

**LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**EQUALITIES BOARD**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2018,  
Gartree Room, County Hall at 10:00am**

Gordon McFarlane	Assistant Director, Corporate Services, Corporate Resources (Chair)
Mike McHugh	Public Health Consultant
Ian Vears	Assistant Director, Environment and Transport
Jane Moore	Assistant Director, Education & Early Help, Children & Family Services
Kate Revell	Commissioning Business Manager, Adults & Communities
Donna Worship	Policy Manager, Chief Exec's
Andrew Jeffreys	Policy Officer (Equalities), Chief Exec's
Liz Biswas	Senior Comms Officer and Chair of LGBT+ Staff Network
Rabinder Lail	Family Support Worker and Chair of BWG
Richard Wilding	Service Delivery Business Partner, Strategic and Business Intelligence
Jo Miller	Team Leader, Strategic & Business Intelligence
Mandy Baughurst	Learning & Development Advisor
<b><u>Apologies</u></b>	
Heather Pick, Mo Seedat, Alyson Podmore, Anthony Stone	

<b>Item</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Action by</b>
Item 1	<b>Welcome – present and apologies</b>  See above.	
Item 2a	<b>Minutes of Equalities Board held on 31st July 2017</b>  <b>i. Accuracy</b>  There were no points of inaccuracy to record.	

<p>Item 2b</p>	<p><b>ii. Matters arising</b></p> <p><b>Equalities Board Forward Plan 2018-19</b></p> <p>A new Forward Plan has been prepared and was circulated to Board members with the agenda for this meeting.</p> <p><b>EHRIA completion and forward planning annual reporting</b></p> <p>Gaps in data from some departments for the 2016-17 period has prevented a final report being prepared for the Board. This issue is addressed in more detail in the paper for Agenda Item 6 (see below).</p> <p><b>Trans policy</b></p> <p>AJ reported that HR had advised on relevant corporate policies to enable him to commence drafting a LCC Trans policy document. The aim is for the policy to reflect Stonewall guidance as closely as possible. The document will be shared with the LGBT+ staff network when ready.</p> <p>GMcF noted that it could be presented to Employment Committee in June</p>	<p>AJ</p>
<p>Item 3</p>	<p><b>Staff Survey 2017 Equality &amp; Diversity Issues</b></p> <p>JM presented the headline statistics from the Staff Survey 2017 using the new Tableau dashboards. These allow results to be filterable either by LCC as a whole, by each department, by personal characteristics consistent with the Equality Act 2010 groups or by work characteristics including staff grade, working hours and location. The survey was available in both online and hard copy format over a seven-week period. 46% of staff completed the survey compared to 41% in 2015 and this was reflected across most departments with the biggest increase in response rate being achieved by Children &amp; Family Services. The highest response rate overall occurred in Public Health despite a fall in responses compared to 2015.</p> <p>The most positive response in the My Council, My Manager and My Job sections of the questionnaire shows that 91.5% of staff believe that the council is committed to equality and diversity. However, compared to the LCC average, staff identifying as disabled responded significantly less positively to all questions in these sections; this trend is also consistently reflected against the</p>	

average level of response by all staff in each department except for Public Health. Consequently disabled staff feel more stressed, less willing or able to speak up and challenge how things are done at the council and less confident that change in the council is well-managed. Other groups responding less positively compared to the LCC average against one or more of the specific indicators within each of these sections were staff identifying as male, non-white British, those declaring under other sexuality and those working outside County Hall. Also, compared to the response rates for these questions in 2015, there was significantly lower level of satisfaction in staff groups identifying as female, white British, 16-34 and 25-54yo, disabled, other religion and other sexuality about how change is communicated within the council.

The specific equalities-related questions ask staff about their experience of bullying, harassment or discrimination over the past 12 months. Although bullying, harassment and discriminatory behaviour across all LCC staff groups has decreased since the previous survey, staff identifying as disabled responded significantly less positively to these questions compared to the LCC average in relation to bullying and harassment (-12.4% points) and discrimination (-32.9%). Specific grounds of discriminatory treatment were cited by disabled respondents under gender, age, race / ethnicity, religion / belief and caring responsibilities. The other main staff group citing higher than average experience of discrimination was non-white British.

