

# **NOTICE OF MEETING**

## **EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE**

## TUESDAY, 23 NOVEMBER 2021 AT 12.00 PM

## **COUNCIL CHAMBER - THE GUILDHALL**

Telephone enquiries to James Harris on 023 9260 6065 Email: james.harris@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

If any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting has access requirements, please notify the contact named above.

## Information with regard to public access due to Covid precautions

• Attendees will be requested to undertake an asymptomatic/ lateral flow test within 48 hours of the meeting. Around one in three people who are infected with COVID-19 have no symptoms so could be spreading the virus without knowing it. Asymptomatic testing – getting tested when you don't have symptoms - helps protect people most at risk by helping to drive down transmission rates. We strongly encourage you to take up the habit of regular asymptomatic testing to help prevent the spread of coronavirus to your colleagues and residents you work with.

• We strongly recommend that attendees should be double vaccinated.

• If symptomatic you must not attend and self-isolate following the stay at home guidance issued by Public Health England.

• All attendees are recommended to wear a face covering while moving around within the Guildhall.

• Although it will no longer be a requirement attendees may choose to keep a social distance and take opportunities to prevent the spread of infection

• Hand sanitiser is provided at the entrance and throughout the Guildhall. All attendees are encouraged to make use of hand sanitiser on entry to the Guildhall and are requested to follow the one way system in place.

• Attendees are encouraged book in to the venue (QR code). An NHS test and trace log will be retained and maintained for 21 days for those that cannot or have not downloaded the app.

• Those not participating in the meeting and wish to view proceedings are encouraged to do so remotely via the livestream link.

## Membership

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (Chair) Councillor Simon Bosher (Vice-Chair) Councillor Cal Corkery Councillor Lewis Gosling Councillor Darren Sanders Councillor Jeanette Smith

## **Standing Deputies**

Councillor Ryan Brent Councillor Ben Dowling Councillor George Fielding Councillor Suzy Horton Councillor Gemma New Councillor Scott Payter-Harris

(NB This agenda should be retained for future reference with the Minutes of this meeting.) Please note that the agenda, minutes and non-exempt reports are available to view online on the Portsmouth City Council website: <a href="https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk">www.portsmouth.gov.uk</a>

Deputations by members of the public may be made on any item where a decision is going to be taken. The request should be made in writing to the contact officer (above) by 12 noon of the working day before the meeting, and must include the purpose of the deputation (for example, for or against the recommendation/s). Email requests are accepted.

## <u>A G E N D A</u>

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Declarations of Members' Interests
- 3 Minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2021 (Pages 5 10)

RECOMMENDED that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

4 Living Wage Accreditation - Progress Update Report (Pages 11 - 16)

At Employment Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021 Members were updated on the joint working Officers have undertaken with the Living Wage Foundation. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the progress made to date.

This report provides an update on progress of the Living Wage working group.

It is recommended that a special Employment Committee meeting is scheduled for early January 2022 to allow for a detailed financial analysis to be completed and so the financial impact of seeking accreditation from the forthcoming financial year can be understood. The financial implications of seeking accreditation would need to be addressed as part of the budget setting process; a decision to seek accreditation would therefore need to be made by Full Council.

Whilst it has been confirmed that statutory National Living Wage will increase to £9.50 from April 2022, the Living Wage Foundation have stated that they will not be announcing the increases to Real Living Wage rates of pay until Monday 15<sup>th</sup> November.

Providing the Committee with a further report at a special January meeting will allow for an accurate assessment of financial impacts based upon known Real Living Wage rates for the coming financial year rather than via models based upon assumptions.

## 5 Sickness Absence - Quarterly Report (Pages 17 - 24)

The purpose of this report is to update the Employment Committee about the levels of sickness absence across the council and the actions being taken to manage absence and promote employee wellbeing.

## **RECOMMENDED** that the Committee:

- Continues to monitor sickness absence and ensure appropriate management action is taken to address absenteeism;
- Notes the wellbeing activities undertaken to support attendance and in response to the Covid-19 pandemic; and
- Notes the change in absence levels across the organisation.

## 6 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (Pages 25 - 50)

The purpose of this report is to update members on progress against the actions set out in the Equality and Diversity Strategy 2019 - 2022 and provide an update on the council's actions in regard to Equality Diversity and Inclusion throughout the Covid 19 response (March 2019 to date). The report also outlines a forward plan of action to further enhance and embed the council's commitment to equalities, evidence compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and set out the actions to be taken that will underpin the Council Corporate Plan for Recovery and Renewal.

**Recommended** that members are asked to note the contents of this report and endorse the planned activity to enhance and embed the council's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

## 7 Workforce Profile (Pages 51 - 90)

The purpose of this report to present to the committee the workforce profile for 2019 and for 2020 and to outline how this data will be used going forward.

The Committee are asked to note the contents of the report and attached workforce profile and note the key actions and next steps.

## 8 Future Working Arrangements (Connectivity Project) (Pages 91 - 96)

This report provides an update on the emerging Connectivity Programme that is tasked with delivering projects to support and enable our new ways of working.

## It is recommended that:

- Members note the progress made to date and the upcoming work that will be delivered by the Connectivity Programme.
- Members nominate a group representative(s) to enable cross party and officer engagement on the programme as it progresses.

Members of the public are permitted to use both audio visual recording devices and social media during this meeting, on the understanding that it neither disrupts the meeting nor records those stating explicitly that they do not wish to be recorded. Guidance on the use of devices at meetings open to the public is available on the Council's website and posters on the wall of the meeting's venue.

Whilst every effort will be made to webcast this meeting, should technical or other difficulties occur, the meeting will continue without being webcast via the Council's website.

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# Agendad tem Back

## EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Employment Committee held on Tuesday, 21 September 2021 at 12.00 pm at the Council Chamber - The Guildhall

#### Present

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (in the chair)

Councillor Lewis Gosling Councillor Darren Sanders Councillor Jeanette Smith

## **Officers Present**

Peter Budd, Assistant Director of HR Natasha Edmunds, Director of Corporate Services Merydydd Hughes, Assistant Director of Buildings Richard Lock, Procurement Manager Lynda Martin, Health & Safety Manager David Williams, Chief Executive

## 13. Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Apologies were received from Cllr Matthew Atkins and Cllr Cal Corkery.

## 14. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of interest from the members present.

#### 15. Minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2020 (AI 3)

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 2 March 2021 were confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

## 16. Living Wage Accreditation - Progress Update Report (AI 4)

## (TAKE IN REPORT)

Natasha Edmunds, Director of Corporate Services, introduced the report which updated the Committee on progress made towards becoming an accredited Living Wage employer. Richard Lock, Procurement Manager and Jess Goble from the Living Wage Foundation were also present to answer questions.

In January 2021, Employment Committee Members instructed Officers to work with the Living Wage Foundation to seek to progress Portsmouth City Council towards accredited status. As part of the work to achieve accreditation status the working group had been expanded to include representatives from Procurement, Finance, Legal, HR, Trade Unions.

All employees, including those who transferred to the council under TUPE, apprentices, those on the Kickstart Scheme and Local Authority maintained schools pay increased on 1 April 2021 to reflect the new Living Wage rate of £9.50.

Procurement were actively incentivising take up of Living Wage through explicit incorporation within Social Value award criteria for relevant contracts in line with the Council's Social Value Policy.

The main work undertaken to date centred around the development of contract pipelines to identify all contracts which were up for re-tender or renewal over a 3 year implementation period starting from 1st April 2022. The team were working with high impact providers, such as adult social care, to identify key suppliers and identify any impacts that the introduction of the living wage may have.

Engagement would be undertaken with peer authorities who had implemented the living wage to understand the different approaches that had been taken. Ms Goble believed that Sunderland City Council was the most recent comparable authority to have introduced the real living wage and would liaise with colleagues to inform PCC's approach.

In response to questions, it was confirmed that the Living Wage Foundation were content that the council was moving in the right direction to implement the real living wage for the 2022/23 financial year, although adult social care was a key area to address.

The budget pressure figure of  $\pounds$ 3.2m was confirmed as a straight profile, but any peaks in the three years would be identified once further data had been gathered through the pipeline process.  $\pounds$ 3.2m would be a difficult figure to find, however much would depend on the council's overall priorities.

During the discussion the committee confirmed its commitment that the real living wage should be implemented, with a particular mention of improving the lowest wages of those in adult social care. Acknowleding the significant pressure on the care system it was hoped that the real living wage would assist with staff retention and encourage new staff.

The committee recognised the complexities of introducing the real living wage due to contractors delivering care to PCC, Hampshire County Council (HCC) and self-funded clients. The scheme therefore needed to work for those delivering care to PCC funded residents whilst not subsidising care to HCC funded residents when HCC was not a real living wage employer.

Following the discussion it was RESOLVED that the update be noted.

## 17. Quarterly Sickness Absence Report (AI 5)

## (TAKE IN REPORT)

Peter Budd, Assistant Director of HR introduced the report which updated the committee on the levels of sickness absence across the council and the actions being taken to manage absence and promote employee wellbeing.

The committee was advised that many services were operating differently as a result of the coronavirus pandemic with many staff now working remotely. Compared to the start of the pandemic, overall absence levels were down, however they had increased in some areas during the last two quarters.

The level of sickness absence for this quarter had increased slightly from 9.45 to 9.47 average days per person per year, with the main cause being psychological stress followed by Musculoskeletal.

In respect of wellbeing, the findings of the Staff Wellbeing survey showed that levels of anxiety, stress and nervousness had increased by 3% since June 2020. The levels of happiness saw little movement, but there was a 1% increase in staff feeling happier. Over two-thirds of staff stated that they were satisfied with work at the moment, those working exclusively at home being most satisfied and those working both at home and workplace are least.

