

Adoption of the Equality Strategy 2021-23

Summary:

To adopt the new Equality Strategy agreed by members at on the 15th February 2021.

Portfolio: Support and Safeguarding (Cllr Josephine Hawkins)

Date Signed Off: 1st April 2021

Wards Affected: All

Recommendation

The Executive is advised to RESOLVE that the Equality Strategy 2021-23, as set out at Annex A to the report, be adopted by the Council.

1. Key Issues

- 1.1 The Equality Working Group has a membership of 9 cross party representatives who meet up to 3 times a year to review and discuss issues or concerns relating to Equalities.
- 1.2 The Group has recently considered a draft programme for Members' equality training, and agreement was reached at its meeting on the 15th February 2021 that Ioda Ltd which led the training sessions during the 2019 Member induction programme would be invited to deliver further training. This would focus upon 'The Doorstop Challenge', sessions aimed to equip Members with the tools to hold difficult conversations around equality and to challenge members of the public which held discriminatory views. The sessions would also act as an aide memoire as to the responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. This is to be scheduled for early in the 2021/22 municipal year.
- 1.3 Members have also discussed how best to support the myriad of annual commemorative events. The Equality Strategy includes a template for members of the working group to nominate events to be supported see annex A for further detail. It was outlined to the Group that the events would be managed by the Marketing and Communications team and would entail the sharing of social media posts and the issuing of supporting statements. It was emphasised that current events such as Remembrance Sunday and Fly the Flag fell outside of this scope and that there was potential for the plan to be reviewed by the Working Group on an annual basis.

The Working Group acknowledged the greater potential for the Council to celebrate its diversity of religions followed within the borough; and it was agreed for religious festivals such as Eid al-Fitr and Diwali be

included in the annual plan of events to be marked, the group also added Gypsy and Traveller week to the plan, and suggested that there is potential for the local Muslim, Hindu and Sikh communities to make use of the Council's facilities in order to celebrate events and hold open days.

2. Resource Implications

2.1 Existing Council budgets will be utilised to meet the training costs.

3. Options

3.1 The Executive has the option to;

- i. Adopt the Equality Strategy without change
- ii. Amend and adopt a revised strategy
- iii. Not to adopt the strategy

4. Proposals

4.1 It is suggested that the Executive adopt the Equality Strategy

5. Corporate Objectives and Key Priorities

5.1 The funding of voluntary organisations allows the Council to meet its objectives to:

- Work in partnership with local organisations to provide support to the community and diverse open space and recreation facilities.
- Understanding and supporting local voluntary groups.
- Significantly contribute to civic pride through the provision of events and green spaces.
- Work in partnership with the voluntary and third sector to extend opportunities in the Borough.
- Encouraging greater involvement from local clubs and organisations including volunteering.

Annexes	Annex A – Equality Strategy 2021-23
Background Papers	None
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