

Project Scope – Equality & Diversity Review Group

Review Topic	‘Equality and Diversity’
Lead Member	Councillor Tom Hayes
Other Review Group Members	Councillor Altaf-Khan Councillor Sian Taylor Councillor David Thomas
Officer Support and allocate hours	Scrutiny Officer support – approx. 2-4 days per month for up to 4 months (mid-October to early-December and mid-February to mid-April). Additional support from Organisational Development, Learning and Human Resources.
Background	<p>Oxford City Council is an employer committed to increasing the diversity of its workforce and providing an inclusive work environment with equality of opportunity for all employees. However, some groups with protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010) are under-represented.</p> <p>The Council produces an annual workplace equalities report and monitors performance against the following targets (results as of June 2015):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The percentage of employees with a disability - 8.52% (target 10%); - The percentage of black and minority ethnic employees - 7.2% (target 9%). This figure rises to >12% when staff from white European and other ethnicities are included. <p>The Scrutiny Committee has previously focused on the employment of staff from BME groups. Applications from BME groups have increased in recent years but appointment rates remain proportionally lower.</p> <p>One third of the workforce is female but many services have an even gender profile (the exceptions being direct labour services). In 2014/15, 38% of new recruits were female.</p> <p>Under 1% of employees have self-declared as LGBT and this number has been stable for many years.</p> <p>The Council will need to manage changes to the age profile of its workforce as working lives, including manual working lives, are extended and rates of employees with a disability may increase.</p>
Rationale	<p>Scrutiny members want to understand whether there is more that could reasonably be done to promote equality and diversity within the Council’s workforce.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Committee prioritised a review focusing on ‘equality</p>

	and diversity' when agreeing its work programme for 2015-16.
Purpose of Review	To identify how the City Council promotes equality and diversity within its workforce and what further steps is feasible. Key lines of enquiry are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What barriers are faced by under-represented groups in recruitment and career progression at the City Council; - How does the Council prevent and address discrimination, including specifically discrimination against LGBT employees.
Indicators of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The production of an evidence-based report with recommendations to the City Executive Board aimed at improving outcomes; - Identifying and assessing Council policies and practices that impact on equality and diversity, including any gaps or opportunities; - Good quality engagement with under-represented groups or their representatives; - Detailed consideration of two specific issues or strands relating to the topic of equality and diversity; - The majority of recommendations to the City Executive Board are agreed.
Out of scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broader community engagement activities, consultation and the provision of Council services to diverse groups.
Methodology/ Approach	Evidence gathering could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inviting written and verbal evidence from stakeholders and experts; - Reviewing employment, recruitment and application data to identify inequalities and under-represented groups, including in particular types of jobs and at different grade levels; - Employee focus groups; - Issuing a call for evidence to City Councillors, other interested parties and/or the public; - Desk research / literature review, including of relevant Council policies; - Considering what could be learnt from other organisations;
Specify Witnesses/ Experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chris Harvey – OD, Learning & HR Support Manager; - Jarlath Brine – OD & Learning Advisor; - Justine Thorne – HR Manager; - Caroline Glendinning – Unison Branch Secretary; - Martin Naish – Unite the Union Equalities rep.; <p><i>Other witnesses TBC</i></p>
Specify Evidence Sources for Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate Equality Scheme 2012-15 – Oxford City Council; - Annual Workplace Equalities Report 2014-2015 – Oxford City Council; - Applicant and recruitment equalities data by service; - Employment equalities data by service and pay grade. <p><i>Other document evidence sources TBC</i></p>

Specify Site Visits	N/A		
Projected start date	26 October 2015	Report published to Scrutiny Committee	24 March 2016
Meeting Frequency	Monthly	Projected completion date	14 April 2016 CEB

Draft outline of meetings and indicative dates

Meeting one – 26 October 2015
Scoping meeting to agree the purpose of the review.
Meeting two – 19 November 2015
Meeting to engage with key witnesses / experts and plan further evidence gathering methods and sessions.
Meeting three – w/c 8 February (TBC)
Evidence session.
Meeting four – w/c 29 February (TBC)
Evidence session.
Meeting five – w/c 14 March (TBC)
Meeting to reflect on evidence gathered and consider a draft report and recommendations.

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