

From: **Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community Services**
Gary Cooke, Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services
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To: **Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 6 December 2013**

Decision No: None

Subject: **Annual Equality Report**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary: This report outlines the content and purpose of the annual equality report 2012/13.

Recommendation: The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Members on the Annual Equality Report 2013.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Equality Act 2010 outlines, for England, the framework for promoting equality of outcomes and eliminating discrimination. The Act includes a general duty for public authorities to promote equality, undertake equality analysis to inform all policy decisions and to publish equality information.
- 1.2 All public authorities have a legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to publish equality objectives. Progress on those objectives must be reviewed at least annually and the progress published.
- 1.3 The attached report is Kent County Council's third annual report and demonstrates where progress has been made on the objectives. These objectives were about creating the conditions in which the equality duty can be met.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 There are no financial implications in producing an annual report.

3. Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

- 3.1 The proposed decision links with Bold Steps for Kent in that it provides information on how the authority is tackling disadvantage.

4. Background

4.1 Publication of equality information is compulsory in England for all public authorities. Proactive publication of equality information ensures not only compliance with the legal requirements, but it can ensure a greater understanding by the public of the difficult decisions being faced by an authority, and why they are being taken. Gathering equality information and using it to inform decision-making can also enable authorities to achieve greater value for money in the services they deliver through better targeting of services. On-going, regular information on equality in service provision is published on kent.gov.uk and reviewed by 31 January each year. Therefore, that information is not published in the annual report.

4.2 It would be illegal not to publish progress on outcomes, but it is at the discretion of the authority to determine how it is published.

4.3 In 2012 the Council published the equality objectives set out below, and progress is reported in the annual report:

Objective A Working with all our partners to define and jointly address areas of inequality

Objective B Promoting fair employment practices and creating an organisation that is aware of and committed to equality and diversity and delivers its Public Sector Equality Duty

Objective C Improving the way KCC listens to and engages with its employees, communities and partners to develop, implement and review policy and to inform the commissioning of services; and

Objective D Improving the quality, collection, monitoring and use of equality data as part of the evidence base to inform service design delivery and policy decisions

Objective F Understanding and responding to the impacts on People when KCC is doing its work.

4.4 The annual report also identifies key challenges for 2013 and beyond, in particular the challenge of providing quality public services in the face of limited financial resources and high expectations from the public. The nature of the services provided, combined with Kent's changing demographics (for example, an ageing population), means that, in future, changes to public services have a high relevance to the protected equality characteristics of Age and Disability.

5. Equality Impact Assessments

5.1 As this decision is performance monitoring on the previous year's work there is no requirement to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment.

6. Conclusions

- 5.1 Approving the annual report will ensure that the council can demonstrate how it has complied with legal duties to review equality objectives.

7. Recommendation(s)

Recommendation: The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Members on the Annual Equality Report 2013.

8. Background Documents

KCC Equality Strategy, 11 October 2010, Cabinet

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=115&MId=3026&Ver=4>

KCC Equality Policy Statement and Objectives, Cabinet 17 September 2012

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=115&MId=3899&Ver=4>

KCC Equality Policy Statement and Objectives

Policy & Resources 27 September 2012

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=750&MId=4858&Ver=4>

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