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## DEPUTY MAYOR AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

A meeting of the Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Children's Services was held on Tuesday 27 July 2021.

**PRESENT:** Councillors , M Smiles

**OFFICERS:** S Blood and P Stephens

### 21/1 **EQUALITY AND INCLUSION REPORT - 2019 AND 2020**

The Strategic Director for Adult social care and Health integration submitted a report that asked the Executive Member to note the findings and progress outlined in the Equality and Inclusion Report spanning 2019 and 2020 (Appendix 1) and approve the proposed actions set out within the report to promote continuous improvement.

The report presents the Council's Equality and Inclusion Report for 2019 and 2020 and asked the Executive Member to agree a number of actions to improve outcomes for local communities and the Council's workforce.

The report required a decision as the Council's Scheme of Delegation gives the Executive collective responsibility for corporate strategic performance, together with associated action. Equality and diversity, fair decision-making and the need to tackle inequalities in outcomes is of critical importance to overall community wellbeing and cohesion within Middlesbrough and so was integral to the Council's Strategic Plan.

The report outlined that the Equality Act 2010 placed a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) on local authorities and other bodies. The broad purpose of the PSED was to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into day-to-day business. It required equality considerations to be reflected into the design of policies (including internal policies) and the delivery of services, and for these issues to be kept under review.

This PSED was supported by specific regulations that place additional duties upon the Council. In particular the Council was required to publish a range of data to demonstrate its compliance with the PSED and on the composition and equality of its workforce.

The Council's Annual Equality and Inclusion Report ensures that these duties are met and that all relevant data is published, in line with statutory requirements.

The publication of the report covering 2019 was significantly delayed due to the impact of COVID-19 on the Council's business-as-usual operations, therefore the report presented to today's meeting (Appendix 1) covers both 2019 and 2020 and:

- describes and compares the diversity of Middlesbrough's population and the Council's workforce, alongside appropriate comparators;
- sets out how the Council complies with its duties under the Equality Act 2010; and
- summarised progress to date in actions taken to improve equality and inclusion outcomes for local communities and the Council's workforce, and sets out further action to be taken in the next year.

The report provided details of the key findings and outlined that the action plan for 2021/22 at the conclusion of the report responds to these findings and also to two unprecedented worldwide events arising in 2020/21.

### **OPTIONS**

#### **Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended**

The Council could choose to present the data within this report within two more separate reports (e.g. one regarding equality objectives and another on workforce data). However, this was not recommended, as bringing all data together in one report provides for coherent

analysis and response and was in line with the Council's commitment to openness and transparency.

#### ORDERED

That the Executive Member notes the findings and progress outlined in the Equality and Inclusion Report spanning 2019 and 2020 (Appendix 1) and approves the proposed actions set out within the report to promote continuous improvement.

#### REASON

The decision was supported by the following reason:

To demonstrate the Council's compliance with the PSED and related requirements to publish related data, and to demonstrate to all stakeholders the Council's commitment to improving equality and inclusion within Middlesbrough and within its workforce.

**The decision will come into force after five working days following the day the decision was published unless the decision becomes subject to the call in procedures**