

Committee(s): Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Sub-Committee	Date 7th July 2023
Subject: Dignity At Work Advisers	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?	N/A
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 Information
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Summary

The Dignity at Work Advisers (DAWAs) scheme was an initiative recommended by the Tackling Racism Taskforce (TRT) in 2021. This scheme operates entirely outside of formal investigatory or disciplinary procedures. It is concerned with the early resolution of complaints, to support and guide employees who bring forward a complaint regarding bullying, harassment, discrimination and other concerns.

On 10th January 2023, at the request of some employees, the EDI Directorate met with the DAWAs for the first time to understand their key challenges and how this scheme could be developed and improved for the benefit of employees.

Subsequently, the EDI Directorate organised refresher training for DAWAs on 17th March 2023 which was delivered by the Andrea Adams Consultancy (AAC). AAC has worked with the City of London Corporation on this scheme since 2021 and has trained over a dozen DAWAs.

The purpose of this report is to highlight the important work that the DAWAs are doing to contribute to the wellbeing of employees and to reduce formal complaints and grievances in the workplace.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note:

- That the DAWAs scheme was introduced as a result of the TRT recommendations in 2021.
- The DAWA scheme is being led by the EDI Directorate to support all employees and to contribute to better wellbeing in the workplace.

Main Report

Background

1. One of the recommendations of the Tackling Racism Taskforce (TRT) in the staffing workstream was to create a safe space for staff to report issues of discrimination in the workplace.
2. While the DAWA scheme does not solely focus upon issues involving discrimination, it is an effective mechanism for creating a safe space to report discrimination, bullying, harassment and other matters. In addition, it strengthens the employee voice channels, promotes employee wellbeing and supports the early resolution of conflicts in confidential yet supportive environments.

Dignity at Work Advisors – The Current Position

1. On 10th January 2023, the EDI Directorate met with the DAWAs to understand the key challenges that they faced across the City Corporation and its institutions.
2. The key challenge that was shared by the attendees of this meeting was for the DAWA scheme to be coordinated by the EDI Directorate and to provide support to the DAWAs.
3. The training for DAWAs introduced by the CoLC in 2021, provides that the Director of EDI is the DAWA Scheme Manager and the EDI Officer is the Assistant DAWA Scheme Manager.
4. At the time of the meeting in January, the City Corporation had 7 Dignity at Work Advisors: 4 within the City Corporation, 1 based at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and 3 DAWAs at The Barbican.
5. Since January 2023, the 3 DAWAs at the Barbican Centre have stepped down from the role, due to not feeling supported by their managers. However, two new officers at the Barbican Centre have since volunteered to operate as DAWAs and have been appointed to this post. A separate data collection piece will need to be conducted with DAWAs at the Barbican, to understand any issues and opportunities they experience when delivering this role and identify effective solutions to prevent this situation from happening the future.
6. The EDI Directorate is working with DAWAs to ensure that internal comms is provided concerning the DAWA scheme and the intranet page is updated to reflect accurately all the staff in this voluntary role.
7. In addition, the EDI Directorate has organised quarterly wellbeing meetings for DAWAs to support them and to provide them with a safe space to discuss any concerns.

8. DAWAs will also be invited to EDI Board meetings to enable them to promote the service and to provide updates to the board regarding the work they do. This will help strengthen the employee voice.
9. On 17th March 2023, The EDI Directorate held a DAWA refresher training day for staff operating in these voluntary roles. This was delivered by the Andrea Adams Consultancy (AAC). It was well received by all staff who attended the event.
10. During the training day, the AAC advised that the EDI Directorate should keep a log of common themes. The common themes that have been brought to the DAWAs so far pertain to breaches the Fair Recruitment and Selection policy, bullying and harassment, and poor treatment of staff work.
11. At the request of staff, another DAWA training day is also planned to take place in the summer of 2023. The DAWA scheme is also being promoted at the staff inductions.
12. DAWAs at the City Corporation and its institutions are keen for visibility and have requested lanyards so staff can recognise them when they are in the building. The EDI Directorate is currently exploring this option and other options that will raise the profile of the DAWA scheme. This will help create an open and inclusive workplace culture.
13. A buddy system has also been implemented which will see DAWAs from different departments and institutions buddying up to support each other while operating in these voluntary roles.
14. The EDI Directorate will continue to manage this scheme. The Director of EDI will liaise regularly with the Assistant Director of Business Partnering in HR, as recommended by the Executive Director of HR and Chief People Officer. This joined up working between HR and the EDI Directorate will help promote the DAWA scheme to employees across the City Corporation.

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 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.

Climate implications – N/A.

Security implications – N/A.

Conclusion

15. In conclusion, the EDI Directorate has been proactive in implementing this TRT recommendation to create a safe space for staff to report issues of discrimination and other concerns raised by staff.
16. This has resulted in more employees volunteering for the role and more employees asking for training. The DAWA scheme will help enhance an open and inclusive culture and will have a positive impact on the aspirations of the City Corporation to become an employer of choice.

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