

## EQUALITIES WORKSHOP

### Legal and Democratic Services Advisory Committee - 26 January 2016

Report of: Chief Executive

Status: For Consideration

Key Decision: No

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Portfolio Holder Cllr. Anna Firth

Contact Officer Lee Banks (Ext 7161)

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#### Recommendation to Legal and Democratic Services Advisory Committee:

To delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder for Legal & Democratic Services to take forward a report on the Councils draft equality commitments based on the work of the Members Workshop on Equalities.

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**Reason for recommendation:** To ensure a report can be taken to Cabinet to consider the Councils equality commitments for 2016 prior to the start of the new financial year.

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#### Introduction and Background

- 1 The Council is required to publish its commitments under the Equality Act 2010. The current commitments expire at the end of March 2016 and the council is required to identify what its priorities will be for the coming period.
- 2 To inform this process the Portfolio Holder for Legal & Democratic Services requested that a Members Workshop is held after the meeting of the Legal & Democratic Services Advisory Committee on 26 January 2016. All Council Members have been invited to attend.

#### Members Workshop

- 3 The Members Equalities Workshop will provide an opportunity for Members to set out what is important to them and what they would like to see the Council take forward or tackle in relations to equalities in the coming years. These can be objectives that relate to what we do as a community leader, a service provider or as an employer.
- 4 The feedback received from Members is important in ensuring that Officers are asked to deliver actions that matter most and will make a difference to our communities.

- 5 To ensure that the Council's Equalities Commitments are in place for the new financial year it is necessary to report to Cabinet at their meeting in March 2016. Unfortunately this means that insufficient time exists to bring a report back to the Advisory Committee to feedback on the feedback from the workshop and to set out a draft of the Council's equalities commitments.
- 6 It is therefore recommended that authority is delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Legal & Democratic Services to work with officers to ensure members feedback is properly evaluated and is used to form the basis of the equalities commitments reported to Cabinet at their March meeting.

### **Other Options Considered and/or Rejected**

- 7 It was considered that a report could be brought back to the next meeting of the Advisory Committee, likely to be held in July 2016, before Cabinet receive a report on the Council's equalities commitments. However this would mean the Council did not have its equalities commitments published until September 2016 and would be in breach of requirements of the Council set out in regulations.

### **Key Implications**

#### Financial

- 8 Understanding the needs of people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010) will assist the Council in allocating resources to areas or services where it is considered to be a greater priority.

#### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

- 9 The Council is required to prepare and publish one or more objectives in regards of its commitment to equality and review these at least every four years. Failure to do so would be a breach of the Council's legal duty.

#### Equality Assessment

- 10 Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, and (iii) foster good relations between people from different groups.
- 11 This report sets out a recommendation for Members to help ensure that the Council adheres to the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty

### **Conclusions**

- 12 The Council is required by the Equality Act 2010 to prepare and publish one or more objectives in regards of its commitment to equality and review these at least every four years. A Members Workshop is to be held to ensure

