

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** 20 March 2017

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WARD(S): All

PORTFOLIO: Councillor Sharif, Commissioner for Digital Transformation and Customer Care

PART I **NON - KEY DECISION**

STATUTORY EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

1. **Purpose of Report**

To present to Cabinet for final approval the 2017-2021 Equality Objectives in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010).

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Cabinet is requested to resolve that the proposed equality objectives attached as Appendix 'A' be agreed.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3.1 **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment**

Reducing inequalities and promoting improved outcomes for all groups relates to all aspects of the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy's priorities as set out below:

1. Protecting vulnerable children
2. Increasing life expectancy by focusing on inequalities
3. Improving mental health and wellbeing
4. Housing

The Equality Objectives have been developed using the evidence base of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, amongst other data sources.

3.2. **Council's Five Year Plan Outcomes**

Reducing inequalities and "closing the gaps" is a cornerstone of the vision expressed in the Five Year Plan. Reference to the statutory equality objectives is explicitly made in the Five Year Plan and reflected in the associated outcome plans. Particular emphasis has been placed in the objectives on reducing inequalities in major outcomes areas for housing, adult health and wellbeing, and opportunities for children. These are highlighted as priority areas in the Five Year Plan.

4 **Other Implications**

(a) Financial – there are no financial implications.

(b) Risk Management –

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
Legal	Fulfills Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) Reduces risk of challenges arising from non-compliance or discrimination	
Property		
Human Rights	Supports application of HRA by public authorities	
Health and Safety		
Employment Issues	Inequality in workforce affects recruitment and retention of talent	To promote SBC as inclusive employer of choice
Equalities Issues	Reduces impact of inequality and discrimination	
Community Support		
Communications		
Community Safety		
Financial		Embeds equality objectives into Five Year Plan Budgets
Timetable for delivery		
Project Capacity		
Other		

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications – Slough Borough Council has a statutory duty to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity in the provision of its services and in its workforce (Public Sector Equality Duty, Equality Act 2010).

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment - the equality objectives inherently aim to promote equality for all residents of Slough, providing a focus in priority areas to close outcome gaps between different groups.

5 **Supporting Information**

5.1 It is a statutory requirement for public authorities to publish equality objectives every 4 years. The Equality Act (2010) is not particularly prescriptive about how authorities should do this and it is largely down to the council to identify local priorities and the number of objectives we wish to set. However, objectives should be published in a way that is accessible to the public and should be specific and measurable.

- 5.2 In drafting the proposed objectives, the following has been considered:
- Members' vision to improve choice and equality of opportunity for all residents – "closing the gaps between the haves and have nots"
 - Taking a "people-focused" approach that promotes self-help, prevention and early intervention
 - Supporting the most vulnerable
 - Improving accessibility and transparency in decision-making
 - a particular focus on reducing inequalities in health and well being, housing and the life opportunities of children
 - supporting and developing an inclusive and skilled workforce to deliver this vision
 - leadership and place-shaping

- 5.3 In developing the detail of the objectives, the following data (qualitative and quantitative) has been considered:

2016 and 2017 Equalities DATA Report
HR workforce and recruitment statistics
JSNA 2016 – key health and wellbeing inequalities
Public Health Annual Report, Slough Borough Council (2016)
5 Year Plan 2017-2021
Comments from service managers, including HR and SLT
Staff Surveys
Staff Disability Forum

6 **Measuring progress**

The objectives cover a 4 year period but an update on progress will be available annually.

7 **Comments of Other Committees**

None

8 **Conclusion**

The Equality Objectives are a statutory duty and are now clearly linked to the priorities of the Five Year Plan, 2017-21, focusing on priority areas to reduce local inequality.

9 **Appendices Attached**

'A' Statutory Equality Objectives 2017-2021

10 **Background Papers**

Five Year Plan, Equality Data Report 2017.