In response to questions the committee was advised of the steps that were being taken to manage psychological stress, which had included a number of wellbeing campaigns. The committee was advised that it was important to note that the findings were a snapshot of a period in time during the pandemic and the results could be correlated to a higher workload. Staff working at home often worked longer hours, hence the renewed focus on mental health.

In response to the benefits of face-to-face human contact within teams the committee was advised that future working models were being explored and team contact was encouraged. The Chairman believed that it would be logical for future working models to be considered by the committee in due course.

**RESOLVED** that the Employment Committee:

- (i) Continue to monitor sickness absence and ensure appropriate management action is taken to address absenteeism.
- (ii) Note the wellbeing activities undertaken to support attendance.
- (iii) Note the additional wellbeing activities specifically in response to the Covid-19 pandemic; and
- (iv) Note the change in absence levels across the organisation.

## 18. Health & Safety Annual Report (for period 1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021 (AI 6)

## (TAKE IN REPORT)

Lynda Martin, Health & Safety Manager, introduced the report which sought to provide assurance to the Employment Committee that Portsmouth City Council was complying with health and safety legislation and was ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of those affected by the council's activities.

In light of covid-19 the committee requested an update report at alternate meetings of the committee.

## **RESOLVED** that the report be NOTED.

## **19.** Reward and Recognition (AI 7)

## (TAKE IN REPORT)

Peter Budd, Assistant Director of HR introduced the report which detailed the existing mechanisms that were in place for recognising employee's resilience and hard work during the on-going pandemic period and outlined options for what could be put into place for the future.

This included a recommendation to provide an additional day's annual leave to all staff to be taken on either Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve (or at a later date for those rota'd to work on these days) in recognition of the efforts of all staff during the pandemic and recovery in 2021.

## **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) Members note how PCC has already publicly acknowledged the outstanding services and efforts that council officers have made and are continuing to make during the ongoing pandemic. Future email communication from the Leader and the Chief Executive to staff, recognising this and thanking them for their efforts is continued;
- (ii) Members note what reward and recognition systems are already in place across the whole City Council (contained in Appendix 1);
- (iii) Members provide an additional day's annual leave to all staff to be taken on either Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve (or at a later date for those rota'd to work on these days) in recognition of the efforts of all staff during the pandemic and recovery in 2021; and
- (iv) Members note the options for future reward and recognition. That they confirm the mechanism of reward and recognition they wish to implement in in the future, not discounting the arrangement of an awards ceremony when it is safe to do so, and that they confirm the level at which they wish staff to be recognised.

## 20. Appointments Sub Committee (AI 8)

## (TAKE IN REPORT)

Natasha Edmunds, Director of Corporate Services, introduced the report which sought authority from the Employment Committee for the establishment of an appointments sub-committee and sets out recommendations for its composition for the appointment to the role of Director of Children, Families and Education.

The Chairman read aloud a representation from Cllr Corkery which questioned the proposed make up of the Appointments Sub-Committee.

He did not believe it fair or proportionate that the Liberal Democrat group of 15 councillors should be entitled to two seats on the sub-committee but the Labour Group of seven councillors should be entitled to none. He felt that a fairer representation would be two Conservative councillors, two Liberal Democrat, one Labour and one independent.

The committee supported representation from all four political groups on the council. In addition, the Chairman requested that a report be submitted to a future meeting to look at the appropriate level of delegation for member involvement in the selection of Assistant Directors, as a number had quite large areas of responsibility.

## **Resolved that:**

- (i) the Employment Committee delegate the appointment to the role of Director of Children, Families and Education to an appointments sub-committee
- (ii) the appointments sub-committee be composed of:
  - 2 Liberal Democrat members (Cllr Horton/Cllr Dowling)
  - 2 Conservative members (CIIr Brent/CIIr Norton)
    - 1 Labour member (TBC)
    - 1 Independent Group member (CIIr Smith)

The meeting concluded at 12.56 pm.

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Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE Chair This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 4 THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY (Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)



Title of meeting:	Employment Committee			
Date of meeting:	23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2021			
Subject:	Living Wage Accreditation - Progress Update Report			
Report by:	Director of Corporate Services			
Wards affected:	N/a			
Key decision:	No			
Full Council decision:	No			

## 1. Purpose of report

At Employment Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021 Members were updated on the joint working Officers have undertaken with the Living Wage Foundation. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the progress made to date.

## 2. Recommendations

This report provides an update on progress of the Living Wage working group.

It is recommended that a special Employment Committee meeting is scheduled for early January 2022 to allow for a detailed financial analysis to be completed and so the financial impact of seeking accreditation from the forthcoming financial year can be understood. The financial implications of seeking accreditation would need to be addressed as part of the budget setting process; a decision to seek accreditation would therefore need to be made by Full Council.

Whilst it has been confirmed that statutory National Living Wage will increase to £9.50 from April 2022, the Living Wage Foundation have stated that they will not be announcing the increases to Real Living Wage rates of pay until Monday 15<sup>th</sup> November.

Providing the Committee with a further report at a special January meeting will allow for an accurate assessment of financial impacts based upon known Real Living Wage rates for the coming financial year rather than via models based upon assumptions.

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## 3. Background

PCC's approach to paying Real Living Wage rates to employees has previously been reported to the Committee and remains unchanged. This report deals solely with the activities undertaken by procurement in respect of impacts arising in the supply chain of Real Living Wage accreditation.

## 4. Progress Update

## Procurement

## Social Value

Procurement are actively incentivising take up of RLW through explicit incorporation within Social Value award criteria for relevant contracts in line with the Council's Social Value Policy. This is currently on an incentivisation basis through allocation of additional scores when bids are evaluated only rather than as a pass / fail mandatory requirement.

Work is currently being undertaken to assess the impact of the implementation of the Social Value Policy upon procurement activities and the awarding of contracts. As the toolkit used to capture and monitor provider social value commitments has specific measures for payment of RLW within it this will allow for specific reporting on this area.

## **Contract Pipeline Analysis**

Procurement have produced contract pipelines by directorate and service area which identify all contracts which are up for re-tender or renewal over a 3 year implementation period starting from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022. The contract pipelines have been filtered to remove contracts that do not fall under base LW accreditation criteria - e.g. supply only agreements, concessions, grants, land transactions, less than 8 week duration, etc.

Contracts have then been further filtered by forecast impact of LW implementation, value, re-tender / review date, etc. to enable effective review prioritisation. Procurement have engaged with services, focusing primarily on Adult Social Care, to undertake further analysis and engage with key suppliers.

## Supplier Engagement

Procurement have engaged with suppliers over October / November 21 via:

- A focused survey issued to approx. 200 high impact suppliers which received over 40 detailed responses
- Engagement with domiciliary care and residential care suppliers at provider forum meetings
- 1-1 meetings with high impact / high reliance suppliers

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Whilst further analysis of the findings is required summary review has identified the following trends:

- Approximately half of the Council's high impact suppliers are likely to be already paying current living wage of £9.50
- Of those not all are fully accredited Real Living Wage suppliers and so it cannot be assumed that when the Real Living Wage increase is announced that these suppliers will all increase wages accordingly
- Suppliers are all reporting significant financial pressures due to staff shortages, NI, utilities costs, inflation, NLW increase, etc. and are likely to seek a larger increase than the average 2% uplift they have received previously and will be more likely to be between 4-5%
- Irrespective of Real Living Wage factors wages are likely to have to increase significantly in the sector due to scarcity of staff and competition with higher paid less demanding jobs e.g. supermarkets.
- Increase of wages to RLW will lead to knock on increases to supervisors and other staff for some suppliers which will likely require further pass through of costs to the Council
- At least half of the suppliers have expressed that they are already under significant financial pressure and that the uplifts awarded over the last few years have fallen short of what they actually required, there is little room for any further absorption
- The majority of suppliers would seek to pass any increase associated with Real Living Wage directly to the Council which could mean an average increase of 6-7% compared to the 4-5% we may already be facing
- Some suppliers have suggested that RLW increase could actually reduce costs in the long term as it may improve recruitment and reduce reliance in agencies to fill roles at significant cost
- Due to the majority of high impact contracts having a yearly renewal or yearly uplift mechanism in most cases our 1<sup>st</sup> year costs would be significant
- Suppliers in general would view Real Living Wage as a positive step on the general condition that any increased costs are covered by the Council
- However, it should also be noted that some significant suppliers to the Council have expressed high levels of negativity and may seek to hand back contracts and / or not bid for future work
- A high number of suppliers are concerned that implementation of Real Living Wage could create significant workforce issues with staff undertaking the same job being paid more or less depending upon which contract their works relates to, there are concerns of how this can be addressed without Hampshire County Council who many of the suppliers also work for also seeking to implement Real Living Wage on the same timescales - there is currently no indication from HCC that they are considering implementation

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- Some suppliers are also concerned that a significant increase would have be offset into rates for private clients which is where costs have been absorbed in previous years, however there comes a point where this potentially makes them uncompetitive in the private market which could force a private vs public decision in terms of business focus
- Further to the above point, within the <u>Build Back Better Our plan for health &</u> <u>social care'</u> government have committed to moving towards paying a fair rate of care, which has been interpreted as self-funders/private clients being able to access local authority rates for care. This has not been implemented yet, but when it does come in will add further costs to ASC and reduce suppliers ability to differentiate between LA customers and private customers which may also put suppliers under pressure if they need to reduce private rates which are currently subsidising the lower public rates.

