

Item

Cambridge City Council Single Equality Scheme 2018 – 2021 Year two review

July 2020

To:

Councillor Anna Smith, Executive Councillor for Communities
Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee 02/07/2020

Report by:

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Wards affected:

All

Not a key decision.

1. Introduction / Executive Summary

- 1.1 The current Single Equality Scheme (SES) covers the period from 2018 to 2021. The council produces an SES in order to set out its strategic approach to equalities issues. The SES includes a number of equalities objectives for the Council, which is a key requirement of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010).
- 1.2 This annual report presents information to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty by providing an update on progress in delivering key actions set in SES for 2019/20. It also proposes some new actions for delivery during 2020/21 under the Scheme's objectives.

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

1. Note the progress in delivering equalities actions during 2019/20 set out in this report.

2. Approve the actions proposed in Appendix 1 for delivery during 2020/21.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in the Equality Act 2010 requires local authorities to publish information annually to demonstrate how they meet the equality duty; and publish one or more equalities objectives at least every four years.
- 3.2 The Council has developed a Single Equality Scheme (SES) for 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2021. The scheme was approved by the Executive Councillor for Communities at the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee on 4 October 2018.
- 3.3 The SES identifies 5 objectives for the Council's work on equalities issues. This annual report also identifies key areas of progress in delivering the key actions in the Single Equality Scheme for 2019/20. It also identifies some new actions for 2020/21 for approval by the Executive Councillor, including specific actions to respond to some of the key issues experienced by people with protected characteristics as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 3.4 Some key achievements from 2019/20 for each SES objective are as follows.

Objective 1: To further increase our understanding of the needs of Cambridge's growing and increasingly diverse communities so that we can target our services effectively

- The Council completed four ward profiles for areas in the North, South, East and West of the city and identified work plans for each area relating to reducing social isolation. The profiles will also help inform the Tenancy Audits being carried out by Housing Services in 2020/21 to understand more about tenants living in Council homes and identify areas of support that they may require
- The Council supported the Equality and Diversity Partnership to run training sessions on mental health awareness, suicide prevention and awareness, and on identifying and reporting hate crime.
- A draft equality and diversity terminology guide was developed for staff members in consultation with voluntary and community sector organisations that are members of the Equality and Diversity Partnership. This shall be shared with staff in 2020/21.

Objective 2: To continue to work to improve access to and take-up of Council services from all residents and communities

- Training was provided for council officers to better support service users with different protected characteristics. Training was provided for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller cultural awareness, mental health awareness, mental health first aid, suicide prevention and awareness, and undertaking equality impact assessments. Equality and diversity induction training was provided for new staff members, which also included disability awareness training.
- The Council raised awareness of the council tax discount for those national policy defines as "severely mentally impaired" amongst disabled residents needing support to make adaptations to their homes. We also simplified the application process for this discount.

Objective 3: To work towards a situation where all residents have equal access to public activities and spaces in Cambridge and are able to participate fully in the community

- The Council worked with local churches and community organisations to provide a total of 3,865 free holiday lunches in 9 different venues to help tackle social isolation for low income families and help them to meet increased food costs during school holidays when free school meals are not available.
- The Council provided free menstrual products at all council buildings, including our community centres, to help tackle period poverty.
- Encompass delivered Safer Spaces training to support Council staff to identify and respond to discrimination and hate crime experienced by LGBTQ+ people. This training was provided for staff based in the following buildings to help ensure that they are safer spaces: the Customer Service Contact Centre, City Homes, The Guildhall, Clay Farm Community Centre, Storey's Field, The Meadows Community Centre and Brownsfield Community Centre.
- The Council developed links between a local school and Ditchburn Place sheltered housing scheme to help bring different generations together to tackle loneliness. Visits from the children to Ditchburn Place will take place in 2020/21 and will be linked to themes the children are exploring at school.

