

Resources and Equality Scrutiny Panel

16 March 2023

Report title	Race Equality Code and Ethnicity Pay Gap Actions Update	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paula Brookfield Governance and Equalities	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable Director	David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer	
Originating service	Equality Diversity & Inclusion / Human Resources	
Accountable employee	Jin Takhar Tel Email	Head of EDI 01902 554650 Jin.takhar@wolverhampton.gov.uk
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Report to be/has been considered by		

Recommendation(s) for the panel:

The scrutiny panel is recommended to:

1. Note the Race Equality Code requirements and the actions achieved to date by the Council.
2. Agree to receive a further update which will highlight the priorities and actions following final feedback against the Race Equality Code provisions – as set out within a proposed Race Action Plan for the Council.
3. Note the actions delivered to date following the Ethnicity Pay Gap report presented in June 2022.
4. To seek further feedback on proposed changes in readiness for the Ethnicity Pay Gap report for 2022-2023
5. Advise on any recommended changes to the Council's work on Race Equality

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Resources and Equalities Panel with an update on the Race Equality Code 2021 and the Councils self-assessment against the Code and outcomes achieved to date.
- 1.2 This report will also provide details of the actions delivered to date following the Ethnicity Pay Gap Report presented to Resources and Equalities panel in June 2022 – this to ensure our continued commitment and focus around narrowing the Race Pay Gap within the Council. And to seek further feedback on proposed changes.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Race Equality Code and its accountability framework is designed to provide organisations across all sectors and sizes, the opportunity to address inequality within Governance and Senior Leadership Teams. The RACE Code is issued and supported by the Governance Forum. It is effectively an independent review of the approach taken by the authority and a process that Birmingham City Council, Coventry City Council and West Midlands Combined Authority have been through.
- 2.2 The independent performance framework examines Organisational culture, policy and practice to determine whether appropriate governance structures, systems and reporting arrangements are embedded and in place to address the underrepresentation of Black and other ethnic groups in the senior leadership team.
- 2.3 City of Wolverhampton Council have been working with Dr Karl George MBE since October 2022 and have been undertaking a robust self-assessment against the 54 provisions against the code.
- 2.4 Ethnicity Pay Gap report was presented in June 2022.
- 2.5 Feedback provided by Resources and Equalities Scrutiny Panel in June 2022 has been used to improve the ethnicity pay gap report for the 2022 reporting period.
- 2.6 The Office for National statistics (ONS) defines ethnicity pay gaps as ‘the difference between the median hourly earnings of the reference group (white or white British) and other ethnic groups as a proportion of average hourly earnings of the reference group’.
- 2.7 It is recognised that any one term used within the ethnicity report will not be agreeable to everyone. The report has adopted the terminology recommended in the Councils ‘inclusive language’ guide – based on the UK Governments preferred style of writing about ethnicities Writing about ethnicity.
- 2.8 Proposed timeline for report is indicated within the appendices attached, slide no 15 . We will look to provide a full update on the 22/23 position in June.

3.0 Current Position

- 3.1 Race Equality Code – Please refer to appendix one attached for the following information:
- A. Stage One: Pre-assessment process; involving documentation submission and review including a Staff Survey – Completed 1st November 2022 (Slide 4)
 - B. Key Strengths from initial review (Slide 5)
 - C. Statement from Dr Karl George (Slide 6)
 - D. Stage Two: Self-assessment process; ‘Council has submitted ‘commitment statement’ setting out the actions the council will take to deliver against the four key governance principles. Completed 06th March (Slide 7)
 - E. Stage Three: Final self-assessment process; Council has completed a further self-assessment against the 54 provisions of the RACE Equality Code and supporting actions against the Must, Could and Should priorities (Slide 8)
 - F. The Council verbally awarded the Race Equality Code Quality Charter Mark – 08/03/23 (Slide 9)

4.0 Actions delivered to date

- 4.1 Following the Ethnicity Pay Gap Report presented in June 2022 a number of actions have been undertaken:
- A. Proposed Changes (Slide 12)
 - B. Actions undertaken to support equality of opportunity (Slide 13)
 - C. Future actions to be undertaken to support equality of opportunity (Slide 14)
 - D. Timeline for future reporting (Slide 15)

5.0 Next Steps

- 5.1 To seek feedback from Resources and Equalities Scrutiny Panel on the proposed changes as indicated within appendix two (Actions delivered following Ethnicity Pay Gap report presented June 2022)
- 5.2 To commence work on the future actions outlined and start to finalise draft pay gap report for 2022-2023 and schedule reporting as agreed.
- 5.3 To draft race action plan following feedback from the final self- assessment against the 54 provisions of the RACE Equality Code and supporting actions against the Must, Could and Should priorities.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The cost of undertaking the self-assessment in relation to the Race Equality Code was £8,000. This was funded from budgets held in the Equalities service within Governance.
[AS/08032023/D]

7.0 Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications associated with the report.
[AS/080302023/D]

8.0 Equalities Implications

- 8.1 The Council under the Equality Act 2010 has a legal duty to ensure that the authority eliminates unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity & foster good relations. This is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 8.2 The Race Equality Code and actions delivered to date following Ethnicity Pay Gap report presented in June 2022 will help the council to demonstrate our ability to meet the legal obligations as set out above.

9.0 Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Race Equality Code and Ethnicity Pay Gap Report