

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Cabinet</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">26 April 2023</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TOWER HAMLETS</b></p>
<p><b>Report of: Sharon Godman</b>, Director of Strategy, Transformation and Improvement</p>	<p><b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted</p>
<p><b>LBTH Equality Policy (2023-27)</b></p>	

<b>Lead Member</b>	<b>Cllr Suluk Ahmed</b> , Cabinet Member for Equalities and Social Inclusion
<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	<b>Afazul Hoque</b> , Head of Corporate Strategy & Communities; <b>Anna Murphy</b> , Strategy and Policy Officer
<b>Wards affected</b>	All Wards
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>Reason for Key Decision</b>	NA
<b>Forward Plan Notice Published</b>	NA
<b>Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome</b>	<p>Relevant priorities from the <a href="#">Strategic Plan 2022-26</a></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tackling the cost-of-living crisis</li> <li>2. Homes for the future</li> <li>3. Accelerate education</li> <li>4. Boost culture, business, jobs and leisure</li> <li>5. Invest in public services</li> <li>6. Empower communities and fight crime</li> <li>7. A clean and green future</li> <li>8. A council that works for you and listens to you</li> </ol> <p>And especially the five Equality Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with communities across the borough to bring people together from different backgrounds and promote understanding.</li> <li>• Uphold and protect equality and diversity in all circumstances</li> <li>• Address inequalities particularly those faced by Bangladeshi and Somali communities</li> <li>• Improve safety and opportunities for women</li> <li>• Ensure our workforce reflects the community</li> </ul>

## Executive Summary

This report sets out a refreshed equality policy (2023-27) for the council. It ensures the refreshed policy reflects the council's priorities as set out in the Strategic Plan 2022-26 and outlines how the equality policy is at core of all council business and applies to all aspects of the council's function.

## **Recommendations:**

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Agree the council's Equality Policy 2023-27

### **1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS**

- 1.1 The council's Equality Objectives have been updated in line with the 2022-26 Strategic Plan and as such the refreshed Equality Policy compliments the vision of Equality embedded in this strategic document. Further, the existing equality policy is due for a periodic refresh and the updated equality policy renews the Council's commitments to embed equality through its work and in line with the legal duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010).

### **2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 Make no changes, this is not recommended as the council's Equality Objectives have been updated (for 2022-26) based on evidence of the key challenges impacting residents. The borough has undergone significant population growth and demographic change which will need to be recognised under the council's refreshed Equality Policy 2023-27.

### **3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT**

- 3.1 Our vision for equality is to build a strong, inclusive and fair borough addressing inequalities through our work and ensuring that our workforce reflects the community. To ensure equality is at the heart everything we do, and drives our strategic ambitions, Equality Objectives have been embedded into the Strategic Plan. The Equality Objectives commit the council to:
  - Work with communities across the borough to bring people together from different backgrounds and promote understanding
  - Uphold and protect equality and diversity in all circumstances
  - Address inequalities particularly those faced by Bangladeshi and Somali communities
  - Improve safety and opportunities for women
  - Ensure our workforce reflects the community
- 3.2 In line with the refreshed Strategic Plan, the Equality Policy has been updated to reflect our commitments and sets out the council's understanding of, and commitment to, upholding equality in line with the statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010. Its purpose is to ensure that all residents and staff are treated fairly, with respect and not subject to unlawful discrimination. The policy should guide best practice throughout all functions. Guaranteeing that all employees, partners and residents understand the expected standards and

the processes in place to feedback if the council fails to meet the commitments outlined here.

- 3.3. While our legal duty has remained consistent since the Equality Act 2010, our community, their needs and our corresponding Equality Objectives have changed since the previous policy and these elements have been updated. Our positive vision for Equality has also been strengthened in the refreshed policy, as well as the key principles to achieve this vision. The policy sets out our commitment to celebrate diversity as an asset and include the lived experience of our residents with an increased focus on co-production.

### **Overview of refreshed Equality Policy 2023-27**

- 3.4. The Equality Policy 2023-27 outlines:
- What do we mean by Equality?
  - Understanding our community
  - Our Commitment to equality
  - Putting the policy into practice
  - Roles and responsibilities
  - Equality monitoring and benchmarking
  - What happens when things go wrong

## **4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.3. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure that it meets its Public Sector Equality Duty (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010). This policy helps to set out the council's strategic commitment in delivering equality requirements across the council's work as set out under the Equality Act 2010.

## **5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.3. This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:
- Best Value Implications,
  - Consultations,
  - Environmental (including air quality),
  - Risk Management,
  - Crime Reduction,
  - Safeguarding.
  - Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

## **6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

6.3. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## **7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

- 7.3. The Public Sector Equality Duty (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010) requires the Council, in carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
  - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2 An equality policy highlights the council's commitment to promoting equality and diversity for both service users and staff.

---

## **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

### **Linked Report**

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Draft LBTH Equality Policy 2023-27

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

- NONE

### **Officer contact details for documents:**

Afazul Hoque

Head of Services, Corporate Strategy and Communities