

Overview and Scrutiny



Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee Agenda

Thursday, 14 September 2023
7.00 pm, Civic Suite
Civic Suite
Lewisham Town Hall
London SE6 4RU

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This meeting is an open meeting and all items on the agenda may be audio recorded and/or filmed.

Part 1

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Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee Members

Members of the committee, listed below, are summoned to attend the meeting to be held on Thursday, 14 September 2023.

Jeremy Chambers, Monitoring Officer
Wednesday, 6 September 2023

Members

Councillor Liam Shrivastava (Chair)

Councillor Hau-Yu Tam (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Coral Howard

Councillor Mark Jackson

Councillor Ayesha Lahai-Taylor

Councillor Oana Olaru

Councillor Rachel Onikosi

Councillor Rudi Schmidt (ex-Officio)

Councillor Ese Erheriene (ex-Officio)

MINUTES OF THE SAFER STRONGER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 27 June 2023 at 7.00 pm

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Liam Shrivastava, Hau-Yu Tam, Coral Howard, Mark Jackson, Ayesha Lahai-Taylor, Oana Olaru, Rachel Onikosi and Rudi Schmidt (ex officio).

ALSO JOINING THE MEETING VIRTUALLY: Councillor Ese Erheriene (ex officio).

APOLOGIES: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Sophie Davis (Cabinet Member for Housing Management, Homelessness and Community Safety), Benjamin Awkal (Scrutiny Manager) and Aleister Adamson, Senior Legal Advisor – Release.

ALSO PRESENT VIRTUALLY: Councillor Juliet Campbell (Cabinet Member for Communities, Refugees and Wellbeing), Jannet Hall (Head of Safer Communities), Daniel Fish-Halvorson (Anti-social Behaviour Lead), Karen Kemsley (Data Scientist), Superintendent Charlene Pavitt (Metropolitan Police Service) and Inspector Adrian Hanna (Metropolitan Police Service).

NB: Those Councillors listed as joining virtually were not in attendance for the purposes of the meeting being quorate, any decisions taken or to satisfy the requirements of s85 Local Government Act 1972.

1. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

RESOLVED

That –

1. Cllr Liam Shrivastava be appointed as Chair.
2. Cllr Hau-Yu Tam be appointed as Vice-Chair.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2023

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2023 be agreed as an accurate record.

3. Declarations of interest

None.

4. Proposed Public Space Protection Order

Witnesses

Cllr Sophie Davis, Cabinet Member for Housing Management, Homelessness and Community Safety

Jannet Hall, Head of Safer Communities

Daniel Fish-Halvorsen, Anti-social Behaviour Lead

Karen Kemsley, Data Scientist

Superintendent Charlene Pavitt, South East Basic Command Unit - Metropolitan Police Service

Inspector Adrian Hanna, South East Basic Command Unit - Metropolitan Police Service

Aleister Adamson, Senior Legal Advisor – Release

Key points from discussion

- 4.1. The Chair explained the Committee knew and accepted how harmful anti-social behaviour (ASB) was. The Committee's aim was to consider how effective the proposed Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) would be at addressing ASB and how it might affect vulnerable and marginalised people. Ahead of the meeting, the Chair had written to a range of experts and stakeholders to gain insights to inform the Committee's scrutiny – he tabled the responses received (see *Documents tabled at Committee*).
- 4.2. Officers gave an overview of the proposals and consultation methodology and responses. The Cabinet Member explained the Executive was flexible and receptive to feedback on whether and, if so how and when, the PSPO be implemented.
- 4.3. Residents and councillors reported that there were instances of persistent ASB, but the council and Police lacked the powers to tackle it or, where they had relevant powers, they were excessive. The council's approach to ASB was to engage and support residents to resolve issues before considering enforcement; the PSPO would continue this approach and be a tool of last resort when people refused to stop behaving anti-socially – officers would not be routinely or proactively seeking people to fine. Resorting to fines would indicate a failure to effectively resolve ASB through engagement and support.
- 4.4. The PSPO was intended to enable people to enjoy public spaces where they were currently unable to and not to police people's everyday enjoyment of public spaces.
- 4.5. The PSPO would be implemented by council and Police officers; a third-party PSPO enforcement service would not be commissioned. It was later clarified that the Parks Service, to which PSPO powers would be delegated, was a commissioned service. The council would not be able to further outsource its PSPO enforcement functions without review and procurement processes.
- 4.6. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Police was being considered to ensure both parties were on the same page regarding the enforcement approach.

The Committee then put questions to witnesses from the council. The key points were:

- 4.7. The borough's previous (2018-2021) PSPO applied to the entirety of the borough.
- 4.8. It was accepted that data in the Evidence Pack showed the behaviours in question occurred in specific locations. Most of the measures under the proposed PSPO were intended to apply to the entirety of the borough due to the risk that a more geographically limited order would displace ASB to other areas of the borough where PSPO enforcement powers would be lacking unless the PSPO was updated to include those areas – this was likely to lead to resident frustration that the council had lacked the foresight to pre-emptively regulate those areas.
- 4.9. The previous PSPO was “as effective as it was implemented”. It was used in a targeted manner. However, accurate records could not be provided as the recording of its implementation was poor and data had been lost during a systems migration. The MOU re the proposed PSPO would require accurate and joint record keeping by the council and Police, such as that undertaken for Crime Protection Warnings and Crime Protection Notices. Under the new Assure system, the Police would only be able to provide, and not access, data on PSPO-related interactions, warnings and Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs).
- 4.10. The data used to justify the proposed PSPO was unaffected by the aforementioned data loss. Social distancing restrictions could have affected ASB reporting/data. However, it was evident that ASB was occurring in the borough if one walked around it.
- 4.11. The proposed PSPO would provide the Police with less punitive powers (the ability to issue FPNs, rather than arrest) to enable engagement with ASB perpetrators.
- 4.12. During targeted enforcement activities, officers from other council services who could provide engagement, outreach and signposting would participate.
- 4.13. Routine monitoring of enforcement data would enable regular assessment of whether the PSPO was being used proportionately and enable responsive enforcement. The Cabinet Member noted she was already accustomed to conducting thematic reviews of enforcement through her executive role in relation to housing.
- 4.14. FPNs would not be issued to under 18s. If children were engaged in the consumption of drugs or alcohol, a safeguarding approach would be taken. Early Help and mentoring would also be available to under 18s.

Metropolitan Police Service officers then made opening remarks and took questions from the Committee. The key points were:

- 4.15. The PSPO would be a tool of last resort and the Police would engage in planned, joint days of action to address the causes of ASB. Enforcement data would be reviewed every six weeks to enable the targeting of appropriate resources, including from the third sector.
- 4.16. The PSPO was not intended to target “hardcore” ASB perpetrators, who would be targeted using Community Protection Warnings and Criminal Behaviour Orders; it was intended to create an enforcement mechanism to encourage behaviour change in people in whom there was such potential.
- 4.17. There would be no additional council or Police officers to enforce the PSPO.

- 4.18. The PSPO would not be a panacea but would enable more-effective engagement. It was hoped the PSPO would enable the Police and council to improve joint working and problem solving.
- 4.19. The Police already flagged people for intervention regarding substance misuse via the council and third sector on a daily basis; and the Police and council routinely collaborated and conducted targeted operations re ASB. The PSPO would provide the Police with less-punitive powers and the council with greater powers.
- 4.20. The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis had indicated that neighbourhood priorities, including ASB, would be the focus for the force.
- 4.21. A member accepted the rationale for trying to intervene in a preventative manner, and asked why financial penalties, which could put vulnerable people in debt, exacerbating the issues they faced, was the best last resort. FPNs were a deterrent to encourage compliance. It would be inappropriate to target homeless communities with FPNs, which would be an option to address different levels of ASB. Residents were reporting ASB which detrimentally affected their lives, leading them to change how they went about their business.
- 4.22. Information regarding whether FPNs were used as a last resort in practice, extracted from officer's written statements, would be monitored under the six-weekly reviews. The MOU and training for council and Police officers would ensure powers were used in the intended manner.
- 4.23. A member noted that monitoring of Stop and Search had not resulted in it being used proportionately and asked why the PSPO would be different.

Aleister Adamson, Senior Legal Advisor - Release, made opening remarks and then took questions from the Committee. Key points raised included:

- 4.24. There was a risk that the PSPO would deepen the harms endemic in drugs policing. The Casey Review had found prejudice in the Metropolitan Police Service and there was a question regarding whether it was an appropriate time to give the force additional powers. In the Evidence Pack, a local police officer had stated existing powers – Stop and Search – were sufficient to police drugs.
- 4.25. The PSPO risked deepening the harm experienced by people most affected by drugs policing. Drug users could be prevented from accessing critical services by the dispersal power proposed under the drugs and psychoactive substances provision and be severely harmed by financial sanctions. The confiscation of a person's drugs was likely to result in them purchasing more, increasing the demand for, and trade in, illicit substances in the borough.
- 4.26. Young people, who tended to congregate in public spaces, particularly in the summer, could face criminalisation.
- 4.27. The proposed measure regarding unauthorised encampments essentially criminalised homelessness by prohibiting the use of shelter during a time of economic insecurity with limited support available to the public.
- 4.28. Existing police powers were used disproportionately against certain racial groups, especially Black communities, and there was a significant risk that the proposed PSPO would disproportionately impact those communities and worsen police-community relations.

- 4.29. There was insufficient or insufficiently clear justification for the PSPO, with data from the previous PSPO having been lost and the data relied on being from during the pandemic, when ASB reports doubled nationally.
- 4.30. The responses to the consultation on the proposed PSPO was unrepresentative of the borough's population. Just under 27 per cent of residents identified as Black in the 2021 Census, while 5.2 per cent of respondents (25 people) did so. Other non-White populations were also underrepresented, while White people were significantly overrepresented. It was also concerning that the consultation findings grouped all non-White groups together, diminishing the different experiences of different racial groups. Young people, particularly young men and young black men, who were disproportionately affected by Stop and Search, were also underrepresented; and there were no clear safeguards to protect them from disproportionate enforcement under the PSPO.
- 4.31. Regarding the presentation of enforcement of the PSPO as last resort following attempts at engagement and support, it was unclear what level of support would be provided. People with drug and alcohol problems needed a lot of support and patience; there was a question of when the threshold for enforcement would be crossed and how it would be ensured that threshold would be consistently applied.
- 4.32. It was unclear whether local drug and alcohol treatment services had been consulted during the development of the proposals.
- 4.33. Even the consultation responses which supported the PSPO did not explain why it was the preferable solution to ASB and many raised significant concerns regarding it.
- 4.34. Rather than sanctioning drug use, Release supported harm reduction. It was unclear what harm reduction initiatives were available in the borough and thus whether people who used drugs in public did so because they had no other choice. There were many middle-class people who used drugs in the comfort of their own homes; someone lacking a home or safe space to use their drugs did not provide justification to punish them for their drug use.
- 4.35. The references to multiple statutory powers in the proposed restriction re drugs and psychoactive substances risked the application of different powers in an arbitrary manner or people being punished multiple times under multiple provisions for the same act.
- 4.36. There was a risk that in the drive to tackle ASB, it is forgotten that ASB is not in and of itself a criminal offence; and there was a question regarding when a quasi-criminal response was an appropriate one for a non-criminal issue. A council officer responded that the payment of an FPN allowed people to discharge their criminal liability.

Further questions were put to the witnesses. The key points were:

- 4.37. The drugs and psychoactive substances restriction would only be used to address related ASB, not drug use alone. However, there was no reference to ASB in the proposed restriction, unlike the one regarding alcohol. The Committee was told the application only to cases of ASB would be addressed during drafting.

- 4.38. The drug restriction would not be used to target habitual public users who would not pay the FPN and were unconcerned by the prospect of receiving a criminal record.
- 4.39. Due to capacity, the Police would not be able to deal with all ASB if the PSPO was introduced but would be able to resource targeted enforcement in certain locations. It was envisaged that enforcement would only be undertaken when other approaches had failed, e.g. where there was persistent ASB.
- 4.40. PSPO enforcement powers would be delegated to officers in council teams including Anti-social Behaviour, Environmental Crime and Parks, increasing the resources available to tackle ASB. All such officers would receive training on enforcing the order.
- 4.41. A member asked how the risk that the PSPO would be disproportionately enforced against young people due to the greater likelihood that they were perceived to be intimidating would be mitigated and public pressure to disproportionately enforce against young people due to such perceptions resisted. The serious impact of ASB on residents and how it could deter people from using public spaces were noted, as was the frustration of residents when the council could not deal with serious cases. Nevertheless, the powers would need to be implemented in a way that did not add to the pressures experienced by over-policed communities; the importance of effectively monitoring enforcement was reiterated.
- 4.42. The Equality Analysis Assessment would seek to identify mitigations to the risks identified by the Committee. The council would seek to identify good practice from other areas also. The Chair noted, in the context of the unrepresentative consultation responses, the importance of the Assessment having regard to issues such as disparity in garden access between different racial groups.
- 4.43. It was noted by the Chair that the majority of ASB complaints received by the council were in relation to dogs, but the proposed dog restrictions were particularly unpopular among White consultation respondents.
- 4.44. The dog exclusions applied to cemeteries, crematoria, nature reserves, natural meadows and children's play areas. Enforcement action would only be taken against dog owners who were behaving in an anti-social manner and did not engage with enforcement officers.
- 4.45. In addition to the six-weekly monitoring by the Safer Communities Service, quarterly monitoring reports would be provided to the Safer Lewisham Partnership Board. The quarterly reports and thematic insights could be shared with the Select Committee. A member of the Committee could also sit on the monitoring board.
- 4.46. Examples could not be given of how the previous PSPO was enforced due to the missing data. However, there were anecdotal reports of it being effectively enforced for short periods of time in specific locations. The Cabinet Member offered to provide such examples subsequently if possible and desired by the Committee.
- 4.47. Conduct within events such as festivals would be regulated by those events' security. However, the PSPO could be enforced by the Police outside the bounds of those events.

- 4.48. Aleister noted that people anti-social behaviour was written into most council's tenancy agreements and frequently formed the basis of eviction proceedings. Subject access requests often found that there was limited evidence for allegations of ASB and allegations often existed in the context of wider neighbourhood disputes. Release's clients who used drugs or had mistrust in local authorities or the Police were less likely to report ASB by their neighbours. Release had found it conducive to encourage housing services to mediate neighbourhood disputes to avoid the need for eviction. Aleister asked what evidential threshold would be in place to ensure that every attempt to correct ASB was made but had failed before enforcement action was taken.
- 4.49. A dispersal power was proposed under the drugs and psychoactive substances restriction at page 44 of the report pack and what, if any, interface it had with Part 3 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Police and Crime Act 2014 needed to be considered. The potential interaction between the proposed PSPO and various existing statutory provisions including and further to Part 3 of the 2014 Act required consideration. A Police officer cautioned that any dispersal power would need to be carefully framed.
- 4.50. In the context of the council's positive obligation to facilitate the Gypsy and Roma Traveller (GRT) way of life, including a responsibility to establish sites on which members such communities could live, the absence of any such sites in Lewisham was noted and the question of what would happen if there was an unauthorised traveller site in the borough. The PSPO would not be used to target travelling communities as "more substantial" legislation was available to the Police – the threat of an FPN was described as unlikely to be sufficient to move travellers along. The council would always engage with unauthorised encampments in the first instance, including by seeking to identify any health or wellbeing concerns which may warrant referral, any subsequent enforcement action would be taken by the Police. The question of the availability of culturally suitable traveller sites was a wider question to be asked of the council.
- 4.51. The purpose of the restriction on unauthorised encampments was said to be to restrict encampments for economic purposes – where people decided to live in a park, field or common land as they were travelling for work.
- 4.52. It was noted that the proposed PSPO could effectively criminalise those without the means to pay an FPN. It was confirmed that the Fairer Lewisham Duty would be applied during the Equalities Impact Assessment, as well as the prisms of disproportionality, intersectionality, unconscious bias, unfairness and marginalisation. The PSPO's Equality Analysis Assessment would be a live document: updated using insights from the six-weekly monitoring meetings so that any concerns could be mitigated.
- 4.53. It was noted that the dispersal power proposed under the drugs and psychoactive substances restriction could prevent a drug user from accessing medical and professional support, and could force people to use drugs in more secluded areas, increasing the risk to them and the likelihood of paraphernalia littering those areas. Witnesses were asked how it would be ensured dispersal powers did not disproportionately impact vulnerable groups or criminalise people for being in public spaces; whether and what

protocols and safeguards would be put in place to avoid preventing people from accessing treatment and support services and managed accommodation; how the dispersal of drug and psychoactive substance users would interact with the council's implementation of the Supplemental Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant/Drugs Strategy; and, given Lewisham had the tenth highest rate drug-related death in London, how the measure related to drugs and psychoactive substances would not increase the risk of harm.

- 4.54. Specific substance misuse services and homelessness services had not been engaged or consulted regarding the proposed PSPO. Commissioning officers and housing partnerships sat on the Safer Lewisham Partnership Board and had been consulted. How young people, survivors of substance dependency or misuse or homelessness, and people living in fear of ASB, had been consulted on the PSPO proposals was later questioned.
- 4.55. It was noted that the PSPO was likely to increase police contact for certain groups, potentially increasing the use of Stop and Search against those groups. The Police witnesses did not anticipate that the PSPO would increase the use of Stop and Search in the borough as it would not generate the grounds required to conduct a Stop and Search. Any use of Stop and Search associated with the order would be monitored through the routine six-weekly meetings.
- 4.56. Police witnesses weren't familiar with the causal factors behind the disproportionate issuing of Covid-19-related fines to Black and Minority Ethnicity Groups during the pandemic. However, the importance of monitoring the implementation of the PSPO and the desire to increase public trust and confidence in the Police were reiterated.
- 4.57. It was clarified that the intention was to make the PSPO for three years, but there was flexibility in how and when it was monitored and reviewed.
- 4.58. The Chair summed up, noting that a range of concerns remained, including regarding:
- A lack of engagement with key stakeholders
 - The unrepresentativeness of consultation, particularly in relation to those likely to be disproportionately impacted by the proposals
 - A lack of clarity regarding the interactions between the proposed PSPO and existing legislation and the risk of double punishment
 - The purpose of the restriction on unauthorised encampments, as it had been put to the Committee that it was not to be used against the GRT community or homeless people.
- 4.59. Members noted further concerns, including:
- Human rights and equalities implications
 - Further regulating the lives of residents
 - The necessity, rather than convenience, of the proposals given the range of powers available to the council and partners under existing legislation
 - The threshold of ASB being *likely* to occur to engage the restriction related to alcohol.

The Committee suspended Standing Order 10 at 9.25pm.

RESOLVED

To refer to the Mayor and Cabinet the key issues and concerns noted during discussion and identified during the Committee’s research with a recommendation that, as the proposal and its implications require further consideration –

the proposed Public Spaces Protection Order should not be progressed until the issues and concerns contained in the referral have been fully considered, the proposed restrictions reviewed, comprehensive and representative engagement with stakeholders undertaken and a report regarding

- those issues and concerns;
- the broader policy and activities in place and further opportunities to address the behaviours which are the subject of the order;
- the findings of that further engagement; and
- the justification for the order, if it is to be progressed;

brought to the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee.

5. Select Committee Work Programme

RESOLVED

That the work programme at Appendix D be agreed, subject to the inclusion of a holding item for a further report regarding the proposed Public Spaces Protection Order.

