

Item



CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL, SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME 2018 – 2021, YEAR ONE REVIEW

To:

Councillor Anna Smith, Executive Councillor for Communities
Environment & Community Scrutiny Committee 27/06/2019

Report by:

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Wards affected:

All

Not a key decision

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council's Single Equality Scheme (SES) was approved by the Executive Councillor for Communities at the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee on 4 October 2018. The SES sets out how the organisation will challenge discrimination and promote equal opportunity in all aspects of its work over a three year period (2018 – 2021).
- 1.2 This report provides an update on progress in delivering key actions set out in the SES for 2018/19. It also proposes some new actions for delivery during 2019/20.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

1. Note the progress in delivering equalities actions during 2018/19.
2. Approve the actions proposed in SES for delivery during 2019/20.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in the Equality Act 2010 requires local authorities to: publish information annually to demonstrate how they meet the equality duty; and publish one or more equalities objectives at least every four years.
- 3.2 The Council has developed a Single Equality Scheme (SES) for April 2018 to March 2021. The scheme was approved by the Executive Councillor for Communities at the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee on 4 October 2018.
- 3.3 The SES identifies 5 objectives for the Council's work on equalities issues. It sets out a total of 56 actions for the Council during 2018/19 to help deliver the 5 objectives and there are a further 32 actions that apply across the length of the Scheme, which will be reported back on in 2021 (when this Single Equality Scheme three-year period is at its end).
- 3.4 The annual report for the Single Equality Scheme at Appendix A sets out 48 new actions for the Council to deliver in 2019/20 (for the second year of the Scheme). It also provides feedback on progress in delivering actions for 2018/19. A summary of the latter is provided at 4.0 in this document. A summary of actions set for 2019/20 can be found in section 5.0 of this document.

3. Progress during 2018/19

- 4.1 During 2018/19, we undertook a number of steps to increase our understanding of the needs of Cambridge's growing and increasingly diverse communities so that we can target our services effectively (SES Objective 1), including:
 - Booking 5 free peer-to-peer training sessions for the Equality and Diversity Partnership.
 - Analysing results from the annual survey of residents within our sheltered housing schemes and users of the 65+ service to identify

additional support to address loneliness and isolation. The survey identified 15% of respondents who said they were lonely. Targeted work has been done with individuals as part of their support planning process to try and relieve this.

- Supporting Cambridgeshire County Council to research needs of new communities by running a number of resident workshops.

4.2 We delivered a number of actions which aimed to improve access to and take-up of services from all residents and communities (SES Objective 2), including:

- Providing Gypsy Roma and Traveller cultural awareness training for our frontline staff run by Cambridgeshire County Council's Race Equality and Diversity Service.
- Signing up to the STOP Suicide campaign during mental health awareness week 2018 (14th May to 20th May).
- Leading the development of a Cambridgeshire-wide policy on how funding for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) is awarded and to provide more joined up services across housing, health and social care in order to support people to live independently for longer.

4.3 We have progressed a number of actions to promote equal access to public activities and spaces in Cambridge and help people to participate fully in the community (SES Objective 3), including:

- Identifying a single point of contact at the City Council for Homelink applications for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people, and identifying a member of staff to engage with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people who set up temporary unauthorised sites in the city.
- Providing theatre sessions at Cambridge Junction for a cohort of young people at risk of involvement with the criminal justice system. At least 60% of the young people involved with the project will now achieve their Bronze Level Arts Award.
- Meeting our pledge to help resettle 100 refugees. As part of our resettlement support, the City Council ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) model was praised as being the one of the best in the region and is going to be used to show what a Good Practice ESOL model looks like.

4.4 We undertook a number of activities to tackle discrimination, harassment and victimisation and ensure that people from different backgrounds living in the city continue to get on well together (SES

Objective 4), including:

- Working with the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) to develop a new suite of policies and procedures around Domestic Abuse.
- Funding Women's Aid to provide a service supporting women who have experienced domestic abuse, which is available for 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.
- Replacing our CCTV systems with new High Definition cameras that are low-light capable in order to improve our provision of evidential quality images to the police, which can also help us in identifying and responding to hate crimes in the city. The work will be complete in June/July 2019.

4.5 We took a number of steps to ensure that the Council's employment and procurement policies and practices are nondiscriminatory and to work towards a more representative workforce within the Council (SES Objective 5). We have:

- Procured a new ICT system to improve our approach to managing and delivering the Council's complex range of programmes and projects, including the reporting on equality impacts of proposals
- Developed a new Sickness Absence Management Policy to enable employees to stay in work by adopting a variety of supportive measures for staff experiencing sickness.
- Monitored the profile of the Council's workforce. The percentage of disabled staff as at end of March 2019 was 6.37%, whereas the target for 2018/19 was 7.5%. The percentage representation of BAME individuals in the workforce as at end of March 2019 was 6.75%, whereas the target was 9.5%.

5. New actions for 2019/20

5.1 A further 48 actions have been identified to help deliver the objectives of the SES in 2019/20 (pages 21 to 28 of Appendix A). Most of the actions are an extension or evolution of activity delivered during 2018/19. New areas of work are identified below.

5.2 Related to Objective 1 ("To further increase our understanding of the needs of Cambridge's growing and increasingly diverse communities so that we can target our services effectively") new areas of work include:

- Developing an equality and diversity terminology guide for staff.
- Investigating/ mapping instances of hoarding across our tenancies and reviewing our current procedure to ensure we support people as best as possible. People with hoarding behaviours can be especially prone to mental health issues such as anxiety.

