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Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities

24 September 2015

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities - Councillor Townshend

**Director approving submission of the report:**

Director of Public Health

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:**

Equality strategy – end of year progress report 2014/15

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**Is this a key decision?**

No

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**Executive summary:**

The Council's Equal Opportunities policy states the Council's belief that:

- everybody should have an equal opportunity to contribute to and benefit from society; and
- a diverse community is a positive asset to the city.

The current equality strategy was approved in March 2013. The strategy sets out how the Council will deliver the equal opportunities policy and also how it will comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

This report provides an overview of progress in relation to the equality strategy for 2014/15. This includes a summary of progress in relation to the Council's equality objectives (appendix A) which are linked to the priorities in the Council Plan.

The Council's current equality strategy approved in March 2013 runs until March 2016. A review of the current strategy will take place with a view to producing a draft revised document for consultation. The intention will be to produce a revised strategy by the end of March 2016.

**Recommendations:**

Cabinet Member is requested to:

- (1) consider the progress made on implementing the equality strategy;
- (2) approve the end of year 2014/15 progress report on the Equality Objectives; and
- (3) request a review and update of the Council's equality strategy to be published by March 2016.

**List of appendices included:**

Appendix A Progress report on the Council's equality objectives 2014/15

**Other useful background papers:**

Equality strategy 2013-16

Council Plan performance 2014/15 and revised Council Plan 2015 (Cabinet, 7 July 2015)

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No, the half year report will go to Scrucro

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No

**Will this report go to Council?**

No

**Report title:**

**1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1 The current equality strategy was approved in March 2013 and is due to be refreshed by for March 2016. It sets out how the Council will deliver the equal opportunities policy as well as the requirements of the public sector equality duty in the Equality Act 2010 and the Specific Duties Regulations 2011. The equality strategy identified the following actions that the Council would take to implement the strategy:
- to gather and analyse equality information to inform the development and delivery of Council services;
  - to develop specific measures for the Council's equality objectives and identify gaps in data;
  - to report progress on the equality objectives twice a year through the Council Plan;
  - to regularly monitor and report on the equality objective and equality analysis through the equality strategy;
  - to develop trends analysis on the equality objectives; and
  - to review and revise the equality strategy in line with the Council Plan.

This report provides an update of progress on implementing the strategy as well as progress in relation to the Council's equality objectives for 2014/15.

- 1.2 The Equality Act identifies nine protected characteristics which need to be considered when assessing the equality impact on Council decisions and services. These are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage & civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race / ethnicity; religion and belief; sex; and sexual orientation. Recognising the level of socio-economic inequality in the city and as a Marmot city, the Council also considers the following groups when assessing equality impact: looked after children; carers; and those affected by deprivation (priority neighbourhoods).
- 1.3 The Council has a legal requirement to set at least one equality objective. The Council has set its equality objectives in the context of the Council Plan. The Council Plan was approved in January 2014 and this sets out the aspiration and priorities for the Council for the next ten years. Following a period of consultation the Council's equality objectives were revised in 2014 alongside the plan.
- 1.4 The Cabinet received a report of progress in relation to Council Plan priorities in July 2015. It was noted that good progress had been made in many areas and in particular in the context of continued cuts to government grants meaning that in 2015 the Council has £200 less to spend per person as compared to 2010. The equality objectives are also reported in this context including the city's recovery from the worst global recession; the impact of welfare reform changes and the disproportionate impact on metropolitan areas like Coventry; the highest demand for some services and at a time when councils are facing the deepest budget cuts ever; and a significant reduction in the Council's workforce at all levels.

**Options considered and recommended proposal**

**2.1 Equality objectives**

Appendix A contains a summary of progress in relation to the Council's equality objectives for 2014/15. Progress is presented in relation to the Council Plan themes of globally connected and locally committed. In addition equality objectives relating to the Council's workforce are reported through the workforce profile.