The meeting ended at 9.34 pm

Chair:

Date:

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Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee

Declarations of Interest

Date: 14 September 2023

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Director of Law and Corporate Governance

Outline and recommendations

Members are asked to declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda.

1. Summary

1.1. Members must declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda. There are three types of personal interest referred to in the Council's Member Code of Conduct:

- (1) Disclosable pecuniary interests
- (2) Other registerable interests
- (3) Non-registerable interests.

1.2. Further information on these is provided in the body of this report.

2. Recommendation

2.1. Members are asked to declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda.

3. Disclosable pecuniary interests

3.1 These are defined by regulation as:

- (a) Employment, trade, profession or vocation of a relevant person* for profit or gain
- (b) Sponsorship –payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than by the Council) within the 12 months prior to giving notice for inclusion in the register in respect of expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member or towards your election expenses (including payment or financial benefit from a Trade Union).
- (c) Undischarged contracts between a relevant person* (or a firm in which they are a partner or a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest) and the Council for goods, services or works.
- (d) Beneficial interests in land in the borough.
- (e) Licence to occupy land in the borough for one month or more.
- (f) Corporate tenancies – any tenancy, where to the member’s knowledge, the Council is landlord and the tenant is a firm in which the relevant person* is a partner, a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest.
- (g) Beneficial interest in securities of a body where:
 - (a) that body to the member’s knowledge has a place of business or land in the borough; and
 - (b) either:
 - (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person* has a beneficial interest exceeds 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that class.

*A relevant person is the member, their spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom they live as spouse or civil partner.

4. Other registerable interests

4.1 The Lewisham Member Code of Conduct requires members also to register the following interests:

- (a) Membership or position of control or management in a body to which you were appointed or nominated by the Council
- (b) Any body exercising functions of a public nature or directed to charitable purposes, or whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy, including any political party
- (c) Any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25.

5. Non registerable interests

- 5.1. Occasions may arise when a matter under consideration would or would be likely to affect the wellbeing of a member, their family, friend or close associate more than it would affect the wellbeing of those in the local area generally, but which is not required to be registered in the Register of Members' Interests (for example a matter concerning the closure of a school at which a Member's child attends).

6. Declaration and impact of interest on members' participation

- 6.1. Where a member has any registerable interest in a matter and they are present at a meeting at which that matter is to be discussed, they must declare the nature of the interest at the earliest opportunity and in any event before the matter is considered. The declaration will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If the matter is a disclosable pecuniary interest the member must take not part in consideration of the matter and withdraw from the room before it is considered. They must not seek improperly to influence the decision in any way. **Failure to declare such an interest which has not already been entered in the Register of Members' Interests, or participation where such an interest exists, is liable to prosecution and on conviction carries a fine of up to £5000**
- 6.2. Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest they must still declare the nature of the interest to the meeting at the earliest opportunity and in any event before the matter is considered, but they may stay in the room, participate in consideration of the matter and vote on it unless paragraph 6.3 below applies.
- 6.3. Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest, the member must consider whether a reasonable member of the public in possession of the facts would think that their interest is so significant that it would be likely to impair the member's judgement of the public interest. If so, the member must withdraw and take no part in consideration of the matter nor seek to influence the outcome improperly.
- 6.4. If a non-registerable interest arises which affects the wellbeing of a member, their, family, friend or close associate more than it would affect those in the local area generally, then the provisions relating to the declarations of interest and withdrawal apply as if it were a registerable interest.
- 6.5. Decisions relating to declarations of interests are for the member's personal judgement, though in cases of doubt they may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer.

7. Sensitive information

- 7.1. There are special provisions relating to sensitive interests. These are interests the disclosure of which would be likely to expose the member to risk of violence or intimidation where the Monitoring Officer has agreed that such interest need not be registered. Members with such an interest are referred to the Code and advised to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance.

8. Exempt categories

- 8.1. There are exemptions to these provisions allowing members to participate in decisions notwithstanding interests that would otherwise prevent them doing so. These include:-
 - (a) Housing – holding a tenancy or lease with the Council unless the matter relates to your particular tenancy or lease; (subject to arrears exception)
 - (b) School meals, school transport and travelling expenses; if you are a parent or

guardian of a child in full time education, or a school governor unless the matter relates particularly to the school your child attends or of which you are a governor

- (c) Statutory sick pay; if you are in receipt
- (d) Allowances, payment or indemnity for members
- (e) Ceremonial honours for members
- (f) Setting Council Tax or precept (subject to arrears exception).

9. Report author and contact

- 9.1. Jeremy Chambers, Director of Law and Corporate Governance
jeremy.chambers@lewisham.gov.uk, 020 8314 7648



Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee

Report title: Single Equality Framework

Date: 14 September 2023

Key decision: No.

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors:

Outline and recommendations

This report reviews the Council's Single Equality Framework 2022-24, specifically focussing on the Council's five equality objectives, and provides information on work that has been commissioned to review the Council's overall approach to equalities. The setting of equality objectives is a requirement of the Equality Act (Specific Duties) 2011. The information contained in this report covers the period April 2020 to March 2023.

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

March 2020 – Approval of the Single Equality Framework at Mayor and Cabinet

*September 2020 - Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee: In-depth Review
– How Lewisham Council Embeds Equalities Across its Service Provision*

1. Summary

This is the first review of the Single Equality Framework (SEF) 2020-24,

which was approved by Mayor and Cabinet in March 2020. The delay in annual reporting of the SEF was due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

To that extent this review incorporates information that covers the period April 2020 to March 2023.

2. Recommendations

2.1 To note and comment on the context of this report.

3. Policy Context

3.1 This report aligns with Lewisham's Corporate Priorities, as set out in the Council's [Corporate Strategy \(2022-2026\)](#):

- Cleaner and Greener
- A Strong Local Economy
- Quality Housing
- Children and Young People
- Safer Communities
- Open Lewisham
- Health and Wellbeing

3.2 In particular, this report is closely aligned to the Open Lewisham priority. Promoting equality, by tackling inequality, sits at the heart of the Council's public welfare role, and is connected to every corporate priority, as is stressed throughout the Council's Corporate Strategy.

3.3 The SEF 2020-24 contributes to the Corporate Strategy by helping the Council to better understand the equality implications of the various decisions that it makes in delivering on Corporate Strategy priorities and commitments.

4. Background

4.4 Lewisham is home to a diverse population. As a Borough of Sanctuary, our aim is to ensure that the needs of residents are considered in the performance of Council functions and provision of services.

4.5 The Equality Act (Specific Duties) 2011 requires public bodies to set and publish one or more equality objectives on a four yearly cycle. In addition, the Specific Duties require public bodies to ensure that the objectives can be measured.

4.6 The above requirements accord with the broader framework of the Equality Act 2010 and in particular the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which sets out that when public authorities carry out their functions, they must have due regard or think about the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share that characteristic
- Foster or encourage good relations between people who share a

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protected characteristic and those who do not share that characteristic

4.6 Within the context of the Equality Act 2010, the protected characteristics are defined as follows:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender-reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

4.7 Underlining the Council's commitment to tackling inequality is a focus on socio-economic equality. Notably, although socio-economic status is not a protected characteristic in England, the Council has ensured that socio-economic status is codified in Council policy. A 2020 Review of How Lewisham Embeds Equalities Across its Service Provision, conducted by the Safer, Stronger Communities Select Committee exemplified this commitment and led to the development of a socio-economic equalities framework: the 'Fairer Lewisham Duty'.

4.8 Not willing to draw the line at socio-economic inequality, the Council has gone even further by incorporating a wider range of communities of identity and experience into its equality analysis assessment framework. This has enabled services to describe the likely equality impacts of their decisions in ways that are most relevant to the lived experience of residents.

4.9 In March 2020 a commitment was made to present a report to the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee each year. This report fulfils that requirement.

5. Single Equality Framework

5.1 The SEF is a statement of equality objectives reflecting the Council's public welfare role in promoting the social, economic and environmental well-being of the borough. In addition, the SEF describes the assurance mechanism within which those equality objectives sit.

5.2 The application of the Framework is intended to help the Council to better understand the equality implications of the decisions that it makes, the functions that it performs and the services that it provides.

5.3 The Framework is informed by the socio-economic context of inequality in Lewisham, builds upon existing strategic priorities and reflects the likely equality implications and impacts of current events.

5.4 The SEF is a lens through which the Council can test and assess the way it does things and understand whether it is doing things in the right way. The three main elements of the SEF are set out under the sub-headers below.

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a) Equality Objectives

The equality objectives are the only statutory component of the SEF. The objectives have been designed and developed to reflect a maturing of the Council's understanding of its communities and what equality means in light of that. The Council's five equality objectives are as follows:

- To ensure equal opportunities for marginalised and seldom heard communities.
- To reduce the number of vulnerable people in the borough by tackling socio-economic inequality.
- To improve the quality of life of residents by tackling preventable illnesses and diseases.
- To ensure that services are designed and delivered to meet the needs of Lewisham's diverse population.
- To increase the number of people we support to become active citizens.

b) Six equality prisms

The six equality prisms speak to the fact that in order to address the characteristics of inequality there needs to be a clear understanding of what those features are, how prevalent they are and how they affect different communities. The six equality prisms are as follows:

- Due Regard (i.e.: is the Council doing anything either directly or indirectly, that may be contributing towards inequality)
- Disproportionality
- Intersectionality
- Unfairness
- Marginalisation
- Unconscious basis

c) Data digest

A data digest was published alongside the SEF in March 2020. The aim was to refresh this annually with new equality data. However, since late 2020 the Council has procured the services of an external supplier to maintain an Observatory, which is now the primary resource for equality related data about the borough and which is accessible to the public. The observatory includes information showing how the Council compares to London and nationally. Elected Members have previously been trained in the use of the tool and a new workshop is planned for the benefit of those councillors elected since the tool was last demonstrated to Members.

6. Review of the Single Equality Framework

- 6.1 This is the first annual review of the SEF. The delay in annual reporting was due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The various sources of information that have been used to frame the review are as follows:

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- The wide-ranging impact of the Covid-19 pandemic
- Contextual data eg: 2021 Census
- Outcomes of public engagement and resident satisfaction
- Outcomes of projects and programmes
- Systems and service redesign
- Policy development and application

7. The Lewisham equalities context: 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23

7.1.1 In March 2020, when the Council's five equalities objectives were agreed by Mayor and Cabinet, the population of the borough stood at just over 300,000. Then as now, significant demographic and socio-economic diversity characterised Lewisham. This diversity also manifested itself in the way in which inequality presented across the borough. Some of the key data framing the Council's understanding of inequality in Lewisham for the period April 2020 to March 2023 are as follows:

- Comparatively higher levels of relative deprivation – Lewisham ranks 63rd out of 317 local authorities nationally, for overall deprivation, with particularly high levels of relative deprivation in respect of barriers to housing (13th out of 317), income deprivation affecting older people (18th out of 317), living environment 20th out of 317), income deprivation affecting children (37th out of 317).
- The four most deprived wards in the borough are Bellingham, Downham, Rushey Green and New Cross. In Bellingham, Rushey Green and New Cross, the majority of the population is of BAME heritage.
- The number of businesses contained within the borough has fallen from roughly 10,290 in 2020, to 9,945 in 2022. However, this follows a sharp increase from the 2010 figure of 6,135.
- The percentage of private renting increased from 24.3% in 2011 to 27.2% in 2021. Simultaneously, the percentage of residents who owned their home decreased from 42.4% to 41.9%.
- In 2011 the average house price in Lewisham was more than 7.8 times cumulative gross annual earnings. By comparison, in 2022, the average house price in Lewisham was nearly 12 times cumulative gross annual earnings.
- In 2021, Lewisham was home to around 61.1 people per football pitch-sized piece of land, compared with 56.0 in 2011. This makes Lewisham among the top 5% most densely populated English local authority areas.
- Whilst the employment rate (78.2%) in Lewisham is comparable to the London average, our average income is the 8th lowest out of 33 London boroughs.
- The youth unemployment rate (16-24) stands at 13% with a further 8% 'economically inactive'.
- Life expectancy at birth for a Lewisham female is 82.4 years (marginally

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below the London average) and 77.7 years for a male (below the London average of 80.3 years).

- In terms of life expectancy and causes of death, Lewisham performs significantly worse than England with respect to average life expectancy at birth for males and under 75 all-cause mortality. By contrast, the borough performs in line with England with respect to life expectancy at birth for females, under 75 mortality rate from all cardiovascular diseases, under 75 mortality rate from cancer and suicide rate.

8. The Covid-19 pandemic

8.1 The onset of Covid-19 distorted and exacerbated inequalities across the borough, whilst also bringing the same issues into sharper relief. More than a public health crisis, the pandemic highlighted just how precarious the lives of so many Lewisham residents had become. Particularly as it relates to household income and earnings, and the reality of in-work poverty.

8.2 In the wake of Covid-19, a 'new normal' has been established. Evidence of this can be seen in the residual economic effects of the pandemic such as the JSA claimant count, which has remained above 12,000 for more than two years. Some of the relevant contextual data relating to the pandemic is set out below:

- In January 2021, Lewisham had reported more than 21,000 Covid-19 cases and more than 500 Covid-related fatalities.
- The data relating to Covid-19 cases and fatalities indicated that older residents and those of BAME heritage were disproportionately impacted.
- Just over half of the nearly 1,700 emails sent to the C-19 inbox between March and August 2020 sought help on financial advice for residents or were residents experiencing vulnerability. This highlighted the precarious nature of the financial position of residents.
- In March 2021, roughly 21,000 Lewisham residents were claiming out of work benefits (up from 8,400 in March 2020).
- Nearly 56,000 employments in the borough were furloughed.
- Advice Lewisham reported a 334% Increase in employment advice (from March 2020) when compared to the same period in 2019.
- Between November 2020 and January there were nearly 4,300 emergency helpline requests to Lewisham's Community Hub with nearly 2,600 referrals made to food aid organisations.
- More than 1,200 requests for food parcels were made by residents who were 'shielding.'

9. Progress against equality objectives

9.1 The onset of Covid-19 made any intentional roll-out of the SEF unrealistic as the Council's immediate focus was directed towards repurposing functions and services to tackle the pandemic and save lives. In addition to this, a series of organisational changes at a senior level within the authority, including the oversight of the equalities function, has presented challenges to effectively and consistently monitoring the Council's progress.

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- 9.2 This report takes an aggregate view of the Council's activities, achievements and challenges over the past three years as they relate to the Council's equality objectives. It also sets out the work that will be undertaken, and is already in progress, that will mean the Council sees a step-change in its approach to equalities over the next twelve months and will ensure that our actions meet our rhetoric in delivering the ambitious equalities agenda that Lewisham has.
- 9.3 Despite the challenges to monitoring the Council's progress which are outlined above, the following assertions can still be clearly seen:
- Even without knowledge of what was to come, the design and development of the five equality objectives demonstrates that the Council was 'tuned in' to existing equality challenges facing residents and therefore focusing on the right things.
 - Evidence gathered over the past three years shows that even against the elevated challenges presented by a global pandemic, the performance of Council functions, provision of services as well as the activities of the wider community were able to meet the moment.
- 9.4 Taking the above into consideration, the sub headers below highlight areas where progress has been made in meeting the Council's equality objectives. It should be noted that there are points of intersection and overlap between the progress summaries presented, which itself highlights our understanding of the interconnected nature of inequality and the means by which it should be addressed.

10. To ensure equal opportunities for marginalised and seldom heard communities.

- 10.1 This objective has been developed specifically in recognition of the needs of those in the borough whose voices are not often heard and whose needs may therefore be overlooked. In respect of this objective, the Council has:
- Been recognised as a borough of Sanctuary and has resettled 100 refugee families in the borough.
 - Signed up to the Safe Passage's pledge, committing to accept an additional 100 children over the next 10 years
 - Helped 60,000 residents apply for EU Settled Status to protect their rights after Brexit. Of these, about 58,000 have been granted either Settled Status or pre-Settled Status.
 - Continued to be an active voice for refugees and migrants at the City of Sanctuary Steering and the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on Intercultural Integration of Migrants.
 - Launched a new programme hiring out iPads through libraries and community centre to reduce digital exclusion and reduce loneliness.
 - Set up a Disabled People's Commission to review Council services and functions and make recommendations as to how they can be improved.
 - Launched the 'voices of Lewisham' project to give a diverse range of residents and stakeholders an opportunity to share their personal accounts and experiences of the Covid-19 pandemic. Dozens of

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residents and stakeholders groups participated in the project.

- Continued to take active steps to ensure that Council employees at senior management level, are more representative of the diverse community that it serves.
- Been acknowledged by 81% of 2021 Lewisham Residents Survey respondents as a welcoming borough. A measure we will use to track progress against the next residents survey.

11. To reduce the number of vulnerable people in the borough by tackling socio-economic inequality

11.1 This objective recognises the pervasive nature of socio-economic inequality, irrespective of protected characteristic. It also underlines the Council's commitment to recognise socio-economic inequality, whether or not such recognition is provided for in legislation. In respect of this objective the Council has:

- Helped 5,000 vulnerable and low-income households reduce their energy costs and carbon footprint, and relieved an estimated £38,000 of debt across south London.
- Utilised the Household Support Fund to support thousands of vulnerable residents with the cost of food and utility bills. This includes specific support for households receiving housing benefit or Council Tax reductions, and for households with children receiving free school meals.
- Served 1,500 notices to private sector landlords forcing them to improve the state of rented homes following a complaint from the tenant.
- Distributed £1.29m in funding, to 676 households that were struggling to cover shortfalls in their rents to secure their tenancies and avoid homelessness.
- Awarded Citizens Advice Lewisham with financial support to increase their capacity to deliver income maximisation and debt support
- Procured the Low Income Family Data Tracker. A tool which allows the Council to improve our understanding of the most vulnerable Lewisham residents, and better plan and deliver our support for them.
- Awarded Selce (the South East London Community Energy co-operative) £100k funded by the third Household Support Fund to provide practical support to residents at risk of / experiencing fuel poverty.
- Created a new equalities impact test: 'the 'Fairer Lewisham Duty'. The Duty, which was developed by the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee, has been designed to help officers to better understand the likely socio-economic implications of proposals that they are developing.
- Provided £358k to 716 Lewisham residents who would have lost income through being asked to self-isolate when testing positive or being in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID.

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12. To improve the quality of life of residents by tackling preventable illnesses and diseases.

