

Report Reference Number: E/19/18

To: Executive
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Status: Non-key decision
Ward(s) Affected: All
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Lead Executive Member: Councillor David Buckle, Lead Executive Member for Communities and Economic Development
Lead Officer: Stuart Robinson, Head of Business Development & Improvement

Title: Selby District Council Equality Objectives 2017-2020 – Progress Report

Summary:

As a public body we are required under the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to publish one or more Equality Objectives. We must do this at least every four years. Our current objectives were approved by the Executive on 12 October 2017. At the time of approval it was agreed that a report detailing progress made against the objectives would be brought to the Executive annually. Progress made for the period October 2017 to April 2018 was reported to the Executive on 7 June 2018. This report provides details of achievements from April 2018 to July 2019.

Recommendations:

- i. That Executive note the achievements against the Equality Objectives.

Reasons for recommendation

To ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty. To update the Executive on progress made against the Equality Objectives.

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 As a public body we are required under the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to publish one or more Equality Objectives. We must do this at least every four years.
- 1.2 In setting objectives, we must set out what we are aiming to do to fulfil our obligations under the PSED. The duty requires us to have due regard to
 1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 2. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 3. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 1.3 The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

2. Current Objectives

- 2.1 In October 2017, the Executive approved the following two broad objectives:
 - 1. Ensure services delivered by, or on behalf of Selby District Council are - as far as possible - accessible and do not discriminate.**
 - 2. Ensure employees and Members are supported to deliver accessible, non- discriminatory services.**
- 2.2 The objectives take account of current equality data and processes and are linked to the delivery of The Corporate Plan 2015-2020. They are based around understanding the diversity of our customers and employees in order to better meet their needs.
- 2.2 The approach to setting objectives was based on retaining two general objectives – one outward/customer facing and the second one focused on internal matters. The benefit of keeping the objectives relatively high level is that it provides flexibility to the Council in how we deliver the objectives.

2.3 Equality Objectives Achievements

Progress made for the period October 2017 to April 2018 was reported to the Executive on 7 June 2018. Since then we have continued to undertake a number of actions which support our equality objectives. These include the following:

- **Government Employer Disability Accreditation Scheme** - in May 2018 we were awarded 'Disability Confident Committed Employer' status. This involves committing to a number of actions which include ensuring our recruitment process is inclusive and accessible, anticipating and providing reasonable adjustments as required and

supporting any existing employee who acquires a disability or long term health condition, enabling them to stay in work.

- **Digital Strategy** – we are investing in new software, including functions which will benefit employees and service users e.g. those with a disability – read aloud, text size, spacing and background colour and translation function barriers for those for whom English is not their first language.
- **Selby Leisure Centre** – is a registered Changing Places facility, one of only two in the town, which is suitable and accessible to people with profound and multiple learning and physical disabilities. The site is also accredited as a Breast Feeding Friendly centre.
- Working in partnership with the Council, Inspiring Health Lifestyles (IHL) have developed and delivered:
 - A range of new family-focused activities including Parent and Child Zumba, Parent and Baby Yoga and Tai Chi.
 - Several programmes, including a school holiday camp, targeted at children and young people from the most deprived communities in the District.
 - A range of low impact exercise classes catering for various target groups including older people, people at risk of social isolation and people with limited mobility or health conditions.
 - An adult disability football team through partnership working with NLY Community Sport over the last year (one player chosen to be included in the GB MENCAP squad).
 - They are also looking at implementing a sensory orienteering course later this year, targeted at people living with disabilities and children and young people.
- **Car Parks** - we are part way through a comprehensive programme of improvements to our car parks, which is focussed around improving the user experience – e.g. resurfacing, introducing new lighting, planting and signage. This has included the introduction and/or renewal of appropriate dropped kerbs and tactile paving to facilitate access for users with mobility issues, pushchair users etc.
- **Lifeline Service** – we continue to provide and promote this (non-statutory) support service, which enables disabled/elderly residents to live safely and independently in their own homes for longer, as well as providing some regular contact mitigating social isolation. We have also extended the availability of this local emergency support service and it is now available 24 hours a day. We currently have 760 customers accessing the service (July 2019).
- **Disabled Facilities Grant** – these grants help people who own their own home, private tenants and tenants of social landlords (but not council tenants) adapt their homes to meet the needs of disabled children and adults. Completions are up from 24 to 57 in 2018/19, an increase of 137%. The number of days from application to completion is down from 127 to 79.

