

LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

EQUALITIES BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 16th December 2019,
Goscote Room, County Hall, at 10:30am

Equalities Board members / representatives	
Ian Vears	Assistant Director, Environment & Transport
Kate Revell	Head of Service (Commissioning and Quality), Adults & Communities
Mo Seedat	Head of Democratic Services, Chief Exec's
Mike McHugh	Medical Consultant, Public Health
Anthony Stone	Chair of DWG
Liz Biswas	Co-Chair of LGBT+ Staff Network
Rabinder Lail	Chair of BWG
Presenting	
Carine Cardoza	Engagement Officer, Age UK
Peter Lewis	Chair, Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group
Lucy Smith	Vice-Chair, Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group
Christine Collingwood	Lead Commissioner, Adults & Communities
David West	Team Manager, Digital Services, Corporate Resources
Supporting officers	
Mark Foote	HR/OD Business Partner, Corporate Resources
Mandy Baughurst	Learning and Development Advisor, Human Resources
Richard Wilding	Service Delivery Business Partner, Strategic & Business Intelligence
Zafar Saleem	Head of Communities, Policy & Resilience, Chief Exec's
Donna Worship	Policy Manager, Chief Exec's
Andrew Jeffreys	Policy Officer (Equalities), Chief Exec's
Also attending	
Jason Firth	Team Manager, Corporate Resources
Lee Adams	Business Manager Operations, Children & Family Services
Leon Charikar	Consultation and Engagement Manager, Chief Exec's
Apologies	
Gordon McFarlane, Paula Sumner, David Adler	

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action by
1	<p>Welcome – present and apologies (IV)</p> <p>See above.</p>	
2	<p>Work of the LECG (CCa, LS, PL)</p> <p>The Board received a presentation from the Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group (LECG) on its structure, organisation and performance in 2018-19. Elections are held every two years for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair who, with the Engagement Officer, form an advisory group to shape the agenda and plan the work programme for the year ahead. LECG seeks to reflect protected characteristic groups as far as possible, including identifying and filling gaps, as well as seeking representation across the county geographically. As the group’s name and Terms of Reference make clear, LECG works to constructively challenge the Council as a ‘critical friend’ to improve consultation, communication and inclusive engagement on service change and delivery.</p> <p>The main group holds four meetings a year supplemented by bespoke Task and Finish Groups on specific issues and topics. It is keen to work with officers to look at upcoming business on the Cabinet Forward Plan to shape future Task and Finish activity around, for example, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2020-24 and the business case for the Unitary Council proposals. Work experience, mentoring and the offer by Age UK of volunteer opportunities to support LECG has enhanced capacity and encouraged individuals to subsequently move into work.</p> <p>The group has its own website which is hosted on the Leicestershire Communities website and includes minutes of the meetings, the quarterly newsletter, news and events and a members list with links to their respective organisations / sites. Members also have their own secure area within the site for LECG business:</p> <p>https://www.leicestershirecommunities.org.uk/lecg/</p> <p>IV thanked the group for their invaluable work and recommended that they should view the final MTFS report when it is published. LS highlighted the importance of engagement prior to consultation to involve ordinary people in how services are developed and delivered and that the group had noticed an improvement in the standard of consultation and communication between the Council and external organisations. An ongoing issue for the group was where meetings are held as venues need to be within relatively easy reach for ‘far county’ members, be comfortable and accessible including car parking.</p>	

3	<p>Minutes of Equalities Board held on Monday 16th September 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Accuracy – the Minutes were accepted as correct. ii. Matters arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Web accessibility – see Item 8 b. BME recruitment and progression – Leicester Shire Equalities Forum partners had been asked for any recommended consultants. Also, the Environment & Transport department is developing a ‘Grow your own’ scheme which could be linked to this work c. Widening reach of Spring programme – a Task & Finish Group is being established d. Lone working – had been taken up with Health and Wellbeing to establish how to best support staff experiencing abuse or hate from service users 	
4	<p>Equality & Diversity Performance Update Q2 2019-20 and Workforce Diversity (RW)</p> <p>The percentage of the workforce that is disabled and willing to declare their sexual orientation remained above target for both indicators respectively for a second successive quarter. There was continued improvement in the proportion of BME employees in the workforce and an increase in the BME staff at grade 13 compared to Q1 2019-20 with both indicators still on track to meet corporate targets although further incremental slippage was recorded for the proportion of disabled employees at grade 13 or above. Improvement in completion rates for mandatory training has been maintained and detailed data is available to line managers to identify team and individual performance requiring attention. The prevailing trend in reported hate offences and incidents remains upward by quarter albeit balanced by slight improvement in Community Survey responses on fairness of treatment and people getting on well together.</p> <p>The continued progress and value of regular oversight of key Equality & Diversity and related performance indicators was noted although, going forward, this report will be provided to the Board on a bi-annual basis. This will allow more time for the effect of remedial action whether at corporate or departmental level to take effect and be measured.</p> <p>MM asked about the rationale for BME targets given the proximity of Leicester City with a much more ethnically diverse population than in the county. RW said that the targets were based on the demographics of the travel to work area and undertook to provide relevant population data derived from the Census 2011 including for working ages:</p> <p>LEICESTERSHIRE – ALL AGES</p>	

