

## **Equalities Scrutiny Review Final Report - Cover Report**

### **Introduction**

1. This cover report presents the final report from the Equalities Scrutiny Review and asks Cabinet to approve the recommendations arising from the review.

### **Background to Review**

2. In September 2013, the Corporate & Scrutiny Management Committee received a report highlighting the criteria for achieving Excellence for the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG), together with an update on progress in implementing the council's Excellence Equalities Improvement Action Plan against each of the EFLG performance areas. In November 2013 the Committee considered how Scrutiny might help the authority to achieve excellence level for the Equality Framework for Local Government. Having considered a number of review options, the Committee agreed to proceed with a review and set up a Task Group made up of the following members to carry out the review on their behalf:

- Cllr Ruth Potter
- Cllr John Galvin
- Cllr Neil McIlveen
- Cllr Lynn Jeffries

4. The Task Group worked on the review between early December 2013 and September 2014. Their work was based on the following review remit:

#### Aim

To encourage wider involvement in the Council's democratic traditions i.e. elections, decision making and community engagement, by raising awareness across York's Communities of Identity, and in particular those who have protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

### Objectives:

- i. Examine national best practice by other Local Authorities currently achieving excellence level in their democratic traditions
- ii. Identify optimum methods for raising awareness of the democratic process amongst York's Communities of Identity.
- iii. Identify any barriers in York preventing the involvement of York's Communities of Identity, and identify possible solutions
- iv. Identify appropriate equalities training required for members to help them better serve Communities of Identity within their wards

### **Review Recommendations**

5. In November 2014, the Corporate & Scrutiny Management Committee considered the review findings presented in the final report at Appendix 1 and endorsed the Task Group's draft recommendations listed below:
  - i. Feedback from consultation to be taken into account as part of the ongoing work to update the Council's website
  - ii. New Councillor Induction to include ward demographics / profiles and information on the Joint Service Needs Assessment at ward level
  - iii. Members training on corporate equalities and at ward level to be mandatory.
  - iv. Member Training to be provided on Community Impact Assessments (CIAs)
  - v. Consideration to be given to improving CYC communication, including better use of Community Hubs, use of other organisations communication tools, and University Community Groups
  - vi. EAG to consider its membership to ensure it properly reflects all of York's Communities of Identity and identify improvements in the way it engages with those Communities, recognising that the organisations currently involved do not represent all of the COIs in the city.

- vii. Facilities to be provided in the lobby area of West Offices to enable improved access to information for, and greater participation by members of the public.

### **Council Plan 2011-15**

6. This review supports the Council's corporate priorities of building strong communities and protecting vulnerable people.

### **Options**

7. Having considered the final report at Appendix 1 and its associated annexes, Cabinet may choose to amend and/or approve, or reject the recommendations arising from the review as set out in paragraph 4 above.

### **Implications & Risk Management**

8. The implications and risks associated with the recommendations above are detailed in paragraphs 53-55 of the review final report at Appendix 1.

### **Recommendations**

9. Having considered the final report and its annexes, the Cabinet is recommended to approve the recommendations shown in paragraphs 4 above.

Reason: To conclude the Scrutiny Review in line with CYC Scrutiny procedures and protocols.

### **Contact Details**

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**Report Approved**

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### **Specialist Implications Officer(s)**

Legal Implications: Andrew Docherty - AD ITT & Governance

Equalities: Sharon Brown - Performance & Service Improvement Manager

HR & Financial: Charlie Croft - AD Communities, Culture & Public Realm

**Wards Affected:**

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

**Background Papers:** None

**Annexes:**

**Appendix 1** – Equalities Scrutiny Review Final Report