



## Report of the Convener of the Equality Scrutiny Inquiry Panel

### Equalities Scrutiny Inquiry Panel 11 October 2018

## Planning the Inquiry into Equalities

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| <b>Purpose:</b>                        | To help the panel to plan their scrutiny inquiry into Equalities  |
| <b>Content:</b>                        | Early draft Terms of Reference and Project Plan   |
| <b>Councillors are being asked to:</b> | Consider the information provided and discuss/agree their way forward for the Inquiry   |
| <b>Lead Councillor:</b>                | Cllr Louise Gibbard, Convener Equalities Scrutiny Inquiry Panel<br><a href="mailto:Cllr.louise.gibbard@swansea.gov.uk">Cllr.louise.gibbard@swansea.gov.uk</a> |
| <b>Lead Scrutiny Officer:</b>          | Michelle Roberts<br>01792 637256 <a href="mailto:michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk">michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk</a>   |

### 1. Background

- 1.1 Equalities was raised as an important topic for scrutiny at the Scrutiny Work Planning Conference in June 2018 and was agreed as a topic for in-depth scrutiny by the Scrutiny Programme Committee in July 2018. They suggested the Inquiry look at:
- How well the Council is meeting requirements under the Equality Act 2010 / Public Sector Equality Duty for Wales and equality objectives;
  - How effectively equalities are being embedded across the Council, and how this is being monitored & measured;
  - Examination of specific equality issues / areas / groups e.g. make-up/diversity of the Council workforce, gender pay, engagement with different groups during consultation processes, access to council services
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Programme Committee on the 13 August agreed membership and confirmed the Convener of the Panel as Cllr Louise Gibbard.

### 2. Planning the Inquiry into Equalities

- 2.1 The Panel have reviewed and discussed the overview report provided today.
- 2.2. The Panel are now asked to discuss the Terms of Reference and project plan for their piece of work (see attached an early draft Terms of Reference and Project Plan as previously circulated by email).

# Equalities Scrutiny Inquiry Panel

## Early Draft Terms of Reference

### Inquiry Key Question

The primary focus for the inquiry is to look at equalities in Swansea. The key question, therefore, is:

***'How effectively is the Council meeting and embedding the requirements under the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Equality Duty for Wales)?***

The inquiry will look in particular at how council is meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010. The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their 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.

### Reasons for carrying out this piece of work

Councillors, as part of this inquiry want to:

- Ensure that the Council is meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Equality Duty for Wales)?
- Ensure that there is the staff knowledge, skills and capacity to enable the Council to meet the duty.
- Actively promote a positive attitude to equalities in Swansea.

### Lines of Inquiry

The inquiry will look in particular at how equality issues are considered in the provision of council services and during development and changes to those services. It will also consider what the Council does well and what can be improved. This will include the following key lines of inquiry:

- a) **Role:** What is the councils role under the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Equality Duty for Wales) and how well is the Council meeting and embedding that duty.
- b) **Skills and ability:** Do council staff have the necessary skills, training and capacity to ensure the Council is meeting this duty.
- c) **Culture:** Is there a positive attitude and a commitment to ensuring equity across the organisation.
- d) **Systems/processes and consistency of approach:** Are there effective and efficient systems/practices/processes in place across the Council to enable meeting of the duty? Are Council Officers consistently applying these practices?
- e) **Partnership working:** how we are working with local communities, the voluntary sector and others to help and embed the requirements.
- f) **Measuring success:** How is the Council measuring how it is meeting and embedding the duty?

## **Intended Impact and Contribution**

This inquiry intends to support the work of the Council by:

- Providing a councillor perspective on the issue
- Providing evidenced proposals to Cabinet that will lead to more effective services
- Gaining the views of the public, stakeholders, community groups and staff
- Considering and concluding on recommendations from national reports, legislation /directives and there implications for Swansea
- Identification of good practice/research elsewhere and whether there is any learning for Swansea's approach
- Increased councillor understanding about equalities
- Greater public awareness of work in relation to equalities

## **Membership of the Scrutiny Panel**

Cllr Louise Gibbard (Convener)

Cllr Mo Sykes

Cllr Lesley Walton

Cllr Sam Pritchard

Cllr Erika Kirchner

Cllr Mandy Evans

Cllr Terry Hennegan

Cllr Wendy Fitzgerald

Cllr Hazel Morris

Cllr Yvonne Jardine

## **Key Officer Contact for the Inquiry**

Tracey Meredith, Head of Legal, Democratic Services and Governance Unit

## **Scrutiny Officer supporting the Inquiry**

Michelle Roberts

01792 637256

[michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.roberts@swansea.gov.uk)

