

**LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
EQUALITIES BOARD**

**Monday 14th December 2020, 10:30am-12:30pm
Microsoft Teams Meeting**

NOTES AND ACTION POINTS

Chair: Gordon McFarlane (Assistant Director-CR)

Members: Christine Collingwood (A&C), Mark Foote (CR-Strategic HR)
Mandy Baughurst (CR-L&D), Rabinder Lail (BAME Network), Kate
Revell (A&C), Mo Seedat (CEx), Liz Biswas (LGBT+ Network), Anthony
Stone (DWG)

Guest: Liz Blackshaw (LECG)

Officers: Zafar Saleem, Leon Charikar, Andrew Jeffreys, Richard Wilding

Apologies: Paula Sumner (CFS), Ian Vears (E&T)

cc: All Board members, John Sinnott, Cllr Louise Richardson

	Issue	Lead
1	Action Log from last meeting	
	<p>Notes were agreed as accurate.</p> <p>Actions from last meeting –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Curators' BLM exhibition. Discussion about the title of the Instagram account still ongoing. Discuss with Comms and A&C – Meeting was held with those involved, now resolved • Ask department equalities groups to record all potential equality issues on risk logs. Need to set timescales for completing this – ongoing • Translation & interpreting service - agreed to explore multi-agency options for new provision, use of local community groups or use of staff, but have to bear in mind situations where professional interpretation is required – looking to put together a working group 	

2	BAME Progression Action Plan (AJ)	
	<p>Engagement on the development of the action plan has taken place since June with the BAME Network (including input by individual members at group meetings and by email) and a small working party including GMcF, RL, MF, MB, RW and AJ. The plan is structured around the 3 key themes and 16 recommendations identified by the research and comprises 46 specific actions prioritised by High, Medium and Low.</p> <p>High priority (0-3 months) actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examining data availability and processes for ethnicity pay gap reporting and recruitment outcomes involving BAME candidates • Considering Race at Work Charter application and associated commitments • Maintaining conversations about BAME heritage and external issues that align with barriers to progression • Reviewing learning and development offers around mentoring, unconscious bias and positive action <p>Medium priority (3+ months) actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing new networks in departments for equality champions • Improving access to and support for existing staff networks • Review management support e.g. in relation to third party discrimination reporting • Encouraging greater take-up of development opportunities, and awareness of best practice <p>Low priority (6+ months) actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that high level recruitment remains inclusive • Identifying smarter, evidence-led targets for BAME representation at senior management and member levels • Applying the learning from recovery and flexible / hybrid working patterns (which will benefit all and not just BAME staff) <p>Action: The Board considered that the long-term actions should be assigned against relevant targets and agreed that a summary of the original report and action plan should go to CMT in the new year. It was also agreed to take the presentation to DMT and DEG meetings.</p>	AJ

