

CORPORATE FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY PANEL	DATE 01 December 2021	ITEM NO 5
TITLE Equality and Equity Action Plan – Annual Update 2021	WARD (S) All	
CHIEF OFFICER Director of Communities, Environment and Central	CABINET MEMBER Culture and Communities	

1. **Decision required**

- 1.1 This report makes the following recommendations to the decision-maker: To note progress made on the Council’s Equality and Equity Action Plan in 2021, as set out in the Equality and Equity Action Plan Annual Update 2021 (Appendix A).

2. **Links to the Royal Greenwich high level objectives**

- 2.1 This report relates to the Council’s agreed high level objectives as follows:

- A Great Place to Be – Ensuring there is continued community cohesion in the Royal Borough of Greenwich and equality of access for all
- A Strong Vibrant and Well-run Borough – Ensuring our services are responsive to the needs of residents and support those with protected characteristics accessing services
- A Strong, Vibrant and Well-Run Borough – Ensuring our organisation supports and develops its workforce

3. **Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 3.1 This report will provide an update on progress made against our Equality and Equity Action Plan and connected work during 2021, which was agreed earlier this year by Cabinet in March 2021.
- 3.2 The Equality and Equity Action Plan is the Royal Borough of Greenwich’s commitment to advancing equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful

discrimination, harassment and victimisation and fostering good relations within our organisation and our community.

3.3. This report will include a timeline of key activities over the past 18 months, self-assessment using the Local Government Association's Equality Framework, our achievements, areas to focus on for the next year and progress made against our Equality Objectives 2020-2024.

3.4 Full details of the update are contained in Appendix A.

4. **Introduction and Background**

4.1 The Royal Borough of Greenwich is subject to specific duties under the Equality Act to help us comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a local authority, we must:

- Prepare and publish Equality Objectives at least every 4 years – these must be specific and measurable
- Publish equality information at least once a year to show how we've complied with the Equality Duty

4.2 In October 2020, Cabinet agreed an Equality and Equity Charter and a new set of Equality Objectives for the period of 2020-2024. The Charter and Objectives were developed through extensive consultation with staff, councillors, trade unions representatives, local voluntary and community groups, partner organisations and residents. Consultation started internally in January-March 2020 and then externally in July-August 2020.

4.3 The Equality Objectives and SMART actions are derived from the Charter and feedback from the consultation described above.

4.4 Following agreement of the Charter and Objectives, officers from a number of teams worked with senior leaders to co-produce the Equality and Equity Action Plan.

4.5 The Equality and Equity Action Plan brings together the commitments of the Charter, our new Objectives and consultation, providing a practical method for ensuring that we are delivering on our pledges and our legal duties. The Action Plan was agreed by Cabinet in March 2021.

5. Equality and Equity Action Plan and Annual Update Report

5.1 The Equality and Equity Action Plan provides:

- An overview of both the Equality and Equity Charter and Equality Objectives
- An assessment of the Council's current position using the Local Government Association's 'Equality Framework for Local Government'
- An overview on the processes and structures the Council will put in place to manage, develop and report on the Equality Objectives and associated actions
- A high level workplan for delivery

5.2 This Report provides an update on progress made against the Equality and Equity Action Plan. The full Annual Update for the Equality and Equity Action Plan 2021 is attached in Appendix A.

5.3 The Annual Update provides information on:

- A timeline of key activities over the past 18 months;
- A self-assessment of our performance using the Local Government Association's Equality Framework;
- Our key achievements and why they have been successful;
- Areas that we will focus on for the next year; and
- Progress made against our Equality Objectives 2020-2024.

6. Oversight

6.1 The Cabinet Member for Culture and Communities and the Director of Communities, Environment and Central have overall responsibility for the Equality and Equity Action Plan.

6.2 This is a truly corporate agenda, with a range of delivery partners and stakeholders from across the organisation contributing to its success. Please see the EDI Systems Model in Appendix B for a full overview of political, strategic and operational responsibility for this work.

6.3 As agreed in the Equality and Equity Action Plan, an officer-led Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Steering Group was established in March 2021.

- 6.2 The EDI Steering Group is responsible for monitoring, reviewing, reporting and overseeing the delivery and further development of the Equality Objectives 2020-2024, which form a key part of our Equality and Equity Action Plan. The Group is chaired by a member of GMT and includes representation from each Directorate, HR, Staff Networks, Communications and Continuous Improvement.
- 6.3 As also agreed by the Equality and Equity Action Plan, the Council has supported the establishment of a community-led Royal Greenwich Equality Network. This Network in its early stages and is being chaired by METRO GAVS and supported by the Voluntary and Community Sector team.

7. **Reporting**

- 7.1 Cabinet agreed in March 2021 that the Annual Update on the Equality and Equity Action Plan will contain the relevant qualitative and quantitative data needed to evidence progress, refreshing the previous format for Equalities reporting (the Headline Equality Measures report) to reflect our current position and new Equality Objectives 2020-2024. The previous measures would no longer be relevant or appropriate for measuring progress.
- 7.2 Therefore, the content contained in this Annual Update on the Equality and Equity Action Plan will look different to previous years, as there is a new set of Equality Objectives for 2020-2024 which are part of our overall Equality and Equity Action Plan.

5. **Available Options**

- 5.1 Note progress made on the Equality and Equity Action Plan, as set out in the Equality and Equity Action Plan Annual Update 2021 (Appendix A).

6. **Preferred Option**

- 6.1 Note progress made on the Equality and Equity Action Plan, as set out in the Equality and Equity Action Plan Annual Update 2021 (Appendix A).

7. **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 7.1 The Council is required under the Equality Act, and Public Sector Equality Duty, to:

- Produce four yearly Equality Objectives, which are specific and measurable (contained within our Equality and Equity Action Plan) and
- To publish equality information at least once a year to show how we've complied with this.

10. Cross-Cutting Issues and Implications

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Legal including Human Rights Act	The purpose of this report is to update the Scrutiny Panel on progress made on the Council's Equality and Equity Action Plan in 2021. The report is for noting only and no decisions will be taken. As such, there are no legal implications arising from the report	John Scarborough, Director of Legal Services 14/11/21
Finance and other resources	There are no financial implications arising from this report.	Damon Cook, Director of Finance, 16/11/21
Equalities	This report is submitted in support of the Royal Borough of Greenwich's commitment to the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires public bodies to pay due regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act; (ii) Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and (iii) Foster good relations between people from different groups. Part of our commitment to this is to produce four yearly objectives, which are specific and measurable. 	Grace Roman, Principal Improvement Partner 12/11/21

	<p>There are no decisions recommended through this paper, it is an update on progress on the agreed Equality Objectives.</p> <p>This report is an annual update on our progress made towards our Equality and Equity Action Plan, which contains the Equality and Equity Charter and Equality Objectives 2020-2024.</p>	
Climate change	There are no implications for the Environment	Grace Roman, Principal Improvement Partner 12/11/21

11. Report Appendices

11.1 The following documents are to be published with and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Equality and Equity Action Plan Annual Update 2021

12. Background Papers

- [Equality and Equity Action Plan](#)
- [Equality and Equity Charter](#)
- [Equality Objectives 2020-2024](#)

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