5.3 For Objective 2 (“To continue to work to improve access to and take-up of Council services from all residents and communities”) the following is a new area of work:

- Exploring means to raise greater awareness of further Council Tax Reduction for local disabled people. Especially raising awareness for those that national policy defines as “severely mentally impaired”, which refers to someone with “a severe impairment of intelligence and social functioning which appears to be permanent”.

5.4 There are the most new areas of work for Objective 3 (“To work towards a situation where all residents have equal access to public activities and spaces in Cambridge and are able to participate fully in the community”) including to:

- Undertake a campaign on period poverty encouraging all our council buildings to provide free sanitary provision for girls and young women.
- Work with 15 children from East Chesterton, Trumpington, Abbey and Cherry Hinton wards (so a total of 60 children) aged 11 to 16 on ‘Shout!’ that is a performance-based project.
- Investigate how we could extend the provision of the Community Hub to cover different areas of the City.
- Aim to set up more sessions where nursery-aged children visit sheltered housing schemes across the city.

5.5 The new action for Objective 4 (“To tackle discrimination, harassment and victimisation and ensure that people from different backgrounds living in the city continue to get on well together”) is to support the local Romany Community with a bid to The National Lottery Heritage Fund for a project to research scientific information on the genetic and linguistic origins of the English Romany community.

5.6 The new area of work related to Objective 5 (“To ensure that the City Council’s employment and procurement policies and practices are non-discriminatory and to work towards a more representative workforce

within the City Council”) is to develop workplace guidance to support transgender people at Cambridge City Council who are transitioning to another gender.

5.7 Most actions identified are to be delivered by specific services. The key areas of work that include all services are:

- Dementia Friends training around identifying how services can support people with dementia and their carers
- Supporting people who experience domestic abuse, especially those who develop housing problems as a result of this, through our work on the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance
- To encourage more individuals from different services to sign up to the Equality Pledge
- To provide support to service users in our role as a Hate Crime Reporting Centre
- Safer Spaces, through which we are training frontline services on how to tackle discrimination experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.
- The Stop Suicide campaign about tackling stigma associated with talking about suicide to make sure people get help they need
- The Wellbeing at Work strategy that includes a programme of activities and information campaigns to promote a healthy workforce

6. Implications

a) Financial Implications

As equalities has been mainstreamed across all Council services, the activities and actions identified in the action plan will primarily be delivered through existing service budgets and will not require additional resources. However, the Strategy and Partnerships Team has a small budget to support equalities projects and publications, and a further budget to finance interpreting services that support fair and equal access to and delivery of services. Other services support corporate and service based equalities initiatives through provision of staff resources and occasionally funds for specific projects. We also work extensively with partner organisations to maximise the impact of our resources.

b) Staffing Implications

As equalities has been mainstreamed across all Council services, the activities and actions identified in the strategic action plan will primarily be delivered as part of the core responsibilities of staff within the relevant services. The Joint Equalities Group is made up of staff representatives from across all City Council services who are able to input time to supporting the mainstreaming of equalities. These are not specific posts within services, but are roles that have been adopted by staff where departments have been able to absorb additional duties.

c) Equality and Poverty Implications

No Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out for the Single Equality Scheme itself or this annual report. The Single Equality Scheme 2018 - 2021 forms the framework for the City Council's work to challenge discrimination and promote equal opportunities in all aspects of its work. Relating to this, the annual report feeds back on progress made for actions that were set for 2018/19, and identifies further actions that will start from 2019/20.

d) Environmental Implications

The actions that have been identified starting from 2019/20 for the Scheme are not anticipated to have any environmental impact.

e) Procurement Implications

The City Council has taken steps to ensure that equalities considerations are embedded in its procurement processes. We have produced a guide on implementing The Public Services (Social Value) Act (2012) into our procurement processes for staff to use. This ensures that a key part of our assessment process in procuring contracts is to consider economic, social and environmental benefits suppliers can bring to Cambridge. Additionally, when procuring services it is a requirement that our commissioners abide by our Equality Value Statement and help us in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty. In the Single Equality Scheme 2018 – 2021 itself, over the three years, we have committed to identifying further opportunities to maximise social value through the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

f) Community Safety Implications

Most actions under Objective 4 that are proposed for 2019/20 relate to community safety. Objective 4 is "To tackle discrimination, harassment and victimisation and ensure that people from different backgrounds living in the

city continue to get on well together”, and actions around community safety are as follows:

- Provide support to service users as a Hate Crime Reporting Centre and to raise awareness with the voluntary and community sector and faith groups of this role we have.
- Work with partners in the Community Safety Partnership to improve public safety and raising concerns of people with protected characteristics.
- Design and undertake a project to provide Safeguarding advice and/or training to door staff at relevant licensed premises.
- Devise and implement an action plan for the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance.

Some highlights from 2018/19 of work we have undertaken to maintain or improve community safety included work related to:

- The Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance
- Funding for Women’s Aid
- Replacing our CCTV systems to be complete in June/July 2019

7. Consultation and communication considerations

In accordance with the principles of the Cambridgeshire Compact, consultation on the Single Equality Scheme 2018 – 2021, upon which the annual report is based, took place with voluntary and community sector partners and public sector partners, and Equalities Panel members.

The content of this report will be communicated to residents through the media using a news release, through the Council website, and on Twitter.

8. Background papers

Background papers used in the preparation of this report: Cambridge City Council Single Equality Scheme 2018 – 2021

(<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/6721/single-equality-scheme-2018-to-2021.pdf>)

9. Appendices

Appendix A - Cambridge City Council Single Equality Scheme 2018 – 2021, Year one review

10. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer, tel: 01223 - 457046, email: helen.crowther@cambridge.gov.uk.