

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

To: Strategy and Resources Committee

Meeting Date: 11th July 2023

From: Executive Director of Strategy & Partnerships

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: No

Forward Plan ref: Not applicable

Outcome: The Committee is asked to consider the approach taken to the development of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy and to review and comment on the proposed strategy that will be presented to Full Council on 18th July 2023.

Recommendation: The Committee is asked to recommend the EDI Strategy for approval to Full Council.

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Member contacts:

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1. Background

- 1.1 The Council's Strategic Framework outlines an ambitious agenda for the authority for the next 5 years. Our People Strategy sets out how we will align our workforce to achieve the 7 ambitions set in the Strategic Framework over the same period, and alongside the new People Strategy, a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy has been developed as an additional enabler.
- 1.2 Cambridgeshire County Council's last strategy with a focus on equality was the 2018-2022 Single Equality Strategy. Since launching that strategy, our communities, colleagues and the Council as an organisation have all undergone considerable change. Our communities want services delivered in different ways, and the expectations that employees have of their employers has changed.
- 1.3 This approach builds on the work and achievements we have made through the term of the last strategy and takes learnings from this period to set out our approach and objectives moving forward.
- 1.4 Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy is a key cross-cutting strategy which will enable the council to achieve its vision and ambitions very much following the approach taken in the People Strategy so that Cambridgeshire can become greener, fairer, and more caring in the ways that are most suitable to the variety of people, and diverse communities we serve.

2. Main Issues

- 2.1 The Council's Single Equality Strategy expired in 2022 and when starting to look at refreshing and updating the document a completely fresh approach was needed given how much has changed in this arena, to reinforce the Council's commitment to reducing inequality, strengthening and developing good community relations, and challenging discrimination.
- 2.2 This strategy builds on the successes and learning from our 2018-2022 Single Equality Strategy and sets out our approach and objectives moving forward. Whilst we have made great progress to advance our EDI agenda, we must be open and honest about our journey, and we recognise that there is still a lot of work to do.
- 2.3 It also references the significant decisions taken by the Council this year and last in relation to adopting the Public Sector Duty regarding Socio-economic Inequalities and adding care experience as a protected characteristic.
- 2.4 To drive this work forward, the strategy sets out three themes:
 - Our workforce: Foster an inclusive, supportive and safe working environment that attracts and retains diverse people who feel valued, respected, and empowered.
 - Our communities: Further understand and work with our diverse communities across Cambridgeshire, developing local solutions which address the needs of our communities.

- Our services: Ensure people who use our services and residents have good quality public services that meet the diverse needs of our communities.

2.5 The Strategy itself is supported by three guiding principles:

- Taking evidence-based action.
- Listening to the voices of everyone.
- Having a transparent and robust approach that delivers meaningful change.

2.6 There are twelve equality objectives and success measures have been established to support clear accountability. Progress will be regularly reviewed by the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), Members through Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion Committee (COSMIC) and the EDI Leadership Forum which comprises of officers across the Council, members of the IDEAL staff network and trade union representatives.

2.7 Progress will also be regularly reported to the COSMIC and be included in the annual workforce update to Staffing and Appeals Committee.

2.8 This EDI Strategy is not a refresh of the old strategy; it is a completely new strategy for Cambridgeshire. However, it is not intended to be a standalone document with new or abstract themes. It sits within the Council's Strategic Framework and has been designed to sit alongside People Strategy as an enabler to achieving the ambitions and priorities outlined in the framework.

2.9 Once a final version of the EDI Strategy is approved by Full Council, the strategy document will be designed to mirror the style of the Council's Strategic Framework and ensure that it meets accessibility guidelines.

3. Alignment with ambitions

3.1 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and our communities and natural environment are supported to adapt and thrive as the climate changes

There are no significant implications for this ambition.

3.2 Travel across the county is safer and more environmentally sustainable

There are no significant implications for this ambition.

3.3 Health inequalities are reduced

There are no significant implications for this ambition.

3.4 People enjoy healthy, safe, and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs

There are no significant implications for this ambition.

3.5 Helping people out of poverty and income inequality

There are no significant implications for this ambition.

3.6 Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised

This strategy aligns with this ambition, ensuring that our services are inclusive and accessible to our community.

3.7 Children and young people have opportunities to thrive

This strategy aligns with this ambition, considering equality, diversity and inclusion throughout our services and equality of opportunity.

4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications within this category. All work proposed will be managed within existing resources and approved budgets.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category, the strategy will align to existing HR and legislative requirements.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

The strategy will consider and champion equality, diversity and inclusion within our existing workforce. No direct or adverse equality implications are expected. A full Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out for all projects and programmes of work proposed.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

Whilst colleague feedback has been sought to develop the strategy, considerable colleague engagement and communication will take place once the Strategy has been approved.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.7 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.8 Climate Change and Environment Implications on Priority Areas

There are no significant implications within this category.

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance? Yes

Name of Financial Officer: Tom Kelly

Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the Head of Procurement and Commercial? Yes

Name of Officer: Clare Ellis

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or Pathfinder Legal? Yes

Name of Legal Officer: Emma Duncan

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your EqIA Super User?

Yes

Name of Officer: Faye McCarthy

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?

Yes

Name of Officer: Christine Birchall

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact? Yes

Name of Officer: Emma Duncan

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health? Yes

Name of Officer: Jyoti Atri

5. Source documents

5.1 Source documents: Cambridgeshire County Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023 – 2027

5.2 Location: Attached in Appendix One