and Community and Equity and Economy as defined in the Brighton & Hove Sustainability Action Plan.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

14.5 The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and the Partnership Community Safety Team are key contributors to equalities & inclusion work in the city and this is reflected in the action plan

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

14.6 The implications for risk and opportunities are directly addressed by the actions contained within the action plan.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

14.7 The actions contained within the report have been developed with input from all council teams. To this end the policy and action plan have impacts on communities across the city.

