

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2017

Present:

Councillor Rawlins- In the Chair
Councillors Cookson, Fletcher-Hackwood, Grimshaw, Hassan, Knowles
[CESC/17/44 - CESC/17/46], Sharif Mahamed and Siddiqi

Councillor S Murphy, Statutory Deputy Leader
Councillor Flanagan, Executive Member for Finance and Human Resources
Councillor Craig, Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing and Lead
Member for LGBT Women
Councillor Ahmed Ali, Lead Member for Race Issues
Councillor Midgley, Mental Health Champion

Jenny-Anne Bishop, TransForum

Apologies:

Councillors Austin-Behan, Cooley, Evans and Ilyas

CESC/17/42 Minutes

Decisions

1. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2017 as a correct record.
2. To receive the minutes of the Hate Crime and Third Party Reporting Centres Task and Finish Group meeting held on 19 October 2017.

CESC/17/43 Our Manchester Disability Plan

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Lead (Adult Social Care) which provided an update on progress made on the establishment of the Our Manchester Disability Plan (OMDP) Governance structure and associated work. It also set out the new direction for Manchester to enable it to become a Disabled People Friendly City. It provided an update on the progress made on the points raised at the November 2016 Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee meeting at which Committee Members had requested updates on the wider accessibility related points.

The Strategic Lead (Adult Social Care) referred to the main points and themes within the report, which included:

- The development of the Plan, including how it aligned to the Our Manchester Approach and the contribution of the late Lorraine Gradwell MBE;
- Progress made to date;
- An update on the workstreams;
- Progress on the development of the OMDP website;
- The Disability Confident Scheme;
- The accessibility of events held in Manchester; and

- The role of the Council's planning function in improving accessibility.

Some of the key points which arose from the Committee's discussion were:

- How feedback from a wheelchair user had assisted the Licensing Panel in understanding accessibility issues relating to taxis, the value of involving disabled people in this way and the importance of including the licensing function in the Transport workstream;
- A request for further information on how the Council was engaging with developers on building accessibility;
- What progress had been made in reviewing Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM)'s disability focused initiatives;
- The collective responsibility of all Councillors on diversity and equality issues and the importance of training all Councillors on disability issues;
- The involvement of the Disabled Staff Group; and
- How the request from some disabled young people to be accompanied and supported by people closer to their age group could be achieved.

The Project Manager (OMDP) outlined the involvement of licensing officers in the work of the OMDP Partnership Board, reporting that this work included facilitating contact between disabled people and those working to improve vehicle accessibility. He also reported that he and representatives from disabled people's organisations would be meeting with TfGM and bus operators the following week to progress the work on transport, including training for staff. The Equality Team Leader assured Members that the Council had a long-term good working relationship with the Disabled Staff Group which they were continuing to develop. The Strategic Lead (Adult Social Care) reported that it was proposed to move towards disabled people having more choice about who supported them, for example, someone of a similar age or of the same sex.

Decisions

1. To ask the Director of Neighbourhoods to liaise with Executive Members on how training on disability issues, including the 12 pillars of independent living, can be incorporated into Councillors' induction training.
2. To receive a further report at an appropriate time, to include updates on the OMDP website, the Disability Confident Scheme and two or three of the key workstreams referred to in the report, such as transport, work and skills and accessibility.
3. To invite disabled people to this meeting to discuss their lived experience.
4. To request that this report also include what partners, such as builders and developers, have done to improve accessibility, beyond the minimum standards set out in law, and to consider inviting representatives from these groups to the meeting.

CESC/17/44 Issues

Overview of the work of the Lead Members for Equality

The Committee received a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People, Policy and Reform) which provided an overview of the work and current priorities of the Lead

Members for Equality Issues. It included an update on the support offered to older LGBT people through the LGBT-inclusive Extra Care Scheme and on actions following the publication of the Research Study into the Trans Population of Manchester in November 2016.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report, which included:

- The role of the Equality Lead Members;
- Achievements and priorities for the next 12 months;
- Plans for the Older LGBT-Inclusive Extra Care Scheme; and
- An Update on actions since the publication of the Trans Report.

The Lead Members for Equality Issues also highlighted a number of issues, which included:

- Work on suicide prevention, including the launch of the Suicide Prevention Local Action Plan for Manchester in June 2017;
- Work to support LGBT young people and the importance of Members who were also School Governors monitoring what was taking place in their schools;
- Work to tackle hate crime, including the rise in Islamophobic hate crime since the Manchester Arena attack;
- Work to identify how more Black and Ethnic Minority staff could be developed into management roles;
- The delegation from Wandsworth Council which had visited Manchester to see the Council's approach to equalities issues, including having Equality Lead Members for each equality strand; and
- Work to make events such as the Christmas markets more accessible to disabled people.

