



Policy and Resources Committee

17 June 2019

Title	Annual Equalities Report 2018/19
Report of	Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	Appendix 1: Annual Equalities Report 2018/19 Appendix 2: Barnet Council Workforce Equalities Data Appendix 3: Progress against Equalities Action Plan 2018/19 Appendix 4: Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2019/20
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Summary

This report seeks approval for the council's Annual Equalities Report for the financial year 2018-19 which demonstrates how the council complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty in the Equality Act 2010. The publication of the Annual Equalities Report (AER) forms part of that process.

This AER looks back over the previous financial year and details how the council has approached its statutory responsibilities under The Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty; our approach to implementing our equalities policy; and our progress against our Strategic Equalities Objective, which is set out in the Barnet 2024 Corporate Plan. The AER also proposes a number of priorities for further work that are included in the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Action Plan 2019/20. The Plan incorporates legal duties as well as best practice and internal audit findings (Appendix 4). This action plan will be overseen by the council's cross-cutting steering group on Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion chaired by CMT Sponsor for this agenda.

Officers Recommendations

- 1. That the Committee approve the Annual Equalities Report 2018/19 for publication on the council website.**
- 2. That the Committee approve Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan implementation for 2019/20.**

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies and others carrying out public functions to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunities and foster good relations.
- 1.2 The council has a Strategic Equalities Objective (SEO) that states how it will meet the duty. The current SEO – that residents be treated equally, with understanding and respect, and will have equal access to quality services - is set out in the current Corporate Plan: *Barnet 2024* which was published in March 2019. An annual Equalities and Diversity Action plan provides a detailed view of how the objective will be met. This report provides an update on progress against the 18/19 plan, and includes the updated plan for 19/20.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Council is strengthening Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion agenda in order to demonstrate its legal duty, implement best practice and ensure our workforce reflects communities we serve.
- 2.2 Furthermore, in order to transparently monitor performance against the SEO, an Annual Equalities Report is produced by the council and published on the council website.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 There are no alternative reporting options considered.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Once the Annual Equalities Report has been considered and approved by Policy and Resources Committee, it will be published on the equalities pages of the council's website. The priority actions identified in the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan for the financial year 2019/20, set out in the report, will be implemented.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 For the reporting period of 2018/19, the council's Strategic Equalities Objective (SEO) was part of the Corporate Plan 2016-2020. It was that citizens will be treated equally, with understanding and respect, and will have equal access to quality services which provide value to the tax payer. The new Corporate Plan, Barnet 2024, included a refresh of the SEO as outlined in section 1.2.
- 5.1.2 To transparently monitor performance against the SEO, an Annual Equalities Report is publicly reported to council. The report details how the council has approached its statutory responsibilities under The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, (the report is included at Appendix 1 to this report).

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.2.1 There are no resource implications as a result of this report. However, the EDI Action Plan 19/20 (Appendix 2) does identify some areas where additional resources will be required to meet the stated objectives. These resources have been identified within a transformation budget.

5.3 Social Value

- 5.3.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. Before commencing a procurement process, commissioners should think about whether the services they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure these benefits for their area or stakeholders.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.4.1 The council's Constitution, Article 7 Committees, Forums, Working Groups and Partnerships, sets out the functions of the Policy and Resources Committee to be responsible for Strategic policy and to be responsible for those matters not specifically allocated to any other committee affecting the affairs of the Council

- 5.4.2 The council has statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 - and s149 which sets out the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) - which came into force on 5 April 2011.

5.4.3 General Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty ('PSED') consists of a general duty, with three main aims. The general duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and
- Foster good relations between people from different groups.

5.4.4 Obligations to publish information and set objectives

By the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations, SI 2017/ 353 the council is required to publish information to demonstrate its compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. The information must include information relating to persons who share a protected characteristic, who are its employees, or who are affected by the council's policies or practices. Publication is required annually. This information has been set out in each Annual Equalities Report published since 2014. Under the same regulations the council is also required to set and publish equality objectives to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, at least every 4 years.

5.4.5 Protected Characteristics

The 2010 Equality Act identifies the following protected characteristics:

- age
- disability

- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

5.4.6 In addition to assessing the impact of proposals on the nine protected characteristics, the council also assess the impact on certain other groups, whenever possible, who may be considered disadvantaged and/or vulnerable. These additional groups include; carers, people on a low income, those who are unemployed, young people who are not in education employment or training (NEET), people with mental health issues and some families and lone parents.

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 Progress will be monitored against the council's Strategic Equalities Objective, to mitigate against a range of equalities risks, and to ensure that the council meets its statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

5.5.2 The council's 2014 Equalities Policy outlines how the council works with partners to ensure that our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 are understood and implemented. This Policy is currently being updated.

5.5.3 We work in partnership with organisations that have processes in place to meet their obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Equalities impact assessments are required as part of contractual agreements. The Strategy Team has supported officers from across the council during 2018/19 to ensure that equalities considerations are embedded into the decisions the council and partners make, and into business and financial planning processes. This has moved from being the responsibility of the Equalities Lead, to a shared responsibility across the team, which has been supported by Equality Champions from September 2018 onwards.

5.5.4 The Independent Government Review into PSED (September 2013) recommended that public sector bodies should take a proportionate approach to the requirement to pay due regard to equalities and not seek to 'gold plate'. It also recommended that the PSED should be further reviewed, suggesting in three years' time (September 2016). No further information is available about any proposed review of the PSED.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 The legal requirements of the 2010 Equality Act are outlined above and describe the requirement for public bodies to pay due regard to equalities.

5.6.1 This Annual Equalities Report responds to the requirement to publish information to show compliance with the Equality Duty at least annually.

5.7 Corporate Parenting

5.7.1 In line with Children and Social Work Act 2017, the council has a duty to consider Corporate Parenting Principles in decision-making across the council. Age is a protected characteristic and Barnet's approach to Equalities is to ensure that the most vulnerable are protected.

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

5.8.1 It is not considered necessary to consult on the Annual Equalities Report. The Annual Equalities Report will be published on the council's website.

5.8 Insight

5.8.1 This report demonstrates how Equality and Diversity Data is used by the council to meet it's PSED, including the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 December 2018 Policy and Resource Committee: Annual Equalities Report 2017/18

<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50100/Annual%20Equalities%20Report%20201718.pdf>

6.1 June 2017 Policy and Resource Committee: Annual Equalities Report 2016/17

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s40460/Annual%20Equalities%20Report%202016-17.pdf> .

6.2 June 2016 Policy and Resource Committee: Annual Equalities Report 2015/16

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s32732/Annual%20Equalities%20Report%20201516.pdf> .

6.3 January 2015 Full council: Adoption of Equalities Policy

https://www.barnet.gov.uk/dam/jcr:45f49f6e-2d2f-4d0c-a35f-bd9a200def51/008627_Equalities_A4_Booklet_digital_.pdf

6.4 At the meeting on [24 June 2013](#), Cabinet Resources Committee approved the performance measures for monitoring progress against the council's Strategic Equality Objective, as set out in the Corporate Plan and required by the PSED.