3	Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group Update (LC)	
	<p>The contract with Age UK for the administration of the LECG is due to expire at the end of March 2021 and the council is proposing not to continue with the contract. A Zoom meeting was held in early December but the group has not met for most of the year due to Covid-19 restrictions including the impact on individual members and this has led to a reduced focus on issues of interest to the whole group.</p> <p>There was a discussion about some of the strengths of the LECG. The group feels there is value in meeting, that they feel they can influence council decisions, as well as being a useful forum for officers to go to to talk about proposals or consultations. Liz Blackshaw made the following points from the group and the benefits it brings to the council's work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LECG is a unique opportunity for interested parties to come together on a voluntary basis – members are not paid • The group includes a number of highly respected local experts on inequality and is well connected • The group would be very disappointed if it was felt it existed as a tick box exercise. It sees itself as being able to help officers and elected members linking to all the different communities, to be able to help them network and signpost. <p>The Board agreed it is vital that there is a clear and visible commitment to community engagement on equalities issues. The present situation gives both LECG members and the council the opportunity to consider how this could be developed so that relationships are strengthened through more genuine involvement and wider reach into different parts of the community.</p> <p>Action: GMcF and LC will discuss options for a new model of engagement that can support community representatives more intelligently and bring back to the Board.</p>	LC
4	Equal Pay Audit (MF)	
	<p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Pay – no discrimination because LCC uses the Hays job evaluation system. • Additional Allowance – seems to be linked to occupations where there is not a gender balance. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New policy now in place for standby and on call payments • A report on the equal pay audit was considered by CMT, and there were no significant concerns. • DMTs will be engaged at a detailed level <p><u>Recommendation:</u> the Board noted the report.</p>	
5	Equality & Diversity Performance Update Q1 and Q2 2020-21 (RW)	
	<p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce profile – generally positive, indicators are stable or moving in the right direction. • The percentage of workforce declaring ethnicity has dropped slightly over the last couple of years and needs some further investigation. • Healthy improvement over the last 2-3 years in terms of those declaring as LGBT. However, the figures do remain significantly below the returns from the staff survey (2.4% declared as LGBT whereas the 2019 staff survey was around 5.8%). • BAME representation moving in the right direction in terms of percentage of the workforce and now on a green rating. • Small improvement in the completion rate for the all staff Promoting Fairness and Respect course. • Slight drop from last quarter in terms of the completion rate of the Managing Diversity course for managers. • Hate incidents – the council’s community survey has shown a slow but upward trend over the past 2 years with a peak in June this year of 145 incidents recorded. <p><u>Recommendation:</u> the Board noted the report and commented that the introduction of Oracle Fusion was a good opportunity to get self-declaration rates up. However, there was a need to ensure that the data fields match best practice. It was also noted that apprentice numbers are lower at the moment and so the apprenticeship strategy is being reviewed in the light of remote working etc.</p>	
6	A&C Black Lives Matter Workshop (CC)	
	<p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop in September hosted by ADs Sandy McMillan and Peter Davis. • About 250 people on the call 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colleagues from the Archives service made a video of a conversation around why Black Lives Matter. Personal life experiences shared and a panel discussion. • The department wants BLM to be discussed in team meetings, and there was a discussion about zero tolerance and policies to protect staff recruitment and progression. • Looking at making available resources to make staff aware. • Looked at ways in which we can support staff to engage with service users. • Agreed that communications would go out on behalf of DMT to stress that equalities as part of the day job. • Also agreed that A&C would look at how they can embed equalities within the APR system and supervision meetings. <p>Tracy Ward and Nigel Thomas will be the new A&C equalities champions.</p> <p>Recommendation: the Board welcomed this initiative and encouraged all departments to consider similar workshops.</p>	Departments
7	Staff Network Updates	
	<p>BAME Network (RL):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progression action plan is underway. Also looking at creating race champions in departments. Jane Moore is on an inclusion development board which is open to all staff, regardless of ethnicity, so it's a bit of sharing experiences of staff but also looking at action planning within C&FS. <p>Disabled Workers' Group (AS):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have recently promoted the DWG and have had about six new members join the group, although the number of people who have attended the meeting has gone down considerably during the last year during lockdown. Hoping to bring that up next year and also hoping to get the group more focused on specific topics again. <p>LGBT+ Staff Network (LB):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LGBT+ staff network continues to meet monthly. Probably getting around 10 to 15 people attending via Teams. Jane Moore forwarded an email to the whole of C&FS marketing the group's meetings. Generated interest, including social workers who hadn't been able to join the group in person before. Something to be put 	

	<p>together that could be promoted by all departments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rainbow laces campaign had great coverage this year. • For the last 18 months, the group has been known as the LGBT+ staff network. There are now a couple of people that come along to the group now that identify as '+' and they've highlighted with other members of group and with LB the things the council can do to raise more awareness. 	
8	Policy Officer (Equalities) Update (AJ)	
	<p>LLR EDI partnership – a second cohort is being invited for the reverse mentoring programme and has been promoted to relevant departments through management teams and DEGs. Applications are open until the end of December but early figures indicate an improved LCC response compared to the take-up for the first round in 2018-19.</p> <p>The annual Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration for next year is going to be a joint collaboration between LCC and the City Council. As a physical event, even if scaled back to key civic and other attendees, is not practical in the current restrictions, the focus is on providing a dedicated web page with links to resources and scope for community participation through submitting images or artwork based on the HMD 2021 theme of 'A light in the darkness' for public display at a suitable open space in the city centre.</p>	
9	Any Other Business	
	<p>Kate Revell: Something that's arisen from the A&C DEG meetings about discrimination, raised within the context of racial discrimination from our service users towards our staff. Clearly, it's not practical to have a zero tolerance policy with automatic service withdrawal. Legal advice is that there needs to be an audit trail to show that managers have taken necessary steps to tackle such behaviour.</p> <p>It's also important that staff feel that they can access the right support.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 17th March 2021 2.30-4.30pm</p>	