

Name of meeting: Corporate Scrutiny Panel

Date: 10 January 2020

Title of report: Update on Inclusion & Diversity – Annual Report

Purpose of report:

To update the Committee on progress on Year 2 of the Council's Inclusion & Diversity (I&D) Strategy and Action Plan 2017/21 and to present the draft Annual Report for 2018/19.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Director</u> & name	Rachel Spencer-Henshall, Strategic Director for Corporate Strategy and Public Health – 17.12.19
Is it also signed off by the Assistant Director for Financial Management, IT, Risk and Performance?	N/A
Is it also signed off by the Assistant Director (Legal Governance and Monitoring)?	Julie Muscroft, Assistant Director - Legal, Governance and Monitoring
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Shabir Pandor

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

1. Summary

To review inclusion and diversity (I&D) activities, outcomes and progress for 2018/19.

This paper sets out the progress the Council has made against the outcomes set out in the Year 2 Action Plan, along with complementary projects, pieces of work and other developments that have contributed to this agenda over the past 12 months.

2. Information required to take a decision

In line with the Equality Act 2010 and our Public Sector Equality Duty the Council passed and published its Year 2 Action Plan for 2018/19 as part of the I&D Strategy 2017/21, at Full Council on 12 December 2018.

The Action Plan specifies the overarching outcomes the Council wants to achieve and the associated activities to help support the achievement of those outcomes. Additional complementary work to the Action Plan is ongoing all the time across the organisation.

The Annual Report for 2018/19 is now due for publication.

This paper contains appendices which take a more in-depth look at:

- The Year 2 Action Plan (see Appendix 1)
- A draft Annual Report on our Year 2 Action Plan (see Appendix 2)
- The outcome of our Inclusion Standard Bronze Award (see Appendix 3)

This report seeks views on the draft Annual Report, feedback on our National Inclusion Standard Bronze Award and a steer on priorities for the Year 3 Action Plan.

2.1 Draft Annual Report

Outlined in Appendix 2 is a review of our outcomes, achievements and areas for improvement, primarily against our Year 2 Action Plan, but also encompassing complementary areas of activity, which have helped to progress I&D in the past 12 months. This draft annual report will be a public document and there is a good deal to celebrate, in terms of the range of activities undertaken and the impact that they have had. Indeed, we need to shine a light on good practice and success outlined in the report and ensure the organisation is fully aware of what is working well.

In keeping with the focus on continuous improvement for the organisation, the areas where we need to improve and take forward are listed below, preceded by examples of achievements and good practice:

A committed and diverse workforce ...

Examples of Achievements

- We now have the 2019 workforce profile data, which is about to be published - the focus in the I&D Action Plan is to address under representation at senior level and the new figures demonstrate a move in the right direction, particularly at Grade 17-21 and above (see Appendix 2, pp 2-3).
- The outreach work in recruitment has had a positive impact in relation to disability, ethnicity and gender at senior levels in the organisation. Additionally, for the first time, there is data collection on sexual orientation, which means, from this point on, we'll be able to assess what impact we're having in terms of recruitment in the LGBT community.
- Together, Kirklees Council and Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing (KNH) received 1072 apprentice applications in 2019, a drastic increase on 2018 where the number was 665.
- Regional Level 5 emerging leaders' apprenticeship programme was launched during March 2019. Two of the six places on this programme were specifically allocated to membership of the Kirklees Young Employee Network (YEN) and Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) networks, thereby ensuring inclusion of young and BME employees on the first cohort of this regional programme. Overall, half of the participants on this first cohort of the programme (three out of six) are from a BME background and everyone is progressing well.

Areas for Improvement

- More work can be done to remove barriers in job profiles such as unnecessary qualifications.

- Closer links will be made with local higher education (HE) and further education (FE) establishments to promote Kirklees as an employer of choice.
- Improve the number of supported internships offered to people with learning disabilities.
- Continue to improve the diversity of the workforce profile, particularly at Grade 13 and above.
- Explore different ways to highlight issues affecting staff in equality groups, with particular reference to reverse mentoring, or an alternative similar mechanism.

Positive and inclusive approach...