Jenny-Anne Bishop from TransForum also highlighted a number of issues, which included:

- Work to tackle LGBT bullying in schools;
- Concerns that gender diverse young people were experiencing mental health problems as they weren't receiving treatment quickly enough, that many trans people avoided engaging with health professionals due to fear of discrimination and that approximately half of gender diverse young people were self-prescribing hormones without appropriate medical monitoring;
- Transgender offenders in prisons who were vulnerable to suicide if they were not treated properly and the need for 'trans clustering' in prisons so that trans prisoners could support each other;
- That incidents of autism and learning disabilities were 20% higher in the trans population than in the rest of the population and that there were now two groups in Manchester supporting trans people with autism or learning disabilities; and
- The financial challenges facing some trans organisations.

The Equality Team Leader agreed that he would liaise with trans organisations on available funding.

Some of the key points which arose from the Committee's discussion were:

- Plans for gender neutral toilets in the refurbished Town Hall;
- Variation in the take-up of 'Pride In Practice', a programme to ensure that all LGBT people had access to primary care services that were LGBT inclusive, across the city;
- The impact of the roll-out of Universal Credit on different groups of people;
- A request for equality monitoring statistics for the Council's staff; and
- A request that training on suicide prevention be made available to Councillors.

The Statutory Deputy Leader advised that she supported the inclusion of gender neutral toilets in the refurbished Town Hall and that she had seen both good and bad examples of these in other buildings so it was important to get it right. She advised that she would follow this up with the Deputy Leader, who was leading on the Town Hall Refurbishment Project. She reported that the roll-out of Universal Credit would have a negative impact on the poorest people in Manchester, which included many people with protected characteristics. She advised that the Welfare Reform Board was looking into its impact on the city and on groups with protected characteristics and suggested that the Committee receive a report on this, to which the Chair agreed. The Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing and Lead Member for LGBT Women reported that she was working with commissioners to identify what leverage could be used to get more GP practices involved in Pride in Practice.

Decisions

1. To thank Jenny-Anne Bishop and the Lead Members for their contribution.
2. To continue to monitor the actions arising from the Trans Report.
3. To request that the Committee receive a report on the Welfare Reform Board's work on the impact of Universal Credit in Manchester, in particularly in relation to its impact on people with protected characteristics.
4. To request that equality monitoring statistics for the Council's employees be circulated to Members of the Committee.
5. To request that the Director of Neighbourhoods liaise with the Mental Health Champion on how Councillors can be trained on suicide prevention.

CESC/17/45 Budget Refresh 2018 – 2020

The Committee received a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and the City Treasurer which set out a proposed budget refresh process for 2018-20, including proposals for scrutiny of Directorate Budget and Business Plans.

The Executive Member for Finance and Human Resources introduced the report, highlighting the main points and themes, including:

- The reasons that a three year budget had been set in the previous municipal year;
- The financial challenges facing the Council and the impact of austerity on

- Manchester residents;
- The Council's commitment to support disabled staff affected by funding cuts; and
- The reasons the budget needed to be refreshed and the process for this.

Some of the key points which arose from the Committee's discussion were:

- That the Committee should consider the Directorate Budget and Business Plan Report and Delivery Plan for Growth and Neighbourhoods; and
- That the Committee should also focus on the equality impact of the budget proposals across all Directorates.

The Director of Neighbourhoods confirmed that officers drawing up budget proposals for Members to consider were also required to outline the equality impact of the proposals, that some proposals then required a more detailed equality impact assessment, which should be ready by March 2018, and some could require a public consultation. The Executive Member for Finance and Human Resources recommended that the Committee also consider how the use of Voluntary Severance and Voluntary Early Retirement could disproportionately result in the loss of older and disabled employees.

Decisions

1. To consider the refreshed Directorate Budget and Business Plan Report and Delivery Plan for Growth and Neighbourhoods at the Committee's meeting on 1 February 2018.
2. To consider the equality impact of the budget proposals across all Directorates.

CESC/17/46 Overview Report

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained a list of key decisions yet to be taken within the Committee's remit, responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to approve.

A Member noted that the Committee would be considering a report on Loneliness and Social Isolation and requested that the Mental Health Champion be invited to attend for this item.

Decision

To approve the work programme, subject to the above amendment.