- 2.0 The progress report in appendix A contains headline measures and where available the subsets of data collected to demonstrate the impact on different groups protected by the Equality Act. This also includes contextual information to describe what is happening in Coventry and how this compares to elsewhere. Where headline indicators have been reported previously, progress has been compared with previous years. The report is in three parts: the report begins with the overall impact on each of the protected characteristics; followed by commentary on each of the equality objectives set out by each of the Council Plan priorities (globally connected, locally committed, delivering our priorities with fewer resources); and concludes with a table setting out the performance of the Council's equality indicators.
- 2.1 There are currently 78 equality indicators. Of these, 37 have improved, 8 stayed the same, and 17 got worse, and it is not possible to say for the remaining 16 indicators. Overall, 58% of indicators improved or stayed the same, that is, 45 of 78 indicators. At half year, 36% (25 of 70 indicators measured) improved or stayed the same. It is not always possible to say whether an indicator has improved or not. This is because for some indicators, it is not possible to say whether a change represents good or poor performance; or with other indicators, the way that it is measured has changed making comparisons impossible.
- 2.2 All equality objectives have the potential to make a difference to people belonging to groups protected by the Equality Act 2010. The progress report sets out where the impact is currently being monitored for each of the objectives. The groups monitored will be revised as appropriate in light of service reviews and the outcomes of future equality and consultation analyses (ECAs).
- 2.3 Overall, there have been some positive trends: the recovering economy has resulted in an increase in the employment rate and reduction in unemployment – especially for women. However, this has not been reflected in people's pay packets yet, and the gender pay gap has widened.

Crime has continued to fall and although hate crime incidents has increased – it is not clear from the evidence whether this is due to actual increases in hate crime or in reporting. Fly-tipping, which blights some of the city's more deprived neighbourhoods, have gone up.

There have been some increases in life expectancy and progress made in education – especially in the early years and at key stage 2 where the vast majority has made progress, however at secondary there remain too many disadvantaged pupils, especially boys and looked after children, who do not achieve five good GCSEs. The city's investment into domestic violence and abuse services mean that more people who experienced domestic violence or abuse feel able to come forward – although there are too many repeat victims.

- 2.4 The Council continues to work to make improvements in the way services are delivered for groups protected by the Equality Act through a range of internal forums like the disabled people's strategic forum, employee networks and external groups like the interfaith and communities group, sexual orientation and gender identity advisory group and the disability equality advisory panel. Examples of these are included in appendix A.
- 2.5 **Equality information**  
The Council publishes relevant, proportionate information demonstrating compliance with the equality duty of the equality act. Updated equalities information and analysis continues to be provided on the equality and diversity pages on the Council's website at [www.coventry.gov.uk/equality/](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/equality/). The publication of the equalities information and analysis contained in this report also contributes to this requirement.

## 2.6 Equality and consultation analysis (ECA)

The Council carries out ECAs on key policy decisions and proposed service changes to assess the potential impact both positive and negative on protected groups in the city. ECAs are used to make sure that the Council is mindful of:

- improving equality of access to services;
- achieving a culture of respect for people from different backgrounds;
- challenging harassment and discrimination;
- ensuring that the Council's employment opportunities are fair and
- that the workforce is representative of the ethnic makeup of our city.

2.7 The Council considered the equality impact of the budget proposals for 2015/16 by looking across all major areas of the new focus. Equality analysis is underway for major areas such as kickstart (the Council's transformation programme), city centre first and the workforce strategy proposals. The detailed impact of these programmes will be considered by elected members at the appropriate stages of decision making.

## 2.8 Health inequalities & Marmot

Since Coventry became a Marmot City in 2013 there has been progress in outcomes across health and across society. As well as a narrowing of the life expectancy gap (from 11.2 years to 9.8 years for men and from 8.6 years to 8.5 years for women), there have been improvements in educational development, health outcomes, life satisfaction, employment and reductions in crime in priority locations.

On 26 March 2015 a national conference, 'Making a Difference in Tough Times', was held in Coventry to share the city's achievements as a Marmot City, where Professor Sir Michael Marmot congratulated Coventry on its approach and progress achieved so far. Partners also worked together to develop a case study report and film, which can be accessed at [http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/176/policy/2457/coventry\\_a\\_marmot\\_city](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/176/policy/2457/coventry_a_marmot_city).