## Peer Review

Procurement have also undertaken research into peer local authorities and have approached the Living Wage Foundation for contact details in respect of the following councils:

- Leicester City Council
- Sunderland City Council
- Preston City Council
- Milton Keynes Council
- Reading Borough Council
- Brighton and Hove City Council
- Bristol City Council
- Sheffield City Council
- City of York Council

To date Procurement have met with Sunderland City Council and have also received contact from City of York Council. Sunderland reported that:

- They sought accreditation as part of a wider 'Community Wealth Building' initiative
- They undertook a very similar contract pipeline and impact analysis to the one undertaken by the Council
- They applied a similar assumption model to the one developed by Council finance for January 2021 Employment Committee report
- They estimate a 6% increases to costs of high impact contracts which by year 3 is estimated to equate to an increase of £3.5M

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- Their high impact social care contracts do not come up for renewal or re-tender until year 3 and they are still currently researching impact into this specific market
- Suppliers have largely been positive although the majority have all required pass through of cost increases
- They have set RLW as a pass/fail criteria upon application to tender for contracts, they have implemented within contractual terms and monitor through open book evidence request of payslips
- Are still assessing positive impacts but have already seen 159 local people receiving increases to RLW within the 1<sup>st</sup> year

Procurement will continue to engage with peer local authorities who have implemented RLW in order to understand different approaches that have been taken, risks, rewards, resource requirements, etc. and use this analysis to provide potential implementation options for the Committee to consider.

## Implementation Options & Plan

Procurement has begun to draw up a list of governance processes and associated documentation that will require alteration in the event that the Council adopts LW including for Procurement Gateway Process, procurement template documentation, contract terms, contract management processes, etc. This will be informed by engagement with further peer local authorities over November 21.

Work will need to be undertaken with Legal and HR in order to assess the legal implications of mandating LW adoption onto suppliers and their sub-contractors.

Whilst there are likely to be significant rewards in adopting RLW associated with staff motivation, retention, reducing poverty, local economic benefits, etc. there remain concerns that:

- The supply base may narrow and some key suppliers may be lost
- Cost increases are likely to be passed back to the Council
- The legality of mandating suppliers adopt LW on an explicit pass/fail basis vs the uncertainty of achieving adoption via encouragement
- Potential for protracted negotiations at uplift / renewal and associated potential for increased re-tendering activities
- The likelihood of cost increases rising sharpest in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of implementation
- Supplier two-tier workforce issues

Procurement have passed on the analysis undertaken to date along with all of the raw data to officers in social care and corporate finance so that it can be applied as appropriate into the financial analysis which is now underway.

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## Finance

The potential full financial impact of Living Wage accreditation arising from increasing the hourly rate to £9.50 has previously been estimated as £3.2m to the General fund. The estimated cost of any uplift to this will not be known until the living Wage Foundation announce their revised Real Living Wage rate. In the event that a decision to implement this revised rate is made, the City Council will need to identify and approve additional savings (over and above the planned £1m) over the next 3 years in order to fund this policy initiative. Similarly, any cost implications to the HRA will need to be factored into the HRA budget over the next 3 years and considered as part of the consultation process with tenants.

...N Edmunds...... Signed by:

## **Appendices:**

## Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

Agenda Item 5



Title of meeting:	Employment Committee
Date of meeting:	23 November 2021
Subject:	Sickness Absence - Quarterly Report
Report by:	Peter Budd - Assistant Director of HR
Wards affected:	N/A
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

#### 1. Purpose of report

1.1. The purpose of this report is to update the Employment Committee about the levels of sickness absence across the council and the actions being taken to manage absence and promote employee wellbeing.

#### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Members are recommended to:
  - Continue to monitor sickness absence and ensure appropriate management action is taken to address absenteeism.
  - Note the wellbeing activities undertaken to support attendance and in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
  - Note the change in absence levels across the organisation.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. Members will be aware that the council continues operating many services differently because of the coronavirus pandemic. Many staff have adopted a hybrid approach to their work and are working from home where possible. Compared to the start of the pandemic overall absence levels are down, however they have increased in some areas during the last two quarters.
- 3.2. The following section of the report will therefore note this quarter's sickness absence figures compared to last quarter:
  - The level of sickness absence for this quarter has decreased slightly from 9.47 to 9.03 average days per person per year.
  - Long term absence has decreased from 6.67 to 6.04 average days per person per year.
  - Short term absence has increased from 1.56 to 1.70 average days per person per year.



- 3 directorates have seen a decrease in absence levels this quarter.
- 8 directorates have seen an increase in absence levels this quarter
- The highest reason for sickness absence remains to be due to psychological (stress, anxiety and depression), Coronavirus is now ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> and Musculoskeletal (Lower Limb) is ranked 3rd.
- Musculoskeletal absences are divided into three categories; if these were collated they would become the second highest ranked reason for absence (as was the case last quarter).
- 3.3. Absence levels by directorates for the period from Nov 2020 to Oct 2021 are attached in Appendix 1. A summary of reason for sickness absence for the last year is attached in Appendix 2.

## 4. Wellbeing

- 4.1. This quarter has seen the launch of the 2021 staff flu vaccination programme. This included providing details on how staff could apply for an e-voucher to use at participating pharmacies, to date 485 employees have requested an e-voucher using the councils online booking form. The communications also contained details of the eligibility criteria for the free NHS flu programme that staff could also access, as well as information on the Covid-19 vaccination and booster programme. The e-voucher scheme is still open to employees and can be accessed on the Flu Vaccination intranet pages
- 4.2. The campaigns that we have promoted this quarter included Stoptober and World Mental Health Day. Stoptober detailed the support and resources available to anyone who was looking to stop smoking and World Mental Health Day involved promoting support and resources available to manage our mental health. We also asked staff to share what they do to support their mental health, with the replies helping to form part of a new intranet page to help inspire others on what they could also do to improve their mental health and wellbeing.
- 4.3. The In the Know Wellbeing special for November focused on stress awareness and highlighted online talks to help overcome stress, as well as encouraging staff to pick one action each for their Physical, Mental and Emotional Wellbeing to carry out every day. Another feature of the update focused on Movember, and this included information on how all staff can take part in raising awareness on mental health, suicide prevention, prostate cancer and testicular cancer.
- 4.4. To help our employees who having caring responsibilities, we launched a new carers support network group on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> October. The group will continue to meet via MS Teams on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month. The aim of the sessions is to provide an opportunity to talk about what's important to you, share helpful information and support each other in a friendly environment



- 4.5. Training opportunities that have been promoted this quarter have included sessions provided by Solent Mind on managing mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. These sessions are aimed at managers and supervisors and will be taking place in November and December. We will also be running One Talk on Taking control of your mental health, this is available to any staff member and will be running in November.
- 4.6. The Learning and Development team have also created a new training opportunity for managers and supervisors on Managing wellbeing in a hybrid team. The sessions will initially be available in November, December and January and the focus of the workshops will be on effective skills and behaviours for managers.
- 4.7. The Councils Lunchtime Learning programme continues to provide talks on a monthly basis. September included a talk from the Good Mental Health Coop on managing anxiety and in October, the councils People Handling and Back Care Advisor ran a session on Posture awareness and back care. Each talk continues to be well attended with an average of 40 staff members attending each virtual session.

## 5. Reasons for recommendations

5.1. To continue to improve employee attendance levels. To do this through monitoring sickness absence, understanding and engaging with the workforce to understand the reasons for improved attendance levels, continuing to improve employee wellbeing, which in turn will increase productivity, improve engagement and build a more resilient workforce.

#### 6. Integrated Impact Assessment

6.1. Appendix 3

## 7. Legal implications

7.1. There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

#### 8. Finance comments

8.1. There is no significant cashable saving resulting from the reduction in sickness absence. However, there will be an improvement in productivity in terms of total days worked.

.....N Edmunds.....

Signed by:



## **Appendices:**

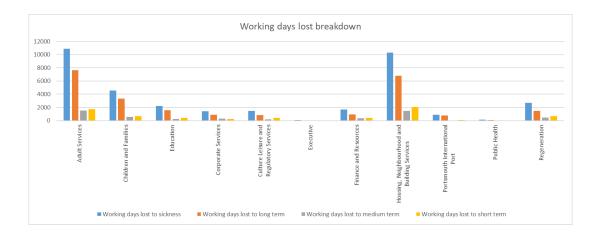
Appendix 1: Sickness AbsenceAppendix 2: Summary of reasons for absenceAppendix 3: Integrated impact assessment

## Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

Signed	by:		



			Sickness - Wo	rking days Lost							
	Headcount		Total		Long Term		Medium Term		Short Term		
Directorate	Current Head count	Working days lost to sickness	Average per Person per Year	Compared to Last EC report	Working days lost to sickness	Average per Person per Year	Working days lost to sickness	Average per Person per Year	Working days lost to sickness	Average per Person per Year	Total Average Per Person Per Year. EC Jun 2021
Agency	141	240	1.70	1	127	0.90	83	0.58	30	0.21	0.79
Adult Services	681	10884	15.98	•	7619	11.18	1508	2.21	1757	2.58	18.61
Children and Families	411	4554	11.08	1	3327	8.09	547	1.33	680	1.65	10.58
Education	275	2218	8.06	+	1590	5.78	225	0.81	403	1.46	8.83
Corporate Services	314	1397	4.44	1	877	2.79	277	0.88	243	0.77	4.38
Culture Leisure and Regulatory Services	327	1444	4.41	1	844	2.58	183	0.57	417	1.27	4.19
Executive	33	76	2.30	1	0	0.00	35	1.06	41	1.24	1.77
Finance and Resources	308	1696	5.50	1	915	8.97	361	1.17	420	1.36	5.04
Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services	960	10291	10.71	1	6772	7.05	1442	1.50	2077	2.16	10.64
Portsmouth International Port	87	885	10.17	+	764	8.78	55	1.48	66	0.75	12.17
Public Health	43	122	2.83	1	60	1.39	32	0.74	30	0.69	1.52
Regeneration	457	2666	5.83	1	1489	3.25	483	1.07	694	1.51	5.47
Schools	1293	8945	6.91	•	3798	2.93	2305	1.78	2847	2.20	8.39
Grand Total (excluding schools and Agency)	3896	36233	9.30		24257	6.23	5148	1.32	6828	1.75	9.75
Grand Total (including Schools excluding Agency)	5189	45178	8.71	•	28055	5.41	7453	1.44	9675	1.86	9.37
Grand Total (including Agency Workers)	4037	36473	9.03	Ŧ	24384	6.04	5231	1.30	6858	1.70	9.47
				= over 7 days							

