

LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

EQUALITIES BOARD MEETING

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15 May 2017,
Gartree Room, County Hall at 10:00am**

Gordon McFarlane	Assistant Director, Corporate Services, Corporate Resources (Chair)
Mike McHugh	Public Health Consultant
Alex Scott	Head of Service Business Management, Environment and Transport
Alyson Podmore	HR Business Partner
Donna Worship	Policy Manager, Chief Exec's
Andrew Jeffrey	Policy Officer (Equalities), Chief Exec's
Sana Mahomed	Equalities Officer, Unison
Liz Goodman	Senior Comms Officer and Chair of LGBT+ Staff Network
Katie Joondan	Strategic Planning & Commissioning Officer, Adults & Communities
Derk van der Wardt	Consultation and Engagement Manager, Chief Exec's

Apologies

Ann Carruthers, Jane Moore, Mo Seedat, Jackie Mould, Diane Scott, Amanda Price, Rabinder Lail

Item	Discussion	Action by
Item 1	Welcome – present and apologies See above.	
Item 2a	Minutes of Equalities Board held on 30th March 2017 i. Accuracy There were no points of inaccuracy to record.	
Item 2b	ii. Matters arising In relation to the explanation about the length of time that it had taken to repair the Rutland Building lift, DW advised that this had been raised at the first meeting of the Disability Task Force held on 5th May. It had also been agreed to hold a separate meeting with Property Services at which a range of accessibility-related	

issues and procedures in place at Council buildings and departments would be addressed.

Action:

Property Services meeting to be arranged and outcomes fed back on this and Disability Task Force progress to the Equalities Board

AJ

New Deputy Chair

Ann Carruthers had volunteered for the position of Deputy Chair. There were no other candidates and the Board welcomed and accepted AC's nomination.

Learning and Development Plan

DW suggested that Mandy Baughurst should represent Learning & Development on the Board when there were relevant items.

Action:

Board agreed to this and for MB to be added to the circulation list to consider attendance depending on items to be discussed.

AJ

Item 3 **Final Report on Equality Action Plan 16/17 and corporate Equality Action Plan 17/18**

AJ commented on the progress report by Chief Exec's about last year's Action Plan and the key priorities for work going forward in the current year. Delivery of the 16/17 Action Plan had been challenging for reasons discussed at the previous two Equalities Board meetings but, despite this, approximately 37 of the 74 actions had been completed. This included workforce representation and other equalities reporting, engagement with staff and services through the Workers' Groups and DEGs and also with LSEF and LECG partners, organisation of events and commemorations (HMD, Inter Faith Forum conference) and continued successful participation as the top-ranked local authority in the Stonewall index.

Areas where some progress had been made but actions and / or outcomes needed to be taken forward into the 17/18 Action Plan included embedding equality and diversity into recruitment and service commissioning processes, reviews of equality and diversity training and the EHRIA toolkit, and adopting a task force approach similar to the one successfully established for

recruitment issues in the 16/17 Action Plan to prioritise and drive forward improvements on disability initiatives.

Areas where no progress had been made were: involving users in recruiting for posts with a strong service delivery element; ensuring job descriptions were non-discriminatory; EHRIA auditing; equalities monitoring data collection by commissioned service providers; supporting voluntary community groups in service delivery; working with the Deaf community; and wider relationship-building.

The 17/18 Action Plan had been revised in line with the comments made during the workshop at the previous Equalities Board meeting and contained 35 actions. The opportunity had been taken to improve plan presentation so that actions, responsibilities and performance measurement processes were more tightly defined. Actions were now also individually numbered. The overall aim was to make the plan more outcome-driven as well as easier to track progress both internally (by the Board) and externally (by County residents, service users and other interested parties). The inclusion of the PSED and general duties at the head of the action plan was also intended to show more clearly how the framework focusses on compliance as well as making clearer how the individual actions in the plan meet the Council's specific equality objectives over the duration of the Equality Strategy 2016-20.

Comments on the 17/18 Action Plan

5.3 – AP noted that the work initiated by the recruitment task force is part of a more holistic approach through the recruitment strategy which is still being developed. This would allow the whole process to be considered from advertisement through to appointment

5.2, 6.4 and 8.1 – MB has emailed to AJ to clarify the wording of and responsibilities for these actions.

8.6 – LG said that raising awareness of hate crime and interventions / preventive actions was part of a communications plan to support the Community Safety Team's work. In future, this would be appended to the Equalities Communication Plan to demonstrate this additional linked activity.

Action:

- To amend the Action Plan as necessary

AJ

The Board agreed the 17/18 Action Plan subject to the drafting changes identified above. GMcF noted that the 16/17 Action Plan had gone through CMT, Cabinet and the County Council and if that process was going to be repeated for the new plan. DW responded that, in accordance with Cabinet authorisation in June 2016, all that was needed to approve the annual action plan was sign-off by the Chief Executive and Lead Member under the delegated authority arrangements.

Action:

- Paper to be drafted for next Lead Member (Equalities) briefing

AJ

DW advised it was still the aim to bring a mock-up of a revised 6-monthly performance reporting process and RAG-rated dashboard to the next Board meeting in July.