Members noted that the Tableau dashboard gave departments and the Workers' Groups the ability to deep dive into the survey results to see which are most relevant to them. In some cases, the less positive responses were due to a potentially wide range of contributory factors that were best addressed more locally – LB commented that the LGBT+ staff network had held a workshop to identify key issues and actions for the group. Members also highlighted that it was not clear from the survey whether discrimination / bullying and harassment was from colleagues or external contacts.

JM informed the Board that the Children and Families Department had considered the survey results at SLT/DMT for further action.

DW noted that a higher-level response to the disability issues was being planned to build on the 'Valuing Differences' brand successfully used in October 2017 to raise awareness of and

	<p>responses to hidden disabilities.</p> <p>The supporting paper by AJ invited the Board to note the equalities and diversity related issues raised in the Staff Survey 2017; and for the departments to undertake a more detailed analysis of trends and issues in their respective areas to inform the preparation of both their own local equality action plans and the corporate Equality Action Plan for 2018-19. The Board agreed that this recommendation should be met through DMTs receiving advice from their Department Equalities Groups; and also to the preparation of a report for CMT to cover equalities issues raised under this and the papers for Agenda Items 4, 5 and 6 (see below).</p> <p><b>Action</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To draft a paper for CMT flagging issues, options and recommendations for responding to the results of the Staff Survey 2017 and other issues identified in the items below.</li> </ul>	<p>DW / AJ</p>
<p>Item 4</p>	<p><b>Equalities Board Terms of Reference annual review</b></p> <p>AJ tabled a paper to fulfil the annual requirement on the Board to consider its Terms of Reference as last amended in June 2016.</p> <p>DW commented that the Board structure and linkages to Departmental Management Teams and equalities groups was essentially an inherited model. A flexible model was needed that maintained a high level of commitment to equalities work with ownership and accountability ultimately within DMTs. A prompt to this work was the opportunity presented by the appointment of a new Lead Member for Equalities (Mrs Richardson) and the imminent arrival on 26<sup>th</sup> March of a new Head of Service for the Communities, Policy and Resilience branch to consider the case for a review of the equalities framework and governance of the Council. The aim of such a review would be to ensure that current Council resources were matched to its obligations. GMcF noted that this process would need to be endorsed by CMT and the Board agreed to this.</p> <p><b>Action</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To consider options for strengthening the corporate approach to equalities work and report with suitable recommendations to CMT</li> </ul>	<p>DW / AJ</p>

Item 5	<p><b>Equality and Diversity Performance Update</b></p> <p>RW presented the quarterly report on workforce representation, completion rates of mandatory equality and diversity training, hate crime incidents and Community Survey insights.</p> <p>GMcF said that the continued uptick in mandatory training rates was a positive step and asked that the Departmental Equalities Groups continue to work towards raising completion rates to the targets. As well as initiatives within the departments, such as Environment &amp; Transport putting through staff in large blocks where possible, there was a role for communications around positive actions and role models that went against perceptions such as male social worker roles in Adults &amp; Communities and more women in a wider range of roles in Environment &amp; Transport.</p>	
Item 6	<p><b>Changes to the EHRIA toolkit</b></p> <p>DW introduced a report which outlined changes to the way the council meets its 'due regard' obligation under the public sector equalities duties. It was proposed to revise the current EHRIA process so that forward planning and completion of EHRIAs was linked to a more risk-based assessment of the equalities impacts. Members welcomed this approach and GMcF said that it also had to support Members to make more fully informed decisions about equalities impacts.</p> <p><b>Action</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board agreed that a review of the EHRIA toolkit through a Task &amp; Finish Group should be established subject to the views of the incoming Head of Service for Communities, Policy and Resilience.</li> </ul>	AJ/DW
Item 7	<p><b>Equality &amp; Diversity Communication Plan 2018-19</b></p> <p>LB tabled a paper with proposed key objectives for equality and diversity communications and related activity over the coming year. This includes a greater focus on the employee lifecycle through data analytics and discrete improvements to the visibility of business processes and equality toolkits.</p>	

