

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE

7 January 2015

Equality and Diversity update

Purpose of Report

1. To present the updated annual equality and diversity employment monitoring report. The council is required to produce this information annually as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Background

2. In January 2014 Wiltshire Council published its [equality and diversity employment monitoring report 2012/13](#) on the Wiltshire Council website.
3. The council is required to publish the updated equality and diversity employment monitoring report 2013/2014 by the 31 January 2015.
4. Last year the report was developed to include further information, data and analysis to demonstrate how the council is meeting the PSED, in line with the Equality and Human Rights Commission guide for public authorities on equality information and the equality duty.
5. This year the report was updated to include information about the development of the corporate equality and diversity steering group, the setting of equality objectives and information about maternity returner rates.
6. As part of the PSED the council is also required to publish data on people affected by its policies and practices (for example, service users) and this information is currently being collected by the Equality and Inclusion Lead.

Data Monitoring

7. Currently we collect, monitor and publish data on sex, disability, ethnicity and age in relation to our current workforce, leavers and applicants for employment.
8. Work is ongoing to assess the feasibility of extending the data collected on the protected characteristics on SAP to include: religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships or gender reassignment. This should make the data more accurate and robust in terms of meeting the requirements of the PSED and helping to inform the work on the council's people strategy. Improved data would also assist the council in assessing the impact of its policies and practices on different groups within the workforce and enable the council to identify and take positive steps to address gaps. The improvement of this data forms part of the council's equality objectives.
9. This year's staff survey also asked staff for anonymous data on the extended range of protected characteristics. The results were not available at the time of compiling this report but should when they become available, provide a useful statistical comparator.

10. In general the data contained in the report is positive, with an increase in the percentage of BME and under 25's compared to the previous year. However there was a slight decrease in the percentage of disabled staff to 2.65% from 2.77% in 2013. This is likely to be linked to the voluntary redundancy exercise last year when a higher proportion of disabled staff opted to take voluntary redundancy.
11. The council continues to work closely with the staff disability forum to identify and undertake a variety of work to support disabled colleagues in the workplace and to attract disabled applicants. The council is proud to have been awarded the double tick – positive about disabled people for another year and has again added a wide range of activities to the annual submission, details of which are available on the [wire](#). This year's submission included the council's work on supported internships for disabled young people, updates on work with the staff forums, reasonable adjustment survey, the development of the corporate equality and diversity steering group and the equality objectives.
12. There was an increase in the number of dignity at work cases this year to 19 from 4 in 2013. This will also be reviewed against information from the staff survey once it is available.
13. The council continues to focus on continuing the development of the positive action listed in the monitoring report including the continued development of the four staff forums.

Publishing equality objectives

14. Last year the report noted a number of actions for consideration these subsequently became part of the council's published equality objectives and include:
 - Improve the rate of unknown's for all categories – including consideration of further data cleanse exercises or targeting particular areas where information is low i.e. paper based checks for those who do not have a pc etc.
 - Measures to increase the percentages of under 25 year olds in the council workforce.
 - Reduce the percentage of disabled staff who respond to the staff survey that they have experienced bullying and harassment
 - Increase the range of protected characteristics captured about the workforce via SAP.
15. An additional HR equality objective was later added relating to implementing improvements identified as part of the Stonewall workplace equality index results.
16. The report outlines an interim summary of some of the work carried out to date to work towards these objectives. This work is still ongoing and the intention is that this will be reviewed with the rest of the council's equality objectives in the New Year.
17. Full details of the Council's equality objectives and how these link to the Wiltshire Council business plan are set out on the [Wiltshire Council website](#).

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

18. None.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

19. As set out in the report.

Risk Assessment

20. Statutory requirement to comply with the PSED.

Options Considered

21. None.

Recommendation

22. That the Committee note the contents of this report.

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The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report: None