

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Personnel Committee – 24 July 2024

Subject: Revised HROD policy – Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy Statement (proposed new title “Workforce Equalities Statement”)

Report of: Director of Human Resources, Organisational Development and Transformation

Summary

To outline a revised employment policy for the Committee’s consideration: Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy Statement (proposed new title “Workforce Equalities Statement”).

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to approve the revised policy attached to this report.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

There will be no significant environmental impacts.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments
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The Workforce Equalities Statement is our revised and refreshed Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy Statement. The statement aims to set out the Council’s position, strategy, aims and ambitions on Equality Diversity and Inclusion.

Specifically, the statement reiterates the Council’s zero-tolerance approach to discrimination (or any other behaviour that makes someone feel they don’t belong), the vision that the workforce reflects the diverse community of Manchester, and the aim to become a fair and inclusive employer. In tone and language, the statement is designed to reach as many of the Council’s employees as possible.
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Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The document reinforces the key aim of the Workforce Equality Strategy – that we want our workforce to reflect the diverse communities of Manchester at all levels of the organisation. The document also details the current activity underway within the Council to deliver this, as well as the roles employees can play to achieve it.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

Appendix 1 Draft Workforce Equalities Statement
Appendix 2 Current Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy Statement

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is committed to advancing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and our vision is to be a place where our workforce fully reflects the rich diversity and talent of the communities we serve at all levels and is a place where everyone can be themselves and thrive.
- 1.2 Our current Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy Statement was developed in 2011 and the 2019 Race Review recommended that we reviewed the policy. We have completed an extensive review to strengthen and improve the policy.
- 1.2 The Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy Statement is an important policy that reinforces our commitment to EDI and ensures that EDI is embedded in all of our employment practices.
- 1.3 The policy statement ensures that we comply with our legal duty under the Equality Act 2010, specifically the Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires public sector bodies to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.
 - Foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

2.0 Context for the review

- 2.1 The 2019 Race Review recommended that:

A review of the Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy Statement would allow the opportunity for it to take into account the current composition of the workforce's ethnic profile and take a proactive stance on positive action for Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff and job applicants.

- 2.2 Because of the time that had elapsed since the statement was last reviewed, the content of the new statement required a significant overhaul to bring it in line with current workforce equality activity, trends and strategy.
- 2.3 We also took the opportunity to review the tone and style of the statement with the aim of making it as accessible as possible to the workforce.

3.0 Policy engagement

- All staff network groups have been given opportunity to comment on the revised statement.
- A specific engagement exercise was carried out with staff networks and directorate equality leads aimed at making the language and tone of the document as engaging as possible with all staff.
- Formal and informal Trade Union consultation has taken place.

- HR Business Partners and Senior HROD&T managers have been invited to comment on the statement.
- Drafts of the statement have been presented to Corporate Equality Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Group and the EDI Team.

Feedback from all these groups has been fed into the statement.

4.0 Policy content

- 4.1 The revised statement is appended below (appendix 1).
- 4.2 The content of the statement has been completely overhauled. The Race Review recommendation was that the workforce's ethnic profile should be taken into account and a proactive stance should be taken on positive action measures.
- 4.3 The statement places at its centre the Council's vision of a workforce which represents the diverse community that we serve, at all levels.
- 4.4 The statement also sets out the activity underway to achieve the vision, including the positive action measures – the Leadership and LeadHERship pathways – as well as training and new initiatives like the Workplace Adjustments Hub.
- 4.5 The statement's tone, style and voice have also been overhauled to make it as engaging as possible with the workforce. The statement is written to address the workforce directly rather than in the "third person".
- 4.6 The statement sets out how we are embedding EDI in employment which includes:
 - Delivering the Workforce Equality Strategy.
 - Embedding EDI in our policy framework (e.g. menopause policy, third party abuse & harassment and zero tolerance statement).
 - Ensuring EDI is embedded across our other workforce strategies (e.g. Health & Wellbeing, Talent).
 - An EDI infrastructure which ensures action is taken right across the organisation to advance equalities and address inequalities (this includes the establishment of the Corporate Equality Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Group, Directorate Leads, and EDI Champions).

5.0 Approach to Implementation

- 5.1 Once the statement has been approved, it will be launched to the workforce via the Council's usual comms channels.
- 5.2 We aim to promote this statement at all levels of the organisation, from senior leadership, Directorate leadership teams and line managers, as well as through an all-staff broadcast.

5.3 We will write to offline staff to ensure they have sight of the Workforce Equalities Statement.

6.0 Comments from Trade Unions

6.1 Unite

6.2 Unite the Union welcomes the Workforce Equalities Statement.

6.3 This statement shows the Council's commitment to placing equalities at the heart of everything that we do. The diversity of the city is increasing, and the Council needs to become more reflective of the city that it serves, and this statement seals its commitment in achieving this. Inclusive decision making and leadership will also help ease the disparities that exist within the city and the workforce.

6.4 Unite the Union would like to thank officers for being allowed to give feedback and input into the statement and hopes that resource will be given so that the aims within the statement are achieved.

6.5 Unison

6.6 We note the statement, and we want to work with the Council in making sure that the statement evolves and continues to be fit for purpose. We note the work that the Council has done around race so that the Council reflects its communities and UNISON will continue to support our members from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic staff. UNISON to work with the Council around other protected characteristics and believe we need to do more to support our disabled colleagues.

6.7 We will reserve the right to come to Committee in the future if believe that the statement is not reflected in the delivery of services, jobs and opportunities form staff.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 Personnel Committee are requested to approve the Workforce Equalities Statement.