

EAST RIDING OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

Report to: The Cabinet
17 July 2018

Wards:

All

Annual Progress towards meeting the Equality Duty and the Corporate Equality Objectives 2017-2018

Report of the Director of Adults, Health and Customer Services

A. Executive Summary

The Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) places a number of requirements on the Council, including publishing information to show compliance with the 'equality duty' and to update on progress towards achieving the Corporate Equality Objectives. Both of these requirements should be carried out on an annual basis and therefore, this report provides an update on the work that has been undertaken during 2017-2018.

B. Corporate Priorities 2016-2021

Supporting Vulnerable People, Reducing Inequalities

C. Portfolio

Deputy Leader
Community Involvement and Council Corporate Services
Transforming Lifestyles

D. Recommendation and Reasons for Recommendation

It is recommended that The Cabinet notes the progress made.

E. Equality Implications

There are no equality implications.

1. Background

1.1 As set out within the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), all public sector bodies are subject to the three aims of the 'general' equality duty, when exercising their functions, and must have due regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

1.2 Further to the general duties of the PSED, as above, public authorities are subject to ‘specific duties’. One of which, is to publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty and how the three aims of the general equality duty have been considered as part of the decision-making process. This may include information relating to employees who share a protected characteristic and information relating to people who are affected by the public body’s policies and practices who share a protected characteristic. The other ‘specific’ duty is to develop and publish measurable equality objectives that are needed to further the aims of the ‘general’ equality duty and to publish an update on progress towards these on an annual basis.

1.3 The following equality objectives were adopted by the Council in April 2016 for the period 2016-2020:

- The Council seeks to provide services which are accessible, wherever possible and appropriate to users;
- Communications with residents are provided, wherever possible, in clear and easily understood formats;
- Our knowledge of residents’ needs is used to inform service provision;
- Equality and diversity training is reviewed and revised and made available to staff and elected members as appropriate.

2. Considerations including Options

2.1 In 2017-2018 the Council’s Equality Analysis process was re-designed and all services were asked to start the equality analysis process when proposing any changes to a policy, practice or service. This is in order to identify any potential negative impacts on protected characteristic groups and to consider the three aims of the general equality duty within our decision making process. All completed Equality Analyses are published annually on the Council’s website <http://www2.eastriding.gov.uk/council/plans-and-policies/other-plans-and-policies-information/equalities-and-diversity/>. As part of the new process, all implemented changes will be monitored around six months after the implementation date, to assess the actual impact on protected characteristic groups.

2.2 An ‘Equalities Workforce Information Report’ is produced annually, which includes various employment information regarding Council employees, relating to all of the protected characteristics. The most recent report for 2016-2017 has been published on the Council website <http://www2.eastriding.gov.uk/council/plans-and-policies/other-plans-and-policies-information/equalities-and-diversity/>.

2.3 Under the Equalities Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, employers with 250 or more employees are required to publish statutory gender pay gap calculations on an annual basis with effect from April 2018. The gender pay gap for East Riding of Yorkshire Council employees for 2017-2018 has therefore, been calculated, reported to government and published on the Council website <http://www2.eastriding.gov.uk/council/governance-and-spending/gender-pay-gap/>. The

Council's pay gap of 10.1% is positive when viewed in the context of the current national average pay gap of 18.4% and work is underway to close the gap further.

- 2.4 Over the last financial year, standard equality monitoring questions have been included in all public consultations and surveys, where appropriate. This will help the Council to consider the number of people with different characteristics who access and use services in different ways. Service user equality information is also now being collected within the Council's new customer relationship management system (Contact 360), where appropriate, and where service users wish to share it. This information will be used to identify any potential areas of inequality and to inform practice, policy and procedure. Many Council services already collect their own equality monitoring data which is used to help inform service provision.
- 2.5 Complaints relating to any of the protected characteristics, as well as any claims of discrimination, are closely monitored and used to identify any key equality issues, identify service needs and inform service provision.

