

CABINET

Subject Heading:

Race, Equality, Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusion (READI) Programme Review.

Cabinet Member:

Councillor Ray Morgon, Leader of the Council

SLT Lead:

Sandy Hamberger, Director of Policy, Strategy and Transformation

Report Author and contact details:

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Policy context:

This report provides an update on the Council's high level action plan agreed by Cabinet in November 2022 to implement the fifteen recommendations from the Council's Commissioned Independent LGA READI review.

Financial summary:

There are no direct financial implications to this decision as this report provides an update to Cabinet regarding progress on the Independent LGA READI Review.

Is this a Key Decision?

This report is a key decision as it has significant effect on two or more Wards.

When should this matter be reviewed?

Bi-annually

Reviewing OSC:

Overview and Scrutiny Board

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Things that matter for residents **X**

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy **X**

Resources - A well run Council that delivers for People and Place. **X**

SUMMARY

- 1.1 In May 2021 the Council commissioned an independent Race, Equality, Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusion (READI) peer review by the LGA.
- 1.2 The review was a commissioned as a pro-active one to ensure the Council was undertaking its statutory Equalities Duties. The review focused on internal policies, procedures and sought experience of staff both in the workplace and undertaking their front-line duties. The review was undertaken by an experienced external team and followed the LGAs scope with a particular emphasis on race.
- 1.3 All those that took part did so on the understanding that contributions made were in confidence and for the sole use of the LGA peer team, whose report would be made public and include improvement recommendations. This is fully in-line with the LGAs sector offer.
- 1.4 The LGAs report was published at the 10th November 2021 Cabinet, along with the Councils Action Plan to deliver the improvement recommendations.
- 1.5 This report provides an update on the progress against the agreed action plan to achieve the improvement recommendations. A further detailed progress update will be provided to staff by the READI Programme Team in due course.
- 1.6 Havering's Vision and Corporate Plan agreed in November 2022 reaffirms its commitment for Havering as a safe place and committed to equality of opportunity for all.
- 1.7 Underpinning this, Havering has a clear zero tolerance to racism and discrimination of any kind, including providers of Council Services.
- 1.8 All Members, Staff, and third party providers are responsible for complying with the Equalities Act requirements and advancing Equality and Diversity and fostering good relations.
- 1.9 Council reports require authors to consider, comment on and address issues that arise from an Equality and Diversity consideration.
- 1.10 Both Members and Officers have access to Equality and Diversity Training and there are mandatory Equality and Diversity objectives in staff Personal Development Review

RECOMMENDATIONS

2.0 This report recommends that:

- Cabinet note the READI Programme Review Progress update in *Appendix 1*.
- All Members continue their support of the READI Programme (Members signed their commitment to Havering pledge upon election).

REPORT DETAIL

3.0 Background

3.1 The Council's commissioned Independent LGA READI Review was undertaken in May 2021. The LGAs Independent report and the Councils action plan to address the fifteen improvement recommendations was published at the Cabinet meeting in November 2021.

3.2 There is a clear governance in place, with the officer and member leads identified. The Councils corporate Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion Group (EDIC's) provides support, advice, assurance and governance to ensure that the council meets our duties as defined in the Equality Act 2010, develop and implement READI related Policies and Action Plan and provides a forum for discussion on matters relating to EDI.

3.3 The Councils READI Team provides support, advice and training in line with the Equalities Act, LGA's Equality Framework for Local Government and the London Chief Executives anti-racism Programme.

3.4 The READI Team will provide a more detailed update for staff that sets out the progress made against internal processes.

3.5 Service areas are responsible for delivering elements of the READI action plan or in some case their own action plans as appropriate.

3.6 The Human Resources service provides monthly updates on EDI workforce dashboard, which includes working towards improving staff diversity disclosures and the data available to inform EDI activity across the Council. This includes information on protected characteristics, Gender Pay Gap.

3.7 The Councils Staff Forums are active, have a time and budget allocation to run a range of events in support of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

3.8 There is a clear Equality and Diversity line of site from the Councils Vision, Corporate Plan, Service Planning, Workforce Strategy, Training and PDR process that ensures the Councils Commitment and individual reasonability and expectations are understood.

3.9 The Councils last LGA Corporate Peer Challenge undertaken in November 2022 noted the progress following the READI review.

REASONS AND OPTIONS

4 Reasons for the decision:

Havering's Vision and Corporate Plan agreed in November 2022 reaffirms its commitment for Havering as a safe place and committed to equality of opportunity for all.

Underpinning this, Havering has a clear zero tolerance to racism and discrimination of any kind, including providers of Council Services.

4.1 Other options considered:

This is not applicable, as this report sets out the required reporting of progress against the agreed action plan.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

5.0 Financial implications and risks:

There are no financial implications associated with reviewing the progress and outcomes of the Race, Inequality, Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusion (READI) Programme. However, the delivery, monitoring and future planning of this may have financial implications for the Council which will be raised through the appropriate channels if and when they arise.

5.1 Legal implications and risks:

There are no significant legal implications and risks associated with reviewing the progress and outcomes of the READI Review as the aim of the review is to ensure the Council meets its Public Sector Equalities Duties whilst eliminating discrimination in the advancement of equality.

5.2 Human Resources implications and risks:

There are no direct HR implications or risks that impact on the Council's workforce as a result of this report. The Council is undergoing organisational restructure and there has been diverse leadership appointments to fit the new TOM's structure. The development of the Council's new careers website and employer brand will give effect to the Council's Workforce Strategy to foster inclusive recruitment that delivers equality, diversity, and inclusion of employees. Workforce planning is being pursued to offer a more planned approach of secondments to learning to offer career progression while nurturing internal talents.

5.3 Equalities implications and risks:

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex/gender, and sexual orientation.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

All the actions in the report are in direct support of advancing equality of opportunity with a positive impact on staff with protected characteristics.

There is no requirement for EQHIA at this stage as the report seeks to update Cabinet about the positive impacts READI team have implemented.

5.4 Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks

The paper seeks to update on the Council's plans to implement improvements requested and identified through the Independent LGA READI review. Whilst there are no direct health and wellbeing implication and risks arising from this update, the READI programme action plan aims to drive equality, diversity and inclusion across the organisation and to eliminate discriminatory practices which will impact positively on the health and psychological wellbeing of the workforce and potentially boost confidence in the corporate Choosing Havering Strategy.

<p>ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS</p>

<p>None relating to this report.</p>

BACKGROUND PAPERS

10th November 2021 Cabinet Report on Independent LGA READI Review 2021 [Cabinet report INDEPENDENT LGA READI REVIEW](#)

10th November 2021 Cabinet Report Appendix – The Council’s Summary Draft Action Plan to Implement the READI Recommendations [READI Appendix v3](#)

9th November 2022 Cabinet Report on [Vision and Corporate Plan](#)

EFLG Standard: [Equality Framework for Local Government | Local Government Association](#)

PSED: [Public sector equality duty - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Equalities Act 2010: [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Appendix

Appendix 1 – LGA READI Programme Improvement Recommendation Progress Update.