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## Appendix 2 - summary of reasons for absence, rolling year Nov 2020 to Oct 2021

Absence Reason	Days Lost	% of Days Lost	Rank	Absence Reason	Days Lost	% of Days Lost	Rank
PSYCHOLOGICAL - STRESS, ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION	8202	22.64	1	* Psychological - stress, anxiety and depression	8202	22.64	1
CORONAVIRUS	3668	10.12	2	* Psychological - stress, anxiety and depression (Work Related)	2076	5.73	8
MUSCULOSKELETAL (LOWER LIMB)	3045	8.40	3	Total	10278	28.37	
GASTROINTESTINAL (INC STOMACH AND BOWEL)	2445	6.75	4				
MUSCULOSKELETAL (BACK AND NECK)	2423	6.69	5	* Musculoskeletal (Lower limb)	3045	8.40	3
VIRUS (INC COLDS, COUGHS AND INFLUENZA; EXCLUDING CORONAVIRUS)	2247	6.20	6	* Musculoskeletal (Upper limb)	1449	4.00	10
NEUROLOGY/NERVOUS SYSTEM (INC HEADACHE, MIGRAINE AND	2214	6.11	7	* Musculoskeletal (back and neck)	2423	6.69	5
PSYCHOLOGICAL - (WORK RELATED) STRESS, ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION	2076	5.73	8	Total	6917	19.09	
CANCER AND TUMOURS	1549	4.28	9				
MUSCULOSKELETAL (UPPER LIMB)	1449	4.00	10	Total Stress + musculosketal %	17195	47.46	
EAR/NOSE/THROAT (INC DENTAL)	1332	3.68	11				
RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS (INC CHEST AND ASTHMA)	947	2.61	12				
HEART DISORDERS	736	2.03	13	Absence Reason	Days Lost	% of Days	Rank
FAMILY BEREAVEMENT	712	1.97	14	* Corona Virus	3668	10.12	2
GYNAECOLOGICAL (INC REPRODUCTION ORGAN DISORDERS)	709	1.96	15				
GENITOURINARY (INC KIDNEY AND BLADDER)	508	1.40	16				
SKIN DISORDERS (INC BURNS)	402	1.11	17				
PREGNANCY RELATED DISORDERS	354	0.98	18				
BLOOD DISORDERS	331	0.91	19				
EYE PROBLEMS	312	0.86	20				
INFECTIOUS DISEASE (INC CHICKENPOX, MEASLES ETC)	148	0.41	21				
LONG COVID	119	0.33	22				
VIOLENCE AT WORK	106	0.29	23				
ENDOCRINE/HORMONAL (INC DIABETES)	72	0.20	24				
THIRD PARTY ACCIDENT	52	0.14	25				
SUBSTANCE MISUSE (INC ALCOHOL AND DRUGS)	36	0.10	26				
ACCIDENT	23	0.06	27				
EXTERNAL SICKNESS	16	0.04	28				
Grand Total	36233						

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# Agenda Item 6



## THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Title of meeting:	Employment Committee
Subject:	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Date of meeting:	23 November 2021
Report by:	Director of Corporate Services
Wards affected:	All

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update members on progress against the actions set out in the Equality and Diversity Strategy 2019 - 2022 and provide an update on the council's actions in regard to Equality Diversity and Inclusion throughout the Covid 19 response (March 2019 to date). The report also outlines a forward plan of action to further enhance and embed the council's commitment to equalities, evidence compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty and set out the actions to be taken that will underpin the Council Corporate Plan for Recovery and Renewal.

## 2. Recommendations

Members are asked to note the contents of this report and endorse the planned activity to enhance and embed the council's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

## 3. Background

The current PCC Equality and Diversity Strategy 2019 - 2022 was published in 2019 and had strong member support from the Cabinet Member. Not long after publication the council underwent a restructure and as a result it was not clear where in the officer structure strategic responsibility for Equalities then rested, compounded with no dedicated corporate Equalities resources as this team had been disbanded several years previously. Furthermore, as a result of the change in structure a number of actions had been assigned to specific roles within the council that no longer existed. The consequence of these changes was a hiatus in progressing a number of actions for a period of some months leading up to the start of the pandemic response in March 2020. During the same period a new role was created in the senior leadership team and was appointed to in September 2019 (Director of Corporate Services).

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(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken) Both prior to, and during the pandemic response there has been recognition and commitment by the council of the importance of equalities and diversity in ensuring delivery of high quality services for all residents; and that our employment policies and practices ensure we attract and retain a diverse workforce, enable all staff to reach their potential, and deliver services that are fair and accessible for all residents.

During March 2020 the council entered into an emergency response phase in order to manage the response to the Covid 19 pandemic. As the pandemic progressed more and more evidence emerged of the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on our communities and in particular:

- Black and Asian communities
- Those with underlying health conditions and disabilities (clinically extremely vulnerable, clinically vulnerable)
- Those living in poverty or experiencing deprivation
- The homeless
- Those aged 60 and over

In addition, during the summer of 2020 the killing of George Floyd raised awareness of race inequality on a global scale.

The combination of factors outlined above shone a light on the structural inequalities that exist within the UK, and within the city.

As a result of the above the council publicly declared its commitment to equality, and race equality in particular, at its meeting in July 2020.

At the same time the Director of Corporate Services assumed strategic responsibility for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and more recently a corporate Equalities Officer role has been created and recruitment completed. The new Equalities Officer starts in role on 15 December 2021.

## 4. Progress Against Equality and Diversity Strategy Action Plan

The Equality and Diversity Strategy 2019 - 2022 sets out 32 actions/objectives under 5 themes.

Objective Theme	No of Actions
Promote fairness and equality by tackling inequalities, disadvantage and discrimination	8
Leadership and partnerships	4
Employment and training	9
Service delivery and access	8



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Assessments, Legar of Tinanee Comments as no devision is being takeny					
Promoting community and the voluntary sector	3				
Total	32				

Progress in delivering a number of the actions has been superseded by the Covid response, for example around Homelessness, and in some cases actions have not been progressed due to capacity in the organisation where Covid response has been prioritised. However, several actions are now in progress and a small number have been completed as set out below:

The chart 1 below sets out progress against all actions:



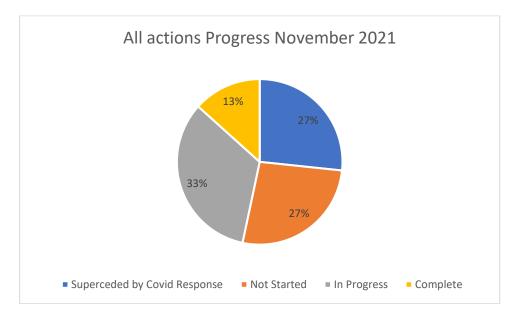
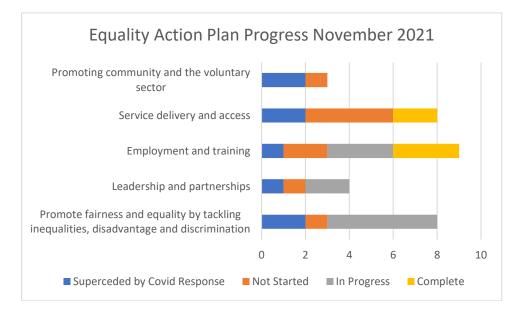


Chart 2 below sets out progress against actions under each objective theme:



(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken) Chart 2 Equality and Diversity Progress by Theme



The details of actions and their status can bee seen in Appendix 1.

Although action against 27% of the objectives has not been started to date, it should be noted that despite the challenges presented by a global pandemic 46% of objectives are either in progress or complete.

The Equality and Diversity Strategy states that an annual report will be produced to show progress on achieving the equality objectives and will report to the Governance, Audit and Standards Committee. For all the reasons outlined above an annual report was not produced during 2020, however the above charts show progress against achieving the objectives and further information setting out additional actions undertaken is set out below.

## 5. Actions Undertaken March 2020 to Date

As outlined above the requirement of the council to move into a pandemic response mode in March 2020 meant the organisation focused on business continuity to ensure critical services remained in place to support our residents and communities. Over the last 18 months of the pandemic services have resumed although methods of delivery have had to be altered to ensure covid safety for both residents and staff. In working through these changes equality, diversity and inclusion considerations have been at the forefront, and additional activity has also been undertaken to support those most vulnerable. Actions taken during the period are outlined below, some of which are actions arising from the Equality and Diversity Strategy and some are in addition. The activities outlined below are



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At its October 2020 meeting the Council further declared its commitment to inclusion by committing to becoming a Sunflower Friendly Council and signed up to the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme. As a result all customer facing staff were given training in recognising hidden disabilities and how to support customers; non-customer facing staff were also given training in the scheme as part of an awareness raising campaign and so staff can support each other. Residents and staff can access Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyards and our staff wellbeing resources have incorporated the hidden disabilities tools. Councillors were also trained in the scheme and a good uptake of the training by members was seen.

