

Community, Cultural, and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee
Meeting to be held on Tuesday, 21 May 2024

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Corporate Priorities:
Delivering better services;

Draft Equality Objectives and Equality Strategy 2024 -28
(Appendix 'A' – 'B' refers)

Contact for further information:

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Brief Summary

Following a request by the Community, Cultural and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee, the Draft Equality Strategy 2024 - 2028 is presented along with a supporting presentation. The Strategy has been developed to support the further progress of the County Council as an inclusive and respectful employer and a provider of inclusive services which meet the needs of diverse communities.

The Strategy aims to encourage greater participation and understanding of citizens in our activities and ensure the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the general aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty are met and evidenced, it aligns fully with other Strategies such as the Corporate Strategy, People Strategy and Digital First Strategy.

Recommendation

The Community, Cultural and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

- i. Consider and reflect on the content of the draft Equality Strategy and the supporting presentation (Appendices 'A' - 'B').
- ii. Consider ways to further support this area of work.

Detail

In December 2022 the Community, Cultural and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee received a report on Workforce Equalities and requested that various actions be taken including the presentation of a further report at an appropriate time



and to ensure that work on workforce equalities is undertaken in partnership with work on the emerging People Strategy. The request for a Workforce Equality Strategy report was confirmed at the Annual Portfolio and Service Area Update in July 2023.

In light of the development of the People Strategy and it containing a theme of "Inclusive and Respectful" and in response to feedback about the accessibility of Services including development of the "Action Plan on Delivering Reasonable Adjustments to Deaf and Disabled People", it was felt more appropriate to produce an Equality Strategy (**Appendix 'A'**) which reflects issues around workforce equality but also includes service delivery and participation elements which are equally relevant.

The themes of the Strategy have been developed in partnership with colleagues from People Services and other Services across the County Council and have emerged in response to evidence-based issues such as feedback from the Staff Survey, annual Public Sector Equality Duty Equality Information Reports, data submissions for the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard and support to colleagues in responding to equality related service complaints and comments.

The Equality Strategy will be supported by Annual Delivery Plans which will be refreshed following review of the items identified above – e.g. Equality Information, Staff Survey, etc. Oversight and assurance for the Equality Strategy and its Delivery Plan will be with corporate arrangements such as the People Board and Compliance and Assurance processes.

The accompanying presentation (**Appendix 'B'**) will outline some of the background and context to the main themes in the draft Equality Strategy.

Appendices

Appendices 'A' – 'B' are attached to this report. For clarification they are summarised below and referenced at relevant points within this report.

Appendix	Title
Appendix 'A'	Draft Equality Strategy 2024-28
Appendix "B"	Presentation

Consultations

No formal consultation has been undertaken.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Legal

There is no specific requirement to produce an Equality Strategy itself under the Public Sector Equality Duty. However, the themes identified will inform the Equality Objectives which must be produced every four years as a specific duty under the



Public Sector Equality Duty and which are intended to be presented to Cabinet in 2024. Delivery of the Equality Strategy and associated Annual Delivery Plans should assist in minimising challenges/complaints under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, although the risk of such situations arising cannot be entirely removed.

Finance

Actions within the Strategy and its Annual Delivery Plan will be contained within the existing financial envelope.

Risk management

Equality and Cohesion/Equality Analysis

Effective implementation of the Equality Strategy and associated Annual Delivery Plans should contribute positively to the Public Sector Equality Duty's three general aims of eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation or other conduct which is unlawful' advancing equality of opportunity for groups with protected characteristics including increasing their participation in public life and fostering good relations between groups who share protected characteristics and those who do not share them.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
N/A		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		

