

SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP

MONDAY, 15 JANUARY 2024

Present: Councillor S Dannheimer, Chair

Councillors: W Mee
S Webb
E Winfield

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C M Tideswell and E Williamson

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

2 REVIEW OF EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT THE COUNCIL

The Working Group considered the presentation from the Equalities Officer and the evidence provided on Neurodiversity. The following recommendations would be presented within the report at the end of the review.

RECOMMENDED that:

- **The Human Resources Manager share the Neurodiversity Policy with all Members.**
- **To increase awareness of Neurodiversity and support available to employees and Members.**
- **To support and provide additional resources to the Communities team to ensure at least one event per quarter, minimum of four in a year, be organised.**

3 PRESENTATION ON EQUALITIES

A presentation was provided by The Equalities Officer to the Working Group. The team worked with members of the public and partnerships to host and deliver up to 4 events throughout the year across the Borough. The group considered the events being spread across the Borough instead of the one event that was held in Beeston in the past. The events were limited due to resources. Members would like to see more events, if possible. The group asked if there was any evaluations and feedback after the events. This information would be fed back to the group.

The events planned for 2024 included: Mental Health, Young People and Black History. Events proposed for 2025 were Learning and Disability, LGBTQ and Community, and Multi Faith.

The group recommended that further support and resources be allocated to the Communities team to ensure at least one event per quarter, minimum of four in a year, be accommodated.

RECOMMENDED that:

- **To support and provide additional resources to the Communities team to ensure at least one event per quarter, minimum of four in a year, be organised.**

4 EVIDENCE ON NEURODIVERSITY AND POLICY

The Council had introduced a Neurodiversity Policy in March 2021 to support employees, managers and new employees to the establishment. The policy outlined the Council's commitment to promoting equality and fairness and to celebrate neurodiversity within the workplace. Since the introduction of the policy, various training opportunities had taken place. Members of the group were pleased to recognise from a benchmarking exercise with other Local Authorities that Broxtowe was leading in its formal commitment to Neurodiversity and that the policy was the first of its kind within the local area.

Applicants could make the Council aware on their application form when applying that they required support with the application form and at the interview. Appropriate reasonable adjustments could be offered at the interview stage. On success of the applicant, any reasonable adjustments would be followed up should the person be offered a role via a pre-employment medical questionnaire which was reviewed by the Occupational Health Team. Additional support could be provided through Access to Work including the purchasing of specialist equipment. In terms of supporting hidden disabilities during employment, it was done on a case by case basis and usually the Manager would liaise with HR about making reasonable adjustments to support the employee.

The HR department had arranged for some neurodiversity testing support for employees via 'Genius Within' this included coaching and a detailed report for the Manager and HR team outlining support needs for employees with dyslexia testing and pre-screening tests for dyscalculia.

Training has been provided to Managers in Neurodiversity and this was organised via The Brain Charity during 2023. Work was being undertaken with the Training Officer to update Broxtowe Learning Zone. The Equalities Working Group was organised by the Chief Executive and a date for the next meeting was to be confirmed.

Members considered the policy and was pleased to see that Broxtowe was supporting applicants and employees. They would like to see this communicated to Members for awareness and support, where necessary.

RECOMMENDED that:

- **The Human Resources Manager share the Neurodiversity Policy with all Members.**
- **To increase awareness of Neurodiversity and support available to employees and Members.**

5 DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND NEXT AREA CHOSEN FROM THE SCOPING FORM

The date and time of the next working group meeting was arranged for 1 March 2024 at 9am. The meeting would start at the D. H. Lawrence Museum followed with a tour of the Kimberley Depot Site. This meeting was to consider the buildings and how they have been accommodated for use under the Equality Act 2010.