In July 2020 a Staff Race Equality Network was established. The group is open to all staff within PCC, the CCG and staff from other partner organisations who don't have a similar network. The focus of the group is on inclusion, providing a forum for mutual support, sharing of experience, consultation about new policies and strategies and support to the wider equalities agenda. It also includes race equality allies from across the organisation and links in to the equalities network established among our schools and education colleagues. The group has an established terms of reference and a number of sub groups on specific areas such as events and support. The Group is chaired at Director level and the Cabinet member is also a member of the group as a race equality ally thereby ensuring senior level champions and the ability for the group to have a voice at strategic level in the organisation. The group have also recently developed a Race Equality Action Plan which is now being populated with action owners and measures to track delivery and impact; the action plan will eventually come under the umbrella of the EDI strategy as one of a number of action plans that will deliver the outcomes in the overarching strategy when it is refreshed in 2022. The group have also been assigned a small budget to progress their work.

One of the achievements of the staff Race Equality Network is the council joining the Safe Space initiative. The initiative creates a Safe Space for individuals who might need support on a night out and is now located in the reception of Civic Offices in Guildhall Square. This has moved from Guildhall Walk Practice, where it has been located over the summer. The Safe Space will be open every Friday and Saturday from 10pm to 3am to offer confidential and non-judgemental advice, immediate medical care, and help for minor injuries from trained professionals to anyone who needs it. Members of the network reached out to the organisers of the initiative and were able to work with services to enable the council offices to participate. The initiative is run in partnership with health and with support from Hampshire Constabulary and the Street Pastors network.

A further area highlighted by the pandemic is the role of unpaid carers in society. As a result of Covid there has been an increase in people who are caring for someone, with 8 out of 10 carers being of working age (i.e. between 16 and 65) according to research carried out Carers UK. Working in partnership with the Adult Social Care Carers Service

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(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken) work is currently underway to develop our approach as an employer to supporting staff with caring responsibilities. The council have taken out membership of Employers for Carers which gives us access to a range of resources including guidance documents, employer toolkits, sharing of best practice, digital resources and networking events. Two workshops have been completed, one for working carers and one for managers to start a conversation and understand current experience in the council and to inform how we develop policies and initiatives to support working carers. A lunch and learn session was hosted to promote the membership resources available to staff who are carers and more recently a Staff Carers Network has been established, along similar lines to the Staff Race Equality Network.

Immediately prior to the pandemic work was started to develop insight about the workforce profile so we can better understand the range of protected characteristics among the workforce and begin to understand the barriers and enablers to inclusion. The council has also implemented a new system for all its workforce information during 2021 and has used the opportunity to encourage staff to update their personal information so that we have a better quality of workforce data from which to draw insight. The categories against which data is collected also now includes all protected characteristics, including some that were not captured under the previous system such as gender identity and sexual orientation. Future years workforce profiles will therefore include these additional categories to further improve our understanding of our workforce.

One of the benefits of annual workforce profile analysis is the ability to track trends and evidence changes arising from actions set out in the Equality and Diversity Strategy in relation to having a diverse workforce and one that is representative of our local community. In order to aid comparison the categories for reporting purposes have been aligned to those of the Office for National Statistics so that like for like comparisons can be made with our population data.

An issue identified as a gap in our workforce data, is an inability to capture data of job applicants. During 2022 a new recruitment system will be implemented that will give greater insight on the protected characteristics of applicants and this will help us to understand who is applying for jobs at the council, how we can improve our reach into our communities and promote careers in local government amongst the widest and most diverse audience as possible. Insight on applicants also helps to identify any potential issues in the recruitment process that may present a barrier.

It is also a requirement of the Public Sector Equality Duty to publish workforce information on an annual basis and therefore the Workforce Profile will be refreshed and published annually and reported to the Employment Committee, with the current workforce profiles for 2019 and 2020 being reported to Employment Committee on 23 November 2021.

Over the last 18 months there has been close working with the Directorate of Children, Families and Education in ensuring that EDI runs through the recently launched Children's



(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken) Trust Plan and a particular commitment to tackling race equality in education. The plan is currently being consulted with stakeholders.

The directorate are working in close partnership with the University and through the Portsmouth Education Partnership. The two areas of focus currently are on tackling racism and supporting transgender young people.

In amongst the above work we have also been taking a targeted approach to encouraging vaccine uptake within the city with an equalities focus. This work is data driven enabling us to target specific sections of our community where the data shows the greatest need. The work to date has focused on our Black and Minority Ethnic communities, younger people aged 16+, those living in more deprived parts of the city (including the homeless) and our Eastern European communities. It has included webinars for the Black community, pop up vaccination clinics e.g. at the Jami Mosque and Friendship House, Instagram stories and Tick Tok features as well as direct outreach work among the Buy Black network of retailers in the city. The working group also has a local resident as a core member, who is a community leader for race equality; this involvement of a resident has been invaluable to our approach to targeting vaccine uptake among our younger age groups and among our ethnic minority communities and enabled the voice of our communities to directly inform the approaches we have taken. The new community champions programme is now becoming established and we are looking to recruit community champions from younger age groups to help encourage vaccine uptake among young people. The work on increasing vaccine uptake has been and continues to be well supported by partners, in particular the Hive, with joint working on webinars, access to community groups and volunteers.

The council has also started working with other large institutions in the city, namely the Naval Base, Portsmouth University, Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust, and Hampshire Constabulary to develop a city wide approach to inclusion and equalities among these partners, starting with some shared activities as part of national inclusion week at the end of September, Black History Month throughout October and, national hate crime awareness week.

## 6. The Future and Next Steps

Going forward pandemic response work will continue on encouraging vaccine uptake using a data driven approach to target the areas of greatest need. The two established staff networks will also continue to be supported and engaged in supporting the wider equality, diversity and inclusion agenda for the council and the city.

An Equalities Steering group will be established with representation from across all council service areas and partners where appropriate. An initial task for this group will be to undertake an equality, diversity and inclusion self-assessment using the Local Government Association equalities framework. The group will also review progress against the current strategy and identify the underpinning activities needed to support and

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enable delivery of the council plan for recovery and renewal. The two activities will be used to inform the Equality and Diversity Strategy 2022 - 2025.

A number of gaps have already been identified that need addressing including:

- Greater focus on LGBTQ+ communities and staff
- Greater focus on disabled communities and staff
- Expand the city-wide strategic approach to include more partners, in particular in the voluntary and community sector
- Further develop the council's approach to measuring achievement of objectives, for example tracking changes in the workforce profile
- Equalities data gathering from recruitment activity
- Further develop the data sets used to inform, measure and provide an evidence base for equality and diversity initiatives
- Incorporate regular reporting of equalities achievements/data in corporate performance reporting to Governance, Audit and Standards Committee
- Develop mechanisms to ensure community engagement by services and partners enables the community voice to be heard in setting equality and diversity priorities

Signed by (Director)

## Appendices:

## Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location



# Equality and Diversity Strategy 2019-22

# Foreword

4

I am delighted as portfolio holder for resources to present our Equality & Diversity strategy for 2019 - 2022.

Along with all our staff at Portsmouth City Council, I am committed to ensuring we deliver high quality services for all our residents. At the same time Portsmouth City Council seeks to be an employer of choice attracting and developing staff to reach their full potential and deliver services which are fair, personal and diverse.

The vision of Portsmouth City Council is to achieve equality, celebrate diversity and advance inclusion in Portsmouth and in line with public sector general equality duty.

we shall show leadership and will help to embed fairness into the cultures and behaviors by:-

- Championing and advancing equality, diversity and inclusion
- In partnership with local providers identify local needs and priorities, particular those at risk of disadvantage and discrimination to help reduce local inequalities
- In partnership with local providers seek the engagement of everyone in shaping local services to meet individual needs and achieve better outcomes for local people
- Helping and supporting staff to understand the importance of fairness and diversity in planning and delivering services.

 Acknowledge and valuing all our local partners who help to deliver fairness and equality

Together we can achieve a more balanced vision and ensure that everyone counts.

**Councillor Jeanette Smith Portfolio Holder for Resources** 

# Introduction

This document sets out Portsmouth City Council's approach to equality and diversity issues over the next four years (2019–2022).

The purpose of the Council's equality and diversity strategy is to set out our vision, approach, key activities and monitoring arrangements in relation to tacking inequalities in Portsmouth.

The strategy has been informed by research and data, as well as gathering information from various protected characteristic groups across the city and analysing the type of corporate complaints that have been received by the council.

- We have re-visited our equalities objectives from for the council and for the city, based on:
- actions from the previous action plan
- Scareview of the latest data on outcomes for communities in the city;
- the results of a range of surveys and consultations;
- changes in the diverse population of Portsmouth; and,
- changes in the legislative context and policy framework.

This document also outlines what equality objectives we are going to progress over the next 4 years based on our five key priorities that were supported by council officers, the residents of Portsmouth and various protected groups across the city, as well as providing a summary of the council's workforce diversity.

This document has been prepared as an PDF (portable document format) to enable the reader to access key facts and figures and get an overview of Portsmouth's growing diversity and related equality issues.

This document is available in alternative formats on request from 023 9283 4789 or by emailing equalities@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

# Our commitment

Our commitment to equalities remains the strong and we will endeavour to ensure this commitment is embedded into the organisation through training, awareness of the protected characteristics described by the Equality Act 2010, we will also aim to make our services and policies accessible and meet the needs of the residents of Portsmouth.

'Portsmouth City Council's approach to equality and diversity primarily focuses on our customers to ensure that our services meet people's needs, both now and in the future. For us, this means all our customers in all our communities. We are working towards making our services more accessible by planning head and taking action based on listening to and involving our communities.

Our aim is to have a workforce that is reflective of the communities in Portsmouth, and is open to new ideas, ways of working and diversity. We are raising awareness on equality and diversity with our staff through an improved training programme that focuses on mainstreaming these principles into all of our work.

