Report to Business and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Date –   16 April 2024
Key Decision –   Yes
Public/Private –   Public

Portfolio –   Councillor Markus Campbell-Savours, Executive Member - Governance and Transformation
Directorate – Assistant Chief Executive
Lead Officers – Joel Rasbash, Strategic Policy and Scrutiny Advisor and Alex Fitzgerald Assistant Director Strategy and Policy

Title – Scrutiny Committee Update Report

Summary: To consult Members of Business and Resources Scrutiny Committee on the Council's Equality Objectives (2024-28) to inform Executive when it considers the paper on 23 April.

Recommendations: It is recommended that scrutiny:
1. Notes the content of the report to Executive and the legal advice.
2. Considers any elements of the report that could inform the Committee's forward plan or recommendations the Committee may wish to make to the Chairs of other Scrutiny Committees to consider.
3. Make suggestions or recommendations that inform the delivery plan that will be developed during year 1 of the Equality Objectives.

Tracking

Executive:	23 April 2024
Scrutiny:	16 April 2024
Council:	N/A

1. Background

1.1. The Cumberland Equality Objectives (2024-28) sets out the Council's strategic approach to meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in the Equality Act (2010), and the organisations Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

1.2. Executive is being asked to agree an overarching objective that will be delivered through four cross-cutting themes. A delivery plan setting out the specific actions linked to the cross-cutting themes and proposed deliverables will be developed over the first 6 months of the objectives.

1.3. Members are asked to note that the aim of the paper is to develop a four-year approach that focuses on outcomes and ambition for this initial four-year cycle, and that takes the changing nature of Cumberland's society into account.

1.4. Members should note that the Policy and Strategy Team is currently developing an overarching framework on Inequalities that will set out how the organisation will meet the Council Plan priority of Addressing Inequalities. This will include a number of interlocking plans and strategic policies that will bring together action on discrimination, poverty, health inequalities and geographic inequalities.

1.5. Members should also note that targeted engagement has taken place in the development of the Equality Objectives with community organisations representing particularly ethnic minority groups and the LGBT+ community and with the Council's Staff Diversity Networks as well as staff across the Council with specific knowledge and interests in Equality Diversity and Inclusion. The Objectives have also been informed by the widespread engagement with families that Children's Services and Public Health have conducted to inform the Early Help Strategy in development. More in-depth engagement will continue over the summer and autumn to look at how the Council can co-produce its delivery of the Equality Objectives with people who share a protected characteristic (inside and outside the organisation).

1.6. Appendix 1 includes the Legal and Equalities advice to Executive. The finance advice is still pending at time of submission of the report to scrutiny, however Members should note paragraphs 2.14 and 2.15 which set out the resourcing proposals for the Equality Objectives, and that there are no budget pressures in the proposals.

2. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

2.1. This report provides an overview of the Equality Objectives. The Committee is asked to consider the recommendation in this report.

Contact details:

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Appendices attached to report:
- Appendix 1: Equality Objectives
- Appendix 2: Evidence

Background papers:
Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:
- None