

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR - CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND
EMPLOYEES****NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT TO THE RACE AT
WORK CHARTER****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek the agreement of Personnel Committee to sign the Race at Work Charter and to ask Members to give their commitment to the 5 key calls to action required of the Charter's signatories.

Information

2. Members will recall agreeing to the publication of the Equalities Action Plan at Committee in October. Following a discussion around how meaningful the actions identified were specifically in relation to Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) employees, further research was undertaken to find a comparable measure to those provided by Disability Confident and the Stonewall Index to which the Council is currently accredited.
3. The Race at Work Charter has been developed by **Business in the Community** which is the oldest and largest business-led membership organisation dedicated to responsible business. Their objectives are to inspire, engage and challenge its members and mobilise their collective strength as a force for good in society to:
 - Create a skilled, inclusive workforce today and for the future
 - Build thriving communities in which to live and work
 - Innovate to repair and sustain our planet.
4. Signatories of the Charter at the beginning of November 2019 include blue-chip businesses, the Bank of England, British Airways, Marks and Spencer as well as the British Army, the Royal Navy and Royal Airforce, and a significant number of the large Central Government departments. To date there are only a handful of council signatories, including Westminster City, Lambeth and two other London Boroughs, which would make Nottinghamshire the first large county authority to sign the Charter.
5. The Charter builds on the work of the 2017 McGregor-Smith Review, Race in the Workplace, and looks to support employers to ensure that ethnic minority employees are represented at all levels of the organisation.

6. The Race at Work Charter has five calls to action required of its signatories to ensure this translates into genuine and practical commitment which ultimately makes a difference. These require the Council to:

- **Appoint an Executive Sponsor for Race**

Executive Sponsors for Race provide visible leadership on race and ethnicity in their organisation and can drive key actions such as setting targets for ethnic minority representation, briefing recruitment agencies and supporting mentoring and sponsorship.

- **Capture ethnicity data and publicise progress**

Capturing ethnicity data is important for establishing a baseline and measuring progress. It is also a crucial step towards an organisation being able to report on ethnicity pay differentials.

- **Commit at Corporate Leadership Team level to zero tolerance of harassment and bullying**

The Race at Work Survey revealed that 25% of ethnic minority employees reported that they had witnessed or experienced racial harassment or bullying from managers. Commitment from the top is needed to achieve change.

- **Make clear that supporting equality in the workplace is the responsibility of all leaders and managers**

Actions can include ensuring that performance objectives for leaders and managers cover their responsibilities to support fairness for all staff.

- **Take action that supports ethnic minority career progression**

Actions can include embedding mentoring, reverse mentoring and sponsorship in their organisations.

7. In signing the Charter, it would also provide significant evidence of how we are meeting our obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires public bodies to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- 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. Members have considered a number of different reports over the last 12 months on a range of activities which fall within the promoting equality agenda including the gender pay gap, Disability Confident, the Stonewall Index, work experience activity and leadership development. This report builds on that work to date and if agreed, provides a measure for progress which we have previously been asked to explore by the self-managed group for Black and Minority Ethnic employees. We continue to explore other national accreditations

and awards to further promote and evidence our corporate approach to equalities.

9. We continue to work with the BAME network and trade union colleagues to encourage employees to disclose any protected characteristics to enable us to ensure our targeted interventions are having a positive impact. Whilst research indicates that one in 8 of the UK working-age population is from a BAME background, only 1 in 13 people at management levels in the private and public sector are from a BAME background. In seeking to attract and retain the best talent to work in Nottinghamshire and to meet the aspirations set out in the Council's People Strategy, it is important to maximise the talent pools from which we recruit from by demonstrating that we are an inclusive employer and want to support and enable people to join our workforce and develop their careers in the Council whatever protected characteristic they may have.

Other Options Considered

10. The Charter is nationally recognised and has a growing list of signatories. Inclusion on the Charter is based on meeting five key standards which require commitment and action to evidence this. It supports our approach to go beyond statutory compliance and demonstrates our commitment to exploring all opportunities to further progress our equalities agenda. The option to do nothing would potentially expose the Council to reputational risk under the various elements of discrimination legislation. However, it would also ignore the business imperative to maximise our draw to candidates and so attract the best talent to work with the Council.

Reasons for Recommendations

11. In seeking to be a community leader and employer of choice, there needs to be clearly identified actions with deliverable outcomes in order to measure performance and progress in the equalities area. Our action plan can be further strengthened in relation to BAME employees in meeting the commitments outlined as part of being a Charter signatory.

Statutory and Policy Implications

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Data Protection and Information Governance

13. There are no data protection implications arising from this report as the information contained in this report does not relate to named individuals' data.

Financial Implications

14. There are no direct financial implications arising from the signing of the Race at Work Charter. However, including this as an activity on the Equalities Action Plan demonstrates

the Council's commitment to equality, promoting itself as an "employer of choice" with plans in place to underpin the objectives set out in the People Strategy. Clearly the ability to identify future resourcing requirements and effective workforce planning are key components of an organisation which places value for money and efficiency at the heart of all that we do and to aim to be an organisation that is representative of the communities that we serve is key to successful delivery of these objectives.

Human Resources Implications

15. The Human Resources implications are implicit in the body of this report. The future success of the Council relies on our ability to plan effectively our future resourcing requirements and to recruit and retain employees with the necessary skills and experience to deliver on the commitments set out in Your Nottinghamshire, Your Future. Meeting these objectives and the 5 key commitments set out in the Race at Work Charter position the Council as a fair and inclusive place to work.

Public Sector Equality Duty implications

16. In seeking to maintain our position as an Employer of Choice, the ability to engage our current and future workforce is essential to our ongoing success. The themes identified in the People Strategy apply to every part of the workforce and therefore there is no group of employees disadvantaged because of this report..

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that members:

- 1) Agree to the required actions to meet the five key challenges required of signatories of the Race at Work Charter.
- 2) Agree to provide their commitment to meeting the "five calls to action" required by the Charter.
- 3) Agree to the inclusion of this activity in the Council's published Equalities Action Plan.

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For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (KK 05/11/19)

17. The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Personnel Committee.

Financial Comments (SES 05/11/19)

18. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

HR Comments (JP 07/11/19)

19. The Human Resources implications are set out at paragraph 15.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All