Our improved Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process works across all our services and functions. This EIA process helps us to meet our legal requirements under equalities legislation, as well as helping us to measure the impact of our services on all of us in relation to age, disability, sex, transgender, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity as well as in relation to community cohesion'. Our Equality objectives (previously Equality & Diversity Action Plan) works alongside this refreshed equality & diversity strategy and has been developed in line with identified needs and priorities. The relating Equality objectives will ensure that equality and diversity issues are at the forefront of the plans that we make, services we develop and actions we take.

# **Our priorities**

Our Equality objectives underpin our five key priority areas. They are:

1 Promoting fairness and diversity by tackling inequalities, disadvantage, and discrimination

Inequalities and disadvantage occur in many different settings, depending on the issue, and vary between the equality strands on the same basis. Therefore, Priority 1 requires a whole range of actions – some corporate in nature that look at issues holistically, and some service-specific actions that will improve particular outcomes for communities.

2 Leadership and partnerships

Be council has a role in shaping the communities it serves as well simply commissioning and providing public services. The council annot achieve its aims in isolation and we will continue to work to 'identify local needs and to address these at a strategic level'.

### 3 Employment and training

Access to employment opportunities and training services are vital in addressing socio-economic deprivation. Our research shows that people from diverse communities in the city may be more likely to suffer deprivation than the wider population, with some communities feeling that discrimination remains an issue when applying for jobs. The council's role as an employer is one area where it can take very direct action on this issue. The council is one of the largest employers in Portsmouth and as such can do a great deal to break down barriers and tackle discrimination. We continue to improve work opportunities at the council by providing work placements and apprenticeships.

#### 4 Service delivery and access

All of Portsmouth's residents have the right to expect to be able to easily access services, advice, and information provided or funded by the council. The equality act places additional duties on the council to consider the needs of all of its communities in the design and delivery of services.

#### 5 Promoting community and the voluntary sector

Delivering on all of the priorities in this strategy and addressing entrenched inequalities cannot be delivered by the council alone, but will be best achieved by involving and engaging communities in the decision-making process, in service design, and in developing our future plans.

# Equality objectives

1. Promoting fairness and diversity by tackling inequalities, disadvantage, and discrimination		
Objective	Lead officer	Progress
Ensure Equality impact assessments are carried out on all committee reports where necessary, service reviews, strategies, policies, functions and if services are created or ceases to exist	Report authors Directors Access & Equality Advisor	Ongoing
Reduce rough sleeping and homelessness in Portsmouth. Produce a strategy of the way forward and the councils approach on how to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping in the city	Homeless & Rough Sleeping Strategic Programme Manager	Superceded by Covid 19 Everyone In campaign
Bileviate poverty and break the cycle of deprivation using the 6 priorities in the facture of the factor of the fa	Acting Tackling Poverty Co-ordinator	Superceded by Covid 19 response
Sonitor and act on corporate complaints including complaints that are perceived as harassment or discrimination	Corporate complaints officer	Ongoing
Review and revise the Equality Impact Assessment forms as appropriate	Access & Equality Advisor	Not started
Actively promote PCC vacancies to diverse community groups	Director of HR, Legal & Performance	in planning
Encourage people to report all types of hate crime, investigate 3rd party reporting training and look at premises/organisations that could be utilised for this purpose	Directors Access & equality advisor	Review of reporting mechanisms underway

To ensure Portsmouth is a good place for children and young people with autism and make sure there is high quality education provision and access to health services to improve their physical and mental health	Head of inclusion	Autism strategy
To promote inclusion and improve outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs (SEND) and their families	Head of inclusion	SEND strategy

Equality & Diversity strategy 2019-22

2. Leaderships and partnerships	
Lead officer	Progress
Access & Equality Advisor	Ongoing
Access & Equality Advisor Independance & Wellbeing Team	Superceded by Covid 19 response
Access & Equality Advisor	In progress
Director of Community & Communications	Not started
	Access & Equality AdvisorAccess & Equality AdvisorIndependance & Wellbeing TeamAccess & Equality AdvisorDirector of Community &

Equality & Diversity strategy 2019-22

3. Employment and training		
Objective	Lead officer	Progress
Cultural information, guidance and training awareness promoted to staff	Team Manager, Independence & Wellbeing Service	Ongoing and subject to review during 2021/22
Monitor staff perceptions of equality via staff surveys and produce actions relating to the outcome of the survey	Director of HR, Legal & Performance	superceded by covid 19 response, full staff survey to be run in
Through the staff survey and other channels we will look at ways on how we can improve the workforce data so we know who are the employees and how best to support them	Director of HR, Legal & Performance Communications Access & equality advisor	See workforce profile 2019 and
nsure mandatory Equality & diversity training reflects new legislation & overnment guidelines	Director of HR, Legal & Performance	Ongoing
Portsmouth City Council to be a Disability Confident employer/leader	Director of HR, Legal & Performance	Complete
Provide training to Members on their duties under the Equality Act 2010	Deputy Chief Executive & City Solicitor Director of HR, Legal & Performance	Complete (member attendance on training offered is low)
Support the voluntary sector and partners to provide training for staff regarding the protected characteristics	Access & Equality Advisor	Not started
Re-establish diversity staff groups if demand is evident and ensure the staff have the opportunity to attend in working hours	Director of HR, Legal & Performance	Staff Race Equality Network and Staff Carers Forum established
Review the internal volunteering policy to enable PCC officers to immerse themselves in the community they serve	Director of HR, Legal & Performance	Not started

4. Service delivery and access - Ensure access, information and advice is available / accessible to all		
Objective	Lead officer	Progress
Feasibility study and costings on allowing disabled people to use their concessionary bus pass before 9.30am to encourage disabled people to work, and college.	Assistant Director, Transport, Environment & Business Support	Superseded by Covid 19 response
To ensure all digital channels of communication is accessible to all people including those that use assistive technology	Assistant Director of Community & Communications Service Manager, Adult Services	Complete
o make sure all the council access points including partnership and commissioned services can be easily accessed e.g. housing offices, for ary's. Co-produce an audit form that will include all disabilities including autism and sensory impairments and work with these groups to carry out the audits.	Director of Community & Communications Director of Housing, neighbourhood and Building Services Director of Culture and City Development	Superseded by Covid 19 response
Conduct an audit and assessment of all customer facing policies across the authority	Access & Equality Advisor	Not started
Mainstream equality considerations in procurement to ensure wider social benefits, such as creating training or employment opportunities	Assistant Director of Contracts, Procurement & Commercial	Complete - see also Social Value Policy
To seek views of the Licensing committee in respect of Section 167 of the Equality Act 2010-Maintain a list of accessible taxis and PHVs licensed in the city	Licensing Manager	Not started

To review and commission disability awareness training for example Blue Lamp to provide this for taxi drivers	Licensing Manager	Not started
Run an awareness campaign for the public regarding the unlawful act of refusing guide and assistance dogs in taxis	Communications Licensing Manager	Not started

Equality & Diversity strategy 2019-22

5. Promoting community and the voluntary sector		
Objective	Lead officer	
To engage with minority communities and their organisations to make sure these voluntary and social enterprise organisations have their say, and have the opportunity to be part of future projects in the city	Voluntary Sector Partnership Manager-	Superseded by Covid 19 response, engagement underway focused on Covid
To work with the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in the city, working to improve partnership and integration between different groups. This integration and collaboration with diverse and minority groups will work to support our understanding of our communities and their needs.	Voluntary Sector Partnership Manager	Superseded by Covid 19 response
b embed equalities monitoring into our VCSE contracts, grants, this formation will support our understanding of our local communities and dentify potential gaps in the city	Voluntary Sector Partnership Manager	Not started

## Legislative context

The Equality Act came into force on 1st October 2010. The act brought together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single act. Combined, the act provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and to advance equality of opportunity for all.

The act covers discrimination because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The act simplifies and strengthens previous legislation to provide a new discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

The general equality duty (set out in the equality act) places upon public authorities a requirement to:

 $\overline{\Phi}$  Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation  $\overline{\Phi}$  and other conduct prohibited by the act.

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:

• Removing or minimising difficulties suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.

- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is extremely low.

Specific Duties were introduced by the Government in September 2011 with an aim of facilitating an efficient and effective compliance of certain public bodies with the general Equality Duty. This includes:

• Publishing information to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty annually;

and

• Preparing and publishing one or more equality objectives that will contribute to satisfying the three aims of the general Equality Duty (as above) every four years.

A ban on age discrimination was introduced by the Government in October 2012. The objective of the ban is to eliminate any age-related discriminative practices in the provision of goods, services or facilities, and in the carrying out of public functions. The council has been committed to age equality in the way it provides public services and exercises its functions long before the ban was introduced. However, the law provisions provide us with an opportunity to closely examine our policies and practises to ensure that our residents are afforded fair treatment, regardless of their age.

In 2013 the Marriage(Same sex Act 2013) was passed which allows couples who are in a same sex relationship to get married rather than just having a civil partnership.

Between 01 January 2017 and 01 January 2018, 31 same sex couples were married in Portsmouth.

This Act makes the marriage of same sex couples lawful in England and Wales, while protecting and promoting religious freedom.

For more detailed guidance on the Marriage (same sex couples) Act 23 visit:

www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/marriageme-sex-couples-act-2013-quick-quide

For more detailed guidance on the Equality Act 2010 visit: www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance

For more information on equality and human rights law, visit the Equality and Human Rights Commission website at: <a href="http://www.equalityhumanrights.com">www.equalityhumanrights.com</a>

#### Consultation

The consultation will take place from 13 August until 02 November 2018.