Examples of Achievements

- Building on initiatives with partners, we took part in our third National Inclusion Week (NIW), organised by Inclusive Employers and collaborated with KNH on activities throughout the week, including the quiz that ran all week, daily challenges – from simply saying ‘hello’ to sharing a cuppa and a chat with someone you haven’t spoken to before.
- In relation to celebrating diversity and sharing good practice our Intercultural Cities membership has provided an international platform for us to promote our commitment to inclusion and diversity, bringing partners from across Kirklees together around the initiative.
- The Kirklees Diversity Awards have raised the profile of the importance of the inclusion and diversity agenda across all sectors and has begun to shine a light on good practice that will be crowned with the final award ceremony in February 2020.
- As part of the inclusive volunteering action the Council has actively worked with third sector leaders in understanding the barriers to inclusive volunteering.
- Following commissioned training provided by Inclusive Employers, the Council Executive now have an improved understanding of unconscious bias, what it means, and takes, to be an inclusive leader, role-modelling the positive behaviours we need to embed in the inclusivity and diversity journey throughout the organisation.
- The associated inclusive leadership session with the Council Management Group (CMG) promoted and encouraged managers across the organisation to embody inclusion and diversity in their day-to-day management. A follow up session and evaluation is to be organised to assess how this has been taken forward.
- All employee networks have increased their activities over the past year, with the additional support provided (see Appendix 2, pp 8).
- As part of the ‘We’re Kirklees’ promotional campaign, we have begun to integrate inclusion and diversity into the internal messages to staff and partners. Internally we have run a campaign called ‘Diversity is a reality, inclusion is a choice’ and another focusing on mental health issues in the workplace, this involved actively supporting and empowering people to become mental health champions, in an attempt to destigmatise mental health issues and enable people to support colleagues and friends on the basis of their own experiences.

Areas for Improvement

- Working with KNH has brought tangible benefits by collaborating on new ways of working and stimulating new ideas, which need to be expanded to other partners in 2020 and beyond.
- To interrogate further the data on barriers to inclusive volunteering and improve the opportunities to people from more diverse backgrounds.
- Continue to roll out the approach to embedding inclusive leadership as a key behaviour and management skill throughout the organisation.
- We have yet to develop the inclusion and diversity leaders/ambassador programme to help us take further inclusive leadership and good practice deeper into services.

An organisation intolerant of bullying, harassment and discrimination, where poor behaviour is challenged and tackled

Examples of Achievements

- We know that the take up of e-learning is low and we have promoted available modules previously yet more could be done in this area to help increase awareness and understanding. Data packs (highlighting disciplinary, capability and probationary cases) should lead to improved management understanding and decision-making.
- Increased awareness amongst managers and staff which will hopefully lead to a reduction of Hate Crime in the workplace and in our communities.

Areas for Improvement

- Improve the collective understanding of bullying and harassment, and their effects on employees and the organisation as a whole.
- Clarify and communicate support available to employees, managers and service users to address bullying and harassment in the workplace.
- 2020 will mark 10 years since the 2010 Equality Act, providing additional impetus and opportunity to support work, particularly in this area.

A partnership approach to support resettlement and integration

Examples of Achievements

Settle, orientate and support to understand and access key services and community activities:

*The **Welcome Mentor Programme** now has 47 active volunteers, with a further 17 currently being trained and 103 requests for support from services and the voluntary and community sector. Mentors support new arrivals to settle and connect to local networks and support.*

Support children/young people to start school and begin to progress in their education: The International New Arrivals Team is now in place to support new arrivals (children and young people) to start school, integrate in to school life and supports the development of a connection between home and school. There are 4 soon to be 5 bilingual support workers in post. Available for all schools across Kirklees.

For communities to have the chance to get to know who lives in their neighbourhood (safe and cohesive):

During the last year #CarryMyStory continued its work in schools developing an understanding of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in Kirklees. The finale took place during refugee week and 500 pupils and up to 200 adults including 30 plus refugees, asylum seekers were involved. This initiative has gained positive feedback on its work in breaking down myths and stereotypes concerning asylum seeker and refugees and planning is underway for 2020.

- The Syrian Resettlement and Vulnerable Children's plan is now supporting 40 families across Kirklees to access ESOL, housing and mental health support.

Areas for Improvement

- Enhancing #KirkleesWelcomes across Kirklees by taking a place-based approach to migration planning.
- Improved communication on the work and scope of #KirkleesWelcomes to raise its profile.
- Planning for introduction of new Home Office refugee resettlement programme from 2020 onwards and reviewing existing work to inform future resettlement action.