## Next Steps and Planning the Inquiry

The Panel based upon their Terms of Reference, are asked to consider

1. Who you would like to speak to in person (panel meeting/roundtable meeting/Q&A)?
2. Who you would like to consult with via written form/survey/call for evidence?
3. Whether you would like to co-opt anyone onto the panel? (*this should be for example someone with expertise, skills and knowledge in this subject area to scrutinise alongside the Panel for the period of the inquiry*)
4. Any other good practice, case studies, legislative or other information you would like to see?

### See below an early draft Timetable of Work - for your consideration

| When / Where  | What / Who  |
|---|---|
| <b>Pre Inquiry Working Group</b><br>11 Oct 2018   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of subject area (Cabinet member and lead officer)</li> <li>• Planning the Inquiry: panel discuss the key question, lines of inquiry and evidence gathering required</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Survey by panel and background information to be sent to the panel throughout inquiry</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short survey for equalities groups/partners organisations, staff?</li> <li>• Any legislation, relevant directives/announcements and other useful relevant evidence</li> <li>• Good practice examples Swansea and elsewhere</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>Evidence gathering phase</b>   |   |
| <b>Session 1</b><br>24 Oct 2018 at 10.30am (TBC)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree Terms of Reference, programme of work and consultation plan</li> <li>• Look at the latest Swansea Equalities Plan (including Action Plan) in detail with Richard Rowlands</li> <li>• Look at the Equality Impact Assessment screening process and documentation with Rhian Millar</li> </ul> |
| <b>Session 2/3</b><br>Nov/Dec 2018  | Q&A session with individual Directors and the Strategic OD and HR Manager. To discuss how progressing with their Equalities Objectives, embedding of duties, staff knowledge, training and capacity plus any relevant performance data.   |
| <b>Session 4/5/6</b><br>Jan/Feb 19  | Speak to interested people/groups including for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor Champions/ Departmental/staff Champions,</li> <li>• Equalities and Human Rights Commission/relevant Commissioners</li> <li>• Equalities Community/Partner Groups/SCVS etc.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Session 7</b><br>Mar 2019  | Review and discuss consultation outcomes including any surveys/consultation carried out by the panel and any relevant survey results already available from within Council  |
| <b>Finalising Inquiry phase</b>   |   |
| <b>Session 8</b><br>Mar 2019  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Findings Report - Start to draw together evidence and discuss emerging themes arising from the inquiry. (Start to put together final report for SPC and then Cabinet).</li> </ul>  |

## For publication on Blog/Twitter:

### Call for Evidence: Equalities Scrutiny Inquiry

A new scrutiny inquiry panel has started which is looking at Equalities. Councillors on the Panel are specifically looking at *'How effectively is the Council meeting and embedding the requirements under the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Equality Duty for Wales)?'*

The Inquiry will look in particular at how equality issues are considered in the provision of Council services and during development and changes to those services. It will also consider what the Council does well and what could be areas for improvement.

As part of this inquiry councillors would like your views on the following issues.

- a) **Role:** The Council's role under the Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Equality Duty for Wales) and how well is the Council meeting and embedding that duty?
- b) **Skills/knowledge:** Do Council staff have the necessary skills, training and capacity to ensure that the Council is meeting the duty?
- c) **Culture:** Is there a positive attitude and a commitment to ensuring equality across the organisation?
- d) **Systems and processes:** Are there effective and efficient systems, practices and processes in place across the Council to enable meeting of the duty. Are Council Officers consistently applying these practices?
- e) **Partnership working:** How are we working with local communities, the voluntary sector and others to help and embed the requirements?
- f) **Measuring success:** How is the Council measuring how it is meeting and embedding the duty?

All the information gathered will be used to inform a report to the Council's Cabinet with recommendations for improvement. This report will be published on the Council website on the Inquiry is complete. Can you please send your views to us by *(add date)*

#### How to provide your views...

Interested groups or individuals are encouraged to submit written evidence to the inquiry by email to [scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk). The Panel may contact you to discuss your evidence. All evidence that is submitted will usually be published as part of the inquiry, if you do not wish your evidence to be published please state clearly.