

## **CABINET – 9TH MAY 2024**

### **Report of the Scrutiny Commission**

#### EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY 2024 - 2028

##### Purpose of Report

To consider the comments and recommendations of the Scrutiny Commission in relation to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024 – 2028.

##### Recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission

That the Cabinet be informed that the Commission welcomes and supports the recommendations set out in the report of the Head of Transformation, Strategy and Performance.

##### Reason

The Commission, having carefully considered and asked questions on the report felt the Cabinet should approve the recommendations set out.

##### Meeting Discussion

- i. Members felt that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan 2024 – 2028 was informative, useful and well presented. Members valued the data on the work force and felt that the consultation efforts were wide reaching and positive.
- ii. The revised Equality, Diversity Strategy and Action Plan 2024 – 2028 contained some new ideas, including the inclusion of the intention to treat care experienced people as if they were a protected characteristic. Further new ideas included the intention to raise awareness of the Equality Impact Assessment process, and to monitor compliments and complaints to assess any trends relating to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- iii. Providing equalities data was optional and the Council could not control the response rate. The Council encouraged the collection of Equalities data from customers as this provided important information for the Council to work with to try to alleviate inequality.
- iv. The Council aimed to increase the diversity of interview panels, as part of the intention of promoting new recruitment processes and evaluation of its efficiency. Interview panels would be made as diverse as possible and other actions would be used to reduce bias in the recruitment process. The Council now accepted CVs as part of the recruitment process and candidates were anonymised at the point of application.

- v. It was suggested that Councillors could support the proposed development to consultation process, which intended to promote engagement from all sections if the community. Ward Councillors were known in the community and would potentially be able to interact with hard to reach communities. The Council's Communications team would use a variety of channels to promote consultations widely. In addition, the Customer Experience team was working to complete the Digital Inclusion Project.
- vi. The Council was committed to improving accessibility for all groups and meeting the needs of residents. Grant funding was provided to Equality Action to provide personalised support to residents where there were accessibility issues.

### Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

Scrutiny Commission Procedure Rule 11.12 sets out the procedure by which a report of a Scrutiny Committee should be considered by Cabinet.

### Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

The information on this in the Cabinet report is not affected by the recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission.

### Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

#### *Financial Implications*

There are no further financial implications associated with the recommendation of the Scrutiny Commission.

#### *Risk Management*

There are no specific risks associated with the recommendations of the Scrutiny Commission.

Key Decision:	No
Background Paper:	Scrutiny Commission Minute 144 2023/24, 29th April 2024.
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