Objective 4: To tackle discrimination, harassment and victimisation and ensure that people from different backgrounds living in the city continue to get on well together

- The Council drafted an expression of interest on behalf of the local Romany community, which has been submitted to the National Lottery to bid for a project researching scientific information on the genetic and linguistic origins of the English Romany community.
- The Council has undertaken a number of actions to support victims of domestic abuse following the Council's accreditation by the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA), including (but not limited to): appointing designated domestic abuse safeguarding leads for each service; reviewing our approach to proof requirements for victims of domestic abuse applying for housing who are unable to access documents; and publicising the organisation Respect across all council services.
- The Council undertook social media activity to raise awareness of its role as a Hate Crime Reporting Centre during Hate Crime Awareness Week. The Equality and Diversity Partnership received hate crime awareness training and 15 people attended. The Faiths' Partnership received information on our role as a Hate Crime Reporting Centre and 3 members of the partnership attended a training session to find out more.

Objective 5: To ensure that the City Council's employment and procurement policies and practices are non-discriminatory and to work towards a more representative workforce within the City Council

- Representation of disabled people as a proportion of the total workforce rose to 7.2% at 31st March 2020, from 6.37% at 31st March 2019. However, BAME people as a proportion of the total workforce was 6.3% as at 31st March 2020, compared to 7.59% at 31st March 2019. The recent TUPE transfer of staff from Ditchburn and retirements have had a significant impact on the BAME workforce profile in the last year.
- A range of 'Wellbeing at Work' activities were provided for Council staff including a Step Challenge, a programme of three weekly fitness classes, a blood pressure pop-up clinic, a health check clinic and a workshop on how to prevent back pain.
- Training for Council staff was provided on managing stress and pressure. Training was also provided for managers on how to support staff with mental health problems.

For a full account on progress on actions in 2019/20 (that is the second year of the Single Equality Scheme) see background paper one.

- 3.4 Appendix A lists actions identified under each objective of the Single Equality Scheme for completion in 2020/21 (the third and final year of the scheme). This includes actions to prevent or mitigate impacts of Covid-19 on different equality groups. These are listed separately in the Appendix to the other actions for 2020/21 and most are also included in this main committee report in the Community Safety section too.

a) Financial Implications

Equalities has been mainstreamed across all Council services. This means that activities and actions identified in the action plan will primarily be delivered through existing service budgets, but services sometimes fund specific initiatives. The Corporate Strategy service has a small budget to support equalities projects and publications, and it funds interpreting services to enable fair and equal access to Council services. The council works extensively with partner organizations to maximize the impact of our resources.

b) Staffing Implications

As equalities has been mainstreamed across all Council services, the activities and actions identified in the action plan will primarily be delivered as part of the core responsibilities of staff within the relevant services. Corporate Strategy convenes a 'Joint Equalities Group' made up of staff representatives across Cambridge City Council's services who are able to support the mainstreaming of equalities. During the Covid-19 pandemic, staff capacity to undertake activities planned before the pandemic may be more limited, as their time will be spent meeting more immediate needs. Some staff may also be unable to undertake some of their responsibilities due to lockdown restrictions.

c) Equality and Poverty Implications

No Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out for SES itself or this annual report. SES 2018 - 2021 forms the framework for the council's work to challenge discrimination and promote equal opportunities in all aspects of its work. An EqIA has been carried out and will continue to be updated to identify needs of the vulnerable groups identified by the Covid-19 Social Exclusion Oversight and Co-ordination Group.

d) Environmental Implications

The actions that have been identified for 2020/21 to help meet the Scheme's objectives are not anticipated to have any environmental impact.

e) Procurement Implications

The City Council has taken steps to ensure that equalities considerations are embedded in its procurement processes through implementing The Public Services (Social Value) Act (2012). This means that a key part of our assessment process in procuring contracts is to consider economic and social benefits that suppliers can bring to Cambridge. Additionally, when procuring services, commissioners are required to abide by our Equality Value Statement.

f) Community Safety Implications

The actions that relate directly to community safety in the strategy are as follows:

- Developing the data management plan to identify and categorise individuals by vulnerability and translate this into a process for bringing together datasets together (under the VPP emergency protocol).
- Developing our action plan around responding to domestic abuse during Covid-19 to address communication, co-ordinating local services, and continuation of services.
- Monitoring standards of work related to the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) through the DAHA Quality Assurance Group.
- Support Cambridgeshire County Council and Public Health to contact people considered vulnerable to Covid-19 because they have disabilities and long-term health conditions.
- Identifying where we can make an impact in supporting vulnerable groups identified by the Covid-19 Social Exclusion Oversight and Co-ordination Group. This will include undertaking risk assessments for each group.
- Working with partners in the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to improve public safety and raising concerns of people with protected characteristics.