There will be an online survey as well as a paper copy for people that don't have access to a computer.

The survey will also be distributed to groups across the city and PCC officers will attend meetings to get feedback and suggestions for the proposed actions for the next 4 years.

# Equality & Diversity at Portsmouth City Council

Our approach to equality and diversity primarily focuses on our customers and their needs, to ensure that we serve all of our communities in the city.

The council's equality diversity work is supported within the Community and communications directorate. It provides support to services and advice on best practice, legislative requirements, monitoring and manages the EIA process.

### Equality impact assessments (EIA)

The council has a well established Equality impact assessment process which assists compliance with the Equality Duty, although ElA's are not a legal document in itself. It was decided in 2016 at the Governance and audit and standards committee that eliminary ElA's should be completed on any decision making ports if required. This was a more effective way of assessing any petential adverse impact our decisions they have on protected characteristics as described under the Equality Act 2010.

Initially a preliminary EIA is completed which is a screening process, this should highlight any potential impact the policy, function or service could have on any protected characteristic groups, if there is not enough information to make a decision or there could be adverse impacts a full EIA would be completed.

A full EIA would include consultation with the groups that could potentially be impacted on and where possible mitigation put in place or barrier removed completely.

All EIA's are published with the report it relates to and any additional

significant EIA's that are completed will be published on the Equality and diversity web pages, these will be published on a rolling year.

The council will publish a list of 'Equality Impact Assessments' (EIAs) on proposed, new, changed or terminated services, policies, strategies, projects and functions with a link to the report that the EIA refers too.

This helps to evidence how the duties under the Equality Act 2010 have been considered, and, if necessary, mitigated any discriminative impact on our residents and visitors.

#### Equality objectives

The Equality objectives are incorporated inj the equality & diversity action plan which provides a list of our objectives. It sets out our key actions on promoting equality with regard to age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation, (as well as socio economic deprivation).

We are required to publish equality objectives in response to our specific duties in legislation.

An annual report will be produced to show progress on the Equality objectives and will report to the Governance, Audit and Standards committee.

#### Workforce Diversity and Management

All Portsmouth City Council's recruitment and human resources policies are designed to be compliant with existing legislation and ensure that discriminatory practices are avoided. The council ensures that all employees and managers undertake appropriate equalities and diversity training, proportionate to their role and level of responsibility. A range of management development programmes are provided to ensure that all managers have the opportunity to develop effective communication and leadership skills and value diversity within the workplace.

The council supports the wellbeing of its employees and provides information and advice to support the health of the workforce. An employee opinion survey is conducted on an annual basis across the whole workforce to provide feedback on a range of aspects. This is analysed across the protected characteristics of age, sex, ethnicity and disability.

der Specific Duties introduced in 2011 as part of the Equality Act 2010, the council has a legal obligation to publish equality ibormation relating to its employees on an annual basis. The council currently monitors the diversity of its workforce with relation to age, sex, disability and race as well as gender pay gap.

#### Sex

The council, like most authorities, has a predominantly female workforce, with 75% female and 25% male employees.

#### Ethnicity

Data held by the council indicates that 6.5% of our staff are from BME groups - this figure has remained unchanged since the previous strategy. However, this is likely to be an under-estimate, as 18.9% are listed as undisclosed. The BME figure does not reflect the diversity of the city, as the most recent data suggest that 16% of our resident population are from BME groups.

#### Age of council staff

The council has 38.6% (increase from 3.6% recorded in the previous strategy) of its staff over the age of 50, while only 5.4% are under 25 (up from 5.3% recorded in the previous strategy).

#### **Disabled staff**

1.5% of the council staff have disclosed having a disability. 30.9% are listed as 'undisclosed'; however, this high percentage includes staff who joined the authority prior to the introduction of any monitoring system to collect information on disability. In addition, because this data is captured at the time of recruitment, it does not reflect any staff that become disabled whilst working for the council. As such, this figure is almost certainly an under-estimate of the true position.

#### Gender Pay Gap

The Gender Pay Gap for Portsmouth City Council was published in September 2017, the report includes school staff.

At the time of the report being published the data was correct for all staff, including school staff in post with PCC who earned their full-pay (relevant employees) At that time , there were 5,873 relevant full pay employees, which is made up of 75% (n4377) of females and 25% (n1496)were males.

The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay for male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees is 11%.

The average mean hourly rate of pay for a male was £16.84. For a female the average mean hourly rate of pay was£14.93, which results in the mean figure reported above.

The gender pay gap exists within Portsmouth City Council as the significantly larger proportion of female employees at the council work on the lower quartile (out of 20 pay bands) than our male employees – 22% male and 78% female staff.

Be percentage of male employees increases throughout the maining quartiles, from 20% in the lower middle quartile to 33% in the upper quartile.

In direct comparison the percentage of females employees decreases throughout the remaining quartiles from 80% in the lower middle quartile to 67% in the upper quartile.

Clearly, the council's current workforce does not match the profile of Portsmouth, with a large gender imbalance (though this is typical of local government) and under-representation of disabled people and people from BAME communities. For more information on the Gender Pay Gap at Portsmouth City Council visit:

https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/the-council/transparency/ senior-management-salary-information

#### Apprenticeships

In Portsmouth City Council we have a successful apprenticeship scheme and look to promote this further especially to the different communities across the city.

The council currently have 74 apprentices-57% females and 43% males

The age of apprentices vary but 62% are aged 19-21 and 11% are aged between 26 and 49.

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## Agenda Item 7



## THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Title of meeting:	Employment Committee
Subject:	Workforce Profile
Date of meeting:	23 November 2021
Report by:	Director of Corporate Services
Wards affected:	All

#### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this report to present to the committee the workforce profile for 2019 and for 2020 and to outline how this data will be used going forward.

The Committee are asked to note the contents of the report and attached workforce profile and note the key actions and next steps.

#### 2. Background Information

As part of the council's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion work has been undertaken to profile the workforce against the protected characteristics (where data is held) to enable a better understanding of the make up of the workforce.

The first workforce profile was completed for the year 2019 however, publication and reporting of the data has been delayed due to the need to respond to the global pandemic. A further workforce profile has subsequently been completed for 2020 and both the 2019 and 2020 data are presented in this report.

Both the Local Government Association and the Equality and Human Rights Commission recommend collecting and analysing equality information about employees in order to:

- Identify key issues;
- Assess performance;
- Take action.

Having workforce data profiled against protected characteristics provides an evidence base to inform the setting of equality objectives, decision making relating to employment policies and practices and regular monitoring enables assessment of the impact of any decision taken or changes made.

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#### (Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Publication of the workforce profile provides transparency for service users, staff and other interested parties as well as demonstrating compliance with the general equality duty.

#### 3. Workforce Profile Summary of Key Issues

The detail of the workforce profile for 2019 and for 2020 can be seen in Appendix 1 and 2 respectively. Accessible versions of the profiles can be found on the following links to the council website: <u>Workforce Insight Profile 2019 - Your City, Your Say survey research</u> (portsmouth.gov.uk) and <u>Workforce Insight Profile 2020 - Your City, Your Say survey research</u> (portsmouth.gov.uk)

However, some key issues that emerge are highlighted below, as follows:

- a) The Equality and Diversity Strategy 2019 2022 identified that the "council's current workforce does not match the profile of Portsmouth, with a large gender imbalance (though this is typical of local government) and under-representation of disabled people and people from BAME communities". The workforce profile analysis shows that this remains the case.
- b) 54% of the workforce live on Portsea Island (PO1-PO5) and 93% live in the local area (PO postal district) therefore a significant proportion of the workforce are also residents, yet not representative of the diversity evident in the city's working age population.
- c) The standard data held on employees has gaps resulting in an inability to analyse and understand a range of other protected characteristics for example, sexual orientation, gender reassignment.
- d) It remains the case that there is low reporting of protected characteristics among staff for example in 2020 only 59% of staff recorded their disability status, and only 33% recorded religion or religious belief.
- e) Equalities data of those applying for jobs at the council is not collected resulting in an inability to analyse and understand who is applying for jobs, what barriers may be being experienced by applicants with protected characteristics, what changes to recruitment policy and practice could be implemented to ensure the workforce is more representative of the community it serves.
- f) There remains a wider range of data that should be analysed against protected characteristics such as disciplinary, grievance, dismissal, complaints about discrimination, incident reporting data and data arising from staff surveys.



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4. Workforce Profile Summary of Key Actions and Next Steps

A number of actions arise from the analysis of the workforce profile the first of which is to report on and publish the data. Going forward, further analysis will be undertaken to better understand the demographic profile of the city against which to compare the workforce profile.

During 20201 a new system has been implemented for all HR records (Fusion) and now includes the ability to capture data across all the protected characteristics. Since the system went live in July 2021 a communications campaign has been underway encouraging staff to update their personal records to enable the council to better understand the workforce profile and take action to address any gaps. Other channels are also being explored to encourage staff to record their personal data. It is anticipated that the workforce profile for 2021 will include a wider range of protected characteristics and an increase in data that is recorded.

Following the Fusion system going live a new data dashboard is now available for managers to see 'at a glance' the profile of their team with data that includes age distribution, ethnicity, gender and length of service. HR are working with managers to support their use of the dashboard to inform workforce planning in their teams.

During 2022 a new recruitment system will be implemented that will give the ability to capture applicant data and enable a better understanding of applicant diversity profiles and conversion rates from application to employment against the range of protected characteristics. Reporting of recruitment data will be for a part year for 2022 and full year from 2023.