	<p><b>Action</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To circulate the draft Equalities communications plan to the Board so that comments can be fed back to LB and Policy Officer (Equalities)</li> </ul>	AJ
Item 8	<p><b>Policy Officer (Equalities) update</b></p> <p><b>Inter Faith Forum Conference 2017</b></p> <p>This event took place on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at County Hall with the theme of exploring the relationship between community cohesion and faith. The programme consisted of a keynote speech by Professor Ted Cattle of the iCoCo Foundation on the perceptions of religion in societies and the wider world and how these could be interpreted as indicators of cohesion or division. He also asked whether the challenges that faith communities were experiencing both externally and internally suggested that an intercultural model to bring organisations and groups together under a shared vision and values was more appropriate than the multiculturalist approach that has underpinned most cohesiveness work at strategic levels to date. Professor Cattle's presentation was followed by workshops facilitated by the LLR Resilience Partnership on how faith organisations and communities could contribute and respond to emergency planning within LLR.</p> <p>47 bookings were received for the conference of whom 31 attended. 13 completed event feedback forms were received rating the event overall, venue and facilities, booking and administration as either Good or Excellent.</p> <p><b>Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) 2018</b></p> <p>As the actual HMD 2018 date of 27<sup>th</sup> January fell on a Saturday, the County Council marked the day on Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> January, with an open service of commemoration based on this year's theme of 'The power of words' which was attended by staff and some members of the Inter Faith Forum including a representative of the Jewish community. Speeches and a response were given by the Chairman, Mrs Richards, Lead Member for Equalities Mrs Posnett and the Chairman of the Inter Faith Forum, Mr Resham Singh Sandhu.</p> <p><b>Equality Action Plan 2017/18 review and draft Plan 2018-19</b></p> <p>AJ commented that monitoring of actions in the Equality Action</p>	

	<p>Plan 2017/18 was largely complete with assistance from the departments and corporate support services and would be presented to the Board at its next meeting on 21st May. Approval of the draft plan by the Board and then the Chief Executive with the new Lead Member for Equalities would take place under the delegated authority arrangements. This would also be discussed at an induction meeting between Mrs Richardson, DW and AJ on Equalities on 26<sup>th</sup> February (pm).</p> <p><b>Member training</b></p> <p>Following the EHRIA training provided for new Cabinet, Spokes and Scrutiny Chairs in December 2017, a further in-depth training using a worked EHRIA example has been arranged for 21st March.</p>	
<p>Item 9</p>	<p><b>Update from workers' groups</b></p> <p><b>LGBT Staff Network</b></p> <p>The staff network had considered some of the reasons given for staff dissatisfaction in the Staff Survey particularly around the management and communication of change. A side-effect of this was that some LGBT+ staff felt that they had to come out again to a new group of colleagues and managers and were looking at ways of mitigating this. The group had also had a workshop to consider the reasons for LCC's fall in the Stonewall WEI 2018 from 36<sup>th</sup> to 79<sup>th</sup>. DW commented that the follow-up meeting with Stonewall had identified three main areas for improvement in procurement, monitoring and introducing a Trans policy.</p> <p><b>Black Workers' Group</b></p> <p>The Representative Recruitment Panel register and guidance has been redrafted and updated and approved by the union. The way in which recruiting managers can access the register has been changed from an Excel spreadsheet of Panel members on the intranet to a self-nomination list operating in the People section of the intranet in the same way as first aiders and fire wardens. It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that their intranet profile states that they are a Panel member to enable this process to work. The process will be publicised on a landing page being developed by Web to sit alongside the guidance.</p> <p>The BWG was considering the scope for members to co-ordinate an LCC submission to the Best Employers for Race List but noted</p>	

	that this was unlikely to take place this year as the window for 2018 entries closes on Wednesday, 2 <sup>nd</sup> May. AJ noted that only one local authority (LB Brent) had been included in the 2017 results covering 67 employers; it was understood that the officer who had led Brent's submission had since left the authority so sources of advice were still limited while this listing was still in a formative stage.	
Item 10	<b>Any other business</b> There was no other business raised.	
	<b>Date and time of next meeting:</b> Monday 21st May 2018 in Goscote Committee Room.	
	<b>Minutes to:</b> Equalities Board, John Sinnott, Cllr. Louise Richardson	