The Board discussed the inclusion of relevant equalities guidance e.g. self-declaration, reasonable adjustments in the induction checklist and agreed that it would be worth checking and updating the content.

Action:

- Review the current induction checklist for equalities content and recommend any additions to L & D.

DW/RW

Item 4 **EHRIA Review Project**

DW introduced this item by stating that, although the current EHRIA toolkit introduced in 2014 had been successful in avoiding challenges, there was a trend in feedback from (a) staff including through the EHRIA training course evaluation that the impact assessment form was too intensive, particularly at the screening stage; and from (b) Members that the presentation of information was not sufficiently clear for scrutiny purposes to support informed debate. The loss of capacity through trainer moves and retirement as well as the need to establish a clearer audit / completion trail were also timely pointers towards a review of the toolkit materials and how EHRIA is implemented within departments. Options included developing more bespoke guidance tailored to types of change in services as well as drawing from current high-level risk assessment processes.

Lauren Haslam has offered support with this project. The project can include working with individual departments if required.

Chief Exec's will be coming to DEGs in the next two months to discuss EHRIA completion reporting and to gain feedback on how the process can be improved. A project plan will be developed to take forward the overall review. The aim is to complete the project by the end of the 17/18 Action Plan.

DW / AJ

Item 5 Improvements to Equalities in Recruitment

AP expanded on the comments already made on the 17/18 Action Plan [see *Item 3 above*] in the context of recruitment actions. Work of the Recruitment Task Force continued and would be integrated where appropriate into the wider recruitment strategy. More information about progress on the strategy would be provided to the Board's next meeting on 31st July.

The People Strategy Board is looking to approve Unconscious Bias training for all Recruitment Panel Chairs in line with the Equalities Board recommendation.

Item 6 Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group update

DvdW updated the Board on recent activity of the LECG and how it supports equality impact assessment work. The group continued to be effective in providing a 'lived experience' perspective of people with protected characteristics in relation to Council policies and procedures. The exchange of information between members is good and there is a desire to build on the launch of the [LECG website](#) last year to continue raising the group's profile:

The contract for secretariat / administrative support to the LECG will need to be recommissioned by the end of this year and Age UK is preparing a progress report to inform decisions about this. DvdW expects the report to be available, together with recommendations about recommissioning, for sharing with the Board at its meeting on 25th September.

MM asked if the group had sufficient capacity and knowledge to provide feedback on public health service changes. DvdW responded that the group seeks opportunities to engage wherever it is possible and relevant to members' expertise and interests.

Item 7 **Update from departments**

Adults and Communities

The first DEG following the deletion of the departmental Equalities Officer post had been held on 27th April. Previous activity had been heavily focussed on EHRIA scrutiny and sign-off but there was a desire to also consider wider equality issues such as in procurement where a supplier round table to discuss equality monitoring was being planned.

Public Health

MM asked whether the CCGs should be represented on the Leicester Shire Equalities Forum. It was noted that they were not directly represented although the Leicestershire NHS Partnership Trust attended LSEF meetings and could raise relevant issues such as hate incidents. DW cited the Great Get Together being organised at County Hall on 16th June as a way of bringing organisations and communities together and building bridges. More generally, LCC's experience was that most hate incident reporting was external rather than in relation to service users against staff. This might be improved by making hate incident reporting information more visible on the website or through the Health and Safety AssessNet system for "near misses", gaining insight from Customer Service and seeking best practice guidance from partners.

Action:

- Investigate corporate initiatives regarding abuse of staff that we can link to 'hate incidents' and report back to the Board
- AJ to raise hate reporting procedures at LSEF

AJ

Item 8 **Update from workers' groups**

LGBT Staff Network

The final draft of the *Trans* equality in the workplace* guidance is available and will be ready for launch on the intranet on IDAHOT (17th May) as well as officially at the LGBT+ staff conference (19th May). Each partner can produce hard copies for their own requirements if needed. The guidance includes a statement and signature from City, Police, Fire & Rescue and LCC (GMcF) senior management. Although Leicestershire NHS Partnership

had not been directly involved in producing the guidance, it is hoped that they will endorse it.

Item 9 **Communications Plan 17/18**

This is still being developed, with particular emphasis on community safety, and will be circulated when ready.

Action:

Circulate Equalities communications plan and append Hate and Prevent communication plan for information

LG

Item 10 **Stonewall 2017 Evaluation Report**

Although a key strength of LCC's 2017 Stonewall WEI submission had been the 87% rating from the staff feedback element of the index, it was more of a concern that only 55% of LGBT staff said they were happy to come out to colleagues. The feedback on LCC's rating also indicated areas for improvement including role models and career development. For the 2018 WEI there will also be a greater emphasis on support policies and practices for trans staff. The LGBT+ staff network is always looking for examples and evidence to support the submission but the level of response is still low. LG asked if DEGs especially could be more proactive in this.

All

Item 11 **Any other business**

No items.

Date and time of next meeting:

Monday 31st July 2017 10am-12pm, Gartree Committee Room

Minutes to:

Equalities Board, John Sinnott, Cllr. Pam Posnett