- **Assisted Waste Collections** - we continue to offer this service to those who find it difficult to take their bins and boxes to their boundary. As at the end of April this year there were 1695 properties receiving assistance (a net growth of 94 during the last 12 months).

2.4 Future Actions

We will continue to demonstrate our commitment to equalities in a number of ways, including:

- Proposing a motion at Council to adopt the **International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of anti-Semitism**.
- **Equality Networks** – maintaining links with local equality networks e.g. Selby District Equality Network (SDEN). SDEN members include Selby District Association of Voluntary Services (AVS), Selby District Disability Forum, Citizens Advice, Dementia Forward, Age UK, Alzheimer's Society, Refugee Council, and North Yorkshire Police. Officers regularly attend SDEN meetings and highlight and discuss relevant council consultations. This provides us with a greater understanding of local issues and the barriers to accessing services for particular groups.
- **Equalities Data** – updating and publishing:
 - **'A Picture of Diversity'** report (Appendix A). This provides a comparison of the protected characteristics of the workforce and the district and identifies that our workforce is broadly representative of the district.
 - The **'Selby District Council Workforce Metrics'** report (Appendix B). This provides data in terms of protected characteristics for starters, leavers, top grades etc.
- **Equalities Training** - maintaining staff and Member awareness. Equalities continue to be included as part of the induction process for all new starters. All staff are required to complete mandatory equalities training and this is monitored through the Performance and Development Review (PDR) process. To date 71% of all employees have completed the training (July 2019). Training for elected Members continues to take place on a regular basis – the most recent training, which took place in June 2019, was well attended and included a number of newly elected Members.
- **Equality Diversity and Community Impact (EDCI) screenings and assessments** – undertaking EDCI screenings and assessments where relevant. The Policy and Performance team provide guidance to officers on how to complete these and have advised in relation to a number of new/amended policies/strategies, these include Tenant Participation Strategy, Licensing Policy, Council Tax Support Scheme and Taxi Licensing Policy. Training is scheduled to be delivered to officers, including senior management, by the Policy & Performance team in the near future.

- **Gender Pay Gap** – our gender pay gap is 9.2%. Whilst this is lower than the sector (15.4%), we will develop a robust action plan to address the gap

2.5 **Monitoring**

Progress made against our objectives will continue to be regularly monitored and reported to Executive annually. The next progress report to the Executive is scheduled for 2020, at which time a new set of objectives for 2020-2024 will also be proposed.

3. **Alternative Options Considered**

N/A

4. **Implications**

4.1 **Legal Implications**

Under the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) we are required to publish one or more Equality Objectives at least every four years.

4.2 **Financial Implications**

None

4.3 **Policy and Risk Implications**

None

4.4 **Corporate Plan Implications**

The Equality Objectives support the Corporate Plan objectives to enjoy life and make a difference.

4.5 **Resource Implications**

None

4.6 **Other Implications**

None

4.7 **Equalities Impact Assessment**

The setting and monitoring of our equality objectives will have a positive impact on the nine protected characteristics.

5. **Conclusion**

- 5.1** As a public body we are required under the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty to publish one or more Equality Objective. We must do this at least every four years. The current objectives were approved in October 2017 and progress reported in June 2018. Since then, achievements which demonstrate our commitment to equalities have been made in a number of areas. The next progress report to the Executive is scheduled for 2020, at which time a new set of objectives for 2020-2024 will be proposed.

6. Background Documents

None

7. Appendices

Appendix A - A Picture of Diversity

Appendix B - Selby District Council Workforce Metrics Report

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