12.1 This objective recognises the impact of health inequality not just as a determinant of life chances, but also a determinant of quality of life. In respect of this objective, the Council has:

- Helped the NHS to vaccinate over 100,000 Lewisham residents from Covid-19.
- Installed 'green screens' around school playgrounds in the most polluted areas to protect pupils from the effects of air pollution. In addition, we have launched 16 new School Streets, taking the total to 26 School Streets reduce car emissions, improve air quality and create a safer environment for our young people and their families.
- Launched the Lewisham Food Justice action plan and funded a programme of food justice community grants to support food giving organisations provide nutritious and culturally appropriate food to residents in need.
- Funded 21 Warm Welcome hubs to ensure access to warm spaces across all wards in Lewisham in winter 22/23. Not only did these hubs help keep people warm but also enabled them to connect to the local community and services to support their wellbeing.
- Launched the 3 year suicide prevention strategy and action plan tackling the risk factors for residents who self-harm or die by suicide.
- Worked with the NHS to deliver polio vaccinations to children aged 0-9 years old in the borough in response to polio pathogens being identified in sewage across London.
- Worked with our provider to increase the uptake of NHS Health Checks for residents aged 40-74 resulting an annual uptake above the London and England average. The NHS Health Check screens for common cardiovascular diseases and offers the opportunity for prevention as well as earlier diagnosis and access to treatment for residents.
- Developed a harm reduction initiative, in partnership with a local business, to support smokers to quit using e-cigarettes. Over 60% of those who took part in the programme quit smoking including 5 pregnant women and 4 of their partners.
- Launched the report of the Birmingham and Lewisham African and Caribbean Health Inequalities Review (BLACHIR) to tackle inequality in health and care in those from African or Caribbean backgrounds.
- Facilitated the recruitment of Health Equity Fellows, based in Lewisham's 6 Primary Care Networks to work with local community organisations to understand and tackle issues facing residents around their health and wellbeing.
- Opened the Clyde Family Hub in April 2023. This is the first of 4 Family Hubs to be opened across Lewisham during 2023/24. Family hubs are accessible, physical and virtual points of contact for families, children and young people age 0-25. These family hubs form the core of a transformation

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programme that aims to provide a more connected and localised approach to improving access to early intervention and prevention support for children and families across health, education and social care.

13. To ensure that services are designed and delivered to meet the needs of Lewisham's diverse population

13.1 This objective recognises the fact that in order to address inequality the Council must ensure that services are designed and delivered in a way that is nimble, agile and resident-centred. In respect of this objective, the Council has:

- Secured over £1m in external funding for our Athena service, which supports hundreds of victims of domestic abuse and wider gender-based violence each year. This funding means we can support more children who are victims of domestic abuse. We have supported more than 1,000 people through domestic abuse services during the pandemic.
- Secured over £5m to invest in tackling the climate emergency, including by retrofitting council buildings and schools. We are using this investment to support carbon reduction and tackle fuel poverty.
- Introduced new Mental Health Support Teams in 19 schools, providing direct help to young people when and where they need it. Head teachers tell us this support has been valuable in supporting children after pandemic school closures.
- Enshrined the role of the Young Mayor in the work of the Lewisham Strategic Partnership, ensuring that the voice of young people is heard by the Council and by its partners across the borough. The youth elections for the Young Mayor are the longest running in the UK, achieve a consistently high turnout and are recognised as national best practise.
- Begun a process of co-production, working with residents where possible to ensure that services are designed by them, for them. Examples would include utilising the Portage Service, to ensure that adventure playgrounds can be co-developed alongside disabled children and their families.
- Begun the process the adding capacity to the Council's equalities function, ensuring that Lewisham Council has the skills and expertise required to provide expert advice to teams across the organisation which design and deliver services.

14. To increase the number of people we support to become active citizens.

14.1 The objective recognises that to tackle inequality it is simply not enough to focus on equal rights and entitlements. A commensurate focus must be given to equal obligations, duties and responsibilities. In respect of this objective, the Council has:

- Partnered to create the Lewisham Community Response Hub. During the Covid-19 pandemic, nearly 2,500 people signed up as volunteers across the Hub as a whole. A detailed report on the work of the Lewisham Community Response Hub by Goldsmiths University, provides

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additional valuable information on social activism in the borough in response to the pandemic.

- Recruited over 100 volunteers to become Lewisham COVID-19 Champions and come from a range of backgrounds including voluntary community sector groups, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) community groups, staff groups, health providers, business owners, local councillors and faith leaders.
- Trained over 900 people within the borough as Dementia Friends, significantly contributing towards our ambition to become a dementia friendly borough.
- Raised over £300,000 for Lewisham projects including the 999 Club and Lewisham food banks, through the generosity of Lewisham residents.
- Reviewed and re-established its internal Corporate Equalities Board. The Board continues to be chaired by an Executive Director and now also includes Director-level representation from across the Council as well as representation from all staff groups. During the period of review the Board has:
 - Routinely requested/ received updates on work being done by the Council to tackle inequality affecting employees. As part of this, the Board has received updates and facilitated numerous discussions relating to tackling race and disability inequality (e.g.: the Board has considered several presentations of the Council's work to address pay inequality by the Director of People and Organisational Development).
 - Taken steps to ensure follow-through on the five recommendations of the Safer, Stronger Communities Select Committee's In-Depth Review of Equalities in Service Delivery. including work on promoting staff engagement, development of a practical approach to assessing socio-economic risk and developing the Council's approach to Equality Analysis Assessments (EAAs).
 - Overseen EAAs for 2022/23 budget savings. The Corporate Equalities Board is also overseeing the Council's wider EAA forward plan, including proposing changes to the way in which EAAs are conducted to ensure that the process is more efficient and outcome-focused.
 - Routinely received updates on equalities work being undertaken within directorate service areas (eg: Education have had "Tackling Race Inequality" briefings with teachers. These included leadership, behaviour management approaches to tackling race inequality in schools).
 - Refreshed its Corporate Equality Policy to reflect learning from the Covid-19 pandemic as well as opportunities to further strengthen accountabilities for the delivery of equality objectives.
 - Continued to ensure that it reports on the cumulative impact of budget savings proposals including the likely impact of savings proposals on the delivery of the Council's equality objectives. The cumulative impact assessment also includes a focus on the likely socio-economic impact of budget savings proposals.

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- Played an active and involved role in the London Council Tackling Race Inequality Group (TRIG). As part of this, Lewisham leads on the work of the TRIG Data Sub-Group through a co-chairing position, and has been influential in encouraging London local authorities to explore best practice in the use of ethnicity data.

15. Challenges

- 15.1 As set out in this report, the equality landscape in Lewisham can no longer be described as business as usual. In addition to comparatively higher levels of deprivation, the residual impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has left additional scars on the borough.
- 15.2 Looking forward, the most significant challenges the Council faces in reducing inequity are summarised below:
- The necessity for data at a much more granular level to evaluate impacts of decisions on protected characteristics and understand features such as disproportionality and intersectionality.
 - Growing socio-economic inequality exacerbated by Covid-19, which is now further exacerbated by the ongoing cost of living crisis.
 - Lewisham's growing population and the implications of this on increased demand and complexity of need.
 - The ongoing cumulative impact of public spending cuts on Lewisham households – specifically as it relates to intersectionality.
 - Ensuring consistent and careful application of the equality analysis screening tool and equality analysis assessments to enable the Council to better understand the likely impact of its decisions on different protected characteristics.

16. Lessons learned

- 16.1 Although we've achieved a lot over a challenging period, there is no doubt that we could have achieved more if the distraction of covid didn't mean we hadn't been able to formally communicate our ambitions on equalities, or benchmark ourselves to create an effective baseline which the organisation could consistently work against.
- 16.2 The recommendation to consider socio-economic status throughout the decision making process was the correct one, but the impact of doing this has not been effectively documented over the last three years. When reviewing what impact the consideration of socio-economic status had on the Council's decision making process, it is challenging to quantify what would have happened had this status not been considered.
- 16.3 Having said this, over the course of the last three years there have been strong examples of best practice, where consideration of socio-economic status has driven decision making. This can be seen in various Equalities Analysis Assessments (EAA). For example, the Distribution of the Government's Household Fund 4 EAA acknowledges how the decisions may have a differential impact on residents of different socio economic status, and utilises this information to arrive at a decision. Over the next 12 months, the Council

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can use examples such as this one to ensure that other decisions make the same considerations through using the EAA tool.

- 16.4 An additional lesson from the last three years has been that the Council has not effectively recorded its progress against the London Councils standard which it signed up to (*noted in paragraph 27*). Going forward, the Council should focus more on benchmarking its current position, and using that information to measure progress against the ambitious objectives that it is committed to. Although signing up to this standard was the correct course of action, there is a challenge to measuring Lewisham's effectiveness at meeting it.
- 16.5 Finally, it would be important going forward to ensure a strong reporting mechanism is put in place, so that officers, Cabinet Members and Scrutiny Members are kept up to date with the Council's work and progress against its equality objectives. Although the intention at the creation of the Single Equality Framework to review it annually was the correct one, this series of reviews was interrupted, and as such progress reporting has not been consistently completed. Effectively utilising the regular meetings of Cabinet, the Safer Stronger Communities Committee and the Corporate Equalities Board could ensure a more effective reporting mechanism, which delivered regular progress updates.

17. Further work

- 17.1 Over the next 12 months, the Council's work on equalities will continue apace. Some of the key areas of focus are set out under the sub-headers below.

18. Lewisham Disabled Peoples Commission recommendations.

- 18.1 The Lewisham Disability Commission was a commitment from the previous Council administration. The work of the Commission was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the Commission has recently concluded its work and drafted recommendations.
- 18.2 These recommendations will be responded to via a report to Mayor and Cabinet, and work has been undertaken to begin early delivery on the commitments outlined in that Mayor and Cabinet report.

19. Armed Forces Covenant Duty

- 19.1 A new statutory Armed Forces Covenant Duty has been introduced by the government. When a specified body exercises a relevant function, it must have due regard to: (a) the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces; (b) the principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces, and (c) the principle that special provision for Service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.
- 19.2 The Council will continue its commitment to supporting the Armed Forces community, retaining its offer on school admissions, health and wellbeing, housing and re-integration and employment.

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20. 2021 Census data releases

20.1 Further releases and analysis of 2021 Census data continue to be scheduled. To facilitate this, a Census Insights programme was developed to ensure that the data is analysed so that key learning can be used to inform the formulation of policy, development of strategy as well as the design and commissioning of services.

21. Borough of Sanctuary re-application in 2024

21.1 The Council is due to reapply for Borough of Sanctuary status in 2023. Activity is being undertaken to review progress made against previous commitments, gather evidence on new areas where progress has been made and identify areas for improvement. In pulling evidence for the re-accreditation, the Council will be working alongside community partners.

21.2 Specific actions relating to the Council's reapplication for Borough of Sanctuary status include:

- Sanctuary awareness raising is included into everyday business of the local authority, e.g. staff induction/training.
- LA to demonstrate how it has embedded the concept of welcome and inclusion at all levels of the organisation (strategy).
- Commitment to supporting initiatives that embeds welcome and fosters solidarity between receiving communities and people seeking sanctuary
- LA publicly highlights its work in support of welcome and inclusion by making it visible on its website and noticeboards
- Identify national policy issues to make collective representations to government to encourage change

22. Tackling climate change

22.2 In 2019, Lewisham Council declared a 'climate emergency' recognising that climate change is the only equality issue with existential implications. In 2020, the Council specifically developed an equality objective with the need to address climate change in mind. The Council will continue to take active steps to tackle climate change by encouraging households and businesses to reduce CO2 emissions.

23. Implementation of the BLACHIR recommendations

23.2 Following completion of the ground-breaking work of Birmingham and Lewisham, which focused on Black and Caribbean health inequalities, a final report has been published. Over the next 12 months and beyond, the recommendations of the review and report will be implemented and embedded across a range of council services, and the work of partner organisations.

24. Lewisham Strategic Partnership

24.1 The Lewisham Strategic Partnership (LSP) is currently operating with one of its four working groups focused on Race and Equality. This group is Co-Chaired by Cllr Juliet Campbell, and a senior partner from the LSP. The purpose of this

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working group is to develop and deliver collaborative action to improve equity within the borough. This can focus either on improving the actions that organisations within Lewisham take to help develop their own employees, or actions that are external facing and support residents within the borough.

25. Developing equality objectives for 2024-28

25.1 Later in 2023, the Council will commence development of equality objectives for 2024, Informed by the review of equalities currently being carried out (see paragraph 28 below). The process will incorporate reflections on the existing five equality objectives as well as relevant information relating to the borough-wide equalities context. The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties 2011) does not prescribe how equality objectives should be designed, other than to dictate that they should be specific, measurable, achievable and time-bound.

26. Application of the Safer Stronger Communities In-depth Review: How Lewisham's Embeds Equalities Across its Service Provision

26.1 Application of this review continues, and has progressed over the previous three years. Work has been undertaken relating to the four key recommendations within this review, focused on staff forums, how the Council completes EEAs and the overall organisational approach to the Public Sector Equality Duty. Examples of how this work has been undertaken, and progress made against the review, can be found in Appendix A.

27. Anti-Racism and Race Equality

27.1 As a part of the Tackling Racial Inequality Group, coordinated by London Council's, Lewisham signed up to both the London Local Government Anti-Racist Statement, and the Chief Executives London Committee's Tackling Racial Inequality Standard.

27.2 The collective commitment to achieve racial equality focuses on what London councils can do together to have a positive impact on life outcomes at all stages, including in relation to health and wellbeing, employment and education. This is about social justice and promoting equality because all Londoners should be able to reach their potential in all spheres.

27.3 To be proactive in meeting this commitment, all local authorities commit to:

- Build a picture of what the key inequalities are in their area and then to look at what is driving these.
- Shape solutions by listening to residents, communities and frontline staff and by responsibly drawing on their lived experience and understanding of what the issues are and what works, without putting the burden on them to educate us.
- Set expectations of leaders to make the connection between achieving positive outcomes and their own leadership style and diversity, and to take personal responsibility for what they can do now to bring about change. This acknowledges residents have worked hard to achieve social justice and

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rightly expect to see leadership that reflects their position, to see action, and to be part of solution.

28. Review of the Councils' Equalities Approach

- 28.1 In addition to the work above, and in order to give focus to it and ensure that the Council's approach to equalities is effective and meeting the needs of its diverse population, a review of the Council's approach to equalities has been commissioned.
- 28.2 This work is being undertaken by DWC Consulting, who are conducting a review of the Council's approach to equalities, what Lewisham does well in this area and what action the Council could take to drive forward its ambitious agenda. This work will provide Lewisham with a measurable standard, in line with national and regional benchmarks, that the Council can use to measure the effectiveness of future work. Following the outcome of this review the Council will be creating an action plan in response, utilising the benchmarking information provided to measure progress.

29. Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any expenditure in relation to the Council's equality objectives and review of them will be contained within existing budgets.

30. Legal implications

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) introduced a public sector equality duty (the equality duty or the duty). It covers the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

In summary, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation 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.

It is not an absolute requirement to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct, or to promote equality of opportunity or foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. It is a duty to have due regard to the need to achieve the goals listed in this report.

The weight to be attached to the duty will be dependent on the nature of the decision and the circumstances in which it is made. This is a matter for the Mayor, bearing in mind the issues of relevance and proportionality. The Mayor must understand the impact or likely impact of the decision on those with protected characteristics who are potentially affected by the decision. The extent of the duty will necessarily vary from case to case and due

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regard is such regard as is appropriate in all the circumstances.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has issued Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty and statutory guidance entitled “Equality Act 2010 Services, Public Functions & Associations Statutory Code of Practice”. The Council must have regard to the statutory code in so far as it relates to the duty and attention is drawn to Chapter 11 which deals particularly with the equality duty. The Technical Guidance also covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty. This includes steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The guidance does not have statutory force but nonetheless regard should be had to it, as failure to do so without compelling reason would be of evidential value. The statutory code and the technical guidance can be found on their website.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has previously issued five guides for public authorities in England giving advice on the equality duty:

- The essential guide to the public sector equality duty
- Meeting the equality duty in policy and decision-making
- Engagement and the equality duty: A guide for public authorities
- Objectives and the equality duty. A guide for public authorities
- Equality Information and the Equality Duty: A Guide for Public Authorities

The essential guide provides an overview of the equality duty requirements including the general equality duty, the specific duties and who they apply to. It covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty including steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The other four documents provide more detailed guidance on key areas and advice on good practice. Further information and resources are available at:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance#h1>

31. Equalities implications

As this report is a review of the Council’s Single Equality Framework, which includes an assessment of progress against the Council’s five equality objectives, the equality implications are set out in the main body of the report.

32. Climate change and environmental implications

The framing of one of the Council’s five equality objectives acknowledges the importance of resident empowerment. Empowering residents to make decisions that promote social responsibility will make an important contribution to ongoing efforts to tackle climate change. Addressing this issue requires a concerted and determined effort from all sections of society.

33. Crime and disorder implications

There are no direct crime and disorder implications but the Council will work closely with the Police to respond to any hate crime that occurs against refugees and migrants in the borough.

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34. Health and wellbeing implications

The health and wellbeing implications are contained in the main body of this report.

35. Background papers

[Single Equality Framework 2020-24](#). The Framework can be accessed via the Council's website.

Learning from the Lewisham COVID-19 Response Hub, Goldsmiths University , December 2020

Lewisham's Corporate Equality Policy 2022-24

36. Report author(s) and contact

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Comments for and on behalf of the Executive Director for Corporate Resources

Peter Allery – Financial Implications

Jeremy Chambers – Legal Implications

37. Appendices

- A. Safer Stronger Communities In-depth Review: How Lewisham's Embeds Equalities Across its Service Provision (*report*)
- B. Corporate Equalities Board Terms of Reference
- C. Lewisham Council EDI Assessment Interim Report
- C1. Appendix 1 to Lewisham Council EDI Assessment Interim Report – Benchmarking Matrix
- D. Draft Response to the recommendations of the Disabled People's Commission Report

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Safer Stronger Communities In-depth Review: How Lewisham Embeds Equalities Across its Service Provision

Summary

This report updates the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee on progress being made to implement recommendations from the In-depth Review: How Lewisham Embeds Equalities Across its Service Provision.

It provides an update against each of the recommendations made by the Committee, outlining some of the action the Council has taken in response to these recommendations.

1. **A Fairer Lewisham Duty should be established requiring the Council to consider socio-economic disadvantage in its decision-making process.**
 - a) **All Equality Impact Assessments should consider socio-economic disadvantage on the same basis as the nine statutorily protected characteristics.**

This recommendation has been actioned, and Equality Impact Assessments consider socio-economic disadvantage alongside all other protected characteristics. The EIA toolkit, which is the guidance issued to all staff who are involved in the process of developing an EIA states:

“It is important that your proposal or decision considers the real world challenges and lived experiences of Lewisham residents, particularly those facing the greatest disadvantage. Therefore, to help you to reflect on the potential socio-economic implications that could arise, please refer to the Fairer Lewisham Duty guidance. The Fairer Lewisham Duty includes useful tips, advice and prompts to help you to contextualise your idea, proposal or decision.”

It is important to note that measuring the impact of considering socio-economic disadvantage through the decision-making process is challenging, though the Council can point to evidence of good practice, and EIAs which have effectively considered socio-economic disadvantage. To ensure that this good practice is more effectively replicated across the Council, training is being rolled out for Council’s Senior Leadership Team, covering key information on how to more effectively complete the Council’s Equality Impact Assessments. In addition to this, following the appointment of an Equalities Advisor, similar training will be provided to all Heads of Service, ensuring that Equality Impact Assessments are consistently strong across the organisation.

- b) **Lewisham Council should produce clear guidance for staff, Councillors, partner organisations and the public, explaining the Fairer Lewisham Duty, with reference to the Interim Guidance for Public Bodies produced by the Scottish Government.**

As a result of Covid, communications plans for the Fairer Lewisham Duty were interrupted, and it is clear three years later that this guidance has not been communicated across the organisation as effectively as it should have been. However, recent action has been taken to address this issue, and is outlined below.