Group	%	Comment
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	88.9	
White: Irish / White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller / White: Other White	2.5	'Other White' accounts for 1.9%
All other BME Groups	8.6	

LEICESTERSHIRE – AGE 16-64

Group	%	
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	88.0	
White: Irish / White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller / White: Other White	2.8	'Other White' accounts for 2.2%
All other BME Groups	9.2	

The continued increase in hate crime was concerning and whether this included (or should include) incidents affecting staff. The Board agreed that this should be covered in a future agenda item.

Decision: Noted by Board

AJ

5

MTFS EHRIA and Cumulative Impacts (DWp)

Based on researching how other councils have assessed cumulative equalities impacts, it was proposed to take a 'line by line' approach to assessing the equality and human rights impacts of the MTFS 2020-24. The aim is to highlight changes where having due regard to equalities objectives must be a key consideration in the implementation of service reviews whilst also providing an opportunity to highlight positive benefits (including from growth and investment) of any changes. A high-level overview of the most significant risks would also enable the Council to consider cumulative impacts across all Departments, and through responses to the Community Insight Survey, to identify impacts over time across Leicestershire on the protected characteristic groups that feel they have being affected by austerity.

A draft MTFS has been produced to be presented to Cabinet on 17th December for approval to consult [consultation subsequently approved and runs from 18th December to 19th January] An initial EHRIA has been developed and shared, this will be refined through engagement with

	<p>departments. The final assessment is intended to be shared with the Equalities Board on the consultation close before being subsequently considered in tandem with the MTFs by CMT, Scrutiny, Cabinet and the full Council from late January to mid February.</p> <p>Points raised in discussion were that changes within departments were not always reflected in changes across the council so the process needed to address this. Also, how to take account of poverty and low incomes in an overall assessment of propensity to and / or actual disadvantage.</p> <p>Decision: Agreed by Board</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial assessment to be shared in Departments as necessary and comments submitted to Donna Worship by 10th January 2020 • Round table discussion to be convened with departments as soon as possible within timeframe 	<p>All AJ / DW</p>
6	<p>Equality Strategy 2020-24 Consultation and Engagement Update (AJ)</p> <p>The online consultation opened on Monday, 11th November and will run until midnight on Sunday, 2nd February 2020. Accessible formats are available on request. Weekly reports on response rates are provided by Business Intelligence with the most up to date report showing 132 responses from staff (86%), members of the public (10%), councillors (2%) and representative organisations or stakeholders (2%). Wider public awareness of the consultation is being promoted through posters in libraries and key community spaces and bespoke circulation of the consultation documents to specific service users where a need has been identified, as well as by providing quotes for Lead Member speeches at public events. The consultation is also being tracked on social media accounts to show total reach against the number of ‘pushes’ from LCC.</p> <p>Targeted engagement is taking place alongside the consultation both internally through DMT / SLT and departmental equality group meetings, briefings with teams that work directly with cohorts from protected characteristic groups, and externally with partnership boards, other networks including the Leicester Shire Equalities Forum and the Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group.</p> <p>Action planning will begin in the second half of the consultation period with a ½ day workshop event scheduled for Friday, 17th January. The proposed format is for a series of opening presentations on the context and approach to the Equality Strategy refresh followed by a facilitated round table session examining each of the five proposed equality objectives for 2020-24. A targeted invitation from GMcF will be sent to managers to secure attendance through booking on the Learning Hub.</p> <p>Decision: Agreed by Board</p>	

	Action: Policy Officer (Equalities) to draft and circulate email invitation to include staff nominated by Board members / departments	AJ
7	<p>Dementia Friendly Council (CCd)</p> <p>Data indicates there are currently 9,548 people aged 65+ in Leicestershire living with dementia and expected to rise to 17,0128 by 2035. 184 further Leicestershire people aged 30-64 also live with dementia meaning it will touch many service users' and employees' lives. Dementia friendly communities aim to help people with dementia and those who care for them feel safe, supported and remain active within the community. Making LCC Dementia Friendly involves not just working with external partners to establish dementia friendly communities but also understanding the impact of the condition and how the Council interacts with people with dementia so that our services and facilities meet their needs. A review of departmental functions and corporate services indicates a wide range of potential interfaces with people with dementia including buildings and signage, specialist accommodation and transport, technology, information and communications, customer services processes, staff awareness, training and support including for carers.</p> <p>To build on work that has already been undertaken on dementia mapping, internal awareness raising and external research around best practice and other councils that have already achieved dementia friendly status, it is proposed to establish a Task and Finish Group of leads from across LCC to identify possible gaps and develop an action plan including engagement with relevant partners and service users. The action plan will be taken through departmental and corporate management approval to recommend to Cabinet that LCC undertakes to become a Dementia Friendly Council from May 2020 to tie in with Dementia Action Week 2020 (11-17th May).</p> <p>https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-involved/dementia-action-week</p> <p>It was observed that customer interactions could be identified from the Customer Services Centre – the number for the Environment & Transport Notice Processing unit is known to be high. Subject to appropriate governance and ownership being established, the Board approved the proposed Task and Finish Group approach and recommended that it be linked to complementary workstreams around autism and loneliness.</p> <p>Action: Departments to seek positive stories around dementia support and provide to CC</p>	All
8	<p>EU Web Accessibility Directive Update (DWt)</p> <p>The Council is required to meet the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No.2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 which have</p>	