3. Progress Towards The Equality Objectives

- 3.1 Various work, projects, groups and meetings have taken place during 2017-2018, in order to progress the delivery of the corporate equality objectives and to support the three overall aims of the equality duty. This information has been gathered from a range of services and the key actions are set out below in more detail:
- 3.2 The Council seeks to provide services which are accessible, wherever possible and appropriate to users:
- A new and improved Equality Analysis process has been developed to replace the previous electronic process. This includes three stages which are, screening, analysis and monitoring. The new forms have been tested by various service areas and are now available on the Intranet.
 - The Equality Act 2010 imposes a duty on drivers of designated vehicles (both hackney carriage and private hire) when dealing with passengers travelling in wheelchairs. The licensing team have therefore published a list of wheelchair accessible licenced vehicles across the East Riding, on the Council website <http://www2.eastriding.gov.uk/business/licences-and-registrations/public-registers/cars-and-taxis/wheelchair-accessible-vehicles/>. The team have also provided free disability awareness training to taxi drivers to raise awareness of the wider issues that customers with a disability may face and to help with the loading of the wheelchairs.
 - Transportation services have significantly improved the specifications for the accessible vehicle fleet to ensure they are as fully accessible as possible and provide a safe and comfortable customer experience.
 - Procurement Services have taken positive steps to reduce inequality with a dedicated Special Educational Needs (SEN) section in the new supplies catalogue, to ensure all needs are catered for.
 - A full access audit was undertaken by Building Design on the Hornsea Leisure Centre project. This has led to the proposal of significant access improvements to the existing changing facilities, in addition to a new 'Changing Places' facility and other general accessibility improvements.

- Building Regulations Team continue to set minimum standards for accessible design and always look to exceed these standards where appropriate.
- Building Design have delivered customer facing services in Cottingham, (including the library, Customer Service Centre and Registrars) in to one new fully accessible building, enabling the release of the previous unsuitable/unadaptable building.
- The Council Housing Assistance Policy has been amended to ensure that those in greatest need are supported to live independently, including the introduction of a range of products and improvements that are available as loans.
- Over 400 Council tenants received adaptations to their homes, including level access showers, wet rooms, ramps, ceiling hoists and stair lifts.
- Older Multi Service Centres have been remodelled and fitted with new carpets that are dementia friendly.
- The Countryside Access Team are working towards making nature reserves, picnic sites and rail trails meet the Fieldfare Trust nationally recognised accessibility standards. The Rights of Way team have also been working towards achieving a target of 95% of routes being free from stiles and to improve path surfaces on priority routes. The team have made various reasonable adjustments across the network, as appropriate over the last year.
- All Sports, Play and Arts Service programmes have been designed to be fully inclusive and in addition, there are sessions that focus on supporting specific needs such as, the Long Term Conditions Activity Groups, All Ride (adapted cycles), Rise (increasing skills and confidence for young people with additional needs), Us Girls (supporting teenage girls and young women to make positive lifestyle choices).
- The Ashes Playing Field Trust has been allocated £23,000 of commuted sums to purchase and install much needed play equipment on The Ashes, Howden. This will enhance the inclusive play equipment on the site and will enable the play area to be included on a nationwide list featuring areas with inclusive play facilities. These additional items will qualify the site for a Plan Inclusive Play Areas (PiPA) Assessment, which is a recognised award designed in association with Kids (the disabled children's charity) and recommended by the Governments Accessible Britain Challenge, British Design Council and London Play.
- Sewerby Hall has continued to ensure that the hall and gardens are disabled friendly and accessible, including disabled parking bays, a Changing Places facility including appropriate equipment.
- Revenue and Benefits Welfare and Visiting Team have received Advice Quality Standard (AQS) accreditation, which is the quality mark for organisations that provide advice to the public on social welfare issues. This includes ensuring equality of access to information and advice.
- The Sensory and Physical Teaching Service (SaPTS) has continued to undertake access audits of schools in the East Riding to ensure school setting are as accessible as possible. The team also provides advice and written recommendation to schools to promote access and inclusion.

- Adult Social Care was rated 'Excellent' and maintained 4 out of 4 stars for overall access to social care advice, information and service, as part of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Care, Yorkshire and Humber Mystery Shopping Report 2017-2018.
- The Connecting Communities grant scheme was introduced by Adult Social Care and partners to provide funding for projects which help the older generation become involved in social or physical activities, or to take part in events that are happening within their communities.
- The Council, in partnership with Music and The Deaf and the National Centre for Early Music, offered a full day of free music workshops and activities for deaf and hearing impaired children along with their friends, families and carers in March 2018.

3.3 Communications with residents are provided, wherever possible, in clear and easily understood formats:

- The Anti-social Behaviour Team, along with Humberside Police, have carried out work to increase community integration within certain areas of the East Riding. This included producing various information cards in different languages to help educate people and promote cultural awareness.
- The Council's translation and interpretation service provider has continued to meet the communication needs of the families that are part of the Syrian Resettlement Programme.
- Transportation services have provided easy to understand timetable information for parishes and also offered journey planning advice for people who need it.
- Within the Customer Service Centres, a new digital service has been introduced to support people with limited digital skills.
- The Elections Team have continued to provide alternative formats of communications for visually impaired residents such as, tactile voting equipment for electors, enlarged posters with instructions for electors and enlarged postal vote ballot packs.
- The Sensory and Physical Teaching Service continues to provide modified and adapted written material and Braille resources to various pupils within Council schools and settings.
- The Carers Support service and the Carers Advisory Group continue to meet regularly to ensure that information provided to carers and their families is accessible and easily understood. This includes offering various literature/communications and newsletters in alternative formats.
- The Carers Support Service, in partnership with Hull City Council and the NHS Hull CCG, held a 'Differently Abled Event' to raise awareness and provide information on the services which are available in the public, voluntary and community sector.
- The Equality and Diversity Council webpage has been continuously updated and checked to ensure that all the published information is up to date and clear for residents.

