

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION SUB-COMMITTEE
Friday, 22 November 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Sub-Committee held at Committee Rooms, West Wing, Guildhall on Friday, 22 November 2024 at 10.00 am

Present

Members:

Deputy Andrien Meyers (Chair)
Deputy Randall Anderson
Caroline Haines (Ex-Officio Member)

Officers:

Sarah Guerra	- Equalities Director
Alice Reeves	- Corporate Strategy & Performance
Sacha Than	- Corporate Strategy & Performance
Cindy Vallance	- People and Human Resources
Holly Booth	- Remembrancer's Department
Matthew Cooper	- Town Clerk's Department
Mark Gettleson	- Town Clerk's Department
Gregory Moore	- Deputy Town Clerk
Kate Doidge	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Joanna Abeyie (Deputy Chair), Alderman Sir Charles Bowman, Deputy Peter Dunphy, Florence Keelson-Anfu, Deputy Charles Lord, Judith Pleasance, and Deputy Henry Pollard.

Deputy Peter Dunphy, Florence Keelson-Anfu, Judith Pleasance, and Deputy Henry Pollard observed the meeting online.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 4th September 2024 be approved as an accurate record.

4. INTRODUCTION TO THE EQUALITIES DIRECTOR

The Sub-Committee welcomed Sarah Guerra, the new Equalities Director for the City of London Corporation.

5. EQUITY, EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION (EEDI) REVIEW UPDATE

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Chief Strategy Officer, concerning the activities since the last meeting of the Sub-Committee in relation to the Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI) Review. It was noted by the

Sub-Committee that the consultants were now able to survey 4,000 respondents, an increase from the original 200. This meant that the survey would be sent to all staff and all Members of the Court of Common Council.

Following a query, the Sub-Committee heard that there had been a total of 3 bids through the procurement process. Some consultants had been directly targeted via suggestions through the City Corporation's networks, whilst others had been targeted via the responsible procurement platform. There were 2 people from the successful consultancy leading the review, who would receive support from City Corporation officers.

It was intended for the consultants to present the baseline findings to the Sub-Committee at its meeting in February 2025. The recommendations following the completion of the review would then be received by the Sub-Committee for decision at its meeting in June 2025.

It was queried how it was determined what matters were in and out of scope for the review. The response was that those that were out of scope were part of pre-existing workstreams, such as the HR Policy Framework Review or pay, reward and TCs which was being looked at as part of the People Strategy. Other elements, such as Elections or Lord Mayor's Show would be difficult to incorporate due to the agreed timescales of the Review. Work had taken place to ensure the consultants were briefed appropriately across those areas and officers from across the Corporation would be providing the consultants with clear overviews to understand the out-of-scope workstreams. However, depending on the recommendations that the consultants proposed in April 2025, the focus could then be revisited as part of Phase 2.

RESOLVED – That the report be received, and its contents noted.

6. **SOCIAL MOBILITY EMPLOYER INDEX BENCHMARKING UPDATE**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Chief Strategy Officer, concerning the City Corporation's result and ranking for the Social Mobility Employer Index for 2024.

A Member queried what could be done to push the initiatives in departments including Environment Department and Department of Community and Children's Services, noting that Environment Department had a wide range of employees. The Sub-Committee heard that the Equalities Director was in early conversations with the Executive Director of Environment, focusing on the diversity of the workforce and the challenges and barriers, to develop a plan together.

Members raised that the number of employers part of the Social Mobility Foundation had not expanded further. It was noted that it was a question of whether the City Corporation was utilising its convening power with sufficient impact. This topic would further be expanded upon in the next item.

It was questioned why the City Corporation's ranking in the Social Mobility Index had fluctuated throughout the years. The response was that the approach

to the Social Mobility Index had changed over time, including how the submission was structured which may have contributed to the fluctuation. In terms of aims for next year's submission, this depended on the City Corporation's capability to reach them.

RESOLVED – That the report be received, and its contents noted.

7. **PROGRESS TOGETHER UPDATE**

The Sub-Committee welcomed the CEO of Progress Together. The Sub-Committee were sighted on a presentation, which covered the purpose of Progress Together, the importance of promoting socio-economic diversity, the challenges of meeting this target. Following the presentation, the Sub-Committee asked questions and made comments, summarised below:

- Referencing discussion in an earlier item, it was queried what could be done to expand the numbers of organisations involved in social mobility and socio-economic diversity. The response was that it may be that organisations were currently doing very little with socio-economic diversity and mobility and thus did not communicate this publicly. However, there was also a lot of public anti-EDI rhetoric that meant that was organisations were not publicly communicating or sharing their work on EDI. Continued silence on this topic would mean that the targets of improving socio-economic diversity would not be met, and removing this stigma was one of the biggest challenges.
- It was raised that the work of Progress Together should not be viewed or operate in isolation, with the Member highlighting the Women Pivoting to Digital Taskforce. This Taskforce also aimed for cultural change, and the City Corporation had role in providing opportunity and visibility for both these matters.
- One of the aims of Progress Together was to facilitate a shift to skills-based organisations. However, it was noted that for global organisations, diversity was defined differently within different contexts – for instance, socio-economic diversity appeared to be a particular issue for the UK, which made it more difficult for global organisations to understand its importance. With 50% of Progress Together's organisations being international, and it was a question of facilitating difficult conversations and being aware of the language used when talking with global peers.
- It was noted that many investors were interested in socio-economic diversity, and a Member queried whether if there was progress with investing in venture capital, for instance. The response was that these were often the hardest markets to break into, and there was not much progress in venture capital. However, there was a real opportunity for local authority pension funds and investment, and the City Corporation had influence in pushing this matter.

RESOLVED – That the report be received, and its contents noted.

8. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**
Referral regarding Member E-mail

The Sub-Committee noted that the Chairman of Policy & Resources, at the last meeting of the Court of Common Council, had indicated his intention to refer a matter concerning a particular email to the Sub-Committee. This was raised at the recent meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee, and the Committee agreed to invite the Sub-Committee to consider this matter. The Sub-Committee were invited to consider if there was any action that it wished to take, under paragraph E of its terms of reference.

The Sub-Committee discussed the possible actions it could take, including suggesting guidance to members that any communications sent by Members, even if it was not produced by the Member, that could be misconstrued as offensive was the same as it if it had been produced by the Member. There were also links to Member development and training, especially in relation to the upcoming elections in 2025, and the requirement of mandatory training on certain matters. However, the Sub-Committee did note that these matters were not within its remit.

It was therefore agreed that the Sub-Committee refer this matter to the Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee under its responsibilities for the City of London Corporation Member Code of Conduct. It was also agreed that the Sub-Committee further recommended considering further Member training, including what training would be mandatory and how this could be enforced.

RESOLVED – That the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Sub-Committee note the referral from the Policy & Resources Committee, and invite the Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee to consider the matter under its responsibility in overseeing the City of London Corporation’s Member Code of Conduct, with a further recommendation to the Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee to consider further Member training, including what training is mandatory and consider how this may be enforced.

10. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

11. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on 4th September 2024 be approved as an accurate record.

12. **EVENTS AND VENUE ACCESSIBILITY**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the City Remembrancer, concerning an update on venue accessibility and processes for events at the City Corporation.

13. NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE

There were no non-public questions.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE SUB COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

One item of non-public urgent business was raised.

The meeting ended at 11.27 am

Chairman

Contact Officer: Kate Doidge
Kate.Doidge@cityoflondon.gov.uk