



Classification	Official		
Meeting	Service Leadership Team	Agenda no.	6f
	Performance and Resources Board		12
Meeting	17 September 2024		
	24 September 2024		
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Presented By	Colette Black, Director of People Services		
Subject	Public Sector Equality Duty Update – September 2024		
Type of Report	Information		
Action Point No.		For Publication	Yes

RECOMMENDATION(S)

This report is for noting the progress made on our Strategic Equality Objectives.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report details the progress of delivery against each of the Equality Objectives between April and September 2024, as part of our Public Sector Equality Duty 2011.

BACKGROUND

In 2022, we worked with JS Associates as part of our partnership with the Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) to review and reset our Public Sector Equality Duty Objectives. Following consultation, we agreed the following 4 Strategic Equality Objectives for our Service for 2022-2024:

1. We will consistently demonstrate ‘due regard’ (give genuine attention and thought) to equality and diversity in our organisation and aim to be leading practitioners of workplace diversity and inclusion across Essex.
2. We will invest in a diverse workforce with the skills, knowledge and attitude needed to build a culture of diversity and inclusion.
3. We will deliver inclusive evidence-based services that show ‘due regard’ when assessing risks and behaviour in the community, to help make sure services are accessible and fair to everyone.
4. Demonstrate community-focused leadership by working in partnership and making the most of our presence in the region to stress the importance of socio-economic factors, and how they affect both employment and services.

OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

Summary of Progress

(see Appendix A for more details)

Equality Objective 1 – On Track

We will consistently demonstrate ‘due regard’ (give genuine attention and thought) to equality and diversity in our organisation and aim to be leading practitioners of workplace diversity and inclusion across Essex.

- PIA App is being utilised for all policies and projects
- PIA's are being quality assured
- PIA coaching being provided by I&DBP, as required
- Awarded Silver Accreditation in the Inclusive Employers Standard in March 2024
- Employees encouraged to review and update their equality data by personal email request, Inclusion Insights, and objective in appraisal pilot. Podcast being considered
- Employee equality information target 75% shared information for each characteristic. Current shared data: Gender 96.2%, Ethnicity 84.4%, LGBTQ+ 74.9%, Religion or Belief 60.8%
- NFCC EDI data toolkit being utilised to ensure harmonised data collection
- Public Sector Equality Duty, Reasonable Adjustment Duty and Worker Protection Act 2023 (coming in October 2024) added to new EDI Policy
- Participating in County-wide, Regional and National Equality initiatives

Equality Objective 2 - On Track

We will invest in a diverse workforce with the skills, knowledge and attitude needed to build a culture of diversity and inclusion.

- Inclusive Behaviours training being delivered
- Inclusion Insights e-newsletter being delivered each month, with back copies available on intranet
- Champions of Diversity approach being developed to overcome gaps in employee networks and support development of community focused engagement activities
- Dignity and Inclusion Advocates in place, meeting monthly with quarterly CPD. Target to have a distribution of DIA's in all employee groups and directorates, new DIA's being trained
- Disability Listen and Learn Part 1 delivered and evaluated. Part 2 on 9th October and Part 3 April 2025
- Positive Action Plan being delivered and reviewed at monthly Positive Action Working Group
- Attracting greater diversity to all roles, attraction and selection process attrition data monitored for proportionality and reported by Head of Resourcing quarterly
- Joiners & leavers diversity demographic reported monthly

Equality Objective 3 – On Track

We will deliver inclusive evidence-based services that show ‘due regard’ when assessing risks and behaviour in the community, to help make sure services are accessible and fair to everyone.

- CRMP engagement, public perception surveys and Consultation demonstrate due regard, live PIA in place, being regularly reviewed and updated
- Improved use of data, feedback and research to better understand the needs and risks within diverse or underrepresented communities and inform decision making
- Sensory Champion training and Virtual Dementia Experience delivered to Safe and Well and Home Safety teams
- Person centred framework guidance being utilised to deliver a standardised and evidence-based approach to Home Fire Safety Visits to support the Prevention Fire Standard
- Education and Specialist Intervention team are providing neuro-inclusive initiatives
- Road Safety, Water and Home Fire Safety community engagement is targeted to the groups most at risk, informed by data

Equality Objective 4 – On Track

Demonstrate community-focused leadership by working in partnership and making the most of our presence in the region to stress the importance of socio-economic factors, and how they affect both employment and services.

- Increased use of People Impact Assessments for Prevention, Protection and Response activities for all protected characteristics, and socio-economic impacts
- EDI included in Supplier Code of Conduct and Equality in Procurement guidance created to ensure PSED is being upheld in procurement
- Participation in Collaborative Boards: Includes Safer Essex Board, Community Safety Partnership, Safer Essex Roads Partnership, Southend, Essex, & Thurrock Domestic Abuse Board, Health and Wellbeing Board and Integrated Care Board to inform Prevention activities and community engagement
- Partnership with Pan Essex Dementia Alliance, North East Health and Wellbeing Alliance, UK Health Security Agency, Essex Resilience Forum, Faith Covenant Steering Group

RISKS AND MITIGATIONS

Delivery of our Equality Objectives is a key control for SRR150019.

LINKS TO FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

Delivery of our Equality Objectives is a key enabler for the Fire and Rescue plan.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are none associated with this update.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Delivery of our Public Sector Equality Duty objectives are part of our compliance with the following legislation:

- Public Sector Equality Duty 2011
- Equality Act 2010

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The actions being taken will not have a disproportionate impact on individuals with protected characteristics (as defined within the Equality Act 2010), when compared to all other individuals and will not disadvantage people with protected characteristics.

Race	N	Religion or belief	N
Sex	N	Gender reassignment	N
Age	N	Pregnancy & maternity	N
Disability	N	Marriage and Civil Partnership	N
Sexual orientation	N		

There are no negative impacts identified; the Strategic Equality Objectives aim to progress equality for all.

The Core Code of Ethics Fire Standard has been fully considered and incorporated into the proposals outlined in this paper.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Progress reported at the People Strategy Board 2nd September 2024. Previous engagement has been completed on the Equality Objectives when devised and implemented.

FUTURE PLANS

- Reporting Progress in our annual Equality Information Report
- Review of Equality Objectives following CRMP Consultation

LIST OF APPENDICES AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix A – Progress of the Public Sector Equality Objectives April – September 2024