3.4 Our knowledge of residents' needs is used to inform service provision:

- Transportation Services have established a network of Parish Transport Champions and regular local transport partnership meetings to ensure local transport needs can be effectively communicated to the Council.
- Civil Engineering services have regularly sent plans of proposals that could potentially affect people with a disability, to the Disability Advisory Group for their comments and feedback.
- Civil Engineering services have sent the latest crossing guidance to their contractors to reinforce the need to construct the dropped crossings to the appropriate specifications, in relation to users with impaired mobility.
- Disability Advisory Group meetings have been held on a quarterly basis throughout the year, in order to liaise and consult with representatives from disability related organisations on various work, policies and strategies being implemented by the Council. Various accessibility related issues such as disabled parking, have been discussed in the meetings. Also, the Department for Work and Pensions attended a meeting in December 2017 to give a presentation on Universal Credit and Northern Rail attended the February 2018 meeting to discuss the future provision of rail services and accessibility.
- Building Design consults users in the delivery of major projects. This includes consulting with users with various disabilities through the Council's wider formal consultation channels.
- Extensive new design work has been undertaken for the replacement of a Special Needs school at Welton (St Anne's). This has, and will continue to, involve extensive consultation in order to provide design solutions for Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Speech, Language and Communication Needs, for example. This project will be the first full project to respond to the newly published BS 8300:2018 Design of Accessible and Inclusive Environments.
- Building Design have begun initial research into a new pioneering project for residential respite for SEN children, working closely with the East Riding of Yorkshire Council Client Team in preparation for the forthcoming construction project.
- East Riding Leisure has introduced quiet swimming sessions following consultation, where no music is played to create a calm environment for children with autism and Asperger's who may be sensitive to noise and also, dementia friendly swimming sessions.
- The need for beach wheelchairs was identified at Bridlington South Beach and therefore, these have been introduced for disabled residents and tourists. Feedback has also been used to improve this service.
- Organisation Redesign and the Customer Service Network attended two Disability Advisory Group meetings in December 2017 and February 2018 to consult with members of the group regarding the new proposed blue badge application process. This included showing website designs, explaining the process and gathering member's thoughts, feedback and suggestions to incorporate into the new application process.
- Asset Strategy carried out engagement with the traveller community in order to establish accommodation needs.

- Affordable warmth solutions were targeted to Council tenants living in properties that were off the gas network or without central heating, to improve the energy efficiency of their home.
- Consultation was carried out by Housing Strategy regarding the new Homelessness Strategy, which seeks to deliver services to some of the most vulnerable members of the community.
- Sports, Play and Arts programmes and sessions are bespoke to individual participants needs. These include, having a variety of adapted bikes at All Ride, to suit people with a wide range of disabilities, tailored support for families within the Supporting Families pilot, activities for older people or those with long term health conditions and taking into account various other needs such as visual impairments, dementia, mobility issues, balance and coordination challenges, mental health problems and carer needs.
- Sewerby Hall and Gardens became the first venue to be awarded a 'Breastfeeding Welcome' status in summer 2017 and is part of a new scheme in Bridlington to find places where mothers are welcome to breastfeed.
- Increased resource and support for the Lollipop Group (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning (LGBTQ) support group for young people) has been implemented, in recognition of the increase of youth transgender and sexuality referrals in the East Riding.
- A web support page 'Thirteen' www.thirteen.me.uk, has been created as a safe place for young people to access information on sexuality and identity.
- The LOOK group has been created which targets parents/carers who need more support around sexuality and identity.
- The Carers Support group have worked in partnership with the CAG to shape the core offer to all registered carers.
- Adult Services consulted with the Carers Advisory Group on the development of the revised community equipment service and the new proposed blue badge application process.
- The Bi-annual Survey of Adult Carers in England (SACE) 2017 results have shown a maintained level which is above the England average and those results have been used to inform the development of both Carer Support Services and Adult Social Care Services.
- Adult Social Care, service users and stakeholders, have been involved in consultation events within 2017-2018 such as, the Mental Health and Dementia Strategy and the Adults with Autism Strategy development, to ensure these services are planned and designed to meet all needs.
- Information gathered over the last year from the adult social care service user annual reviews has been used to inform future service planning and priorities, in partnership with the Business Management and Commissioning Service.
- The 'Right to Be' project led by Barnados and in partnership with the Council, Humberside Police and others, has been created to work with schools on LGBTQ work, tackle hate crimes, bullying and to raise awareness of support groups for young people and parents.

