

From: Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services

Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Economic Development

Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee - 25 September 2020

Subject: 2019/20 Equality and Diversity Review of Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 15 September 2020

Future Pathway of Paper: N/A

Electoral Division: All

Summary: This report sets out a position statement for the Growth, Environment and Transport (GET) Directorate for 2019/2020 regarding equality and diversity within work programmes.

Recommendation(s):

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 GET firmly places our approach to equality and diversity within our customer focus. The Duty for GET is about understanding and responding to our customers and non-customers' needs, data-led across all ten protected characteristics. Everybody has protected characteristics.
- 1.3 The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has identified six domains which reflect the capabilities or areas of life that are important to people and that enable them to flourish. The six domains are work, living standards, education, justice and personal security, participation and health.

1.4 KCC corporately has moved to measure all services' progress against the Equality Duty 2010 by utilising these EHRC domains. This report therefore looks to do the same, as we have done in the previous two years' reports, .

2. Financial Implications

2.1 There are no financial implications in producing an annual review of progress against the Equality Duty 2010

3. Policy Framework

3.1 This report relates to the KCC Equality and Human Rights Policy 2016 – 2020.

4. GET progress against KCC Equality and Diversity Objectives

4.1 GET Directorate has lead responsibility for five of the KCC Human Rights and Equality Policy Objectives: and further detail is given for each from paragraph 4.2 onwards

4.1.1 Protected characteristics will be considered within all highways and transport schemes identified within Local Transport Plan 4, as well as the schemes' potential to advance equality of opportunity

4.1.2 The Equality Duty will inform all services' efforts to maximise businesses' potential.

4.1.3 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

4.1.4 Irrespective of Age, Disability, Race or Religion and Belief, Kent residents should be able to access our county's high-quality landscapes and environment

4.1.5 The Libraries, Registration and Archives Service in Kent will continue to understand its local communities' needs, and tailor its services accordingly

4.2 Further details of GET's performance against these objectives are given in appendix 1.

5. Conclusions

5.1 GET continues to improve its compliance with the Equality Duty by improving year on year the volume, depth and underpinning data of completed equality impact assessments. However, neither Directorate Management Team nor the GET Equality and Diversity Group can become complacent that the Equality Duty is always fully considered.

- 5.2 From preparing this 19/20 review, it is apparent that the GET Equalities and Diversity Group is more systematically utilising the online portal of completed EqlAs as a 'temperature check' and 'tool' for driving forward the agenda
- 5.3 Throughout 19/20 and as is evident from the above sample of Equality Impact Assessments, a great deal of consideration was given to digital accessibility from an equality perspective by GET officers in 19/20, which was a focused piece of work ahead of imminent Government digital accessibility legislation coming into force September 2020. The Government Digital Service (GDS) will monitor public sector websites and apps on their accessibility from September 2020 onwards. GET has been working proactively with KCC Infrastructure on this for over two years.
- 5.4 GET has a Joint Organisational Development/Equality and Diversity Group that works to ensure as a directorate we have a clear focus on how we support diversity and inclusion across our staffing. That group's work falls outside of the remit of this report, but as per previous years, continues to use national peer reviews, KCC and GET organisational data and the KCC and GET staff survey reflective data to inform its focus, and its work.

6. Recommendation

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

7. Background Documents

- 7.1 KCC Human Rights and Equality Strategy 2016 – 2020:

https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/67075/Executive-summary-of-our-annual-equality-and-diversity-report-2016-2020.pdf

Appendix 1: GET's performance against KCC Equality and Diversity Objectives and EHRC domains – examples from Equality Impact Assessments

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