

# East Herts Council Report

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Date of meeting:** 8 June 2021

**Report by:** Councillor Linda Haysey – Leader of the Council

**Report title:** Draft Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Summary** – A new draft strategy for Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion has been developed which will be proposed for adoption by Full Council on 28<sup>th</sup> July.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

a) To review the draft strategy and comment before further consultation and engagement takes place

#### 1.0 Proposal(s)

1.1 Committee Members review the draft strategy and provide comments before formal consultation with key partners is undertaken in June and it is considered by Executive on 6<sup>th</sup> July before being proposed for adoption by Council on 28<sup>th</sup> July

#### 2.0 Background

2.1 East Herts Council entered into a shared service with Hertfordshire County Council to provide Equalities and Diversity support in November 2020. This equates to 2 days per week of time from the Joint Equalities and Diversity Officer. The first task of this officer has been to lead on the overall process for refreshing the East Herts

strategy for Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion. The process to date has been as follows:

- A self-assessment of East Herts Council approach to equalities using the Local Government Association's Equality Framework (November 2020 – January 2021)
- Workshops and discussion with East Herts Council's Leadership Team and Senior Manager's Forum (January 2021)
- Initial engagement with key partners including Hertfordshire County Council, Broxbourne and East Herts Council for Voluntary Services, the Citizens Advice Service, GATE, Herts for Learning, (February – present)
- Discussion with Executive Members (March 2021)
- A briefing and discussion for East Herts Members (May 2021)

2.2 The result of this work is a draft strategy, setting out the issues and challenges which is attached at Appendix A.

2.3 Work to date on developing the strategy has been through informal consultation and engagement with key stakeholders. During the month of June, and following the views of Overview and Scrutiny Members, we will undertake formal consultation with partners listed above and other key stakeholders including CDA Herts, Dementia Friendly Action Group, Age Concern, LGBT representatives. In addition a number of East Herts Councillors have offered to share the draft strategy with contacts from different communities in our district and this will be an invaluable part of the engagement process.

2.4 The draft strategy will also be made available for public comment and consultation however we do not anticipate a large response through this general approach. Targeted consultation with specific groups and communities as outlined in (1.3) is more likely to result in meaningful feedback and engagement.

2.5 The draft strategy will be shared with Executive on the 6<sup>th</sup> July before being proposed for adoption at Full Council on 28<sup>th</sup> July.

### **3.0 Reason(s)**

3.1 The Council's current equalities strategy is in urgent need of refresh

### **4.0 Options**

4.1 Alternative option is to not have an equalities strategy

### **5.0 Risks**

5.1 The strategy mitigates risks of the Council not complying with requirements of the Equalities Act 2010

### **6.0 Implications/Consultations**

6.1 Focused consultation will be undertaken in June

### **Community Safety**

No

### **Data Protection**

No

### **Equalities**

Yes – strategy will promote a stronger approach to equalities across the organisation

### **Environmental Sustainability**

No

### **Financial**

No

### **Health and Safety**

No

## **Human Resources**

No

## **Human Rights**

No

## **Legal**

No

## **Specific Wards**

No

## **7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material**

### **7.1 Appendix A: Draft Strategy**

#### **Contact Member**

Councillor Linda Haysey, Leader of the Council

#### **Contact Officer**

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