

CHILDREN'S SERVICES STAFF EQUALITIES GROUP

Equality, Equity and Empowerment

DRAFT Terms of Reference

1. Purpose of the Group

1.1. The primary purpose of the group is to create opportunities through regular meetings to influence changes in the Council's approach to the following, as it applies to the diverse culture and protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership) embodied within Children's Services:

- **equality** - ensuring that each individual and / or group experiences and receives the same as others);
- **equity** (or equal opportunity) - ensuring that disadvantages between individuals and / or groups are eliminated); and recognition is given to the fact that "compliance with the duty [S 149 Equality Act 2010] may involve treating some persons more favourably than others (positive action)" (p4, *Ealing's Equality Assessment Process Guidance, 2017*).
- **empowerment** - ensuring that individuals and /or groups have the freedom and power to inform decisions affecting them, and to assert control over their desires, needs and experiences.

1.2. To provide a forum for all **culturally diverse** staff in Children's Services which recognises and values the accounts and lived experiences of marginalisation and racial inequality **and inequity**. The forum will work to effect and prioritise coordinated action within the Council to tackle inequality, **inequity** discrimination and racism.

1.3. To highlight inequalities **and inequities** within Children's Services and feedback to senior leaders, for changes to be considered and acted upon, in line with the agreed action plan.

The Group's key objectives are to:

1. Create a safe space within the equalities group to facilitate conversations about equality, equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace and to review progress against an agreed plan of action.
2. Use the expertise within the group to identify solutions to barriers that may present themselves in delivering the Council's aspirations and obligations around equality, equity and diversity.
3. Support conversations and opportunities to take equality, equity and diversity into account, in a positive way, at every stage of our work.
4. The group should challenge the organisation in terms of our practice, approach and development of **valuing and actively promoting** diversity and inclusion in Children's Services.
5. Engage in conversations which help to identify organisational barriers **on for** a diverse workforce and examine practical ways of removing or reducing those barriers **to ensure equity**.
6. To look at the whole agenda more holistically to understand the systemic pathways of some of the issues we face and how we can promote diversity, **equity** and inclusion in Children's Services **for our children, families and Council staff**.
7. **focus on addressing specified protected characteristics, each year, as determined by the Council's Executives.**

2. Accountability

2.1. The Group will be accountable for its own members participation and in meeting its key objectives as defined by the Terms of reference.

2.2. The Group will be accountable for engaging and supporting the Co-Chairs for the formulation of decisions and actions to be taken forward. Key decisions and actions will be agreed by a majority voting process.

2.3. The Executive Director of Children's, Adults and Public Health Services is accountable to the group for taking actions and reporting back to the group.

2.4. The Group will work closely with other staff groups and corporate groups as well as external agencies as agreed by the group.

2.5. Members taking actions from the Group will be responsible for reporting back on those actions at the next scheduled meeting.

3. Chairing and Membership

3.1 **Chairing:** Meetings will be coordinated for the first six months by the three co-chairs. This will be reviewed by the group after six months.

The Chairs will be responsible for:

- Setting the agenda for the meetings.
- Chairing the meetings ensuring that they are timely and that actions are assigned appropriately.
- **To bring bringing** impartiality and objectivity to meetings and decision making
- Finalising and signing off minutes of meetings.
- Ensuring that the Executive Director for Children's, Adults and Public Health Services is updated after each meeting on key issues and actions.

3.2 **Membership** of the Group is open to all **culturally diverse** staff working in Children's Services in all settings and all levels within the organisation who are willing to make a commitment to the group.

Members will set and agree ground rules for the group that will include as a minimum:

- Respecting the confidentiality of all members
- Respecting different views and opinions
- Operate within an environment of trust and openness
- Commitment to attend all meeting where possible

4. Administration

4.1. The Group will be responsible for its own administration.

4.2. The Group will meet monthly.

4.3. Agendas and minutes will be saved in a shared folder for member access only.

4.4. The Group will manage and monitor its own membership and encourage membership from **culturally** diverse staff, **including those with protected characteristics**, across salary grades to ensure an equitable representation.

5. Task Groups

5.1. The Group may choose to establish **time-limited** task groups to carry out specific pieces of work and report back to the Group. Where this occurs a Task Group chair will be identified who will be responsible for the work of the task group and reporting back to the Group.

5.2. The Task Group Chair will be responsible for the administration of the Sub-Group.

5.3. Membership of the Task Group will be agreed jointly by the Chair of the Task Group and the Group. The essential criteria will be that they have a contribution to make to the aim and work of the Task Group.

6. Monitoring and evaluation

- Recommendations made by the group will be considered for action by CSLM, the Director of Children and Families and the Executive Director of Children's, Adults and Public Health Services.

- Children's Directors and Heads of Service will attend meetings when invited to do so by the group.
- Children's Directors and Heads of Service will take responsibility for delivering actions agreed by the group.
- The Executive Director of Children's, Adults and Public Health Services will be responsible for delivery of an agreed action plan.

Draft terms of reference to be reviewed by the group at the first meeting.