An intranet page on equalities went live on 9 June 2023 and was promoted via a “news for you” article and the Acting Chief Executive’s weekly staff update. The page provides information on our obligations under the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty; the Single Equalities Framework 2020-24; the Corporate Equality Guide; and EAAs. It contains a link to the Equalities Community of Practice site which allows colleagues across the organisation to access a

range of equality related information, all in one place. This includes relevant policy documents, frameworks, presentations, reports and links to data sources both internal and external.

The page will be further developed following the launch of the Council's new intranet.

Over the next few months, the Council's Policy team will be creating two libraries on the Equalities Community of Practice site to highlight good practice – an internal library of completed EAAs and a library of assessments from other local authorities that represent good practice. These will be useful for colleagues to review as a starting point for their own EAA but cannot, of course, be copied, as officers must consider the unique impact service changes or strategies will have on their service user cohorts.

2. Intersectionality should be considered as part of the Equalities process

a) Each department and all project leads should consider issues of intersectionality, and a range of diverse groups and their needs.

Following the external equalities review which has been conducted by DWC Consulting, the Council has committed to creating a series of action plans, specific to each Directorate, focused on tackling equalities issues. These action plans will encompass not just issues related to the service delivery of these directorates, but also any internal equalities issues related to the Directorate's workforce.

In addition to the above, the guidance issues for the Equality Impact Assessments completed by each Directorate are designed to take intersectionality into account, ensuring it is a key part of the process for any major decision. The Council's six equality prisms, outlined in both the EIA guidance and the Single Equality Framework include *"Is intersectionality a factor?"* and ask anyone completing an EIA to consider *"the extent to which the combination of characteristics represented by an individual increases their vulnerability or exposure to risk and whether or not this is reflected in the way in which assessments are made and decisions are reached."*

b) The Council should listen to, include, and meaningfully collaborate with diverse groups. There should be diversity of individuals and diversity of organisations. One voice cannot speak for all.

The new posts for Equalities Advisor and Disability & Co-Production Officer will sit within the Communications and Engagement Division. This placement will ensure that these officers can influence the Council's engagement policy across all services, and provide advice on how best to engage with seldom-heard voices.

In addition to this, the creation of a post which focuses specifically on co-production will ensure that the Council brings in expertise to help develop the skills needed across the organisation for more meaningful collaboration. This builds not only on the recommendations contained within the Disabled People's Commission report, but also on the findings from the Council's 2021 Corporate Peer Challenge, which stated: *"There is widespread recognition of the race equality work internally and externally in Lewisham which has built a coalition of those willing to work with the council on other strategy creation and delivery. This work has set a high bar for what happens next..."*

The Council has undertaken work across a range of service areas to ensure that it meaningfully collaborates with diverse groups. The Disabled People's Commission Report drew on expertise from residents with lived experience of disability to provide recommendations to the Council. The work undertaken to deliver the BLACHIR report was overseen by an advisory board made up of nine members with a range of knowledge, skills and lived experience. The purpose of this board was to

work to marry the scientific evidence with the lived experience of the Black African and Black Caribbean communities in Lewisham and Birmingham.

c) In funding, designing and commissioning services the Council should take an intersectional approach. This could include;

- I. Ensuring diverse organisations closest to the ground take the lead in project design and implementation.
- II. Recognise and trust the expertise and lived experiences of organisations and movements, especially those representing marginalised groups.
- III. Funding diverse organisations and movements to facilitate safe spaces where particularly marginalised communities can feel empowered to speak freely.

Since 2020, the Council has commissioned a large number of services using an intersectional approach and is improving the method through which it brings together diverse organisations to support service design. In Play, the Council utilises the Portage Service to ensure that the voices of deaf and disabled children, as well as their families, are heard in the creation of any new play area. Additionally, the response to the Disabled People's Commission Report commits during any Public Realm consultation, the Council will specify during the tender process that any organisation working with the Council to conduct consultations must seek representations from deaf and disabled people.

d) The Council should build a senior management team with a culture of inclusion that reflects the diversity of communities and overlapping identities in Lewisham.

The Council's Senior Management Team has become more diverse since the creation of these recommendations. Full details of the progress made against this recommendation can be found in the [Council's publicly available Diversity Profiles](#).

Additionally, the Council runs a Management Development Programme for Black, Asian and Other Ethnic Group employees focused on some of the cultural nuances and barriers that can impact progression. Whilst for various reasons there were some drop-outs on the programme there were also success stories, with three staff who have benefitted from the programme achieving promotions within the organisation. All three are on the level five (Operational Manager Apprenticeship) cohort, so this has placed more BAME staff in higher managerial positions. The programme is now open to all staff, and colleagues from Black, Asian and other ethnic groups are actively encouraged, with support from our staff network.

e) The Council should create a culture that celebrates difference by appreciating the contributions that everyone can make.

The Council has launched a Reward and Recognition programme which celebrates the contributions made by staff across the organisation. In 2023, the Council re-launched its staff awards process, culminating in a celebratory event in the Broadway Theatre which recognised the work done by staff at all levels of the organisation. The Council is currently engaged in a process, led by the Change Network, to review the success of this year's Reward and Recognition programme in advance of the 2024 programme being launched in January.

Staff forums have been empowered, and in 2022 Lewisham Council participated in Pride for the first time in an event supported by the LGBTQ+ Forum. Earlier this year, the Council marched in the Pride parade for the second year in a row, and the Council owned Broadway Theatre hosted a range of performances throughout Pride month to celebrate and uplift LGBTQ+ voices.

In addition to this, the Council is also looking externally and celebrating successes from within our communities. The Mayor of Lewisham Business Awards are a yearly opportunity to celebrate our fantastic local businesses and the outstanding contribution they make to the borough. These awards present an annual opportunity to recognise local organisations which boost economic growth and provide opportunities that benefit their local communities and the wider borough.

Lewisham's time as London's Borough of Culture was a year-long celebration of the borough's diversity, with over 350 events taking place. This celebration brought together more than 200 partner organisations and over 1,800 volunteers contributing more than 10,000 hours of their time. The work that took place over this year was designed to leave a lasting legacy, and the four legacy outcomes which were identified to be delivered, including *"We will continue to build upon our partnerships, both formal and informal, to deliver and support diverse and inclusive activities bringing communities together for the benefit of our borough, so that everyone can benefit from creative engagement"*, show the Council's proactive approach to ensuring that everyone's contributions are celebrated.

3. A more proactive approach should be taken to address the Public Sector Equality Duty

- a) Equality objectives should be specific, achievable and measurable.
- b) Equality objectives should be readily understandable to the public.
- c) Equality objectives should identify areas of work via which improvements inequality can be made.
- d) Progress in these areas of work should be monitored and reported.

Since the publication of these recommendations, the Council has refreshed the way it [reports on performance data](#) across a wide range of areas. This publicly available information helps both the Council and residents better track and understand progress made against equality objectives.

The Council's equality objectives have not been reviewed since the publication of these recommendations. However, the Single Equality Framework will expire in 2024, and the Council intends to review all of its equality objectives over the next six months. As part of this review, the Council will ensure that any newly published equality objectives meet these recommendations.

4. Staff Diversity Forums should be empowered within the Council.

Since the implementation of these recommendations, a number of actions have been taken to further empower the Council's Staff Forums.

The effectiveness of these actioned is evidenced by the recent application of the Lewisham Women's Bond, which is designed to provide a vital voice and means of connection for female staff and their allies. The creation of this forum showcases the confidence staff have in the Council's model. However, this is an area where there is still more work to be done, and following a review of the Council's approach to Equalities by DWC Consulting, the Council will commit to a full review of the framework for staff forums, aiming to ensure that their voice within the organisation is made stronger, and that staff are provided with even greater opportunities to participate.

- a) Forums should have a clear remit as to their purpose and how they contribute to the improvement of the Council.

In April 2021, the operational framework for the staff forums was revised, and outlined a clear remit as to the purposes of the forums and how they would contribute to the Council. This revised framework states that:

“Their main purpose is to provide a means of mutual support on a common theme and share thoughts and ideas through a collective voice that will assist us to achieve our objectives and corporate priorities.”

“We will actively engage with networks/forums because we want them to add value to what we do. Formal negotiation and consultation on collective matters impacting on employees will be facilitated through the trade unions in accordance with our Employee Relations Framework. “

“Together Lewisham” the Council’s staff led improvement programme is another important symbol of the Council’s commitment to engaging its workforce as well as a channel for delivering improvements to how we work. The Programme has five themes which are relevant to the work of all of our networks/forums:

- *Our People*
- *Leadership*
- *Inclusive Workplace*
- *Communication*
- *IT*

Together Lewisham is supported by the Change Network which is open to all members of staff. The Change Network ensures that the programme will always be informed by and accountable to staff who will be involved in every project and empowered and supported to shape the work.”

To complete the application process to become an officially recognised Staff Forum, a forum is required to present a paper to the Council’s Executive Management Team, outlining the group’s aims, objectives and priorities. This process helps ensure that forums have specific remits and a clear set of initiatives to drive their work programmes.

b) Forums should have a set time to meet to discuss, promote and air concerns staff may have affecting equality in the Council. This should be adequately resourced and supported by the Council.

The operational framework for staff forums outlines the Council’s offer to members of the forums, as well as to the Chairs and Vice Chairs:

- Protected paid time off work of up to two days each month for the Chair and Vice Chair of each network/forum we have formally adopted;
- Reasonable paid time off work for network/forum members to attend meetings and other events;
- Accommodation for the purpose of meetings and events;
- A platform through the intranet (and other internal staff communication channels) for each network/forum to engage with staff and share its achievements;
- The support of a member of the Executive Management Team, who will act as a Network/Forum Executive Sponsor;
- The opportunity to work collaboratively with Organisational Development on organisational and cultural change initiatives, including the Together Lewisham programme;
- The opportunity for the Chairs of each network/forum to meet as a group with the Chief Executive twice each year;
- The opportunity for the Chairs of each network/forum to be members of the most appropriate Corporate Board e.g. Corporate Equalities Board.

- c) Forum leads should be given specific time away from their substantive role to plan, prepare and carry out the forums activities. This should be protected time which will not impact on their hours of work.**

As outlined above, Forum leaders are provided with protected time to carry out their roles.

- d) Forum members should be given time to participate in its activities.**

As outlined above, the operational framework does acknowledge the requirement for forum members to be given time to participate in its activities. However, issues have been raised by members of staff forums relating to them not feeling they have the time to participate, and as such the Council will ensure that as part of both its review of the forum's operational framework, the rules around allocated time for forum members will be communicated to all members of staff. This should encourage staff to participate more actively in the work of forums, and help them to understand the Council's policies around participating in forum activities.

- e) Forums should be given the opportunity to meet with senior management and communicate the experiences and needs of staff.**

As stated in the operational framework, all staff forums are regularly given the opportunity to engage with senior staff at meetings of the Corporate Equalities Board. In addition to this, Jennifer Daothong (Acting Chief Executive), has so far met with representatives of all staff forums in 2023, providing them with the opportunity to raise concerns and discuss any issues directly with her. As outlined in the operational framework, these meetings with the Acting Chief Executive will continue.

5. [The Council should adopt an Open Data approach for Equalities.](#)

- a) Data sharing across the organisation should be improved. It should not be a challenge to access data that has already been collated by different teams or departments.**

Since 2020, considerable work has been undertaken to ensure the Council improves its approach to data sharing within Directorates. [The Knowledge Observatory](#) provides a source of information that can be easily accessed by teams across the Council.

In addition to this, in 2022, Extended Leadership Team meetings were scheduled quarterly, providing the opportunity to bring together all Heads of Service to ensure that major updates from across the organisation were effectively communicated. These meetings have continued since their implementation, and items such as the Staff Survey, Census information and Residents Survey have been shared, ensuring that staff are aware of substantial data sources that should impact the way their services are designed and delivered.

A key method of ensuring better data sharing across Directorates has also been to improve internal Communications within the Council. In September 2023, the Council launched its new intranet, which provides a much-improved platform for staff to share information across the organisation.

Increased sharing of EIA's and the guidance accompanying them, which is detailed below, have also provided more opportunities for data sharing across the organisation. Regular Directorate Management Team meetings of Senior Staff will now review EIA's, with the Corporate Equalities Board overseeing the full EIA forward plan on a bi-annual basis. This provides the opportunity for broader organisational oversight of upcoming EIA's, and ensures strong ownership of Equality Impact Assessments as a senior level of the organisation.

b) Guidance for producing Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) should be clear. Equality Impact Assessments should be data driven.

In 2023, the Council revised its guidance for Equality Impact Assessments, ensuring that the requirements for their completion were clearer. This newly revised guidance was published on the Council's intranet and promoted via a News for You Article. The guidance itself stresses the importance of a data driven response and the sections below, taken directly from the EIA guidance, highlight this:

"You need to use information and data to understand the potential impact this work might have. You might have existing information to use, or you may need to consult to gather more information. Information on potential data sources is included within this toolkit. If you are collecting your own data, please see the Equalities Monitoring Toolkit. Once you have the data you need you should consider what the impacts might be and if anybody would be unfairly impacted."

Since 2020, the Council has additionally published a new Corporate Strategy (2022-26). This Strategy highlights the importance of evidence-based decision making across all areas of work. This work is supported by the Council's Data and Insight Team, which provides the organisation with additional capacity to carry out high-level analysis of data sources.

c) Every Equality Impact Assessment should be logged by Corporate Services and published on the Council website making it accessible to all.

Although the Council has published a number of Equality Impact Assessments since these recommendations were made, it has not published or effectively catalogued all of them consistently, or in a single location that is easily accessible to residents. However, in 2023, the Council's Executive Management Team approved a new approach to managing Equality Impact Assessments through the Chief Executive's Directorate.

d) Steps should be made to ensure individuals are confident sharing their data with the Council to help improve services. At the point where individuals share their data agreements should be in place to allow for this to be anonymised and shared where necessary

Through the Race and Equality Working Group of the Lewisham Strategic Partnership, work is currently being undertaken to co-ordinate an effort to increase the number of staff within Lewisham and Greenwich Trust, Lewisham Policy Force and Lewisham Council who register their disability with their organisations. This work is scheduled to be launched in line with International Day of Disability (December 3rd 2023).

In addition to the partnership work which is being undertaken, in May 2022 the Council launched Disability Passports to promote equality and inclusion for employees with disabilities, impairments or long-term health conditions. This new scheme ensures that Council colleagues have a record of agreed, reasonable adjustments, that is held centrally on the HR system and which will follow officers throughout their career with the Council.

The Council provides a standard set of EDI questions, commonly used as best practice, which the Council will use for all EDI consultations to help monitor response rates to any engagement work which is undertaken.

In 2022, the Council carried out an extensive Staff Survey. Although this survey highlighted that in 18 out of 21 benchmarkable indicators since the previous staff survey, the Council had improved its

performance, it did also indicate areas where improvement was required. In response to this survey, an Action Plan was created and is being delivered by the Council People and Organisational Development Division. The delivery of this Action Plan will showcase to staff that the organisation has listened to concerns, and is taking direct action in response, utilising data and information shared by staff to improve its performance and staff wellbeing.



Corporate Equalities Board Updated Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference 2021

Objectives

1. Provide strategic direction for equalities across the Council;
2. Offer advice, scrutiny and challenge to help the Council to meet its Statutory obligations regarding equalities;
3. Update, advise and support local decision makers on the Council's equalities agenda (i.e. Executive Management Team, Directorate Management Teams and Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee);
4. Receive equalities performance data and intelligence to assess the effectiveness of Council policy and strategy and the impact of Council services;
5. Review and scrutinise policy, strategy, strategic frameworks and preparation of equality analysis assessments;
6. Review, scrutinise and challenge the Council's Equality and Diversity training offer;
7. Identify and promote opportunities to support the work of employee engagement forums and activities;
8. Promote best practice and peer learning across the Council as it relates to equalities;
9. Escalate issues of concern to Directorate Management Teams and the Executive Management Team as required
10. Promote inclusion through reasonable adjustments and facilitation of staff participation

Membership of Corporate Equalities Board

- Executive Director for Children and Young People (Chair)
- Representative Disability Forum
- Representative BAME Staff Network
- Representative LGBTQ+ Staff Network
- Director of Education (Directorate Representative)
- Director of Housing (Directorate Representative)
- Head of Strategic Procurement and Commercial Services (Directorate Representative)
- Director of Public Health (Directorate Representative)
- Director of People & Organisational Development
- Director of Communications and Engagement (Directorate Representative)
- Head of the Chief Executive's Office
- Representative Disability Forum
- Senior Policy and Strategy Officer
- (Support to the Board)

Schedule of Meetings

The Corporate Equalities Board meets six times of year.

Lewisham Council EDI Assessment Interim Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 DWC has been commissioned to undertake a high-level assessment/benchmarking exercise on the effectiveness of Council's EDI approach, strategies, systems etc. Our methodology begins by collating the key drivers that contribute to the success of the council in establishing an inclusive workplace and promoting EDI within the borough.
- 1.2 At this interim stage, this document provides an assessment of the council's capabilities against the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG), which is the primary EDI standard for local authorities. We have therefore taken the competences in the EFLG and its Performance Scale (Developing, Achieving, Excellent) as the baseline against which to assess the council's EDI performance.
- 1.3 Moreover, in assessing the council's race equality performance we have reviewed the council's performance on race both through the lens of the EFLG and other indicators that contribute to the broad aims of the 'The London Local Government Tackling Racial Inequality Programme' (TRI). Whilst the TRI is not to be regarded as a benchmarking tool at this point, its stated aspirations does allow us to extrapolate the competences required by councils in pursuing race equality.
- 1.4 A similar process is being followed for establishing a view of the council's performance on sexual orientation (LGBTQ) which will reference the good practice outlined by Stonewall's Champion programme. This will be completed mid-March 2023.
- 1.5 In arriving at our assessment of the council's EDI and Race performance, we have also drawn on DWC's considerable experience of working within the fields of EDI and Race Equality to present some initial recommendations on areas where improvements can be made.

2. Thematic Performance Indicators

- 2.1 The EFLG gives us a framework for identifying the areas of activity that councils need to address in order to deliver good equality outcomes. This assessment of the council's performance against the framework informs the recommendations for improvement made in this report.
- 2.2 The EFLG uses 6 overarching performance indicators in its standard. These taken individually and together are regarded as the areas critical to a council's success in integrating EDI into its business life cycle. These are:
 1. Leadership - demonstrating a clear commitment to EDI through their actions.
 2. Governance – adherence to corporate structures that govern EDI implementation.
 3. Policies, Procedures & Monitoring – regulating and evaluating EDI performance.
 4. Diverse & Engaged Workforce – as a prerequisite and indicator of inclusion.
 5. Service Delivery & Design – is inclusive and engages diverse stakeholders.
 6. Promoting EDI Borough-Wide – to influence good practice.
- 2.3 Lewisham council's performance against each theme is assessed on how the council delivers against a number of sub-competences.

- 2.4 The Tackling Racial Inequality programme (TRI) has been established to ensure race equality is central to what local authorities do and deliver. To achieve this, the programme is set up to deliver two overarching priorities:
1. Support the work that individual boroughs are undertaking which responds to the needs within their communities and organisations.
 2. Work beyond our statutory duties to develop regional activity and action, where appropriate.
- 2.5 The competence indicators presented in the EFLG have been phrased by DWC in such a way as to reflect the aspirations expressed in the TRI programme (Appendix 1).