4. Consultation and communication considerations

Consultation took place on the Single Equality Scheme 2018 – 2021. The council consulted with voluntary and community sector partners and public sector partners, and the Equalities Panel.

The content of this report will be communicated to residents through the

media using a news release, and on the Council website and Twitter.

5. Appendices

Appendix A: Further actions identified starting from 2020/21 for the Scheme (including actions identified to help mitigate or prevent negative impacts of the coronavirus pandemic for equality groups)

6. Background papers

1. Progress on actions in the second year of the Single Equality Scheme (2019/20): <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/our-equality-and-diversity-performance>
2. Equality Impact Assessment on Cambridge City Council support for thematic Public Health vulnerable groups as identified by the County Council during COVID-19:
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/8425/eqia-support-for-vulnerable-groups-2020-06.pdf>

7. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Helen Crowther, Equality and Anti-Poverty Officer, tel: 01223-457046, email: helen.crowther@cambridge.gov.uk

Appendix A:

Further actions identified starting from 2020/21 for the Scheme (including actions identified to help mitigate or prevent negative impacts of the coronavirus pandemic for equality groups)

Below are listed some further actions starting in year three (2020/21) of the Single Equality Scheme, and the services that will be responsible for completing them. Please note that many services expect to be impacted by the coronavirus pandemic in unanticipated ways and that new priorities continue to arise. This may impact on the completion of these actions, especially project work.

Objective One: To further increase our understanding of the needs of Cambridge's growing and increasingly diverse communities so that we can target our services effectively

<u>From the third year of the plan (2020/21) we will:</u>	<u>The service(s) that will lead on this:</u>
Provide the Shopmobility service at the Grand Arcade and Grafton East car parks to support disabled people.	Commercial Services
Work with 7 other local authorities to complete an assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showmen and Bargee Travellers and other caravan and houseboat dwellers to inform the councils' Local Plans.	Housing Service
Complete the review of our current hoarding procedure to ensure we support people with hoarding behaviours, who can be especially prone to mental health issues, as best as possible.	Housing Service

Objective Two: To continue to work to improve access to and take-up of Council services from all residents and communities

<u>From the third year of the plan (2020/21) we will:</u>	<u>The service(s) that will lead on this:</u>
Carry out a review of ChYpPS to establish the need for the current provision for children &	Community Services

young people, including Scrap Store & Play Pods.	
Procure a service to support British Sign Language (BSL) users to be able to receive BSL interpretation when contacting the Customer Service Centre phone line.	Corporate Strategy
Pilot Unconscious Bias and Social Inclusion training to help services identify how they can improve access to and take-up of services from different equality groups.	Corporate Strategy
Provide our staff with face-to-face Gypsy, Roma and Traveller cultural awareness training delivered by Friends, Families and Travellers.	Corporate Strategy
Support and encourage people on low-incomes and who have disabilities or long-term health conditions to reduce energy and water demand and costs, and to maintain a warmer home.	Environmental Services
Produce a draft homelessness and rough sleeper strategy to go to committee in January 2021 that helps meet needs of people with different protected characteristics.	Housing Services
Continue to provide sheltered housing schemes for people aged over 60 who wish to carry on living independently but who require some support to do so and support the schemes to run their own social clubs, activities, and events.	Housing Services
Train our staff on best practice in supporting service users with mental health problems, including running 2 Mental Health Awareness training sessions, 2 Mental Health First Response training sessions and a STOP Suicide workshop.	Human Resources (and Corporate Strategy for STOP Suicide workshop)

Objective Three: To work towards a situation where all residents have equal access to public activities and spaces in Cambridge and are able to participate fully in the community

