

	<h2>Policy and Resources Committee</h2> <h3>9th July 2015</h3>
<p style="text-align: center;">Title</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Annual Equalities Report 2015</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Report of</p>	<p>Kate Kennally, Strategic Director for Commissioning</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Wards</p>	<p>All</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Enclosures</p>	<p>Annual Equalities Report 2015</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Officer Contact Details</p>	<p>Lesley Holland 0208 359 3004 Lesley.Holland@Barnet.gov.uk</p> <p>Elissa Rospigliosi 0208 359 7158 Elissa Rospigliosi@Barnet.gov.uk</p>
<h2>Summary</h2>	
<p>It is required under the Public Sector Equality Duty (which forms part of the Equality Act 2010) that Local Authorities monitor and report progress against the delivery of their Strategic Equalities Objective. For Barnet, the publication of the Annual Equalities Report (AER) forms part of that process.</p> <p>Following approval of the Annual Equalities Report by Policy and Resources Committee, the report will be published on the Council’s website.</p> <p>This is the second Annual Equalities Report produced by Barnet Council under the 2010 Equality Act, and it is part of our approach to strengthening how we take account of equalities in our decision making. In particular, it outlines the equality processes for business planning, which analyse the equalities impacts of those decisions and provide a cumulative impact assessment – see paragraph 3. vi) of the AER.</p> <p>The AER also looks back over the previous financial year and details how the Council has approached its statutory responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED – further detail is set out at 4.2.3 below and included in the AER at Appendix 2); our approach to implementing our equalities policy; and our progress against the Strategic Equalities Objective, which is linked to Barnet’s Corporate Plan. The AER</p>	

also proposes a number of priorities for further work in the Equalities Action Plan 2015/16.

Recommendations

- 1. That the Committee approve the Annual Equalities Report 2015 for publication on the council website.**

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 An Annual Equalities Report is required under the arrangements for reporting progress against the Council's Strategic Equalities Objective which were agreed at Cabinet Resources Committee on 24 June 2013.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 2.1 No alternative reporting option is required.

3. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1 Once the Annual Equalities Report has been considered and approved by Policy and Resources Committee, it will be published on the equality pages of the Council's website. The priority actions identified in the Equalities Action Plan for 2015/16, set out in the report, will be implemented.

4. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

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

- 4.1.1 There are no resource implications in this proposal.

4.2 Legal and Constitutional References

- 4.2.1 Council Constitution, Responsibility for Functions – Annex A, sets out the terms of reference of the Policy and Resources Committee, including 'To be responsible for the overall strategic direction of the Council including the following specific functions/activities: Equalities, Diversity and Community Cohesion'.

- 4.2.2 The Council has statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010, which came into force on 5 April 2011 – in particular s149, which sets out the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

4.2.3 General Public Sector Equality Duty

The 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.

4.2.4 Specific Equalities Duty

The specific duty requires public bodies to:

- Set and publish equality objectives, at least every four years; and
- Publish information to show their compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually.

The information published must include information relating to employees (for public bodies with 150 or more employees) and information relating to people who are affected by the public body's policies and practices. This information is included in the Annual Equalities Report 2015.

4.2.5 Protected Characteristics

The 2010 Equality Act identifies the following protected characteristics:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

It also covers marriage and civil partnership with regard to eliminating discrimination. Therefore, in addition to assessing the impact of proposals on the 9 protected characteristics, the Council also tries to assess the impact on certain other groups who may be considered disadvantaged and/or vulnerable. These additional groups include people with learning disabilities, people with mental health issues, carers (including young carers), people on low income, people from areas of deprivation and the unemployed

4.3 Risk Management

4.3.1 The Council's approach to equalities is designed to monitor progress with the Strategic Equalities Objective, to mitigate against a range of equalities risks, and to ensure that the Council meets its statutory obligations under the Equalities Act 2010, including the general and specific PSED duties.

4.3.2 As a public body, the Council and all organisations acting on its behalf, must ensure that it meets its legal obligations to pay due regard to equalities, including where some functions have been delegated. The Council's

Equalities Policy was refreshed and published in January 2014 and outlines what the Council expects of partners so that obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 are understood and implemented. The PSED cannot be delegated and the risks of non-compliance can be mitigated by consistently demonstrating that due regard has been paid to equalities.

- 4.3.3 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 in September 2016.

4.4 Equalities and Diversity

- 4.4.1 The legal requirements of the 2010 Equality Act are outlined at paragraphs 4.2.2 – 4.2.5 above and describe the requirement for public bodies to pay due regard to equalities.

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

4.5 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 4.5.1 This is the second Annual Equalities Report produced by Barnet Council under the 2010 Equality Act, and it is part of our approach to strengthening how we take account of equalities in our decision making. The report details how the Council has approached its statutory responsibilities under The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, (PSED – further detail outlined at Appendix 2); our approach to implementing our equalities policy; and our progress against the Strategic Equalities Objective, which is linked to Barnet's [Corporate Plan](#).

4.6 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.6.1 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. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 5.1 At the meeting on 21 January 2014, full Council took note of the adoption of Barnet Council's revised [Equalities Policy](#).
- 5.2 At the meeting on 18 November 2013, Business Management Scrutiny Committee considered the draft of the Council's revised Equalities Policy and recommended that the policy be reported to full Council following the consultation exercise.
- 5.3 At the meeting on 24 September 2013, Cabinet noted the content of the council's draft Equalities Policy and 'Communities Together' Action Plan and the approach for promoting community cohesion and monitoring community

tensions. Cabinet agreed to launch a public consultation on the Council's draft Equalities Policy.

- 5.4 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. The Committee agreed that an Annual Equalities Report should be published as part of the Council's approach to reporting progress against the Strategic Equality Objective.