3. Information Sources

- 3.1 In making the assessment and recommendations presented in this interim report we have relied on a number of published documents presented to us by the council. In addition DWC has had discussion with a number of senior leaders as well as the LGBTQ and Disability staff forums. In completing the work we will offer the opportunity for additional council officers and the BAME Forum to provide information that presents a fuller picture of the council's performance. In light of this, the initial scorings presented here are subject to change.
- 3.2 A list of documents relied on in making this assessment is presented at the foot of this report. These documents have also been tabulated against the relevant EFLG and TRI competences in a spreadsheet (Appendix 1).

The EDI Performance Assessment

4. Leadership — demonstrating a clear commitment to EDI through their actions

4.1 The score for EFLG under this theme is ‘Developing’

4.1.1 There are a number of contributory factors leading to this determination the most recent staff survey indicates a lack of trust between staff and senior leaders – (only 45% of all staff (on average) agree they have trust toward senior leaders) . In the same survey a low number of staff (46.4% - the average) report they feel senior leaders listen to their ideas

4.1.2 Whilst there may not be a definite correlation between these results and EDI it is likely that there exists a similar lack of trust and perception of senior leaders’ responsiveness on EDI.

4.2 The score for TRI under this theme is ‘Developing/Achieving’

4.2.1 The main contributing factor to the score here is the perception that the leadership under the current CEO has shown a determination to tackle racial inequality. Whilst this has yet to bear all the desired fruit the CEO’s involvement in the TRI programme sends out a strong message about the council’s race equality commitment to staff, communities and other London councils.

4.3 Our emerging recommendations here are:

- Increased visibility of all senior leaders is needed on EDI and race issues coupled with care taken to manage expectations about the scale and pace of progress.
- Leaders should be appraised on their EDI performance, with input from staff within their area of influence.
- Staff survey questions should be enhanced by including questions that elicits richer information about staff lived experience (by protected characteristics), and how leaders are perceived to be progressing EDI and Race Equality.

5. Governance – adherence to corporate structures that govern EDI implementation

5.1 The score for EFLG under this theme is ‘Developing’

5.1.1 The council has established a Corporate Equalities Board (CEB) to guide the development of its EDI strategy. This is a positive indication of Lewisham’s intention to include a diverse range of voices in its decision-making process at corporate levels.

5.1.2 We have not yet seen evidence of how the objectives/decisions of the CEB connects with its overall business planning and governance. This requires further exploration.

5.1.3 The council has begun the process of benchmarking its performance against a range of good practice standards and that of other London councils. This supports the competence in the EFLG - ‘The organisation assesses its performance and outcomes against comparable organisations’.

5.3 The score for TRI under this theme is ‘Developing’

- 5.3.1 The BAME Forum is represented on the CEB and the minutes shows consideration of race equality issues.
- 5.3.2 This assessment against the TRI objectives and implied competences is evidence of the council's intention to tackle racial inequality.
- 5.4 Our emerging recommendations here are:
- The EDI governance structure should be synergised with the council's business strategy and planning processes.
 - The specific business case for EDI and Race Equality needs to be articulated and placed at the forefront of council business and EDI objectives and given a high priority.
 - Staff Forums need to be capacity built to move beyond providing a safe space for their members to raise issues and be empowered to provide strategic high-level input into the CEB.

6. Policies, Procedures & Monitoring – regulating and evaluating EDI performance

6.1 The score for EFLG under this theme is 'Achieving'

- 6.1.1 It is clear from the document search and our review that the council has a set of policies and practices to enhance workforce equality and diversity, and there are procedures for monitoring its EDI performance: including reasonable adjustments, equal pay, flexible working and family friendly policies.
- 6.1.2 The Single Equality Framework, Equal Opportunities Policy Statement, Dignity at Work policies are fit-for-purpose and inclusive of the interests of protected characteristics.
- 6.1.3 The recent staff surveys elicits rich information that gives good scope for understanding the experience of staff from different backgrounds.
- 6.1.4 The one area where we could not identify any clear evidence of monitoring is faith/religious belief. It is notable that there is not a faith staff forum to gauge the qualitative experience that faith groups have working for the council.

6.2 The score for TRI under this theme is 'Developing'

- 6.2.1 The council's policies and procedure cover race in general but we have yet to speak with the BAME Forum to understand how these relate to the specific lived experience of BAME group. There is also more to be done to understand where the council has progressed in addressing the ethnic pay gap – part of this can be accounted for by the bulge in the demographic of Black staff in the lower grades.
- 6.2.2 With respect to Ethnic Pay Gap - the council undertook a deep-dive analysis (covering period 2021-22) into pay and ethnicity. EMT were asked to consider the findings and its role in addressing the ethnic disparity in pay. We need to understand how much progress has been made to address the recommendations made in the report - 'People management a deep dive into workforce practices'.
- 6.2.3 Over three fiscal years, there has been a lack of noteworthy advancements in closing the pay gap. In fact, the pay gap has risen to 2020/21 levels, exceeding the 10.4% value reported in 2018/19, albeit with a negligible reduction from 2019/20. These findings suggest that the efforts made to address the pay gap between diverse ethnic groups require more attention.

6.3 Our emerging recommendations here are:

- A thorough review of key policies is undertaken with a focus on those that are most likely to impact the council's EDI objectives/stakeholders e.g., recruitment, dignity at work, training & development. This could take the form of a rigorous Equality Analysis Assessment (EAA).
- Faith and religion are an important part of a person's identity and at certain moments in history they act as a trigger for punitive and discriminatory behaviour. The council should bolster its policies and procedure with specific reference to faith and initiate monitoring to understand the experience of faith groups in the workplace.
- Consideration should be given to the questioning and data capture in order to move the focus of data capture from collecting information to gathering intelligence to improve EDI performance. For instance, asking whether staff are proud to work for Lewisham can be supported with additional enquiry to elicit the sources of that pride/dissatisfaction.
- We highlight the recommendations made in the 'Deep Dive' report into workplace practices and recommend the council prioritise action to implement them i.e.:
 - HR to consider the types of support/ programmes and interventions that may be put in place to help upward talent movement of BAME staff, particularly Black staff which targeted approach for staff at different levels.
 - SLT briefing to highlight inequities identified. This would be set in context of 'tackling race inequalities' CELC working group which Lewisham are actively part of.
 - Review existing approval requirements for honorariums, market supplements and starting salaries e.g., should all HR/ED approval be required for honorariums PO6-8 and above.

7. Diverse & Engaged Workforce – as a prerequisite and indicator of inclusion

7.1 The score for EFLG under this theme is 'Developing'

- 7.1.1 Inclusive communication is a contributing factor to arriving at the Developing score in this area. We are uncertain whether/how the council meets the objective of having clear communication with staff about its EDI values and how to live them.
- 7.1.2 After reviewing staff feedback, we found around 70% of all staff feel well-informed, which means there is still some room for improvement in communication with staff (30%). However, there is some disparity in groups feeling informed about team happenings - including Asian staff, men, those aged 40-49, and gay/lesbian staff. Unfortunately, there is no indication how this relates to feeling informed about EDI issues.
- 7.1.3 A strong indicator of how staff experience the organisation was given in the most recent Staff Survey. Staff on average (86.5% the average) agreed their line manager treats them fairly. This is very encouraging, and it is worth noting that conditions are particularly good for staff between the ages of 30-39.

7.2 The score for TRI under this theme is 'Developing'

- 7.2.1 We cannot detect clear evidence that race equality issues are mainstreamed into all staff training and development programmes.
- 7.2.2 The council's race equality values are not embedded within staff appraisals, one-to-ones, performance assessments.

7.2.3 On some satisfaction indicators Black and Asian staff score above average. As this is an important contributor to the ‘Developing’ score, it requires further discussion with the BAME Forum to contextualise.

7.3 Our emerging recommendations here are:

- Improved data capture on how protected characteristic groups are experiencing the workplace.
- Embed EDI considerations into all performance review processes and monitor them to ascertain how much staff are invested in creating an inclusive organisational culture.
- Leaders and managers supported to hold informative and courageous conversations with staff on EDI to reinforce the values via team meetings, one-to-ones etc.
- Improve awareness of EDI issues by marking cultural events like Black History month, Eid, Diwali, and Hannukah.

8. Service Delivery & Design – is inclusive and engages diverse stakeholders

8.1 The score for EFLG under this theme is ‘Developing’

8.1.1 One of the competence indicators here is the ability of the organisation to demonstrate a clear link between meeting its equality objectives and positive outcomes for its communities. Once again this is not the substantive focus of our review so there may be more evidence than we were presented with. However, there is just enough evidence here to surmise that the council is delivering against the competences in this area.

8.1.2 There is evidence that EAA’s are completed but the quality of them and EDI considerations given in drawing them up have not been reviewed by us.

8.1.3 In order to properly evidence this area we would need to review service plans and the EDI consultative processes that supports them.

8.2 The score for TRI under this theme is ‘Pre-Developing’

8.2.1 There is not enough evidence to properly assess the council’s race equality performance in this area. Reluctantly we score the council as Pre-Developing with a request for more information.

8.3 Our emerging recommendations here is:

- More time and information are needed to score the council’s service delivery and design performance.

9. Promoting EDI Borough-Wide – to influence good practice

9.1 The score for EFLG under this theme is ‘Pre-Developing’

9.1.2 The focus of this review has been internal facing on the workplace so we are not in a position to properly assess performance in this theme. However, there are some indicators in the information presented to us that the council is promoting EDI externally. This is mainly project based (e.g. Achilles Street regeneration) and therefore does not represent a co-ordinated central strategy to promote EDI borough-wide in all its initiatives.

9.2 The score for TRI under this theme is ‘Pre-Developing’.

9.2.1 There is not sufficient information presented for us to make a determination on the TRI competences beyond scoring it Pre-Developing.

9.3 Our emerging recommendation here is:

- The council develops a strand of its EDI strategy geared towards promoting EDI in its work with partners across the borough.

Primary Documents used in scoring the assessment:

- Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG)
- London Local Government Tackling Racial Inequality Programme (TRI)
- CYP Directorate Plan
- Deep Dive into workforce practices
- Head of Service. Strategy & Improvement
- SSCSC: How Lewisham Council embeds Equalities across its service provision (Equalities review September 2020)
- Single Equality Framework 2020-2024
- Voices of Lewisham Final Report
- Equal Opportunities policy statement
- Corporate Equalities Board Updated Terms of Reference
- Staff surveys - Age/Ethnicity/Gender/Sexual Orientation/Disability
- Lewisham people delivery plan
- Race Equality Pledge
- HR Report Q3 2022
- Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (updated draft Nov'22)
- Birmingham and Lewisham African Caribbean Health Inequalities Review

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APPENDIX 1

COMPETENCIES	LEWISHAM PERFORMANCE	AGE	DISABILITY	FAITH	GENDER	LGBT	RACE	BENCHMARK	LEVEL	BENCHMARK	LEVEL
								EQUALITY FRAMEWORK		TACKLING RACE (TRI)	
The key used to score the assessment is ranked from lowest to highest as PRE-DEVELOPING (P) DEVELOPING (D) ACHIEVING (A) EXCELLENT(E). This ranking system seeks to categorise and measure progress, allowing LC to identify areas of improvement											
LEADERSHIP	The EFLG assessment of LC's LEADERSHIP practices is DEVELOPING. The TRI Score is DEVELOPING/ACHIEVING										
Senior leaders have stated their commitment to a diverse workforce and have made clear what is expected from staff when delivering services to the community	Laid out in the SSCSC Equality Review with a commitment to regular updates			y			Y	Commitment is shown in policy statements but EDI values and expectations are not clearly articulated to staff	D	CEO membership of TRI sends strong message of commitment to challenging race inequality	A
Leaders have publicly committed to improving equality in their area of influence. There is some evidence of action, not just 'talking about it'.	Council Corporate Equalities Board is a cross-council meeting with representation from all directorates, providing strategic direction for equalities across the council. The board updates and advises local decision makers. It does not "police" the directorates. Its role is advice, challenge and a "critical friend". The board also receives and analyses equalities data and escalates concerns to DMTs and EMT as required.							CEB agenda does not appear synchronised with council corporate objectives. Evidence of departmental leadership is not apparent	D	Evidence of action on race equality by managers not apparent	D
There is evidence that equality considerations inform leaders' decision-making.	CEB but not linked to business planning process							Link between EDI and decision making unclear. EAA's are not rigorous and systemic	P	Link between Race equality and decision making unclear. EAA's are not rigorous and systemic	P
Leaders and management appraisals include specific equality objectives.	No evidence							No evidence/ needs further investigations	P	No evidence/ needs further investigations	P

COMPETENCIES	LEWISHAM PERFORMANCE	AGE	DISABILITY	FAITH	GENDER	LGBT	RACE	BENCHMARK	LEVEL	BENCHMARK	LEVEL
								EQUALITY FRAMEWORK		TACKLING RACE (TRI)	
<p>The key used to score the assessment is ranked from lowest to highest as PRE-DEVELOPING (P) DEVELOPING (D) ACHIEVING (A) EXCELLENT(E). This ranking system seeks to categorise and measure progress, allowing LC to identify areas of improvement</p>											
GOVERNANCE	The EFLG assessment of LC's GOVERNANCE practices is DEVELOPING. The TRI score is DEVELOPING										
The political and executive leadership have publicly committed to reducing inequality, fostering good community relations and challenging discrimination.	SSCSC working with community through initiatives							The political and executive leadership have publicly committed to reducing inequality, fostering good community relations and challenging discrimination.	D	CEO membership of TRI sends strong message of commitment to challenging race inequality other leaders need to be bold	D
There exists a corporate governance structure for decision making which has the authority to determine the vision and direction of EDI for the council	CEB but not linked to business planning process							Unless the CEB synergises with council objectives mainstreaming EDI is unlikely to be effective	D	BAME forum membership of CEB	D
Staff Forum representatives, Trades Unions and other stakeholders have a formal seat at the table and a voice within the corporate governance structure	Expressed in Equality review - The Head of HR reported that there is a formal structure for trade unions and senior staff to resolve disputes. There are quarterly directorate meetings and an organisational meeting chaired by Director of Resources. If there are disputes that could not be settled through this process they could be escalated to the works council, which is cabinet member-led.							Stakeholders have seat on CEB but Faith, Women and TU's appear not to have formal representations.	P	BAME forum membership of CEB	D
The organisation assesses its performance and outcomes against comparable organisations.	The BLACHIR process allowed us to explore the evidence using a unique compilation of rich local data and intelligence as well as co-exploration with communities to better understand the challenges of persistent inequalities affecting Black African and Black Caribbean people in Birmingham and Lewisham. Also Glasgow and Sutton							Work underway to benchmark against several standards and other councils	D	Succession of Lewisham's membership of TRI after CEO departs needs to be secured	D

COMPETENCIES	LEWISHAM PERFORMANCE	AGE	DISABILITY	FAITH	GENDER	LGBT	RACE	BENCHMARK	LEVEL	BENCHMARK	LEVEL
								EQUALITY FRAMEWORK		TACKLING RACE (TRI)	
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POLICIES, PROCEDURES & MONITORING	The EFLG assessment of LC's POLICIES PROCEDURE & MONITORING is ACHIEVING. The TRI score is DEVELOPING										
The organisation has established and publicised a strong business case for its equality work.	Single Equality Framework							The setting and monitoring of equality objectives is subject to challenge, including through any organisational bodies or groups and the political overview and scrutiny process.	A	There need to be a more robust case made for race equality. This is being picked up by membership of TRI	D
The organisation has a basic set of policies and practices to enhance workforce equality and diversity including reasonable adjustments, equal pay, flexible working and family friendly policies.	Equal Opportunities Policy Statement							The organisation's workforce strategies and policies include equality considerations and objectives.	D	Policy statements specially refer to race. More needed on positive action commitments	D
Policies and systems are in place to identify, prevent and deal effectively with harassment and bullying at work.	Dignity at work policy							The organisation's workforce strategies and policies include equality considerations and objectives.	D	Policy in place. Black people feel least confident in being taken seriously when complaining	D
Diversity monitoring information is separated from recruitment decisions and held securely. GDPR processes are in place and regulations are being met.	Staff survey separately stored GDPR Processes are met, no evidence of data security measures							Needs specific review of recruitment practices to determine the situation	TBD	Needs specific review of recruitment practices to determine the situation	TBD
The progress of protected groups through the organisational hierarchy is monitored and reported on.	Regular staff surveys				y	y	y	Information and data is analysed to support the assessment of status quo	A	Information and data is analysed to support the assessment of status quo. Specific reporting on race	A
There is evidence that workforce data is analysed and reported to senior leaders regularly.	Regular staff surveys				y	y	y	Information is collected and reported. There may be a need for managers to have regular access to EDI information to shape decision-making	A	Information needs to be linked to targets for reducing inequality	D
There are standard equality clauses in suppliers' contracts.	Unknown - Will recommend if none								TBD		TBD
The organisation sets stretching targets for social value in equality from its contracts and these are being achieved.	Unknown - Will recommend if none								TBD		TBD

COMPETENCIES	LEWISHAM PERFORMANCE	AGE	DISABILITY	FAITH	GENDER	LGBT	RACE	BENCHMARK	LEVEL	BENCHMARK	LEVEL
								EQUALITY FRAMEWORK		TACKLING RACE (TRI)	
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DIVERSE & ENGAGED WORKFORCE	<p>The EFLG assessment of LC's commitment to a DIVERSE & ENGAGED WORKFORCE is DEVELOPING. The TRI score is DEVELOPING</p>										
The organisation has sufficient information about staff to inform robust equality analysis and decision-making	Staff Demographic Surveys plus report presented to cabinet	y	y		y	y	y	The organisation can demonstrate movement towards greater diversity in its workforce profile compared with previous years, including increasing the levels of previously under-represented groups at all levels of the organisation.	A	Progress is being made but the pace is slow	D
There is evidence that equality issues are mainstreamed into all staff training and development programmes and rooted in clear organisational values and behaviours.	Realising potential training course, more work required				Y	Y	y	The council carries out regular assessments of the training, learning and development needs of members and officers in order that they understand their equality duties and take action to deliver equality outcomes. Consideration is given to the progression of under-represented groups. Need to see more evidence of EDI links	D	Not much evidence of Positive Action being taken	D
There is clear communication with staff about their objectives and the expectations management have of them including how EDI values are lived.	After reviewing staff feedback, we've found that certain groups feel more informed about team happenings than others. These groups include Asian staff, males, those aged 40-49, and gay/lesbian staff. However, only 77% of all staff feel well-informed, which means there is room for improvement.							Staff feel informed about business objectives the evidence is not clear the same is true of EDI expectations	D	BAME reporting roughly same satisfaction as others but evidence is unclear about how the feel race is progressed.	D
In the post-pandemic world, homeworking and working more flexibly is now the default in some roles. Staff from protected groups reporting there is a safe working environment which supports their wellbeing and resilience where they are impacted by racism and other discrimination while remote working.	No evidence							Considerations about EDI and the challenges of remote working not evident	P	Considerations about Race and the challenges of remote working not evident	P
Where there is evidence of disproportionality, barriers have been identified and action taken to reverse the trends.	Deep dive into workforce practices - recommendations have been made							The organisation can demonstrate movement towards greater diversity in its workforce profile compared with previous years, including increasing the levels of previously under-represented groups at all levels of the organisation	A	Not enough evidence of positive action to support Achieving score in this competence	D
There are Staff Forums providing a safe space for raising issues and influencing EDI policy at departmental and corporate levels	Corporate equalities board report							Appropriate structures are in place to ensure delivery and review of equality objectives.	D	More clarity needed on CEB race objectives	D
The organisation recognises and acknowledges that staff from protected groups may experience issues such as harassment, micro-aggression from colleagues or service users.	Equal opportunities policy recognises this							Structures are in place to ensure delivery and review of equality objectives.	D	Defined race targets and processes for achievement needed	P