<u>From the third year of the plan (2020/21) we will:</u>	<u>The service(s) that will lead on this:</u>
As part of the Equality and Diversity programme of events, support and help coordinate South	Community Services

Asian Heritage Month activities taking place for the first time in Cambridge this year.	
Explore further means of targeting free provision of sanitary products to people experiencing period poverty, including those experiencing homelessness or struggling to pay their rent.	Community Services
Provide Community Grants for 2021/22 to support the voluntary and community sector to reduce social and economic exclusion, which different equality groups can be disproportionately impacted by.	Community Services
Work with organisations in the My Cambridge Partnership and beyond to develop and implement a fundraising strategy for the next stage of the Culture Card project.	Community Services
Launch 'Make a Difference' days to involve young people in issues that they think are relevant and provide an opportunity to do something for their local community.	Community Services
Provide open access play activities for children, young people, and their families in local neighbourhoods (including low income neighbourhoods) across Cambridge.	Community Services
Continue to provide affordable, doorstep sport StreetGames activities in local neighbourhoods to encourage physical activity for young people aged 11 to 25 years old.	Community Services
Facilitate and support Let's Go Girls programme of activities, including supporting more local delivery in specific sports and providing some online activities during lockdown.	Community Services
Provide the final year of the free exercise referral programme across the City that includes free access for residents via ten identified GP surgeries.	Community Services
Continue to deliver the Invigorate programme, offering physical activity free of charge or at reduced cost to users of mental health services.	Community Services
Work with Student Action for Refugees to provide sessions for female refugees, most of whom are from Syria, to try different forms of exercise and socialise.	Community Services

<p>Help tackle food poverty for families with children by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a programme of free lunches with local partners for low income families during school holidays in areas of highest need in Cambridge. • Support local voluntary and community sector organisations to provide cookery skills workshops for families to be delivered in low incomes areas of Cambridge 	Community Services
Hep drive forward the Dementia Friendly Communities campaign by running Dementia Friends sessions for staff of frontline council services and bringing local businesses together to help them identify actions they can undertake to support people with dementia.	Corporate Strategy
Work with voluntary and community sector partners and other public sector partners to continue to raise awareness of the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS).	Corporate Strategy
As part of the Safer Spaces project run by Encompass Network, undertake training on tackling lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender discrimination (LGBT+) discrimination for front-of-house staff of Council buildings and run two transgender awareness training sessions per year for frontline-facing staff.	Corporate Strategy
Work with residents who have disabilities, including blind and partially sighted people, to develop a Street Charter.	Environmental Services
Include sanitary provision in all cubicles in public toilets and explore which public toilets could be altered to include gender neutral facilities.	Environmental Services
Develop an 'Eco-Day' programme for schools and roll out across the city.	Environmental Services
Ensure delivery of at least 25 fully adapted wheelchair homes, and at least 500 adaptable homes.	Housing Development Agency
<p>Help tackle digital exclusion, especially likely to be experienced by disabled people and older people by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting partner organisations and community groups to develop sustainable 	Housing Service

<p>activities to support low income residents to access the internet and develop digital skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting digital inclusion sessions, including for older residents in sheltered housing schemes. 	
Continue to provide holistic support to City Council tenants with mental health issues to remain in their tenancies and help link people to meaningful activities and groups in order to help reduce social isolation. Produce a new Tenancy Sustainment Service Policy to support this work.	Housing Service
Continue to provide 17 units of move-on accommodation for people receiving support under the CPFT's mental health team to help them to help them to move onto living independent living.	Housing Service
Organise visits from a local school to Ditchburn Place sheltered housing scheme. Explore means of extending this intergenerational project to other schools and sheltered housing schemes across the city.	Housing Services
Provide Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) to people claiming benefit who need extra help with housing costs, including disabled people and families with children that are affected by the benefit cap	Revenues and Benefits

Objective Four: To tackle discrimination, harassment and victimisation and ensure that people from different backgrounds living in the city continue to get on well together

