

<p>Cabinet</p> <p>6th September 2016</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Zena Cooke, Corporate Director Resources Melanie Clay, Corporate Director Law, Probity and Governance</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Improving disabled and ethnic minority staff representation at the senior manager (LP07+) level</p>	

Lead Member(s)	Executive Mayor John Biggs Councillor David Edgar, Lead Member for Resources
Originating Officer(s)	Kevin Kewin, Interim Service Head, Corporate Strategy & Equality Stuart Young, Interim Service Head, HR and Workforce Development
Wards affected	All Wards
Key Decision?	No
Community Plan Theme	One Tower Hamlets

Executive Summary

This report submits the scrutiny report and recommendations for improving disabled and ethnic minority staff representation at the senior manager (LP07+) level. Accompanying the report is HR and Workforce Development's response and accompanying action plan.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note the challenge session report;
2. Approve the proposed action plan in response to the recommendations.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 Councillor Maium Miah, the Overview and Scrutiny Lead for Resources 2015/16 has initiated and completed a scrutiny challenge session on the council's efforts to have a diverse senior management. The resulting report (appendix 1) provides 6 recommendations. HR the service responsible for this

area have provided an action plan in response to the recommendations. Cabinet are asked to approve the accompanying action plan.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet may decide to all accept all the recommendations or only some of the recommendations.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

- 3.1 The challenge session took place on 10th February 2016 as a result of concern amongst some Members around the slow progress against the council's commitment to have a senior management that is reflective of the local disabled and ethnic minority communities. The council has been recognised for its efforts on LGBT inclusion and meeting its strategic priority for 50% of senior managers (LP07+) to be women.

- 3.2 The aim of the challenge session was to explore ways in which the council can improve ethnic minority and disabled staff representation at the senior management level (LP07+).

- 3.3 The session was underpinned by the following core questions:
- a) Is there a perception of a glass ceiling for ethnic minority and disabled staff?
 - b) Are there any positive action schemes in place and if so, are they having any effect?
 - c) How do we manage talent within the council?

- 3.4 The report with recommendations is attached at Appendix 1. There are 6 recommendations from the challenge session which are outlined below:

- **Recommendation 1**

The council should adopt a new talent management process for all staff to replace Navigate and actively promote the scheme to ethnic minority and disabled staff through all available communication channels.

- **Recommendation 2**

The council to ensure that all HR schemes and policies to improve ethnic minority and disabled staff representation at the senior manager level include clear objectives and intended results. These need to be communicated to all staff. Additionally, the impact of any implemented scheme and policy will need to be monitored.

- **Recommendation 3**

The council should reinvigorate the BAME and disabled staff forums and ensure that they are fit for purpose, are representative, are led by effective chairs and have senior champions whose roles are communicated clearly to all staff.

- **Recommendation 4**
The council undergoes an organisational culture audit focusing on diversity and inclusion. Specific areas of focus should include line management practice; talent management processes; the effectiveness of current equality and diversity training and staff engagement.
- **Recommendation 5**
The council should roll out a survey for all staff to provide their views on career development and any barriers, if any, that are perceived. The survey should seek a representative response, including from BAME and disabled staff.
- **Recommendation 6**
The council's HR service to provide a detailed action plan on how they will address any concerns raised through the survey with regular performance monitoring reports provided to the Tower Hamlets Equality Steering Group.

3.5 Comments from the services suggest that these activities will be considered as part of HR's implementation of a new Workforce Strategy for the council.

3.6 Over previous years the council has focused on local diversity targets that were not mapped across London and provided no comparison data from which to benchmark and measure success in this area. This approach has now developed through the creation of the Workforce Strategy and the Organisational Culture Plan, which provides a commitment to a broader representation of the whole community and to benchmarking workforce diversity across London.

3.7 This work has been influenced through external peer reviews by the Local Government Association (LGA), the Society for Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and Investors in People (IiP) and includes best practice and recommendations for future development. As such, the activities detailed in the action plan will form part of this work and will be delivered in line with this wider approach to promote and monitor workforce diversity and equality across all protected characteristics

3.8 Attached as Appendix 2 is the proposed action plan in response to the report and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

4.1 The report makes a number of recommendations to improve ethnic minority and disabled staff representation at the senior management level (LP07+). These recommendations are expected to be delivered through existing budgets within HR and directorates. However, should additional resources be required to deliver the action plan, officers will be obliged to seek appropriate approval through the Councils financial approval process.

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 5.1 The council is required by section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 to have an Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to have executive arrangements that ensure the committee has specified powers. Consistent with this obligation, Article 6 of the council's Constitution provides that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants. The Committee may also make reports and recommendations to the Full Council or the Executive in connection with the discharge of any functions.
- 5.2 When making decisions, the council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. A proportionate level of equality analysis is required to discharge the duty and information relevant to this is contained in the One Tower Hamlets section of the report

6. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1. Workforce diversity is an activity in the council's Strategic Plan and Single Equality Framework. Having a workforce that is able to serve the community and deliver services that appropriate to local needs is a key priority for the council.

7. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 requires the council as a best value authority to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness". The activities and measures in the proposed action plan will be monitored helping to fulfil this obligation.

8. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 8.1 Not applicable.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Workforce diversity activities and milestones are found in the council's Strategic Plan and SEF. The Strategic Plan and SEF provide a strategic framework for other strategies and plans. Risks relating to the achievement of its objectives are therefore monitored through the council's corporate risk register and directorate risk registers. Risks are assessed for likelihood and impact, and have responsible owners and programmes of mitigating actions.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Not Applicable.

11. SAFEGUARDING IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Having a diverse workforce will allow the council to fully understand the safeguarding issues that people in our communities may face.
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Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- **Appendix 1** – Workforce diversity challenge session report

Appendices

- **Appendix 2** – Action Plan

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A