COMPETENCIES	LEWISHAM PERFORMANCE	AGE	DISABILITY	FAITH	GENDER	LGBT	RACE	BENCHMARK	LEVEL	BENCHMARK	LEVEL
									EQUALITY FRAMEWORK		TACKLING RACE (TRI)
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There are appropriate examples of positive action to improve diversity.	In the recruitment process the heads of service are required to be aware of and perform in accordance with the current EDI framework							The organisation understands its local labour market and has mechanisms in place to monitor its workforce against protected characteristics.	D	Insufficient evidence	P
There are career development and retention strategies for under-represented groups into management roles.	Initiatives like Realising Potential are not yet part of Talent Development & Succession Planning							Needs addressing	P	Needs addressing	P

COMPETENCIES	LEWISHAM PERFORMANCE	AGE	DISABILITY	FAITH	GENDER	LGBT	RACE	BENCHMARK	LEVEL	BENCHMARK	LEVEL
								EQUALITY FRAMEWORK		TACKLING RACE (TRI)	
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SERVICE DELIVERY & DESIGN	The EFLG assessment of LC's SERVICE DELIVERY & DESIGN is DEVELOPING . The TRI score is PRE-DEVELOPING										
The council has adopted some of the key policies of the socio-economic duty when taking decisions.	SEF recognise that social mobility is one of the most effective ways to tackle inequality and pledge Increased provision of affordable housing, Increased access to employment for those (e.g.: lone parents and older people) Reduction in the attainment gap between the best performing pupils'							Equality objectives for the organisation have been set and published in accordance with the requirements to support the public sector Equality Duty. More to be done on linking with the bough business case	D	No case made for race equality linked to economic impact of council services on diverse communities	P
The organisation can demonstrate a clear link between meeting their equality objectives and positive outcomes for its communities.	Single Equality Framework sets out very clear guidelines and processes to champion inclusion for the community							Services need to be reviewed to identify the socio-economic benefits to diverse communities. EAAs can be a useful tool here if undertaken whole heartedly	D	No case made for race equality linked to economic impact of council services on diverse communities	P
Diverse groups of service users are consulted effectively before services are developed.	Weak evidence that EAA are done systemically and is responsive to views of service users							More evidence needed here	P	More evidence needed here	TBD
There is evidence that equality issues are mainstreamed into all customer facing training (e.g. training on customer care) and rooted in clear organisational values and behaviours.	Staff Survey say 65% of staff agree they have the necessary training to do the job. However, no hard evidence training is imbued with EDI concerns.	y		y	y	y	y	A third of staff not reporting they have adequate training requires action to address	D	No evidence here of race impact being assessed and training modified	TBD

COMPETENCIES	LEWISHAM PERFORMANCE	AGE	DISABILITY	FAITH	GENDER	LGBT	RACE	BENCHMARK	LEVEL	BENCHMARK	LEVEL
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PROMOTING EDI BOROUGH-WIDE	<p>The EFLG assessment of LC's commitment to PROMOTING EDI BOROUGH-WIDE IS PRE-DEVELOPING. The TRI Score is PRE-DEVELOPING</p>										
Key stakeholders across the borough have been involved in developing the shared vision of equality for the borough.	Equalities review - Safer Stronger Community select committee							The political and executive leadership have publicly committed to reducing inequality, fostering good community relations and challenging discrimination.	D	The relationship with BAME communities needs investigating	TBD
Equality objectives are reflected in local strategic planning.	CYP Service Plan & Directorate and Single Equality Framework							There is some evidence that strategic plans reflect EDI aspirations. More evidence of action needed	D	There is some evidence that strategic plans reflect council Race aspirations. More evidence of action needed	D
The council looks beyond traditional partners and includes the voices of smaller organisations in shaping its plans.	Voices of Lewisham, BLACHIR, LIF, YA							Partnership working arrangements are being reviewed with the voluntary and community sector and the wider community to ensure that local equality priorities are addressed.	D	No real evidence of race planning that promotes race equality to external partners and communities	P
There is evidence that cross-organisational learning is taking place.	SSCSC working with organisations like LIF to address inclusion of LGBT community Inc. various events							Structures are in place within the council and across partnerships to understand community relationships and map community tensions.	D	No substantive evidence of co-production and shared learning with local black communities	P
The organisation is able to show that even when making difficult decisions it continues to demonstrate a clearly articulated and meaningful commitment to equality.	Achilles street regeneration is one example referenced in the Equalities review							Currently lacking evidence	TBD	Currently lacking evidence	TBD

COMPETENCIES	LEWISHAM PERFORMANCE	AGE	DISABILITY	FAITH	GENDER	LGBT	RACE	BENCHMARK	LEVEL	BENCHMARK	LEVEL
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The key used to score the assessment is ranked from lowest to highest as PRE-DEVELOPING (P) DEVELOPING (D) ACHIEVING (A) EXCELLENT(E). This ranking system seeks to categorise and measure progress, allowing LC to identify areas of improvement

Documents used in scoring the assessment
Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG)
London Local Government Tackling Racial Inequality Programme (TRI)
CYP Directorate Plan
Deep Dive into workforce practices
Head of Service. Strategy & Improvement
SSCSC How Lewisham Council embeds Equalities across its service provision (Equalities review) September 2020
Single Equality Framework 2020-2024
Voices of Lewisham Final Report
Equal Opportunities policy statement
Corporate Equalities Board Updated Terms of Reference
Staff surveys - Age/Ethnicity/Gender/Sexual Orientation/Disability
Lewisham people delivery plan
Race Equality Pledge
HR Report Q3 2022
Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (updated draft Nov'22)
Birmingham and Lewisham African Caribbean Health Inequalities Review
TBD = To Be Determined



Mayor and Cabinet

Report title: Response to the recommendations of the Disabled People's Commission Report; *If not now, then when?*

Date:

Key decision: No.

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Helen Clarke – Director of Communications and Engagement

Alex Glanz – Head of the Chief Executive's Office

Outline and recommendations

This report provides the Council's response to the Disabled People's Commission Report (If not now, then when?).

Mayor and Cabinet are asked to review and approve the Council's response to these recommendations.

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

29 March, 2023 – Publication of the Disabled People's Commission Report at the Council's AGM

13 September, 2023 – Executive Management Team meeting

14 September, 2023 – Safer Stronger Communities Committee Meeting

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report provides a summary of the recommendations outlined in the Disabled People's Commission Report: *If not now, then when?* The report also provides the Council's response to these recommendations, as well as information regarding work the Council is planning to do to improve the borough

for deaf and disabled residents alongside the recommendations in the commission's report,

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Note the contents of the report
- 2.2. Approve the Council's response to the Disabled People's Commission Report (*If not now, then when?*).

3. Policy Context

- 3.1. This report aligns with Lewisham's Corporate Priorities, as set out in the Council's [Corporate Strategy \(2022-2026\)](#):
 - Cleaner and Greener
 - A Strong Local Economy
 - Quality Housing
 - Children and Young People
 - Safer Communities
 - Open Lewisham
 - Health and Wellbeing
- 3.2. In particular, this report is closely aligned to the Open Lewisham priority. It aims to ensure that we are inclusive as a Council, actively listen to our residents and are responsive to their concerns, aiming to co-design services with those affected by them.

4. Background

- 4.1. Lewisham Disabled People's Commission was established in December 2019 to research and report on barriers affecting deaf and disabled adults who live or work within the borough. The report was published at the Council's AGM on 29 March 2023, and a commitment was made that the Council would bring a report to Mayor and Cabinet stating its response to the recommendations made by the Commission.
- 4.2. Tackling inequalities is one of Lewisham Council's key priorities, and is fundamental to all the work we do. It is at the heart of our Corporate Strategy and the Mayor's manifesto. Our response to the Disabled People's Commission Report sits alongside a significant and ambitious programme of work being undertaken to put Lewisham at the forefront of the radical change needed to make a fairer society.
- 4.3. Lewisham Council does face challenges to supporting deaf and disabled residents that do not apply to all local authorities, or even all London boroughs. The Council is ambitious about what it wants to achieve, but faces significant constraints due to ageing infrastructure, density of residential housing and financial limitations. These obstacles present fundamental challenges to Lewisham developing a public realm that is fully accessible to all disabled residents.
- 4.4. However, the Council does not believe that we should lower our ambition

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because of those challenges. Instead, it is hoped that this report sets out what is possible, even when faced with those constraints. By utilising innovation, co-producing with those who have lived experience and gathering grass-roots support from within the Council and across the borough, Lewisham can set the standard as one of London's most accessible boroughs. We know that doing this will take time, and the Commission's report acknowledges that many of the solutions to challenges deaf and disabled residents face are long-term, but this report should act as a launch-pad for the borough to deliver something truly ambitious and forward thinking for its residents.

5. Strategic Recommendations:

- 5.1. **A rights-based approach with a co-production focus.** Lewisham Council formally adopts a human rights based approach, including committing to the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. The Council uses this and the social model of disability to inform all aspects of its work. This is applied with an active commitment to 'nothing about us without us' – co-production with deaf and disabled people in service and policy design and commissioning. As it develops skills and expertise in this approach, it works with key partners such as the NHS to embed this approach within the work of relevant bodies across the borough.
- 5.2. **Senior policy lead in co-production.** A Senior Policy Lead in Co-Production based within Lewisham Council is appointed to work across the Lewisham Strategic Partnership, leading on coproduction and report implementation, building capacity within these partnerships for genuine coproduction.
- 5.3. **Formation, support, and initial resourcing for a Deaf and Disabled People's User-Led Organisation (DDPULO).** The Lewisham Strategic Partnership funds and supports the establishment of a representative Deaf and Disabled People's User-Led Organisation (DDPULO) in Lewisham.

6. The Short-Term Actions: Cost of Living Crisis

- 6.1. Review the impact of the cost of living crisis on deaf and disabled residents, developing a coordinated strategic response and halting local benefit deductions and debt recovery processes.
- 6.2. Carry out an analysis of the financial situations of disabled people on and off means-tested benefits and ensure that people who are no longer eligible for the warm homes discount and larger energy bills payments are receiving the support they need. This is especially important where they may face unavoidably increased energy costs due to running essential medical equipment, requiring a home of a specific temperature, or facing additional energy usage due to the presence of essential carers.
- 6.3. For people paying for social care, provide a temporary inflation-equal uplift to the minimum income guarantee and personal expenses allowance.
- 6.4. Commit to ensuring that charging for social care will never take anyone's income below the UK poverty threshold (excluding any income from Personal Independence Payments, designed to meet the extra costs of disability).

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7. Short Term Actions: Borough Access

- 7.1. Adapt Love Clean Streets to allow people to report missing, damaged, or inappropriate dropped kerbs and tactile paving, and access barriers such as overgrown vegetation and pavement blockages.
- 7.2. Develop a plan using Love Clean Streets for people to report buildings which do not provide wheelchair access to the Council, and for the Council or an appropriate partner to follow this up with a reminder of the legal obligation to provide reasonable adjustments. Where there are persistent and egregious offenders and it is appropriate, use levers such as planning and licensing to achieve these outcomes.
- 7.3. Place a moratorium on 'shared space' developments and commit to working with deaf and disabled people on the accessibility of future pavement architecture.
- 7.4. Assess and increase the number of benches, toilets, and Changing Places toilets (those with hoists and adult-sized changing beds).

8. Short-Term Recommendations: Communicating with the public

- 8.1. Work with deaf and disabled people including Deaf BSL signers and people with learning disabilities to improve access to the Lewisham Council website.
- 8.2. Develop a wider communication strategy that works across the borough to ensure that all content produced is accessible to everyone.

9. Long-Term Recommendations

- 9.1. **Access Point.** Create a deaf and disabled-led single point of access service working across the Council, NHS, policing, Department of Work and Pensions and other bodies as appropriate to support deaf and disabled people through their user-journey with services. It should tackle barriers faced (such as inconsistency of support and contact), ensuring they don't 'fall through the gaps'.
- 9.2. **Independent Living Strategy 2030.** Co-produce a long-term Independent Living Strategy 2030 alongside the DDPULO, maximising the independent living benefits across the borough offered by increased personalisation including improved outcomes and reduced costs. This must commit to the principle that adult social care should be free at the point of access and to working towards achieving this, exploring interim steps such as reduced charging.
- 9.3. **Borough Access Strategy 2030.** Co-produce a Borough Access Strategy 2030 working with the DDPULO, Lewisham Strategic Partnership and deaf and disabled residents across the borough. This will select and prioritise changes required to make Lewisham a national pinnacle of accessibility, in areas including housing, transport, policing, education, recreation, and community access. It will interact with processes such as the redevelopment of Lewisham and the Catford Centre, creating a vision of how the ideal accessible borough might be experienced.

10. Council response to the recommendations of the Commission

- 10.1. The Council welcomes the Commissions' recommendations and the work it has

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done since it was established. In particular, Jamie Hale is thanked for their substantial contribution to this work, and commitment to improving the lives of deaf and disabled people across the borough. The report highlights the genuine challenges faced by those with disabilities, and it would not exist if it were not for the effort of the Commissions' members, each of whom is noted in the Commissions' report.

- 10.2. The Council's response to each of the recommendations listed above is outlined in the paragraphs below:
- 10.3. **A rights-based approach with a co-production focus (5.1).** The UK Government is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, meaning all UK public bodies should take the convention into account when carrying out their work. Lewisham Council is supportive of the convention's principles which help inform how public bodies such as the Council meet the Public Sector Equality duty and comply with disability discrimination legislation. Furthermore, the Council welcomes and endorses a social model of disability that recognises that society and the environment inhibit people with disabilities from fully exercising their citizenship and role in society. The Council's Corporate Strategy explicitly states the Council's support for this model.
- 10.4. Additionally, the Council has expanded the work it has undertaken using a co-production model and acknowledges fully the importance of the principles of co-production. This report expands on policy areas, such as Play and Public Realm where specific action is being undertaken to further develop the Council's approach to co-production. A core tenet of the role of the policy post (*referenced in paragraph 10.5*), will be to ensure that a 'nothing about us without us' approach is taken across all aspects of the Council's work which have a direct impact on deaf and disabled residents.
- 10.5. **Senior policy lead in co-production (5.2).** Following discussions with partner organisations within the Lewisham Strategic Partnership, it has been agreed that this post will be jointly funded, primarily by the ICB and Lewisham Council. This role will be responsible for providing advice and co-production capacity across the Strategic Partnership. The report recommends this post is recruited on a 36-month contract, but due to financial implications the post will be advertised on a 24-month contract. Recruitment for this post is underway, and will be done in consultation with Jamie Hale, as a representative of the Disabled People's Commission. The successful applicant will additionally be responsible for assessing and delivering a number of the recommendations within the report.
- 10.6. Given the report's specific recommendation that a deaf or disabled person to take up this post, the Council can commit to being proactive in ensuring that the recruitment campaign is targeted to targeted to groups representing deaf and disabled people. The Council will additionally ensure a fully accessible recruitment process, including creating a BSL interpretation of the job description, and an easy read version of the job description which will be available on request.
- 10.7. In addition to recruiting to this post, the Council will also be recruiting an Equalities Advisor, who will oversee all Council work relating to EDI, and provide support and line management to the Disability Policy Officer. This

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additional capacity will allow the Council to ensure it has the expertise in place to effectively deliver on the commitments outlined in this report, and to tackle the challenges of intersectionality which we know exist within the borough.

- 10.8. **Formation, support, and initial resourcing for a Deaf and Disabled People's User-Led Organisation (DDPULO) (5.3).** The Lewisham Strategic Partnership is a partnership body of organisations from across the borough who work together towards shared strategic priorities. Although this partnership is chaired by the Mayor of Lewisham, the Council does not make decisions on its behalf. Upon the appointment of the policy lead in co-production, they will be tasked with working with the LSP to explore how this organisation could be created and how Lewisham would benefit from it. They would also explore whether funding can be found from within the LSP to initially resource the DDPULO.
- 10.9. The Council itself would welcome a DDPULO and recognises the value that this could have in the borough. If an organisation of this nature is formed and makes a specific request to the Council for support to help it develop, this would be considered at that time.
- 10.10. **Cost of living crisis (6.0 – 6.4).** As the cost of living crisis had an immediate and direct impact on a large number of Lewisham's residents, the Council took rapid action to provide targeted support wherever it could. As a result of this, the work contained within these recommendations has largely already been undertaken by the Council, and much of the support which has been provided can be seen on the Council's website (<https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/cost-of-living>).
- 10.11. In January 2023, the Council completed an equalities screening, assessing the socio-economic impact of the cost of living crisis on residents with any of the [nine protected characteristics](#). This screening identified the specific impact that the cost of living crisis was having on disabled residents, and the information gathered through it was used to assist the council in targeting the support it subsequently provided. The full screening has been attached to this report as appendix C.
- 10.12. In addition to this screening, the Council has undertaken an analysis of the financial situations of disabled people on and off means-tested benefits. However, this is an initial analysis based on readily available public reports, and a more detailed, local analysis will be scoped following the appointment of a Disability Policy Officer.
- 10.13. With regards to providing a temporary, inflation-equal uplift to the minimum income guarantee (MIG), Lewisham already has a more generous MIG than the DHSC prescribes. For example, the April 23/24 DHSC figures for MIG for those aged 60+ and receiving Pension Credit is £214.35pw. Lewisham actually allows £251.31pw, £36.96pw more generous. If the Council applied inflation at 6.5% to the DHSC figure, this would result in an additional £13.93pw, which would total £228.28pw. This figure would remain far less than the current MIG in place at Lewisham, and therefore the Council feels that its currently policies already take account of the cost pressures that many residents face.
- 10.14. **Borough Access (7.0 – 7.4).** The recommendations within the Commission's report relating to updating the Love Clean Streets app to allow residents to report issues related to accessibility have been actioned, and this function is

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now possible within the app. In addition to this, the Council has gone even further in creating a specific section within the app related to accessibility. This functionality will allow deaf or disabled residents to more easily navigate the tool, and will allow the Council to collect valuable data on how frequently reports of this nature are being made.

