



Subject:	Equality and Diversity - Five Year Review of the Equality Scheme 2015-20 and Annual Report 2019-20
Date:	18th December 2020
Reporting Officer:	John Walsh, City Solicitor / Director of Legal & Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Sarah Williams, Governance and Compliance Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of report or summary of main issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to submit for approval the following Equality and Diversity Reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Five Year Review of the Equality Scheme (Appendix 1)• Updated Equality Scheme (Appendix 2)• Annual Report 2019/20 (Appendices 3a and b)
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	It is recommended that the Committee approves the following in compliance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Five Year Review of the Equality Scheme;• Updated Equality Scheme;• Annual Report 2019/20

3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report annually to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) on the progress of the implementation of its Equality Scheme 2. Carry out a review of their Equality Scheme every five years and make any relevant updates to a revised Equality Scheme. <p>Also every five years, as recommended by the Equality Commission’s revised Section 75 Guide for Public Authorities public authorities should then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. undertake an Audit of Inequalities to identify inequalities across the nine Section 75 categories, relevant to a public authority’s functions and 4. use the audit information to develop and implement an Action Plan to address inequalities relative to its functions which is recommended to align with the public authority’s corporate planning cycle.
3.2	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>Five-Year Review of the Equality Scheme</p> <p>An Equality Scheme describes certain arrangements that a public authority has set up and which it is obliged to apply and follow as a means of fulfilling the duties imposed on it by the duties set out in Section 75:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity, and (2) regard to the desirability of promoting good relations. <p>This includes arrangements for (a) training staff, (b) assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity, and (c) monitoring any adverse impact of those policies that have been adopted.</p>
3.4	<p>The purpose of a Five Year Review is to examine how the Equality Scheme arrangements have been applied and to assess how effective they have been in assisting the Council to comply with Section 75 duties. A summary of this report is sent to ECNI which sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the scheme’s implementation has benefitted individuals within the Section 75 groups • how leaders within the authority are engaged in the scheme’s implementation • challenges and how they have been overcome • lessons learned, and • good practice <p>The Five Year Review of the Equality Scheme is attached at Appendix 1.</p>

3.5	<p>Equality Scheme</p> <p>The ECNI advises that public authorities are not obliged to make changes to their Equality Schemes, but they may need to be amended to ensure they are up-to-date to reflect any changes that have been made to a public authority’s organisational structure, functions or contact details. Such changes should be communicated to consultees however these changes would not require that a new scheme be developed for Commission approval.</p> <p>An updated Equality Scheme reflecting minor structural or functional changes is set out in Appendix 2. Once approved, this will be signed by the Lord Mayor and submitted to the ECNI.</p>
3.6	<p>Annual Report</p> <p>The Annual Report 2019/20 is a commitment in our Equality Scheme. It is an opportunity to update on progress we have made on implementing the arrangements set out in our Equality Scheme to discharge our Section 75 statutory duties. The date for submission of the Annual Report to ECNI is usually 31 August each year, however, due to the pandemic this has been extended by 3 months.</p>
3.7	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>The documents will be submitted to the ECNI once approved by Council. The Equality & Diversity Unit will then lead on the development of a new Audit of Inequalities and Equality Action Plan for the period from April 2021. It is planned that a draft version of these documents will be brought to Committee early next year to be able to issue for public consultation.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>This work is covered by existing budgets.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The actions outlined contribute to our legal compliance regarding the promotion of equality and good relations.</p>
4.0	<p>Documents Attached</p> <p>Appendix 1: Five Year review of the Equality Scheme</p> <p>Appendix 2: Updated Equality Scheme</p> <p>Appendix 3a: Annual Report to the ECNI 2019/20 – Part A: Equality & Good Relations</p> <p>Appendix 3b: Annual Report to the ECNI 2019/20 – Part B: Disability</p>