Professor Sir Michael Marmot also committed to continue to work with Coventry for a further three years, in partnership with colleagues from Public Health England. Public health will be working with partners to develop a Marmot strategy and further indicators for the next three years based on the Marmot policy objectives outlined in 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives'. This will be aligned to the health and wellbeing strategy, which will be a key enabler for addressing inequalities in the city.

## 2.9 Workforce

As at 31 March 2015 the total number of contracts was 5,778 (excluding schools and casual posts). This compares to 6,270 contracts as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014. The equality data for March 2015 workforce showed:

	31 March 2015		31 March 2014	
	Contracts (no.)	Contracts (%)	Contracts (no.)	Contracts (%)
Female	4,054	70.2	4,445	70.9
Black / Minority Ethnic Group (BME)	945	16.4	1,023	16.3
Declared disability	334	5.8	379	6.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,778</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6,270</b>	<b>100</b>

For employees at senior management level (Hay graded and chief officers) this showed:

	31 March 2015		31 March 2014	
	Contracts (no.)	Contracts (%)	Contracts (no.)	Contracts (%)
Female	56	50.5	60	50
Black / Minority Ethnic Group (BME)	7	6.3	9	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

The Council's workforce is more representative of the community it serves in the lower grades and this has remained fairly static in comparison to last year. The number of senior manager contracts has reduced by nine and whilst the percentage of female senior managers has remained at a similar level, the percentage from black/minority ethnic groups has reduced slightly as a result of a reduction of two contracts. As the numbers of vacancies continue to decrease, there are fewer opportunities to recruit. The focus for the Council is therefore to develop existing staff through coaching, mentoring, and leadership programmes.

The Council undertook a gender pay audit on the March 2015 payroll of employees on the Coventry terms and conditions evaluated using the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (green book) job evaluation scheme. This covers the majority of Council employees including school support staff, but excluding teachers. Further details are set out in appendix A.

### **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1 Consultation on the current equality objectives took place in 2014. There was overall support for the equality objectives, however comments were made for the Council to remain mindful of key issues in relation to poverty and employment and how these affect certain groups, in particular in relation to older people and disabled people.

### **4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 4.1 This is a top-level report on equalities in the Council. Progress for the half year 2015/16 will be reported alongside the Council Plan.
- 4.2 A revised equality strategy will be published by March 2016. A draft will be presented to the Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities prior to going out to formal consultation.

### **5. Comments from Executive Director of Resources**

#### **5.1 Financial implications**

The cost of monitoring the equality objectives and the equality strategy will be met from within existing resources.

#### **5.2 Legal implications**

The equality strategy and the progress report meets the Public Sector Equality Duty set out at Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share relevant protected characteristics and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share relevant protected characteristics and those who do not.

The Council is required to set equality objectives to meet its obligation under the Equality Act (Specific Duties) Regulation 2011. This report forms part of the Council's response to the legal requirement to publish equality objectives and report progress towards those objectives.

## **6. Other implications**

None

### **6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key priorities?**

The equality strategy sets out the equality objectives to help the Council achieve the overall priorities set out in the Council Plan ([www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)). By systematically measuring progress in relation to the equality objectives, areas where good progress is being made can be identified as well as those where progress is not as expected and where corrective action may be needed.

### **6.2 How is risk being managed?**

The performance management framework helps the Council to manage risk by systematically measuring progress in relation to the priorities of the Council Plan and the Equality Strategy. This means the need to do more to address inequality can be identified and corrective action taken.

### **6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

The equality objectives impact on all of the Council's directorates. As equalities are embedded into the Council Plan, achieving the objectives set out in the Equality Strategy will help to ensure that the Council's priorities are delivered.

### **6.4 Equalities / EIA**

The process outlined in this report will enable the Council to comply with its obligations under the Equality Act (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011. Initial equality analysis was carried out to inform the development of equality measures, and this was further informed by the consultation process. Furthermore an equality analysis will be undertaken when the Council's equality strategy is revised.

### **6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment**

None

### **6.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

Many of the Council's equalities objectives are delivered through partnership working which means that there will be implications for partner organisations. By making equality information easily accessible for local residents, it will also make it easier for partner agencies to obtain equalities information and will prevent the duplication of information gathering.

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