

From: Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation
Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community Services
Mark Dance, Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Barbara Cooper, Corporate Director Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 12 October 2016

Subject: **2015/16 Growth, Economic Development and Transport Equality and Diversity Review**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 7 September

Future Pathway of Paper: N/A

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 2015/16.

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 2015/16 performance of the GET Directorate against the current KCC Equality and Diversity Policy, with each chapter considering each KCC equality and diversity objective in turn.
- 1.3 Progress has been made in embedding a stronger equality and diversity approach across the entire Directorate, and a wealth of good practice is detailed in the Appendix including a directorate-wide review of customer service commissioned under the GET Customer Service Programme, as a first step to transform the way in which GET engages with customers as set out in paragraph 5.1 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 2016/17. 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 In 2015/16, the Directorate has proactively informed the draft KCC Equality and Human Rights Policy 2016 – 2019 that is currently out for public consultation. The Directorate will contribute to all relevant objectives, but will lead on five proposed objectives:
- a) Protected groups' needs will be considered within all highways and transport schemes, as well as the schemes' potential to advance equality of opportunity
 - b) The needs of all members of a community will be considered when investing in roads, facilities and utilities that are 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 services' efforts to maximise all residents, communities and businesses' potential

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
- 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; and
 - c) ensuring appropriate training for staff to ensure the Directorate meets our equality and diversity duties efficiently and effectively.

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 embedded 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.

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

8. Contact details

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