	<p>compliance dates of 22nd September 2019 (for new public sector websites published since September 2018), 22nd September 2020 (for all other public sector websites) and 22nd June 2021 (for public sector mobile apps) respectively. This is done by meeting international / European accessibility standards and publishing an annually updated accessibility statement that lists any inaccessible parts of the website, what alternative methods exist for obtaining content that is not accessible, how to contact the website owner if issues are identified, and what appeal procedure exist if users are not happy with the owner's response.</p> <p>For the LCC corporate website, this process is being implemented through quarterly automated reviews supported by manual reviews and user testing, the provision of accessible documents as well as the required accessibility statement, and appropriate communications and training. For microsites and applications, compliance will be through procurement at the development stage specifying the relevant standards and including an accessibility statement but this will be the responsibility of services that 'own' the microsite or app. The Digital Services team will provide advice and support other than on accessibility.</p> <p>Decision: Noted by Board</p> <p>Action: Contact David West for support and advice on compliance for other LCC microsites.</p>	All
9	<p>Policy Officer (Equalities) Update (AJ)</p> <p>Recent outputs from the working party set up to respond to the 'Valuing differences' disability survey include a revised managers' guide to supporting disabled staff, an accessibility audit of the County Hall campus which is being shared with Property Service colleagues for consideration and implementation of the specific issues identified around signage to the main Reception and marking of disabled car parking spaces in the rear car park, and ongoing discussion between HR and the DWG on policy reviews.</p> <p>Following a successful Leicestershire Inter Faith Forum conference jointly organised with and hosted by the University of Leicester on 10th October which attracted 53 attendees, it is planned to discuss with the University how further engagement with faith and belief communities might be developed.</p> <p>Reverse Mentoring training for the manager mentees with Prof Stacy Johnson has been arranged for 3rd February after which the mentors and mentees can formally begin the programme. A second system-wide equality and diversity event for social care and health managers on 31st March is being developed and opportunities will be shared with LCC staff.</p> <p>Discussions on the grounds for adopting the International Holocaust</p>	

	<p>Remembrance Association working definition of Antisemitism have been held with Leicester Shire Equalities Forum and the Community Safety Partnership Delivery Group to ensure a consistent understanding of, and response to, requests that have been made to LCC and other local councils in this regard.</p> <p>Decision: Noted by Board</p>	
10	<p>Update from Workers' Groups</p> <p>Black Workers' Group – concern about awareness of the representative panel policy had been raised with AJ to identify how this can be improved. Lone working as noted in Matters arising at Item 3ii above.</p> <p>Disabled Workers' Group – handouts and presentations from the successful hidden disabilities event on 3rd December are available from AS. The DWG is also looking at how equivalent groups in other organisations operate and at any scope to develop a wider network or partnership on common issues.</p> <p>LGBT+ Staff Network – the network is examining results from the Staff Survey 2019 that indicate some reduced levels of satisfaction from LGBT+ colleagues in relation to fairness and respect. Other work includes a review of the guide to managers on supporting LGBT+ staff, developing a mentoring scheme and a possible Trans-specific support. All the WG and DA Chairs had been represented at the Community of Practice events on 'Inclusion without exclusion' organised by HR in November.</p>	
10	<p>Any other business</p> <p>IV noted that the Staff Survey results had been reviewed at an Environment & Transport awayday to identify how representation from protected characteristic groups could be improved. The WG Chairs now have individual and collective meetings planned with the Director (AC).</p> <p>LC commented about the historic portraiture on the first floor and if there might be any opportunity to use this area, given its regular use by members of the public, to reflect the diversity of contemporary Leicestershire communities. AJ noted in a similar regard that the dedicated Workers' Group cabinets on the ground floor beyond the controlled access could also be made more visible to both staff and visitors.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Graeme Wardle regarding art work in the Committee Area • Policy Officer (Equalities) to review and advise on the Workers' Group cabinets 	<p>LC AJ</p>

	Date and time of next meeting: Monday 16 th March 2020 at 10:30am in Gartree Committee Room	
	Minutes to: Equalities Board, John Sinnott, Cllr. Louise Richardson	