<u>From the third year of the plan (2020/21) we will:</u>	<u>The service(s) that will lead on this:</u>
Continue to work with partners in the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to improve public safety and raise concerns of people with protected characteristics.	Community Services
Continue to support the local Romany Community with a bid to The National Lottery Heritage Fund for a project to research scientific	Community Services

information on the genetic and linguistic origins of the English Romany community.	
Continue to monitor standards of work related to the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) through the DAHA Quality Assurance Group.	Housing Services

Objective Five: To ensure that the City Council's employment and procurement policies and practices are non-discriminatory and to work towards a more representative workforce within the City Council

<u>From the third year of the plan (2020/21) we will:</u>	<u>The service(s) that will lead on this:</u>
Commit to use the Social Value portal to help measure economic and social benefits of Council contracts and assess bids in relation to benefits potential suppliers will bring to these areas.	Commercial Services
Provide 2 training sessions on how to carry out Equality Impact Assessments.	Corporate Strategy
Identify how best to raise our profile as an employer with disabled people and Black and Asian Minority Ethnic people and continue to monitor the profile of the Council's workforce.	Human Resources
As an accredited Disability Confident Employer, explore future actions to recruit and retain disabled people.	Human Resources
Provide two Managing Mental Health sessions for managers who support staff in the workplace who are experiencing mental health issues.	Human Resources
Provide Equality and Diversity induction training that includes disability awareness training.	Human Resources
Develop, promote and deliver the 'Wellbeing at Work' range of wellbeing classes, activities, information campaigns and promotions to encourage a healthy active workforce.	Community Services and Human Resources

What actions for 2020/21 has the council identified to help mitigate or prevent negative impacts of the coronavirus pandemic for equality groups?

The following actions have started to be undertaken in response to Covid-19 and are particularly aimed at supporting equality groups.

<u>From the third year of the plan (2020/21) we will:</u>	<u>The service(s) that will lead on this:</u>
Provide information and support to the Equality and Diversity Partnership in its response to Covid-19.	Community Services
Provide advice and referrals to support the voluntary and community sector organisations that are helping to tackle digital exclusion.	Corporate Strategy
Continue to monitor local and national information around how different protected characteristics are impacted by coronavirus to identify areas where the council can help mitigate or prevent negative impacts.	Community Services and Corporate Strategy
Bring together datasets (under the VPP emergency protocol) to identify vulnerable groups.	Community Services and Corporate Strategy
Run a new virtual community centre to provide specific information for children, young people, older people and families. We will also share messages about how the public can protect their mental health during the Covid-19 pandemic.	Community Services and Corporate Strategy
Help respond to domestic abuse during Covid-19 by undertaking our action plan to address communication, co-ordinating local services, and continuation of services.	Community Services and Housing Services
As part of Mental Health Awareness Week (18 to 24 May), provide training on managing mental, emotional and physical wellbeing and on personal resilience and share key messages on how staff can look after their mental health and wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic.).	Community Services, Corporate Strategy and Human Resources
Continue to support Cambridgeshire County Council and Public Health to contact people considered vulnerable to Covid-19 because they have disabilities and long-term health conditions.	Coordinated by Community Services, Housing Services
Identify how the Council can contribute to wider efforts to support the key vulnerable groups identified by the County-wide Covid-19 Social Exclusion Oversight and Co-ordination Group The groups are:	Community Services, Corporate Strategy, Environmental Services and Housing Services

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those suffering from child criminal exploitation • Those with existing mental health issues • Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people • Migrant workers • Those at risk of economic hardship (this includes people with no recourse to public funds) • Rough Sleepers • Those experiencing domestic abuse • Ex-offenders • Those with drug and alcohol addiction • Sex workers 	
In partnership with statutory, commissioned and voluntary partners, ensure that a more stable housing offer is made to each rough sleeper housed under the emergency Covid measure, including (where possible) those who have been evicted from that accommodation due to their behaviour and those who have abandoned it.	Housing Services
Maintain regular telephone contact with sheltered housing tenants to provide any extra support they need with emotional and practical issues and visit sheltered housing tenants in emergency situations, taking appropriate precautions to protect residents and staff.	Housing Services