Complementary activities

This section in the annual report sets out the key additional work that has successfully taken place to achieve even greater progress in I&D throughout the organisation.

Examples include:

- A specific Council Management Group (CMG) focus on inclusion and diversity highlighted to all senior and middle managers across the Council the importance of this agenda as an organisational priority. Having reflected on progress, and conducted follow up conversations about inclusion, and reminded managers of their responsibility, highlighting the role of the employee networks and issuing a call to action. Subsequent to the meeting, feedback has been received from managers to show that inclusion and diversity is regularly now featured in meetings, on away days and making connections with project work.
- The Council held its first High Five awards on 4 October at the John Smith's Stadium.
- The event celebrated and rewarded some of the best examples of dedication, commitment and innovation demonstrated by our colleagues. One of the categories recognised the contribution to diversity, and it is hoped this will inspire others to embrace this in their day-to-day work.
- The Council has been shortlisted for four prestigious Local Government Chronicle awards, including one for I&D. Our entry described how we had addressed low diversity amongst Council and KNH staff. This has led to changes in recruitment processes for apprenticeships, resident engagement and the working environment to promote inclusivity.
- We have now revised our impact assessment process to incorporate low earners and unpaid carers, along with the environmental impact of new services or proposed changes to existing ones. These changes will mean that we exceed basic compliance in discharging our Public Sector Equality Duty and address climate emergency concerns in our future work.
- Support by the Mayor for a National Lottery Heritage Fund application by Kirklees Local TV (KLTV) to fund ongoing work on Windrush: The Years After, A Community Legacy a community history project that celebrates the contribution made by the African-Caribbean community to life in Kirklees over the past 60 years.

2.2 National Inclusion Standard

In September 2019, the Council achieved a Bronze Award for the Inclusive Employers' National Inclusion Standard, which was assessed by an independent panel. This was our first submission for the standard and Appendix 3 includes a full copy of the IE feedback report, with commentary, outlining where we performed well and areas where we can improve within a Six Pillar framework. The final assessment provides us with an extremely helpful baseline performance assessment, which can help to shape our Year 3 Action Plan and general I&D practice in the organisation. In summary, the key areas where we are performing well and those we need to improve on are as follows:

Pillar One: Engage – Areas of strength: Efforts to seek to increase disclosure of diversity data have been undertaken within past three years via online and paper methods (for dispersed staff). An established Inclusion and Diversity plan is in place and is supported at senior level within the organisation. Evidence shows that some employee network groups exist and are well-established. There is an aspiration to relaunch and expand these to include additional protected characteristic groups.

Areas to focus on: Evidence indicates disclosure rates are low for two of the protected characteristics currently tracked - consider efforts to boost these. Consider methods for communicating inclusion related activity to allow those without access to a computer to be included in comms. Consider how employee network groups can form part of consultation and decision-making processes in the organisation. It would also be useful to have the ability to analyse the employee survey feedback by protected characteristics and take this into consideration when acting upon the survey results.

Pillar Two: Equip – Areas of strength: The evidence presented shows the organisation has a comprehensive range of inclusion policies in place. There are a variety of different inclusion training options available to all staff, covering a range of different topics. For managers, there is a new course on menopause and courses on coaching/emotional intelligence that incorporate elements of inclusion.

Areas to focus on: The organisation could consider reviewing their inclusion training offering, including a clear rationale for the approach and how it ties into the overall I&D strategy. It may be worth refining/expanding the offering and making some courses mandatory. Whilst a range of inclusion training options are available to all staff, consider developing some diversity/inclusion training that is specifically designed for managers/leaders perhaps looking at appraisal, salary review, promotion, managing performance processes.

Pillar Three: Empower – Areas of strength: A governance structure is in place for consultation that includes trade unions and an annual staff survey. Staff have been involved in organising inclusion activities - predominantly through the employee networks. The YEN network appears to be particularly active and this group has created a Young Inclusion award. The senior team are engaged in wanting to operate as inclusion champions and have received training on how to do this. Evidence shows all staff are offered the possibility of coaching and mentoring and to be nominated for the level 3 aspiring managers' programme.

Areas to focus on: To develop ways of moving from intermittent 'cheerleading' to more effective and focused role model identification and development. Improve our consultation process to ensure we systematically feedback to consultees on the difference they have made (i.e. 'you said, we did'). Consider also developing a champions role profile and associated development programme.