3.5 Equality and diversity training is reviewed and revised and made available to staff and Elected Members as appropriate:

- Several members of staff from Infrastructure and Facilities attended a seminar in early 2018 at which a member of the Disability Advisory Group highlighted some of the difficulties that wheelchair users face. Information from this event has been disseminated to staff directly involved in the design of footways and pedestrian crossings.
- Several staff within Building Design have been recruited on the RIBA accredited Access Consultancy Course in 2018 which will lead to registration on the National Register of Access Consultants (NRAC).
- Elected members have undertaken Disability Equality Training and Hate Crime Training in 2017.
- Members of the Customer Service Centres attended third party Hate Crime Training in March 2018.
- Front line staff in leisure centres including receptionists and lifeguards have completed the Dementia Friendly Training session.
- A staff member within Revenue and Benefits delivered Dementia Awareness sessions for both Elected Members and the Corporate Strategy and Commissioning managers.
- The Sensory and Physical Teaching Service has provided training to school settings such as, deaf, vision and disability awareness training and this has also been delivered to the Improvement and Learning Service staff.
- Specialist training has been provided to Youth Counsellors around transgender specific issues.
- Equality Training is mandatory for Adult Services and Children's services who have been provided with various disability related and equality related training.
- A new corporate equality and diversity e-learning package has been drafted. This combines the existing packages and includes improved content aimed at a lower reading age. Once rolled out, this will need to be completed by all Council staff.
- Over 300 Council staff within key service areas, have received Modern Day Slavery training to raise awareness within the organisation and, in addition, over 300 partners have received the training.
- The Council has published a voluntary Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement and procurement teams are ensuring that appropriate measures and clauses are included in contracts above the relevant EU thresholds to minimise as far as is reasonable the risk of modern day slavery within our supply chains.
- An 'Equalities Week' took place across the Council in February 2018 that focussed on raising awareness of equality legislation, issues and topics. This included featuring specific content on many Council building internal notice boards and daily intranet articles, which received nearly 1,200 views across the week.

3.6 Other equality related work and projects which have taken place across the East Riding and have considered the three aims of the equality duty include:

- Architectural staff involvement in the 2017 City of Culture's Architectural Ambassadors Programme, which included working closely with local primary schools to explore their own environments, discuss accessibility and inclusivity within school design.
- South Cliff Caravan Park has provided a caravan for use by East Riding Council Carers team, which allowed carers to have a short break away from their caring duties. Cherry Cottage on the grounds of Sewerby Hall also offered the same short break facility.
- Sewerby Hall has continued to allow free access for carers and free travel on the Land Train.
- There has been continued joint working with Humberside Police to raise awareness of Hate Incidents and Crimes and how to report them.
- All Council public buildings continue to be signed up as part of the 'Safe Place Scheme', aimed at helping vulnerable people to stay safe whilst out and about in the community.
- All Customer Service Centres continue to be fitted with hearing loops and also have disability accessible work stations.
- All services across the Council have continued to access translation and interpretation for various communication needs. The service provider offer translations and interpreters for over 400 languages, including British Sign Language, braille and audio transcriptions.
- Northern Ballet performances and workshops, which are aimed at engaging with and introducing children under eight years old to the theatre (including children from a special needs school), have taken place as part of the Sports, Play and Arts Service.
- The Carers Advisory Group Chair and the Manager of the Carer Support Service have delivered a tailored 'carers awareness' session for students, covering specific health and social care courses, to inform their understanding about carers and their needs.
- Adult Social Care received positive Adult Social Care Outcome Framework (ASCOF) results (measuring how well care and support services achieve the outcomes that matter most to people). These results place the East Riding within the top three Councils in the Yorkshire and Humber region.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 There has been significant progress towards the corporate equality objectives in 2017-2018 and many of the above mentioned projects, work, consultations and meetings, also support the three general aims of the Equality Duty to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations. The required equality related information to comply with the equality duty, has been published on the Council's website, including information such as, gender pay gap, workforce information and completed equality analyses. Existing practices and equality related work will continue over 2018-2019 and many new projects and equality focussed work will also be undertaken.

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Background Papers
None