- 10.15. In addition to the above, the Council is currently undertaking work to develop processes that would ensure any complaint relating to building accessibility, including public buildings and privately owned businesses, would be dealt with by an appropriate team, within an appropriate timescale. This would be delivered through expanded use of the Love Clean Streets application, and although this feature has not yet been implemented, it is something the Council is actively pursuing.
- 10.16. The Council is committed to utilising [AccessAble](#), an online accessibility guide containing information about venue accessibility. Between 1 January 2022 – 1 January 2023, Lewisham's pages on AccessAble's website were viewed 19,787 times, and the Council's communications team will be working over the course of this administration to raise the visibility of this tool within the borough, particularly with partner organisations.
- 10.17. In response to recommendations in the Commission's report, the Council will create a list of the top 100 most accessed venues within the borough, and arrange for a window sticker to be sent to each of them featuring a QR code that can be scanned for accessibility information. In addition to this, over the course of this administration we will work to ensure that every venue, operated by every member of the Lewisham Strategic Partnership, is signed up to AccessAble, providing a single, easy to use source of accessibility information within the borough.
- 10.18. In response to the Commission's recommendation around working with deaf and disabled people on accessibility of the public realm, for all future tenders of public realm consultations, the Council will specify during the tender process that any organisation working with the Council to conduct consultations must seek representations from deaf and disabled people. In the long-term, the Council would hope to utilise the Disability Policy Officer, and potentially a DDPULO to ensure that these representations are sought effectively.
- 10.19. On shared space developments and the recommendation for a moratorium, the Council follows the guidance set out in '[Inclusive Mobility](#)'. This guidance states that: *"Conversion of an existing footway to a shared use route should only be considered when options that reuse carriageway or other space have been rejected as unworkable. Even then, this option may only be acceptable if there is sufficient space available, with low pedestrian and cycle user numbers along the route, and low expectations that pedestrians will cross the path to access adjacent facilities, such as shops."*
- 10.20. Additionally, [Local Transport Note 1/20](#) sets out that *"In urban areas, the conversion of a footway to shared use should be regarded as a last resort."* However, the Council is required to be pragmatic and to acknowledge that there may be situations where physical constraints do not allow for segregation. As a result of this, placing a moratorium on shared use would not be possible at this time. The Council will continue to regard shared use as a last resort and make best efforts to avoid its use whenever possible.

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- 10.21. The Council will additionally support a strong position against the introduction of new cobbled streets. Public realm should always be designed to be accessible, and the Council will work to ensure that there is no new introduction of cobbled streets. Where a proposed development site has historic cobbles, consideration will need to be given for their historic value and how they can be integrated into a development project. However, as with share use, cobbled streets will be regarded as a last resort.
- 10.22. The Council can commit to increasing the number of Changing Place toilets within the borough. There are plans to create a new community space in the Lewisham Shopping Centre, and this will include the provision of a new Changing Place Toilet, accessible to all residents. In addition to this, further plans have been developed to deliver an additional Changing Place Toilet in Downham Leisure Centre. The Council's ambition is to have both of these facilities delivered before the end of 2023. The Council will continue to look for further opportunities and funding to increase the number of accessible toilets within the borough.
- 10.23. Finally, Lewisham Council currently has over 700 benches, including 27 disabled user friendly picnic table/benches funded via Lewisham Mayor's Greening Fund. Over the remainder of 2023, the Council intends to install seven additional public benches within the borough, as well as three additional Disabled user friendly picnic tables. This is a significant increase from the number of public benches installed during 2022. To fund the delivery of further benches and other outdoor furniture, the Sustainable Streets scheme will be used to fund improvements to local streets. Although the Council cannot commit to a definite figure for the number of benches that will be installed under this scheme, all funds raised are ring-fenced for local transport and highways improvements, and a full roll-out of the scheme across the borough would support the further delivery of public benches.
- 10.24. **Communicating with the public (8.0 – 8.2).** Accessible language and design are key considerations in all our communications work and are at the heart of our new website and communications strategies.
- 10.25. We know there are improvements that need to be made to our website, and this is a focus for both our IT and digital, and communications teams. We are currently undertaking a major review of the website to improve its content and usability. This is in line with government legislation for public sector organisations, that requires a WCAG 2.1 level AA standard for public sector websites. This includes a wide range of accessibility measures including recommended colour contrast ratios, making text easier to read, a heading structure to website, URL highlights and an inbuilt text to speech web reader.
- 10.26. We are using Site Improve software to analyse our website for accessibility issues. We currently have a 96/100 rating for content, however we know there are improvements we can make relating to the technical performance of the site, so this is a priority. The Council's Disability Policy Officer will work closely with the Communications team to provide their expertise in terms of creating accessible communications.
- 10.27. In addition to the above, following this report the Council will commit to providing BSL signers to all large, Council run events. The Council is also committed to ensuring that its cultural offer to the borough is more accessible

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than ever. From 2023 onwards, the Council is committing to holding a British Sign Language show for the pantomime performance at the Council owned Broadway Theatre every year. We are also exploring options and costs for a relaxed environment show.

- 10.28. **Access Point (9.1)** The Council is currently working collaboratively with the NHS and VCS partners towards improved signposting and referral abilities. The Council's partners at Community Connections host [their own directory](#). In addition to this, as part of the Council's response to the cost of living crisis, we worked with the Independent Food Aid Network to co-create the [Worried About Money tool](#) for assisting residents with finding financial support services. Through the Lewisham Strategic Partnership, the DWP, Police, local NHS and other partnership organisations have been passed information regarding these tools, and encouraged to direct the residents they interact with on a regular basis towards them.
- 10.29. In the long-term, the Council does recognise the need to reduce points of access for residents, particularly those who are deaf or disabled, seeking advice. A project to achieve this is already being scoped to deliver this, and following the appointment of a Disability Policy Officer, one of their key tasks will be to provide advice to the project group tasked with improving access to the Council. They will use their experience and expertise to ensure that accessibility for deaf and disabled residents is a priority for this project, tackling the barriers which are highlighted in the Commission's report alongside these recommendations.
- 10.30. In addition to the above, the Council is committed to maintaining its 24 hour, [online interpreting service for BSL users](#) who need to contact the Council either during, or out of hours. This service will be integrated within any project which is undertaken to improve access to the Council for residents.
- 10.31. **Independent Living Strategy (9.2).** Following the appointing of a Disability Policy Officer, they will be asked to review whether they feel an Independent Living Strategy is the most effective method of ensuring improved outcomes across the borough. In addition to this, the Council recognises the substantial benefits of the principle of making Adult Social Care free at the point of access. Lewisham will, where possible, work closely with other London boroughs to ensure that the case for the national changes required to make implementing this policy feasible, are made to central Government .
- 10.32. **Borough Access Strategy (9.3).** As outlined above, the Council's Disability Policy Officer will be asked to assess the need for a Borough Access Strategy, and to work closely with residents, Council services and partner organisations to ensure that Lewisham matches the ambition set out in the Commission's report to be a "national pinnacle of accessibility". In the short term, this officer will work closely with the services outlined in the Commission's report to ensure that principles of accessibility are enshrined into Council policy. This will ensure that planned development, both of buildings and policies, takes into account the access requirements of deaf and disabled residents.
- 10.33. In order to fully show the Council's commitment to establishing a public realm that is accessible for all residents, Lewisham will sign the [Equal Pavement Pledge](#). This pledge commits the Council to protecting Blue Badge Bays, working with disabled experts and engaging with and listening to the

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perspectives of disabled people, across the impairment groups, who have been significantly erased from the conversation. The Council is currently in discussions with [Transport for All](#) around the process for committing to this pledge, but is determined to undertake work, when financially viable, designed to achieve the outcomes set out in these pledges.

11. Additional work

- 11.1. Although the Council's response to this commission has considered all the recommendations made, we are ambitious about our plans for inclusivity and want to go even further. Utilising the experience we will gain from hiring a dedicated expert on disability issues, the Council has outlined a number of additional actions/ projects which we will undertake to ensure that we are a leading borough for accessibility and providing support to our deaf and disabled residents. Further work which the Council intends to undertake that will support deaf and disabled residents, and falls in line with the spirit of the Commission's report, is outlined below in paragraphs 12 – 16.

12. Extensions to the report

- 12.1. The Disabled People's Commission Report included a number of extensions, focused on specific policy areas where improvements could be made to support deaf and disabled residents. We know that we cannot act on all the recommendations contained within these extensions alone, and are committed to working closely with our partners to reach our ambitions.
- 12.2. The Council has shared and promoted the extensions to all members of the Lewisham Strategic Partnership. Encouraging each partner organisation to assess the recommendations that are most relevant to their organisation, and to act on them, with the support of the Council where possible. The Council has successfully worked closely with Lewisham Police Force, and they have now published a statement, outlining their commitment to the recommendations within the extension.

13. Disability Confident Leader

- 13.1. Lewisham Council is proud to be certified as a Disability Confident Employer. However, as has been stressed throughout this report, we want to go even further and to act as a leader both within our Borough and the wider national context in terms of our approach to supporting deaf and disabled residents.
- 13.2. Over the course of this administration, the Council will be focusing on achieving status as a [Disability Confident Leader](#). Accreditation at this level within this nationally recognised scheme would showcase the Council as a champion for Disability Confident within our local and business communities, and show disabled residents that we are leading the way in getting every business to become Disability Confident.
- 13.3. As well as setting ambitious targets for ourselves as an employer, the Council is also committed to championing the importance of becoming a Disability Confident Employer. Utilising the Lewisham Strategic Partnership, we will also support all partners who have the capacity to achieve this level to reach it, over the course of this administration. These partners will be supported by the newly appointed Disability Policy Officer who will support effective implementation of

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policies through working closely with the deaf and disabled community in the borough.

14. Inclusive Playgrounds

- 14.1. In 2020, the Council set out in its Parks and Open Spaces Strategy that it would “seek advice through the new Disabled People’s Commission, and identify the best way to engage with disabled young people, their parents and carers to ensure that our parks and open spaces are designed to enable children of all abilities, to access and enjoy”. In order to achieve this goal, the strategy set out three measures: monitor the number and outcome of consultation with disabled stakeholders and the application of inclusive play principles in their design, layout and equipment choices. Develop a play strategy that balances inclusive play for children of all abilities and age ranges, and ensure that the design brief builds on best practice in terms of intergenerational design.
- 14.2. We are following through on these commitments, and other recommendations such as the “[Let’s Play Fair](#)” campaign from Scope, which highlights the importance of inclusive play for children, and outlines consistent issues such as the lack of inclusive and accessible playground equipment provided by local authorities. We have been consistently raising expectations on our playground providers that the equipment they provide is accessible, and our [Play Strategy](#) highlights the Council’s expectation that “Providers of play services and facilities will ensure their offer is... accessible for all, particularly disabled children”.
- 14.3. We have also recently introduced a model of co-design, as promoted in the Commission’s report and set out in the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy. In 2022, the Council utilised a co-production approach to deliver a new children’s play area within Blackheath Ward, and is now committing to ensuring that whenever possible, the Portage Service will be utilised by the Council to ensure that the voices of deaf and disabled children, as well as their families, are heard in the creation of any new play area.

15. Levelling Up Fund

- 15.1. Earlier in 2023, the Council secured £19m from the Government's Levelling Up Fund to improve Lewisham Town Centre. In order to ensure that this substantial development of our public realm is accessible, the Council will work with disabled experts, with lived experience, during the design process. Given the Council’s commitments throughout this report to fully utilise the effects of a co-production approach, the Council is committed to calling upon the insight and knowledge of disabled residents, making full use of their lived experience to ensure that the best possible town centre for all residents is delivered.

16. Reviewing our work

- 16.1. We know that much of the work needed to fully deliver on the spirit of the recommendations contained within the Commission’s report will require years of work, and many of the commitments contained within this Council report set out work that has only recently begun. Therefore, the Council will commit that in between 24 and 36 months time, the Council will commission an independent disability-led organisation to review it’s progress against these recommendations. It is the intention of the Council to be transparent about the

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challenges it faces in achieving the ambitions set out in the Commission's report, and the work it will do to overcome those challenges. Any independent assessment of this work commissioned by the Council will be published in the public domain.

17. Financial implications

- 17.1. [Type here, Arial size 12]
- 17.2. See Section 6.10.1. - "Financial implications" in the guidance for more information.

18. Legal implications

- 18.1. [Type here, Arial size 12]
- 18.2. See Section 6.10.2. - "Legal implications" in the guidance for more information

19. Equalities implications

- 19.1. [Type here, Arial size 12]
- 19.2. See Section 6.10.3. - "Equalities implications" in the guidance for more information
- 19.3. Make sure you include reference to how this report demonstrates Lewisham Council's commitment to the social model of disability.

20. Climate change and environmental implications

- 20.1. [Type here, Arial size 12]
- 20.2. See Section 6.10.4. - "Climate change and environmental implications" in the guidance for more information

21. Crime and disorder implications

- 21.1. [Type here, Arial size 12]
- 21.2. See Section 6.10.5. - "Crime and disorder implications" in the guidance for more information

22. Health and wellbeing implications

- 22.1. [Type here, Arial size 12]
- 22.2. See Section 6.10.6. - "Health and wellbeing implications" in the guidance for more information

23. Background papers

- 23.1. [Lewisham Disabled People's Commission Report \(If Not Now, Then When\)](#)
- 23.2. [Extensions to the Lewisham Disabled People's Commission Report](#)

24. Report author(s) and contact

- 24.1. Helen Clarke – Director of Communications and Engagement
- 24.2. Helen.Clarke@Lewisham.gov.uk
- 24.3. Comments for and on behalf of the Executive Director for Corporate Resources

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24.4. [Type here, Arial size 12]

24.5. Provide the name of the author of the financial implications.

24.6. Comments for and on behalf of the Director of Law and Corporate Governance

24.7. [Type here, Arial size 12]

24.8. Provide the name of the author of the legal implications.

25. Appendices

- *Appendix A – Disabled People’s Commission Report: If not now, then when?*

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Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee

Select Committee Work Programme Report

Date: 14 September 2023

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1 (not restricted)

Wards affected: Not applicable

Contributor: Benjamin Awkal (Scrutiny Manager)

Outline and recommendations

This report gives Committee members an opportunity to review the Committee's work programme and make any necessary changes.

The Committee is recommended to:

- Review the work programme attached at Appendix D.
- Agree the following changes to the work programme: to remove unneeded PSPO, warm hub evaluation, and budget reduction items; and move the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy and Local Assemblies item to the November 2023 meeting.
- Consider the items for the next meeting and specify the information required.
- Review the forward plan of key decisions at Appendix E and consider whether there are any items that should be considered for scrutiny.

Timeline of decision-making

27 June 2023 - Draft Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee work programme 2023/24 agreed by the Committee

4 July 2023 - Work programme 2022/23 – approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1. Summary

- 1.1. The Committee proposed a draft work programme at the beginning of the municipal year. This was considered and approved, alongside the draft work programmes of the other select committees, by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 July 2023.
- 1.2. The work programme should be reviewed at each meeting to take account of changing priorities.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Committee is recommended to:
 - Review the work programme attached at Appendix D.
 - Agree the following changes to the work programme: to remove unneeded PSPO, warm hub evaluation, and budget reduction items; and move the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy and Local Assemblies item to the November 2023 meeting.
 - Consider the items for the next meeting and specify the information required.
 - Review the forward plan of key decisions at Appendix E and consider whether there are any items that should be considered for scrutiny.

3. Work programming

- 3.1. When reviewing the work programme the Committee should consider the following:
The Committee's terms of reference
- 3.2. The Committee's areas of responsibility, include, but are not limited to:
 - scrutinising the Council's statutory crime and disorder function;
 - reviewing the development of policy in relation to crime and disorder and in particular the borough's community safety plan: the Safer Lewisham Plan;
 - enhancing the Council's ambitions for equality of opportunity within the borough
 - community development and the voluntary sector.
- 3.3. The Committee also has a role in engaging and reflecting the views of residents in relation to community development-related matters. This includes, for example, community partnership and consultation as well as equalities and libraries. The Committee has also led on aspects relating to staff such as reviewing staff survey results.
- 3.4. The Committee's full terms of reference are set out in Appendix A.
Whether any urgent issues have arisen that require scrutiny
- 3.5. If the Committee becomes aware of an issue requiring further scrutiny, it should consider the prioritisation process (Appendix B) and the Effective Scrutiny Guidelines (Appendix C) before deciding on its priority.
Whether a meeting is the most effective means for scrutinising the issue
- 3.6. Committee members should consider whether there are alternative methods for gathering information or receiving updates on issues of interest. For example, would a briefing, written summary or review of exiting material be more appropriate and effective?

Whether there is space in the Committee's work plan to consider the item

- 3.7. Members should consider which work programme items could be removed or rescheduled to make space for the full consideration of more important issues.

Whether the item links to the priorities set out in the corporate strategy

- 3.8. A new corporate strategy has been developed¹ – which sets out the Council's values, priorities and focus for the next four years (2022-2026). These are categorised under the following headings:
- Cleaner and Greener
 - Strong Local Economy
 - Quality Housing
 - Children and Young People
 - Safer Communities
 - Open Lewisham
 - Health and Wellbeing
- 3.9. The work of the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee will relate most closely to the 'safer communities' and 'open Lewisham' priorities, which commit the Council to:
- work with the police to implement our Violence Against Women and Girls strategy.;
 - support the Mayor of London's Have a Word campaign, which encourages men to reflect on their own behaviour and the way they see, treat and talk about women.
 - reduce the number of young people who enter the criminal justice system, focusing on prevention and expanding our trauma-informed approach, championed by our Youth Offending Service.
 - continue to focus and develop our successful public health approach to youth violence, aiming to tackle knife crime and reduce sexual exploitation across the borough.
 - celebrate Lewisham's diversity, ensuring we are a representative and inclusive council and workforce.
 - maintain our status as a Borough of Sanctuary and London's leading borough for refugee resettlement.
 - develop plans to build on our legacy as London's Borough of Culture, celebrating the diverse and creative communities within Lewisham. This will include creating a new Culture and Live Music Strategy and bringing artists, community groups and businesses together to launch a Black Arts Festival.
 - maintain and strengthen the Lewisham Way of working in collaboration with our voluntary and community sectors and seek new areas where we can partner together. We will actively listen to our residents, being responsive to their concerns and communicative in our approach.
 - co-design services with those affected by them and ensure strong consultation processes that reach out to people whose voices are seldom heard.

¹ <https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/corporate-strategy>

- 3.10. The Committee should consider how its work programme reflects these priorities. The Committee might also consider whether there are suggestions that should be put forward for consideration in the new municipal year.

4. The next meeting

- 4.1. The following items are scheduled for the next meeting. For each item, the Committee should clearly define the information and analysis it wishes to see in officer reports. If the Committee has designated one of its members as a climate change champion, that member should work with the Chair to ensure that officers are given appropriate steers in relation to the reports, to ensure they include relevant climate change considerations.
- 4.2. The Committee should also consider whether to invite any expert witnesses to provide evidence, and whether site visits or engagement would assist the effective scrutiny of the item.

Agenda Item	Review type
Performance and direction of library provision	Performance monitoring and policy development
Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy and Local Assemblies	Performance monitoring and pre-decision

5. Referrals

- 5.1. This is a list of referrals made by the Committee this municipal year:

Referral title	Date of referral	Date considered by Mayor and Cabinet	Response due at Committee
Proposed Public Spaces Protection Order	27 June 2023	19 July 2023	Updated report for decision due at Mayor and Cabinet on 1 November, which will be circulated to the Committee

6. Financial implications

- 6.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee's work programme will have financial implications and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, all scrutiny select committees must devise and submit a work programme to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the start of each municipal year.

8. Equalities implications

- 8.1. Equality Act 2010 brought together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. The Act included a new public sector equality duty, replacing the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The duty came into force on 6 April 2011. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 8.2. The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation 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.
- 8.3. There may be equalities implications arising from items on the work programme and all activities undertaken by the Select Committee will need to give due consideration to this.

