

Committee(s): Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Sub-Committee – For Decision Policy and Resources Committee – For Decision Corporate Services Committee – For decision	Dated: 12/12/2022 19/01/2023 17/01/2023
Subject: Proposal to agree a timeline for consultation on Equality Objectives 2023 to 2027	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1,2,3,4,5, 8
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Emma Moore, Chief Operating Officer	For Decision
Report author: Ms. Saida Bello, Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, EDI directorate	

Summary

The purpose of this report is to agree a timeline for consultation on new overarching Equality Objectives for the City of London Corporation (CoLC). The proposed Equality Objectives will be applicable to all departments in the City of London Corporation (CoLC), its institutions, and its public functions.

Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the CoLC is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED is supported by specific duties which require public bodies to set themselves specific, measurable equality objectives every four years.

The current four-yearly Equality Objectives covered the period between 2016 and 2020, and therefore, need to be refreshed.

This report recommends that new Equality Objectives are agreed and that stakeholders are consulted on the draft Equality Objectives for 12 weeks as proposed by the timeline in Appendix 1. This proposal will ensure that the CoLC is compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and related regulations. The consultation period will allow key stakeholders including staff, residents, institutions, city workers, Members, and other stakeholders to contribute to the development of the CoLC's overarching Equality Objectives.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Agree that internal consultation can commence on the proposed Equality Objectives 2023 to 2027

- As an interim measure, to agree that the current Equality Objectives in paragraph 2 above will remain applicable until the Court of Common Council approves the new Equality Objectives in 2023
- Note that revised proposals will come back to this committee in March 2023 for approval to progress to external consultation
- Note the planned timeline in Appendix 1 of the attached report

Main Report

Background

1. The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) is supported by specific duties under the Equality Act 2010 ([Specific Duties Regulations 2011](#)) which require public bodies to set themselves, specific and measurable equality objectives every four years.

Current Position

2. The CoLC's current four-yearly Equality Objectives covered 2016 to 2020 and they are set out below. The previous Equality Objectives aimed to:
 - Increase community engagement and improve cohesion within our communities so that people feel safe
 - Support the City's most disadvantaged groups and develop our understanding of our communities
 - Improve the way we listen to our communities and respond to their feedback to improve our services
 - Promote staff development and career progression to ensure equality of opportunity for promotion and the development of a workforce that reflects the make-up of our communities
3. Progress against these objectives during the relevant period will be tested as part of the internal consultation process and reported back to this Sub-Committee.

Proposals

4. The Local Government Association (LGA) has developed the [Equalities Framework for Local Government](#) (EFLG) which provides guidance for improving performance in relation to equalities. This enables local authorities to assess their performance against best practice.
5. The four key areas set out by the LGA in the EFLG to support local authorities in benchmarking their equality functions are as follows:
 - i. Understanding and Working with your Communities
 - ii. Leadership and Organisational Commitment
 - iii. Responsive Services and Customer Care
 - iv. Diverse and Engaged Workforce

6. In accordance with the EFLG framework, the four proposed Equality Objectives for the CoLC will include the following broad areas:

Equality Objective 1 – Understanding and Working with our Communities

Promoting a data-led and evidence-based approach to understanding and working with our communities

Equality Objective 2 – Leadership and Organisational Commitment

Leading on a broad and intersectional approach to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 which includes social mobility and other underrepresented groups

Equality Objective 3 – Responsive Services and Customer Care

Co-creating a community-centred approach to service delivery bolstered by an effective community engagement strategy

Equality Objective 4 – Diverse and Engaged Workforce

Enabling staff development and career progression to ensure equality of opportunity for all and the development of a workforce that reflects the composition of our communities

7. Not all activities of CoLC is local government orientated. However, it is proposed that the wording on the Equality Objectives be adjusted through the consultation, so it adequately reflects all that we do.

Proposed timeline for consultation

8. Over the next three months (December 2022 to February 2023), the EDI directorate will consult with relevant internal departments, and the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of all committees on the four Equality Objective areas. Following internal consultation, the EDI directorate will bring a report on the four new Equality Objectives to the EDI Sub-Committee in March 2023. The report will also go to the Corporate Services Committee, the Policy and Resources Committee and to the Court of Common Council. It is proposed that a consultation with wider stakeholders take place between May and July 2023 for the minimum consultation period of 12 weeks.

The above timeline aligns with ongoing plans for the development of a wider community engagement strategy. This will be delivered by the Head of Campaigns and Community Engagement in the Deputy Chief Executive and Town Clerk's office.

Our aspirations

9. Crucially, the EFLG has three levels of achievement which can be used to benchmark local authorities. Our aspirations are to move from our current position as a “Developing” local authority to “Achieving” and then to “Excellent”. We intend to move from “Developing” in 2023 to “Excellent” by the end of the proposed Equality Objectives in 2027.

This proposal for new Equality Objectives 2023 to 2027 and for consultation within an agreed timescale, will be the first step towards the realisation of our aspirations. We, therefore, recommend these proposals to the EDI Sub-Committee.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications

The proposals align with outcomes 1, 2 3, 4, 5 and 8 of the Corporate Plan 2018 to 2023. It also aligns with the CoLC’s Social Mobility Strategy 2018 to 2028 and other Strategic Plans.

Resource implications – The project led by the EDI directorate is cross-cutting and it will have resource implications for all CoLC departments, services and institutions. Consequently, each department and institution should consider the human and financial resources required to achieve the Equality Objectives of the CoLC and to comply with the CoLC obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and related regulations.

Legal implications – The Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) is supported by the specific duties regulation which requires public bodies to set themselves, specific and measurable equality objectives every four years. This proposal will enable the CoLC to comply with its obligations and specific duties regulations mentioned in the Equality Act.

Risk implications – The risk of non-compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and related regulations includes reputational damage and the possibility of the proceedings being brought by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission.

Equalities implications – This proposal will enable the CoLC to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010, Section 149 which covers the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Specific Duties regulations mentioned above. This proposal involves setting objectives required to comply with the Equality Act 2010. This proposal, is therefore, likely to have a positive impact on citizens protected by existing equality legislation which are age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

The proposal allows for a 12-week consultation period to enable key stakeholders including staff, equality representatives, staff networks and other stakeholders to be consulted on the changes and to contribute to the Equality Objectives.

Furthermore, an Equality Impact assessment will be completed to ensure that both positive and negative impacts of this proposal have been considered.

Climate implications – N/A

Security implications – N/A

Conclusion

10. The EDI Sub-Committee are asked to agree the recommendations set out above.

This proposal will ensure that the CoLC continues to be compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and the specific duties regulations in paragraph 1 above.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Proposed timeline for consultation

Background Papers

None

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Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

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Appendix 1 – Proposed timeline for consultation

City of London Corporation's Equality Objectives 2023 to 2027