Pillar Four: Embed – Areas of strength: Inclusion and diversity is included in the corporate strategy and plan. This plan has been in place for some time and is now in its second iteration, having been reviewed and reported on. Correctly used, the Equality Impact Assessment form provides a practical tool to evaluate likely impact on employees and external parties.

Areas to focus on: Revise governance terms to include specific I&D objectives in action plan development and monitoring functions. Incorporate HR more fully into policy implementation and monitoring. Build annual I&D objectives into senior officers and senior elected members' performance targets. Review of the appraisal system to include I&D.

Actively utilise recruitment and workforce planning data to inform and target under-representation in the workforce.

Pillar Five: Evaluate – Areas of strength: Evidence shows that a monthly reporting regime is in place within the organisation to review diversity data relating to headcount.

Areas to focus on: Improve scope and range of data capture. Address concerns surrounding confidentiality and consent-related issues expressed in the employee profile information gathering process. Allow greater use of a qualitative approach to evaluate I&D action plan implementation.

Pillar Six: Evolve – Areas of strength: Membership of Inclusive Employers is seen as a valuable means of obtaining thought leadership on D&I and this has already resulted in a tangible benefit to the D&I programme.

Areas to focus on: Clarify and monitor our return on investment and clearly reflect this in outcomes and key performance indicators (KPIs). Develop a Comms plan to promote best practice externally and identify more effective ways of learning from other organisations and sectors.

3. Implications for the Council

The I&D Strategy and Action Plan supports the council priorities and actively contributes to all shared outcomes, particularly the Sustainable Economy and Safe and Cohesive. The former through our enhanced recruitment and employment practices and the latter via our work with communities specifically with the activities with migrants and asylum seekers.

The aim over time is to have I&D embedded fully throughout the whole organisation and for all services to recognise the benefits of the “Diversity Advantage”. This means we have more diverse and inclusive workforce which leads to more innovation and improved services for our citizens.

3.1 Working with People

The Year 2 Action Plan has been more outward facing and year 3 will need to extend this approach. We have undertaken a number of outreach events within disadvantaged/deprived communities, to promote the council as an employer, to support people to apply for roles, and also sign post them to other support networks if they are not quite job-ready. The Council is working towards a new recruitment system to make the process of applying for jobs in the council more straightforward. The work with refugees and asylum seekers has been led by the council however there is a significant amount of peer support in this work where individuals and communities find shared solutions.

3.2 Working with Partners

Our strategy and action plan are principally focused on council activities however, year 2 of the plan has broadened this out and again year 3 will seek to expand on this. For example, we will have an awards event which will incorporate local businesses and the voluntary and community sector. Our work with Inclusive Employers has brought a fresh perspective of support and challenge to our approach to I&D; plus, the work on the ICC Programme involves active engagement with businesses and educational establishments. The Council is also working with partners, such as the Police, Huddersfield Town Football Club/Huddersfield Town Foundation, the

University, as part of our Inclusive Growth conversations to develop joint approaches to recruitment, where appropriate.

3.3 Place Based Working

The I&D strategy and year 2 action plan covers all of the district there are areas, such as the “partnership approach to support resettlement and integration”, where the different needs of communities are considered in terms of place.

3.4 Improving outcomes for children

In terms of assessing impacts, in relation to children, age is an existing protected characteristic catered for in our current approach to Equality Impact Assessment that will be carried forward to the new Integrated Impact Assessment process.

3.5 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources)

We are in the process of establishing I&D financial requirements as part of the overall budgetary process.

4. Consultees and their opinions

The council’s cross service I&D Hub which includes representation from all Employee Networks.

5. Next steps and timelines

The attached annual report will go to Cabinet and then on to Full Council in the next two months.

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

For the committee to comment on the Annual Report for 2018/19 and feedback from our Bronze National Inclusion Standard Award.

7. Cabinet portfolio holder’s recommendations

To support the recommendations outlined above.

8. **Contact officer**

David Bundy, **Corporate Policy Officer**, Strategy and Policy Team
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9. **Background Papers and History of Decisions**

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, 5 November 2018 – annual Inclusion & Diversity report and Year 2 Action Plan

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, 27 March 2017 – update on Inclusion & Diversity

Report to Full Council, March 2016 - Inclusion and Diversity in Kirklees – work on a new policy statement for 2016/17

10. **Strategic Director responsible**

Rachel Spencer-Henshall, Strategic Director of Corporate Strategy and Public Health