

From: Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste

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To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee - 6 September 2017

Subject: **2016/17 Growth, Environment and Transport Equality and Diversity Review**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: N/A

Future Pathway of Paper: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee - 21 September 2017

Summary: This report sets out a position statement for services within the Growth, Environment and Transport (GET) Directorate regarding equality and diversity work and subsequent progress on KCC equality and diversity objectives for 2016/17.

Recommendation:

The Cabinet Committee is asked to note current performance, provide any comment, and agree to receive this report annually in order to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Publication of equality and diversity information is compulsory in England for all public authorities, as stipulated in the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010. Proactive publication of equality and diversity information ensures not only compliance with the legal requirements, but also transparency for the public in how this Directorate ensures equality and diversity considerations are part of every stage of our programmes and projects.
- 1.2 The detail attached as Appendix 1 seeks to capture and consider the 2016/17 performance of the GET Directorate against what was the current KCC Equality and Diversity Policy for most of 2016/17, with each chapter considering each KCC equality and diversity objective in turn.
- 1.3 Progress has continued to be made in embedding a stronger equality and diversity approach across the entire Directorate, and a wealth of good practice is detailed in the Appendix.

- 1.4 The content captured is being utilised at Divisional as well as at Directorate level, and has been used to inform the Directorate's approach to equality and diversity for 2017/18. This includes an enhanced focus on the equality and diversity data that GET services gather, and how that data is then actioned; a consistent approach to equality and diversity being an underpinning critical factor to understanding and meeting the needs of Kent residents; understanding the role of equality and diversity at each stage of the commissioning cycle and practically applying that; and aligning equality and diversity data more closely with the Directorate's organisational development priorities.
- 1.5 The Directorate has five lead objectives in the KCC Equality and Human Rights Policy 2016 – 2019 that was agreed in December 2016. These are:
- a) Protected characteristics will be considered within all highways and transport schemes identified in the Local Transport Plan 4, as well as the schemes' potential to advance equality of opportunity.
 - b) The protected characteristics of all members of a community will be considered when investing in roads, facilities and utilities that are identified through the Growth and Infrastructure Framework, and delivered to meet the needs of Kent's population changes.
 - c) Irrespective of age, disability, race or belief, Kent residents should be able to access our county's high quality landscapes and environment.
 - d) The Libraries, Registration and Archives Service in Kent will continue to understand its local communities' needs, and tailor its services accordingly.
 - e) The Equality Duty will inform all services' efforts to maximise all residents, communities and businesses' potential.
- 1.6 GET is using 2017/18 to establish baseline equality and diversity performance of what are predominantly large strategic programmes that began in similar timeframes to the KCC Equality and Human Rights Policy, and will continue beyond that current Policy. The baseline data gathered in 2017/18 may inform the setting of specific targets with regards to one or more of the protected characteristics, which will in turn will define what success might look like in future years of the Policy, for these major GET programmes. The focus on the five objectives will also ensure protected characteristic data collection and analysis is built into the contracts and commissions relating to the five objectives.

2. Financial Implications

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

3. Other corporate implications

- 3.1 The entire KCC Equality and Diversity Review will be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee in December 2016. The content of this paper will inform the KCC Review.

4. Governance

- 4.1 Following an internal audit in 2012, governance arrangements across the authority were agreed to ensure compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. If Key Decisions are taken without full equality analysis the authority is open to potential Judicial Review.
- 4.2 As part of excellent customer service, GET has additionally committed to every policy, programme and project being equality impact assessed every three years or at a point of significant change of that policy, programme or project, whichever is soonest. A portal on KNET is used by all GET teams as a repository for current and archived equality impact assessments, and as a source of best practice.
- 4.3 The Directorate has an overarching Equality and Diversity Group, whose membership consists of senior Divisional representatives, a Staff Group representative, a GET Customer Service Programme representative, and a KCC Policy representative. This Group meets every six weeks, with a clear focus on:
- a) ensuring equality and diversity are embedded into every stage of the commissioning cycle – i.e. analyse, plan, do, and review;
 - b) providing oversight to ensure that evidenced Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken for all priority programmes and projects as set out in Directorate and Divisional Business Plans, including service redesign and transformation;
 - c) ensuring appropriate training for staff to ensure the Directorate meets our equality and diversity duties efficiently and effectively; and
 - d) understanding and analysing the data regarding GET staffing, to ensure the Directorate is realising the potential and benefits of staff.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The Directorate's approach to equality and diversity is carefully positioned to underpin the Directorate's approach to customer insight and customer service.
- 5.2 Extensive training and awareness raising of the Public Sector Equality Duty and its practical application in informing and improving delivery of GET services and programmes is successfully embedding its tenets within day to day delivery.
- 5.3 A clear focus on equality and diversity data, and utilisation of that data, is at the heart of GET's equality and diversity approach.
- 5.4 Analysis of diversity data of GET staff is now an established core element of the Directorate's organisational development priorities.

6. Recommendation(s):

- 6.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to note current performance, provide any comment, and agree to receive this report annually in order to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010.

7. Background Documents

7.1 KCC Equality and Diversity Policy 2012 – 2016

7.2 KCC Equality and Human Rights Policy 2016 – 2019:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/corporate-policies/equality-and-diversity>

8. Contact details

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