9. Climate change and environmental implications

- 9.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. However, in February 2019 Lewisham Council declared a Climate Emergency and proposed a target to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030. An action plan to achieve this target was subsequently agreed by Mayor and Cabinet (following pre-decision scrutiny by the Sustainable Development Select Committee)². The plan incorporates all areas of the Council's work. Items on the work programme may well have climate change and environmental implications and reports considered by the Committee should acknowledge this.

10. Crime and disorder implications

- 10.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee's work programme may have crime and disorder implications and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

11. Health and wellbeing implications

- 11.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee's work programme may have health and wellbeing implications and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

12. Report author and contact

If you have any questions about this report please contact Benjamin Awkal (Scrutiny Manager) benjamin.awkal@lewisham.gov.uk

² See <https://lewisham.gov.uk/TacklingTheClimateEmergency> for a summary of the Council's work in this area.

Appendix A

Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee Terms of Reference

The following roles are common to all select committees:

(a) *General functions*

- To review and scrutinise decisions made and actions taken in relation to executive and non-executive functions
To make reports and recommendations to the Council or the executive, arising out of such review and scrutiny in relation to any executive or non-executive function
- To make reports or recommendations to the Council and/or Executive in relation to matters affecting the area or its residents
- The right to require the attendance of members and officers to answer questions includes a right to require a member to attend to answer questions on up and coming decisions
- To consider matters referred to it in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme

(b) *Policy development*

- To assist the executive in matters of policy development by in depth analysis of strategic policy issues facing the Council for report and/or recommendation to the Executive or Council or committee as appropriate
- To conduct research, community and/or other consultation in the analysis of policy options available to the Council
- To liaise with other public organisations operating in the borough – both national, regional and local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working

(c) *Scrutiny*

- To scrutinise the decisions made by and the performance of the Executive and other committees and Council officers both in relation to individual decisions made and over time
- To scrutinise previous performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives/performance targets and/or particular service areas
- To question members of the Executive or appropriate committees and executive directors personally about decisions
- To question members of the Executive or appropriate committees and executive directors in relation to previous performance whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over time or in relation to particular initiatives which have been implemented
- To scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the borough and to invite them to make reports to and/or address the select committee and local people about their activities and performance
- To question and gather evidence from any person outside the Council (with their consent where the law does not require them to attend).
- To make recommendations to the Executive or appropriate committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process

(d) *Community representation*

- *To promote and put into effect closer links between overview and scrutiny members and the local community*
- *To encourage and stimulate an enhanced community representative role for overview and scrutiny members including enhanced methods of consultation with local people*

- *To liaise with the Council's ward assemblies and/or Positive Ageing Council so that the local community might participate in the democratic process and where it considers it appropriate to seek the views of the ward assemblies and/or Positive Ageing Council on matters that affect or are likely to affect the local areas, including accepting items for the agenda of the appropriate select committee from ward assemblies and the Positive Ageing Council.*
- To keep the Council's local ward assemblies and Positive Ageing Council under review and to make recommendations to the Executive and/or Council as to how participation in the democratic process by local people can be enhanced.
- To receive petitions, deputations and representations from local people and other stakeholders about areas of concern within their overview and scrutiny remit and to refer them to the Executive, appropriate committee or officer for action, with a recommendation or report if the committee considers that necessary
- To consider any referral within their remit referred to it by a member under the Councillor Call for Action (Part IV E 10), and if they consider it appropriate to scrutinise decisions and/or actions taken in relation to that matter, and/or make recommendations/report to the Executive (for executive matters) or the Council (non-executive matters)

(e) *Finance*

- To exercise overall responsibility for finances made available to it for use in the performance of its overview and scrutiny function.

(f) *Work programme*

- As far as possible to draw up a draft annual work programme in each municipal year for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Once approved, the relevant select committee will implement the programme during that municipal year. Nothing in this arrangement inhibits the right of every member of a select committee to place an item on the agenda of that select committee for discussion.
- The Council and the Executive will also be able to request that an overview and scrutiny select committee research and/or report on matters of concern and the select committee will consider whether the work can be carried out as requested. If it can be accommodated, the select committee will perform it. If the committee has reservations about performing the requested work, it will refer the matter to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for decision.

The Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee has these specific terms of reference:

(a) To fulfil all overview and scrutiny functions in relation to the discharge by responsible authorities of their crime and disorder function as set out in Sections 19 and 20 Police & Justice Act 2006, as amended from time to time, and all other relevant legislation. This shall include the power:

(i) to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by responsible authorities of their crime and disorder function,
(ii) to make reports or recommendations to the local authority or the executive with respect to the discharge of those functions; and

(iii) to make reports and/or recommendations to the local authority with respect to any matter which is a local crime and disorder matter in relation to a member of the authority. A local crime and disorder matter in relation to a member means a matter concerning crime and disorder (including, in particular, forms of crime and disorder involving anti-social behaviour or other behaviour adversely affecting the environment), or the misuse of

drugs, alcohol and other substances, which affect all or part of the electoral area for which the member is elected or any person who lives or works there.

(b) make proposals to the Executive to promote equality of opportunity within the borough, including issues of discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, gender, disability, sexuality, age and/or class, including the following matters:-

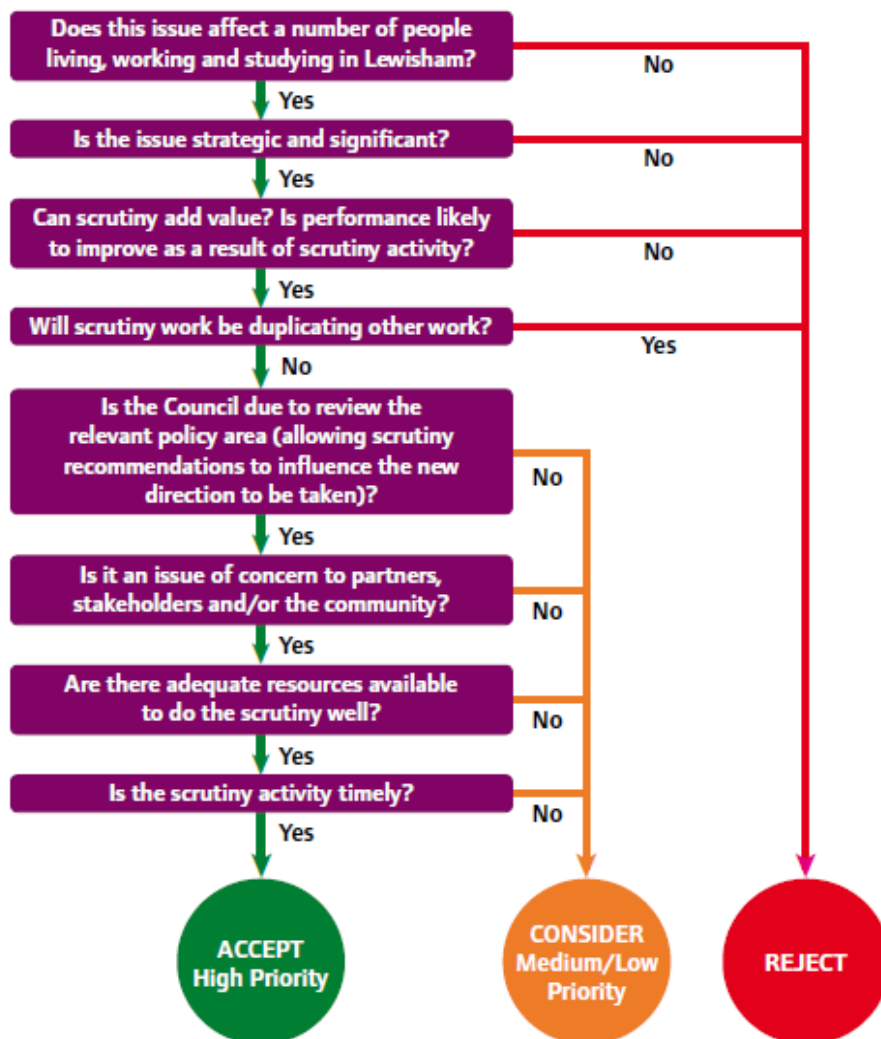
- to recommend to the Executive, the Council or an appropriate committee, proposals for policy development in relation to equalities issues;
- to analyse policy options as necessary to inform the proposals to be made to the Executive or other appropriate committee;
- to advise the Executive or other committee on all matters relating to equality of opportunity both in terms of policy, service provision, employment and/or access to public services;
- to enhance and develop existing and innovative consultative and/or advisory work for equality of opportunity and to consider issues of inequality and discrimination across the borough;
- to consider and recommend to the Executive, ways in which participation by disadvantaged and under-represented sections of the community might be more effectively involved in the democratic processes of local government;
- to pilot methods of consultation and involvement and to report back to the Executive or appropriate committee on their effectiveness with recommendation if appropriate;
- to establish links with and liaise with external organisations in the borough which are concerned with the promotion of equality of opportunity.

(c) Overview and Scrutiny functions (excluding call-in) in relation to library provision.

Appendix B

The flowchart below is designed to help Members decide which items should be added to the work programme. It is important to focus on areas where the Committee will influence decision-making.

Scrutiny work programme – prioritisation process



Appendix C

Effective Scrutiny Guidelines

At Lewisham we:

1. Prioritise

It is more effective to look at a small number of key issues in an in-depth way, than skim the surface of everything falling within scrutiny's remit. We try to focus on issues of concern to the community and/or matters that are linked to our corporate priorities. We only add items to the work programme if we are certain our consideration of the matter will make a real and tangible difference.

2. Are independent

Scrutiny is led by Scrutiny Members. Scrutiny Members are in charge of the work programme and, for every item, we specify what evidence we require and what information we would like to see in any officer reports that are prepared. We are not whipped by our political party or unduly influenced by the Cabinet or senior officers.

3. Work collectively

If we collectively agree in advance what we want to achieve in relation to each item under consideration, including what the key lines of enquiry should be, we can work as a team to question witnesses and ensure that all the required evidence is gathered. Scrutiny is impartial and the scrutiny process should be free from political point scoring and not used to further party political objectives.

4. Engage

Involving residents helps scrutiny access a wider range of ideas and knowledge, listen to a broader range of voices and better understand the opinions of residents and service users. Engagement helps ensure that recommendations result in residents' wants and needs being more effectively met.

5. Make SMART evidence-based recommendations

We make recommendations that are based on solid, triangulated evidence – where a variety of sources of evidence point to a change in practice that will positively alter outcomes. We recognise that recommendations are more powerful if they are:

- Specific (simple, sensible, significant).
- Measurable (meaningful, motivating).
- Achievable (agreed, attainable).
- Relevant (reasonable, realistic and resourced, results-based).
- Time bound (time-based, time limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive).

Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee work plan 2023-24

Item	Type	Priority	27-Jun	14-Sep	07-Nov	16-Jan	20-Mar	
Public Space Protection Order	Pre-decision scrutiny	CP7, CP4, CP6 and CP1						
Equalities: external review; SEF 21/22 & 22/23 reviews; and staff profile.	Performance monitoring and policy development	CP1						
Public Space Protection Order	Pre-decision scrutiny	CP7, CP4, CP6 and CP1	TBC					
Budget reductions report	Pre-decision scrutiny	All						
Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy and Local Assemblies	Performance monitoring	CP1						
Safer Lewisham Plan	Performance monitoring and pre-decision scrutiny	CP7						
Performance and direction of library provision	Performance monitoring and policy development							
Borough of Sanctuary Strategy progress	Performance monitoring	CP1						
Lewisham Disabled People's Commission response implementation	Performance monitoring	CP1 and CP5						

Information reports, briefings, events and visits

Warm hubs evaluation	Performance monitoring	CP5					
Police Service update inc. Casey review and Turnaround Plan	Performance monitoring	CP7				In run up to Jan. meeting	
Fire Brigade update	Performance monitoring	CP7				In run up to Jan. meeting	
Fire station	Site visit	CP7			November/December		
Home Office plans for asylum seekers and asylum seeker accommodation in the borough.	For information	CP1					

Suggested items for 24/25 municipal year

Culture Strategy implementation	Performance monitoring						
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FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

Forward Plan September 2023 - December 2023

This Forward Plan sets out the key decisions the Council expects to take during the next four months.

Anyone wishing to make representations on a decision should submit them in writing as soon as possible to the relevant contact officer (shown as number (7) in the key overleaf). Any representations made less than 3 days before the meeting should be sent to Head of Governance and Committee Services, the Local Democracy Officer, at the Council Offices or emma.campbellsmith@lewisham.gov.uk. However the deadline will be 4pm on the working day prior to the meeting.

A "key decision"* means an executive decision which is likely to:

- (a) result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates;
- (b) be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards.

June 2023	Delegated decision to award Care Leavers Medium to High Support Supported Housing contract (Pt 1&2)	18/08/23 Executive Director for Community Services	Jonathan Scarth and Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care		
June 2023	Delegated decision to award Mental Health Supported Housing Higher Needs	18/08/23 Executive Director for Community Services	Jonathan Scarth and Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
			Care		
July 2023	Appointment of Directors - Lewisham Homes legacy company	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	David Austin, Director of Corporate Services and Councillor Sophie Davis, Cabinet Member for Housing Management, Homelessness and Community Safety		
May 2023	Approval to procure: School Minor Works Programme 2023 (SMWP 23)	20/09/23 Executive Director for Children and Young People	Lemuel Dickie-Johnson, Project Manager Capital Delivery Programme and Councillor Chris Barnham, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
August 2023	Approve allocation of Section 106 monies to fund employment and training programmes, and confirm acceptance of a UK Shared Prosperity Fund 'People and Skills' grant	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	and		
June 2023	Articles of Association - transition of Lewisham Homes	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Jeremy Chambers, Director of Law, Governance & Elections and Councillor Sophie Davis, Cabinet Member for Housing Management, Homelessness and Community Safety		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS					
Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
July 2023	Catford Regeneration Partnership Limited (CRPL) Appointment of Directors	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	David Austin, Director of Corporate Services and Councillor Sophie Davis, Cabinet Member for Housing Management, Homelessness and Community Safety		
March 2023	Contract award for Council Insurances	20/09/23 Executive Director for Corporate Services	Karen Eaton, Group Manager, Insurance and Risk and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
May 2023	Contract Award Report for School Minor Works Programme 2023 (SMWP 23)	20/09/23 Children and Young People Select Committee	Lemuel Dickie-Johnson, Project Manager Capital Delivery Programme and Councillor Chris Barnham, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
May 2023	Contract Award to a Registered Provider for Supported Accommodation for Young People -Site 1 and Site 2	20/09/23 Executive Director for Children and Young People	Chloe Vergara, CLA Placements Contract Manager and		
March 2023	Dementia Strategy	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Tristan Brice, Associate Director, Community Support and Care and Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS					
Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
June 2022	Home Park and Edward Street Development Budget and Programme Update Report	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	James Briggs, Head of Strategic Housing and Growth and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
August 2023	Home Park and Edward Street Development Programme and Budget Update	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Patrick Dubeck, Director of Inclusive Regeneration and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
April 2023	Lewisham and Lee Green LTN monitoring update	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	and Councillor Louise Krupski, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate		
June 2023	Lewisham Homes Interim Business Plan 2023/24	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Katharine Nidd, Head of Strategic Finance, Planning and Commercial and Councillor Sophie Davis, Cabinet Member for Housing Management, Homelessness and Community Safety		
June 2023	Old Fairlawn Primary School Annexe (nursery) - appropriation for planning purposes	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Luke Riley, Head of New Initiatives and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
			Development and Planning		
May 2023	Permission to award Maximising Wellbeing at Home contracts (Lots 5,6,8,9)	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Tristan Brice, Associate Director, Community Support and Care and		
June 2023	Permission to procure - Integrated Community Equipment Service	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Tristan Brice, Associate Director, Community Support and Care and Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care		
June 2023	Review of all Supported Housing Contracts	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Jonathan Scarth and Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care		
July 2023	Statement of Community Involvement for adoption	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Michael Forrester, Head of Development Management and		
May 2023	to approve the annual Besson Street Business Plan	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Luke Riley, Head of New Initiatives and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
August 2023	Treasury Management Strategy - Mid-Year Review	20/09/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Katharine Nidd, Head of Strategic Finance, Planning and Commercial		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS					
Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
			and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
June 2023	Treasury Management Strategy Mid-Year Review	27/09/23 Council	Katharine Nidd, Head of Strategic Finance, Planning and Commercial and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
May 2023	Adventure Playgrounds Grant of Leases and Contract Award	01/11/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Harsha Ganatra, Joint Commissioner (FQC) and Councillor Chris Barnham, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
July 2023	Approval for s106 monies to go to Deptford Challenge Trust	01/11/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Julia Robbins, Developer Contributions Manager and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
April 2023	Approval to enter into contract - Drakes Court development	01/11/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Eleanor Davies, Associate Director Joint Mental Health Commissioning and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS					
Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
February 2022	BfL Programme - Approval to enter into contract Valentines Court	01/11/23 Mayor and Cabinet	James Ringwood, Housing Delivery Manager and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
July 2023	Catford Regeneration Partnership Limited (CRPL) Business Plan	01/11/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Kplom Lotsu, SGM Capital Programmes and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
July 2023	Financial Monitoring - Period 4	01/11/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Nick Penny, Head of Service Finance and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
August 2023	Gambling Policy 2023-2026	01/11/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Richard Lockett and Councillor Sophie Davis, Cabinet Member for Housing Management, Homelessness and Community Safety		
April 2023	Grant of Leases for Adventure Playground Sites	01/11/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Harsha Ganatra, Joint Commissioner (FQC) and Councillor Chris Barnham, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS					
Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
July 2023	Levelling Up Fund Programme - approval for procurement of contractors	01/11/23 Mayor and Cabinet	and		
April 2023	Millwall FC Lease Restructuring Proposals	01/11/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Patrick Dubeck, Director of Inclusive Regeneration and		
May 2022	On Street Advertising Contract Variation and Extension	01/11/23 Mayor and Cabinet	and Councillor Amanda De Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategy		
August 2023	Property Agreement between LB Lewisham and TfL in relation to the A205 Road Realignment Project	01/11/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Charlotte Harrison, Head of Strategic Regeneration and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
March 2023	Public Space Protection Order consultation outcome	01/11/23 Mayor and Cabinet	James Lee, Director of Communities, Partnerships and Leisure and Councillor Louise Krupski, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate		
July 2023	Sustainable Streets recommendations and next steps - Evelyn	01/11/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Martha Lauchlan, Transport Planner and Councillor Louise Krupski, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate		
August 2023	Gambling Policy 2023-2026	22/11/23	Richard Lockett and		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
		Council	Councillor Sophie Davis, Cabinet Member for Housing Management, Homelessness and Community Safety		
December 2022	Ladywell - Budget requirement	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	James Ringwood, Housing Delivery Manager and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
July 2023	Learning Disability Implementation Plan	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	Heather Hughes, Joint Commissioner, Learning Disabilities and Councillor Paul Bell, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care		
December 2022	Mayfield - Budget Requirement	06/12/23 Mayor and Cabinet	James Ringwood, Housing Delivery Manager and Councillor Brenda Dacres, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Development and Planning		
January 2023	Annual progress update on the Autism Strategy Action Plan	24/01/24 Mayor and Cabinet	and		
June 2022	Approval to appoint operator for concessions contract at	24/01/24 Mayor and Cabinet	Peter Maynard, Contract Officer, Green Scene and		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
	Beckenham Place Park Lake		Councillor Andre Bourne, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Communication (job share)		

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials

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