

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Human Resources Sub Group - 31 July 2019
Subject: Update on BAME Workforce Review
Report of: Head of Workforce Strategy

Summary

This report provides an update on work to review the Council's policy and procedures as they relate to race equality. This work is being progressed in the context of data on employee disciplinary cases considered by the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee at its February meeting.

Recommendations

The Sub Group is asked to note the report.

Wards Affected: All

Contact Officers:

Name: Helen Grantham
Position: Interim Director of HROD
Telephone: 0161 600 8380
E-mail: helen.grantham@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Sam McVaigh
Position: Head of Workforce Strategy
Telephone: 0161 234 3976
E-mail: s.mcvaigh@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Keiran Barnes
Position: Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Manager
Telephone: 0161 234 3036
E-mail: keiran.barnes@manchester.gov.uk

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.

Workforce Equality Profile 2018-19

1. Overview: Our Approach to Workforce Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

- 1.1 A focus on workforce equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is both a key strand of the Council's Our People Strategy and a core component of the Authority's corporate approach to equalities more broadly. Through this work, the Council is seeking to deliver improvements in three distinct areas:
- **Get in:** increasing the diversity of the workforce to bring this more in-line with the diversity of our communities.
 - **Get on:** ensuring the day-to-day experience and engagement of all our employees is a positive one and not adversely affected by their community of identity.
 - **Get up:** enabling and increasing the progressing and promotion of employees from protected groups, in particular BAME and disabled employees, to support diversity at all levels of the organisation.
- 1.2 It should be noted that work here is building on both a strong foundation of historic activity and a more recent evidence base to indicate some clear strengths in current practice. This is demonstrated by both the Council's 2018 accreditation at the Excellent level of the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) and the positive findings of a 2018 independent workforce equality review.
- 1.3 A range of actions are currently being progressed to drive improvement here, building on a broad evidence base of workforce data (including the annual workforce equality report), employee engagement and independent review. These priorities broadly focus on the following areas:
- Strengthened strategic approaches to support the recruitment, workforce experience and progression of BAME and disabled employees
 - A refreshed approach to workforce EDI engagement
 - A refreshed framework for and approach to EDI learning and development
 - Strengthened EDI governance approach
 - A clearer EDI communications strategy
 - Refreshed EDI policy and guidance documents
- 1.4 The Council has committed to codesign the approaches to these priorities in partnership with staff.
- 1.5 It is worth noting that the areas of focus noted above reflect challenges seen nationally across the public sector generally and local authorities specifically. However, the Council recognises that it has a clear opportunity and obligation to affect change and improvement here.

2. Reviewing Our Approaches to Ensuring Race Equality

- 2.1 In February of this year a report to the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee on HR casework noted that a significantly higher proportion of

disciplinary cases relate to BAME staff than the organisational norm (34% across the three year reference period compared to an overall representation of 21% at the time). As the report noted, there is no evidence that this trend relates to any inappropriate or racist action and the position is in line with national evidence which shows that individuals from a BAME background are 1.5 to 2 times more likely to be subject to disciplinary action compared to white employees.

- 2.2 The overarching activity on workforce equality noted above is being progressed as a priority and, as noted above, is intended to support not only representation and senior level representation but also the day-to-day employee experience and is therefore relevant here. The Council's is also participating in work across public services in Greater Manchester to strengthen race equality in particular.
- 2.3 However, given the significant level of disparity Officers recognised the need for a detailed and independent analysis of Council policies and practices to understand any explicit or implicit implications which may impact on race equality. The aim of this work is to both identify any actions related to addressing the specific disproportionality in terms of disciplinary cases as well as to ensure broader action on race equality progresses on a sound and well informed basis.
- 2.4 The Council has secured the support of two experienced and respected EDI professionals to undertake this work: Mags Bradbury (Associate Director for Employee Wellbeing, Inclusion & Community at the Manchester Foundation Trust) and David Codner (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager at the Christie). - Whilst both individuals are NHS employees their support is being provided as independent experts and not as representatives of the NHS. The review team provides sufficient independence, whilst also bringing an understanding of the organisational and City contexts and proven experience and demonstrable credibility in the area.
- 2.5 Work on the review commenced in mid May and is anticipated to be concluded by September. The agreed high level specification for this work is appended below for information.
- 2.6 Overall there are two main components to the review: desktop research (with support from relevant officers) and stakeholder engagement. The desktop research component has now been concluded and focused primarily on a consideration of:
 - A sample of HR cases (i.e. grievance, disciplinary, management of attendance) with specific attention to cases where the employee identifies as BAME
 - HROD policy and guidance
 - Workforce data (overall BAME representation and distribution by service and by grade)
 - Organisational Development / Learning and Development approaches to support progression

- EDI approaches (considering both the work of the EDI Team and the extent to which EDI matters are considered in the broader spectrum of non-EDI focused HROD work)

The stakeholder engagement component of the review is about to commence and will include:

- A workshop session with a sample of HROD officers
- A workshop session with the Corporate Equality Champions Group
- Facilitated discussions with the Trade Unions
- Facilitated discussions with representatives from the employee EDI network group for race and relevant trade union self organising groups

2.7 The review team is clear that its methodology aims to provide an objective assessment of the 'as is' based on the evidence available, both qualitative and quantitative, and to use this to define a progressive assessment of what improvements can be considered.

2.8 Emerging Key Lines of Enquiry

2.8.1 Whilst the review is very much still a work in progress, a number of key lines of enquiry are being pursued by the review team to help frame their considerations Broadly these are:

Leadership: the extent to which authentic, visible and active leadership is provided to the race equality agenda from the top of the organisation; the extent to which this extends throughout organisational tiers and local / individual leadership on race equality and EDI more generally is embedded

Governance: the extent to which EDI is built into the organisation's governance arrangements, both those relating to EDI considerations (i.e. Equality Champions Group) and more universal arrangements; the extent to which these support the advancement of race equality at the Council

Consistency and fairness: the extent to which management of BAME employees across a number of management responsibilities is comparable to non-BAME counterparts; the extent to which BAME employees' work-related outcomes can be deemed to be fair and equitable

Mainstreaming and ownership: the extent to which race equality and EDI consideration more broadly is owned and progressed as part of the organisation's business as usual; the extent to which equality is progressed as a corporate concern or a routine service-level activity

2.8.2 Throughout the review, the team is giving due consideration to which aspects of its findings are specifically race-related to satisfy the particular focus of the review, and which findings are more broadly EDI-related, and can achieve improvement for numerous characteristic groups.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 As noted above, work is now well underway with the independent review of race equality previously noted to the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee in February. This work, in part, is intended to support the Council in addressing the disparity in relation to disciplinary cases noted by that meeting. However, the intention is that it will provide a broader basis to support progress with the Council's wider work in relation to race equality noted in section 1 above.
- 3.2 The report's findings will be available in September and follow up actions will then be overseen by the City Solicitor (SMT lead for Equalities) with the support of the Council's EDI team and oversight of the Executive Members for Equalities and HR. However, this work has been noted as a priority for SMT as a whole and the Chief Executive has emphasised the importance of a continued corporate focus on equality led from the most senior level.