Further work is underway to collect data across a range of areas to further inform our understanding of our workforce and the extent to which PCC is an inclusive workplace. Actions include reviewing the Health and Safety incident reporting process to improve the process, raise awareness, incorporate a wider range of incidents (e.g. racial harassment incidents, sexual harassment incidents), develop communications and training where necessary. A wide range of stakeholders are being engaged in the review, including the Staff Race Equality Network to ensure a fit for purpose reporting process and ability to review/investigate incidents and take appropriate actions.

More detailed analysis of the workforce profile is being undertaken by HR and will be used to inform an action plan and equality and diversity objectives for the Equality and Diversity Strategy for 2022 - 25, which will also take account of and underpin the council's plan for recovery and renewal in developing a more diverse workforce and inclusive workplace.

Going forward the workforce profile will be updated annually and reported to the Employment Committee. The workforce profile will also be used to identify key metrics against which to measure progress in the Equality and Diversity Strategy in future years as well as key indicators for corporate health in quarterly performance reporting.

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Signed by (Director)

#### Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Workforce Profile 2019 Appendix 2 - Workforce Profile 2020

#### Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Equality Information and the Equality	Equality Information and the Equality Duty:
Duty: A Guide for Public Authorities	A Guide for Public Authorities   Equality
(Equality and Human Rights Commission)	and Human Rights Commission
	(equalityhumanrights.com)
Equality Framework for Local	Equality Framework for Local Government
Government (Local Government	(EFLG) 2020 Version
Association)	

## Agenda Item 8



### THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Title of meeting:	Employment Committee
Subject:	Future Working Arrangements (Connectivity Project)
Date of meeting:	23 November 2021
Report by:	Director of Corporate Services
Wards affected:	N/A

#### 1. Purpose of report

This report provides an update on the emerging Connectivity Programme that is tasked with delivering projects to support and enable our new ways of working.

#### 2. Recommendations

It is recommended that

- Members note the progress made to date and the upcoming work that will be delivered by the Connectivity Programme.
- Members nominate a group representative(s) to enable cross party and officer engagement on the programme as it progresses

#### 3. Background

The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in unprecedented change in customer behaviour and how we deliver services to our residents. Following Government advice, the council instructed staff to work from home in March 2020 to stem the rate of infection and protect society from outbreaks of Covid, particularly in workplace settings. Due to lockdown restrictions some services were initially closed, however over the course of the last 18 months, services have stood back up and various measures have been put in place within city council workplace settings to ensure covid safe operations.

Prior to the pandemic the Civic Offices was the workplace setting for circa. 2,000 council, partner and tenant staff. As a result of the pandemic a risk assessment was undertaken that identified a maximum safe capacity in the building of 500 persons. Priority was given to staff in those services or individuals where there was a business need to attend the workplace (e.g. access to physical infrastructure; an inadequate, inappropriate or unsafe home working environment; and the mental wellbeing of staff). In order to facilitate home working, staff were encouraged to undertake DSE risk assessments to identify any needs

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(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken) for additional equipment including monitors, docking stations, office chairs and in some cases desks.

Staff engagement has been ongoing throughout the pandemic, and this has shown a degree of anxiety and negative impacts on mental health. Staff are concerned about a return to 'old' ways of working and show a strong desire to maintain some degree of flexibility with 'hybrid' working as a means of ensuring a safe workplace setting as we learn to live with covid.

#### 4. Connectivity programme summary

The Connectivity Programme was established before the Covid-19 pandemic to support the organisation on its journey to becoming a modern digital council. As a result of the pandemic and easing of covid restrictions outlined in Step 4 of the government roadmap in July 2021 the council has reshaped the programme to incorporate our response to the changes in the way we work as well as our longer-term aspirations set out in the City Vision and Corporate Plan. The Connectivity Programme will deliver the following objectives:

- a) An **attractive place to work**, that enhances staff safety and wellbeing with working culture and practices supporting the delivery of Member priorities and the city's vision for Portsmouth.
- b) **Accommodation that is right size**, in the right place and is flexible enough to respond to changing needs.
- c) **Staff in the right locations** and able to dedicate more time to delivering frontline services and to respond to changing customer needs and demands.
- d) Staff able to work from and **manage teams in a variety of settings** team areas, home, clients' home to suit work demands.
- e) Staff with access to the information and equipment they need to fulfil their role effectively via efficient information systems, equipment and devices that are secure when required.
- f) **Effective partnership working**, facilitated by systems and environments, increasingly including co-location, data sharing and collaboration.

A set of principles have also been agreed to help guide our planning for the programme and new ways of working. These are:

# Customers are at the heart of what we do, with the business needs of the council a priority.

- Work takes place at the most effective locations and times
- Flexibility becomes the norm and not the exception
- Everyone is, in principle, considered eligible for flexible working, without assumptions being made about people or roles



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- Staff have more choice about where and when they work subject to business considerations
- Space is allocated to activities not to individuals
- The costs of doing work are reduced
- There is effective and appropriate use of technology
- Managing performance focuses on results rather than presence
- Agile working underpins and adds new dimensions to diversity and equality principles
- Staff have the opportunity to lead balanced and healthy lives
- Work has less impact on the environment

#### 5. Workstreams and projects

There are two key overarching workstreams that are embedded across the programme. The first is redefining how we work and the second is redefining where we work. Phase 1 of the connectivity programme includes three projects that are underway and due to be completed by April 2022:

- Standardisation of IT and office equipment
- Implementation of a resource booking system
- Implementation of hybrid meeting rooms

The current workspace at the Council is no longer fit for purpose as many items have been taken home by staff to facilitate home working in line with DSE risk assessments. Standardised IT and office equipment including desks and collaborative working spaces will be set up in the Civic Offices to allow for the gradual return to the office. An audit of equipment was undertaken in August 2021 to understand the shortfall of key items such as monitors, docking stations, chairs etc.

A resource booking system will enable staff to book desks on days they are attending the office. The system will enable management of the capacity in the Civic Office, whilst providing data on team and individual working patterns. It will also enable infection prevention and control by 'switching off' desk availability in the event of a need to have greater distance between workstations, reducing building occupancy, as well as providing usage data to assist with contact tracing should there be a need.

In order to work effectively with lower building occupancy there will inevitably be a mixture of both home and office-based working. In order to facilitate team working and collaboration, 37 hybrid meeting facilities will be introduced across the Civic Offices and other PCC offices enabling some participants to join remotely. Whilst not all meetings will need to take place from a meeting room, the council delivers a wide range of services involving multiple stakeholder and partner input/engagement; as such a range of individuals/teams will often need to meet and do so in a confidential environment, or in

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(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken) such a way as to not impact on other workplace users. A range of new furniture to enable non-confidential hybrid meetings and equipment for meeting rooms for confidential or large group hybrid meetings would meet this need.

Outside of the programme scope there are a number of other pieces of work underway that will enable our new ways of working. This includes the implementation of Fusion, Microsoft 365 and service re-designs through system thinking interventions.

#### 6. Funding

c£1.3m of funding was secured from the Covid Outbreak Management Fund via the Public Health Protection Board on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021. This funding covers the projected costs of Phase 1 (and the three projects outlined above).

#### 7. Programme management and governance

The Programme Management Office (PMO) have supported the set up of a robust governance framework to drive and embed best practice programme management standards. The following engagement and reporting groups have been established and resource is being recruited to ensure the successful delivery of the programme:

- A monthly Programme Board responsible for developing and implementing the programme strategy. Membership includes the Director of Corporate Services (accountable for the successful delivery of the programme), Directors from Housing, Regeneration and Children/Adult Services.
- A monthly Steering Group to provide feedback from services that will help shape/prioritise programme and ensure the programme is service led around the needs of customers and business requirements. This includes representation from all Directorates.
- A monthly Working Group to plan the operational work required to deliver the project outputs and programme outcomes and benefits. This includes those tasked with project and programme management work, communications and stakeholder engagement activity and representation from all Unions.

#### 8. Staff engagement and change management

We have learned that we are able to adapt, flex and innovate like never before and should keep that capability alive as the programme progresses. Work is underway to actively engage with staff and prepare all stakeholders in the organisation for any further changes to our ways of working. In addition to delivering a comprehensive communications plan of activity, the following engagement work has been carried out over the last few months to ensure staff and managers are listened to:



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- February 2021 all staff were sent a wellbeing survey 1,815 responses received.
- March 2021 structured discussions were held with Senior Management Teams supported by the market research team.
- April 2021 staff workshops run by Baker Stuart (accommodation consultants).
- May 2021 Cabinet member for Communities and Central Services Portfolio and opposition spokesperson invited to participate in workshops with Baker Stuart.
- August 2021 all teams were asked to create principles setting out how, where and when they will work. These were signed off by respective Director.
- October 2021 all staff were invited to attend one of three vision development workshops to understand what they want the future state to look like. A programme vision will be approved by the Programme Board in December 2021.

#### 9. Integrated Impact Assessments

Individual integrated impact assessments will be completed to understand if the projects could impact a number of areas including equality and diversity. Action will be taken to ensure any potential negative impacts are successfully mitigated.

#### 10. Legal Implications

Following the removal of Covid-related restrictions which came into effect from 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021, Portsmouth City Council will continue to implement employers' guidance to ensure the safety of workplaces and in compliance with Health and Safety legislation. Particular circumstances of staff will be duly considered as part of the council's general duty of care. HR Policies relating to new ways of working will be reviewed and consulted. It is anticipated that this work will begin in early 2022.

#### 11. Director of Finance Comments

The scope for Phase 2 of the Programme needs to be agreed and funding secured. This will be dependent on other decisions around the future usage of the Civic Offices. At this stage an expression of interest for £788k capital funding has been submitted to deliver a digital post solution in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the council's activity. The project would be a key enabler to transition to a more flexible working, breaking the link between specific locations being responsible for managing incoming and outgoing paper mail.

Signed by:



(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Signed by (Director)

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Appendices:

#### Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location